

OPINION 6

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THE HUSAIN WAY

WORLD 8

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MONEY 10

SENSEX CLIMBS 465 POINTS;
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BHUBANESWAR, TUESDAY AUGUST 9, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹4



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RJD, Cong ready to back Nitish if he 'dumps' NDA

JD(U), RJD call MLAs' meetings

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PATNA

Bihar is agog with speculation of yet another political volte-face by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who has convened a meeting of all Janata Dal(U) legislators on Tuesday, conceding with a similar meeting called by the RJD.

JD(U) national president Lallan Singh on Sunday set the cat among the pigeons by claiming that there was a conspiracy to weaken the JD(U) and his party will expose it soon. He called it Chirag Model 2. Chirag Paswan's party fielded scores of candidates against the JD(U) in Bihar Assembly polls 2020, which led to confusion and cost the JD(U) several seats. Lallan Singh said a similar conspiracy was on now.

Sources in the JD(U) said they have an audio recording of conversations where attempts were made to break JD(U). A senior JD(U) leader said that Nitish Kumar suspects that there was a design to repeat a Maharashtra in Bihar, and this may force him to walk out of the NDA and join hands with the RJD.



The Bihar Chief Minister skipped the farewell of former President Ram Nath Kovind and the swearing-in of Droupadi Murmu and, more recently, the NITI Aayog meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday.

Sources said that in the event of Nitish and the RJD reviving the Mahagathbandhan of 2015, the Congress, and the Left will be part of such a formation and Nitish Kumar will continue to be the Chief Minister till 2025. "After that RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav will be projected as CM in the Assembly polls," said a leader privy to negotiation going on between the RJD and the JD(U).

Amid the brewing political storm in Bihar, the Opposition RJD on Monday said it was

ready to "embrace" Nitish and his JD(U) if he breaks ranks with the BJP. RJD national vice-president Shivanand Tiwari said that convening meetings of legislators by both parties on Tuesday were a clear indication that the situation was extraordinary.

"Personally, I am not aware of the goings on. But we cannot ignore the fact that both parties, which together had sufficient numbers to muster a majority, have convened such meetings when an Assembly session is not round the corner," Tiwari told reporters.

"If Nitish chooses to dump the NDA, what choice do we have except to embrace him (gale lagayenge). The RJD is committed to fighting the BJP. If the Chief Minister decides to

Take on BJP directly: Chirag attacks Nitish over 'conspiracy' accusation

Patna: Former Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) chief Chirag Paswan on Monday hit out at the JD(U) and dared it to take on the BJP directly instead of accusing him of involvement in a conspiracy to dent Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's popularity.

Detailed Report on Page 5

join this fight, we will have to take him along," said Tiwari.

He was also asked whether the RJD would be willing to forget bitter episodes of the past, like Kumar's return to the NDA in 2017, citing allegations of corruption against Lalu Prasad and his family members, including younger son and heir apparent Tejashwi Yadav, who was then his deputy.

The Congress, principal rival of the BJP nationally but a spent force in Bihar, also went into a huddle. "All party MLAs have unanimously resolved to support the new formation that comes into being if Nitish Kumar breaks away from the BJP," AICC secretary and MLA Shakil Ahmed Khan said.

Birmingham CWG one of most memorable editions for India

Shuttlers dazzle as India finish 4th with 22 gold

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Led by the iconic PV Sindhu, Indian shuttlers owned the badminton arena by winning all three titles on offer on the day while paddler Sharath Kamal yet again reminded everyone of his class and awe-inspiring longevity with a coruscating show, as the country wrapped up its CWG campaign with 61 medals to finish a creditable fourth.

It was expected that Sindhu, Lakshya Sen and the formidable pair of Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy would end up on top of the podium but what provided the icing on the cake was the 40-year-old Sharat Kamal's gold medal-winning show against an equally good opponent in Liam Pitchford.

That performance took India's gold medal count to 22, which is four less than the 2018 edition, but this time the sport of shooting was missing from the roster. The shooters had contributed seven golds in Gold Coast's 66-medal haul, and considering that, India certainly put up a good show.

India's final tally read 22 gold, 16 silver and 23 bronze



PV Sindhu reacts after winning the Women's Singles Final Badminton match against Canada's Michelle Li at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham on Monday; (Right) Lakshya Sen plays a shot against Malaysia's Ng Tze Yong in the Men's Singles Final Badminton match at CWG, winning the Gold

PTI



Heartbroken Hockey India consoled with silver medal



Silver medalist Indian team poses for photographs during the presentation ceremony of the men's hockey, at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham on Monday

PTI

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

In one of its worst performances in recent times, the Indian men's hockey team suffered an embarrassing 0-7 drubbing at the hands of defending champions Australia to settle for a silver medal at the Commonwealth Games here on Monday.

Australia blew away India with their whirlwind speed and relentless attacks, extending their dominance of the CWG stage.

Since hockey's introduction at the Games in 1998, Australia has always stood on top of the podium. This is India's third defeat against Australia in a CWG final, having lost to them in the 2010 and the 2014 editions of the Games.

Nathan Ephraums and Tom Wickham scored a brace each while Blake Govers, Jacob Anderson, and Flynn Ogilvie also found the net in the lop-sided contest.

It was a far cry from what was expected in a gold medal clash as a dominant Australia pumped in five goals in the first half to take the game away from India.

The other time India suffered such a heavy defeat in CWG was in 2010 edition in New Delhi, where Australia hammered the hosts 8-0.

The Indians looked rusty and clueless as they conceded too much space to the Australians in the mid-field, which allowed the Kookaburras to make inroads.

The structure which the Indians are known for was nowhere to be seen. The defence looked shaky, while there was no co-ordination between the midfield and forward-line.

The past problem of mis-passing and trapping returned to haunt the Indians. It allowed Australia to play free-flowing hockey.

The Indians made very few circle penetrations and whenever they did, they lacked the final pass or looked out of sorts. Such was India's struggle that the team could not secure a single penalty corner.

Australia secured their three penalty corner inside the first 10 minutes and broke the deadlock from the third through Govers, whose flick went in between India custodian PR Sreejesh's legs.

CT & GST officer in Vig net

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Vigilance police on Monday conducted searches on the properties of Piyush Kanta Pani, Additional Commissioner, Commercial Tax and GST, Cuttack-I, on the allegation of possession of assets disproportionate to his known sources of income.

Four multi-storied buildings, seven plots worth Rs 1.87 crore in the prime areas of



Bhubaneswar, six costly four-wheelers, a farmhouse worth Rs 38 lakh in Andharua in Bhubaneswar, his assets in his native Jaipur Road, bank and insurance deposits worth Rs 53.68 lakh, 839 grams of gold and household articles worth Rs 12.30 lakh have been unearthed so far.

Further searches were continuing. Unearthing of more assets is likely and overall valuation is likely to increase.

14% have taken third dose in State

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State Government has vaccinated 46.66 lakh people with the precautionary dose of Covid-19 which is 14% of the total beneficiaries.

However, Health and Family Welfare Director Bijay Panigrahi on Monday said the Government is committed to

complete the vaccination drive in the stipulated time period.

Panigrahi urged beneficiaries due for the third dose to come forward and get vaccinated as soon as possible. He said, "We have inoculated 14% of the beneficiaries, and we will vaccinate the others soon. There are still 24.9 lakh beneficiaries yet to take the

second dose of Covid vaccine. I request them to get vaccinated soon." "We have already directed all districts to increase the vaccination centres in addition to forming four mobile teams in each block. We are also working on campaigns to create awareness among people for vaccination," he said.

Bulldozer justice for leader who assaulted Noida society woman

SHEKHAR SINGH ■ NOIDA

The Noida authorities on Monday demolished illegal constructions and encroachment at the residence of absconding politician Shrikant Tyagi, who is the main accused in the Grand Omaxe Housing Society fracas in Noida's Sector 93. The Gautam Buddha Nagar police has suspended six police men, including chowki in-charge of the area, for laxity and also announced a reward of ₹25,000 on information leading to Tyagi's arrest. Police sources said that his last location was traced in Uttarakhand near Haridwar.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has sought a report from the Home Department in connection with Tyagi's case. The CM called for a detailed investigation into the case as well as stern action against Tyagi.

Meanwhile, Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday targeted the BJP amid controversy over the



Residents gather as Noida authority carries out demolition of illegal construction at the Grand Omaxe society in Noida on Monday

PTI

incident at the Noida society, which has now caught the national attention. Priyanka called the Noida authorities' action a "pretence".

Priyanka also shared pictures of the politician with BJP leaders even as the party distanced itself from him. After the party shared a video of BJP MP Mahesh Sharma talking on phone and saying "We are

ashamed that our Government is here", in reference to the Noida incident, Priyanka shared a collage that shows Tyagi with top BJP leaders. "Did the BJP Government not know for so many years that the construction of the Noida BJP leader was illegal? The bulldozer action is just a pretence," tweeted Priyanka.

+2 Art results: Pass percentage 82.10

Record 62,734 students secure 1st div

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Council of Higher Secondary Education (CHSE) on Monday announced this year's Plus Two Arts stream results at its office here.

Total 2, 13,406 students, including 1,98, 624 regular students, had enrolled for the examination while 2,08, 631 had appeared for it and 1,71,288 students passed.

The total pass percentage stood at 82.10. Notably, a whopping 89.49% of students had cleared the +2 exam in Arts stream in 2021.

A record 62,734 students passed the examination in first division. The total numbers of students who cleared the examination in first division in 2021 and 2020 were 30,685 and 22,196, respectively. As many as 177 students passed with 90% or above marks this year.

As many as 28 higher secondary schools recorded 100% results.

Khordha district (87.80%) was the top performer and Nabarangpur recorded the lowest percentage of passed students.

Out of total 90,207 boys, 67,728 passed, the success rate being 75.08 %.

Out of 1,18,424 girls, 1,03,560 passed, the success percentage being 87.45%.

'BJP to form Govt in Odisha in 2024'

Shah sees 'bright future' for State

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR/ CUTTACK

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday asserted that the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) would form Government in Odisha after the elections in 2024 by winning a two-thirds majority.

Shah was speaking at an event marking reading of the book Modi@20 in a hotel in Bhubaneswar.

He also claimed that Narendra Modi would become the Prime Minister for a third consecutive term after the 2024 polls.

Earlier in the day, Shah stated that "Achhe Din for Odisha has arrived" and that he sees a "bright future" for this State.



He was speaking at an event marking the 75th anniversary of Odia daily 'Prajantantra' here in the presence of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.

He said Prime Minister Modi has been giving a special attention to Odisha which

is evident from a good number of persons now occupying important positions at the national level, particularly Droupadi Murmu becoming the President of the country.

Shah, who began his speech with "Jai Jagannath", said that whenever he lands in "Utkal",

he prays to the Lord of Puri and feels drenched with a sense of Bhakti.

Earlier in the morning, Shah visited the Lingaraj Temple in Bhubaneswar and offered prayer to the Lord on the occasion of the last Monday of holy Shraavan month.

UTP's death in jail OHRC directs to pay Rs 5L to kin

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha Human Rights Commission (OHRC) has directed the State Government to pay a compensation of Rs 5 lakh to the family of an under-trial prisoner (UTP) who committed suicide by hanging himself in a jail in 2018.

Jitendra Kumar Biswal (32) had hanged himself at the toilet of the Bhubaneswar Jharpada Special Jail on May 12, 2018 while undergoing jail term there.

The OHRC's order came in response to a petition filed by rights activist Prabir Das.

The petitioner had claimed that Biswal, a resident of Kendrapada district, was convicted in a case and trial was

under way for another case. He had been undergoing a jail term since July 2013. Jitendra was suffering from depression for which he took the extreme step.

Das in his petition alleged that despite knowing Biswal's state of mind the jail authorities had neither provided him psychiatric treatment nor taken him for counselling.

Thus, Jitendra's death should be blamed on negligence on part of the jail authorities and the State Government should provide compensation to the next of kin of Biswal.

In its order, the commission said the father and mother of the deceased would get Rs 2 lakh each and his wife Rs 1 lakh from the compensation.

Gender equity curriculum in Govt schools

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
■ BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha Government's Department of School and Mass Education on Monday announced its partnership with the Breakthrough and the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) South Asia to integrate a gender equity curriculum into the syllabus for students in the Government schools in the State.

An MoU was signed in the presence of departmental Minister Samir Ranjan Dash and Breakthrough CEO Sohini Bhattacharya.

Minister Das said, "Gender equality is very important. We are working on it."

The curriculum uses interactive classroom discussions to encourage adolescent boys and girls to reflect on culturally-embedded gender norms, roles and discriminatory

practices to transform their gender attitudes, aspirations and behaviours. The curriculum would be integrated into the Social Studies syllabus for boys and girls from Grades 6 to 10 in over 18,000 elementary and 5,000 secondary schools by this month.

Departmental Principal Secretary Bishnupada Sethi said: "This intervention can bring about positive changes in the way we look at gender issues. And schools are

the best places to start these conversations and build a gender-equal world."

The curriculum was first evaluated by J-PAL in 314 government schools in Haryana and was found to shift the gender attitudes and behaviours of boys and girls and lead students to enact more gender-equitable behaviours. The curriculum has since been introduced in multiple States in India.

Let media take neutral stand on issues'

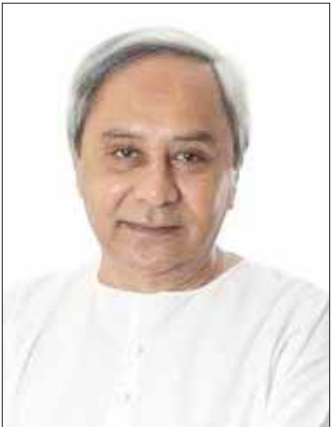
As it is the voice of people, says CM

PNS ■ CUTTACK

Being the voice of people, media must reflect the democratic values and take a neutral stand in every aspect of the society, opined Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik here on Monday.

Addressing an event marking the 75th anniversary of Odia daily 'Prajatantra' at the Indoor Stadium, Patnaik said, "Whether it is print, electronic or social media, it is the duty of every media house to maintain dignity and keep the secular principles in mind."

He said the role of media in a democratic society can hardly be overemphasised. It should endeavour to uphold our great cultural heritage and moral values and promote national integration and communal harmony. Media should discharge its duty without



any fear or favour.

Patnaik further observed that media runs on the basis of people's trust. It is, therefore, expected to prioritise the real issues of people rather than politics. Media essentially should be the voice of people.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan also spoke on the occasion.

Memo to Guv SP demands Caste Census in Odisha

27% quota in job, edu for OBCs

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Samajwadi Party (SP) has urged Governor Dr Ganeshi Lal to direct the State Government to conduct a caste census immediately and implement 27% OBC reservation in education and employment in Odisha.

In a memorandum signed by SP State president Rabi Behera and secretary Sudarshan Pradhan, they said as no Caste Census has been conducted in Odisha, the OBC people in the State are losing their constitutional rights in the field of education and employment.

The party said the State Government is going to fill up 2, 26, 559 posts in a phased manner. As there is only 11.25% OBC reservation implemented in the State, the OBC people are going to lose around 35,683 posts. Similarly,

the SP said recently Prime Minister Narendra Modi has directed all the departments to fill up 9.75 lakh vacant posts in Government of India offices. Here also, the OBCs in Odisha would be deprived of their due quota of 27% jobs reservation guaranteed by the Government of India since August 7, 1990 under Mandal Commission Report, the memorandum said.

On the education front, the State doesn't provide any reservation to backward class students in admission in colleges and universities, including medical, engineering and MBA courses. Hence, around 2,000 students every year are deprived of medical education and more than 20,000 backward class students are deprived of getting engineering education though the category of students enjoy 27% reservation in admission in Central Government universities, medical institutions and IITs, added the memorandum.

'Library's role vital in value edu'



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha Library Academy in collaboration with Siksha 'O' Anusandhan (Deemed to be University), Bhubaneswar, celebrated National Librarian's Day and 7th Annual Day of Odisha Library Academy (OLA).

On this occasion a seminar followed by a panel discussion conducted on the theme "User Engagement in New Normal".

Vice-Chancellor, SOA University Prof Ashok Kumar Mahapatra, who was chief guest, elaborated the role of library in the value of education in society and for the mental growth of human beings.

Guest of honour Director, ICMR-RMRC, Bhubaneswar Dr Sanghamitra Pati appreciated Odisha Library Academy (OLA) and stated that OLA is vibrant like other associations of the country.

Another guest of honour Pro-

Vice-Chancellor, SOA, Prof PK Nanda opined that library is a knowledge hub where information is shared and disseminated. Dr Bijay Kumar Choudhury, retired Professor of Department of Library and Information Science, Sambalpur University, and Gangadhar Kar, retired Librarian of Harekrushna Mahtab State Library, were felicitated by the Odisha Library Academy this year.

652 new Covid cases in State

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The State reported a decrease in the daily Covid-19 cases on Monday with 652 persons infected in 29 districts and the State pool. With this, the total tally rose to 13,19,527.

Among the newly-infected were 132 children in the age group of 0 to 18 years,

Notably, the State had reported 730 Covid cases on Sunday.

Of the new cases, 381 were from quarantine and 271 local contacts.

Sundargarh district reported the day's highest 137 cases, followed by Khordha 70, Sambalpur 58,

Balangir 47, Bargarh 46, Mayurbhanj 43, Kalahandi 36, Nabarangpur 34, Subarnapur 21, Nayagarh 18, Nuapada 16, Rayagada 15, Cuttack 14, Kandhamal 13 and Koraput 11.

The districts which recorded 10 cases were Jharsuguda nine, Jajpur eight, Deogarh and Puri seven each, Baleswar and Gajapati six each, Boudh and, Dhenkanal three each, Angul, Kendrapada and Malkangiri two each, Bhadrak Ganjam and Keonjhar one each. Besides, 15 cases were reported from the State pool.

The active cases numbered 5,798.

So far, 13,04,527 patients have recovered in the State.

State body backs Aug 10 postal strike

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The 4th Triennial Conference the Confederation of Central Govt. Employees and Workers, Odisha State Coordination Committee, was conducted in the premises of Bhubaneswar GPO on Sunday with working president Debabrata Mohanty in the chair. General secretary RN Dhal read out the Triennial Report and income-expenditure statement which were approved unanimously.

The open session was inaugurated by CITU State president Janardan Pati.

The conference expressed

concern over the issue of merger of Post Office Small Savings Scheme with the loss-making India Post Payments Bank Limited which is nothing but privatisation through phase-wise corporatisation of the largest postal network in the world.

It was unanimously resolved, inter alia, to extend solidarity to the nationwide postal strike on August 10.

The conference unanimously elected Rabindranath Dhal, Bruhaspati Samal and Dipti Ranjan Mohanty as the State president, general secretary and financial secretary, respectively for the ensuing session.

No State official received Shah

Aparajita fumes at Govt

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Bhubaneswar MP Aparajita Sarangi on Monday fumed at the State Government for not following protocol to accord reception to Union Home Minister Amit Shah on his arrival at the State capital on Sunday night.

She said that shockingly, neither Minister of State for Home nor Home Secretary nor DGP was

present to receive him at the airport. "Was it indifference or on purpose," questioned she.

Sarangi wrote a letter to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik in this regard, pointing out that a huge number of people was there to welcome Shah and express their gratefulness towards him for his visit to the State.

She said it is surprising that the State Government behaves in such a callous manner and hoped that such behaviour should not be repeated.

Bol Bom devotee drowns in Mahanadi

PNS ■ CUTTACK

A Bol Bom devotee died while taking bath at the Gadagadia Ghat of Mahanadi here in the wee hours of Monday. The devotee, identified as Debabrata Samal, a resident of Dhamnagar in Bhadrak district, was working in a company at Paradip.

Debabrata along with his friend had come for Jalabhishek (ritual of pouring holy water) at the Dhabaleswar Temple. While the duo were taking holy dip and drawing water in pots for the Jalabhishek, Debabrata slipped into deep water and went missing.

On getting information, Fire Service personnel rushed to the spot and initiated a search operation. After a few hours search, they managed to fish out the body.

Police sent the body to the SCB Medical College Hospital for postmortem.

Interview of the week

Jagannath Int'l Hindi Bhakti Sangeet Yatra a success story



SUGYAN CHOUDHURY



ACHARYA ABHIMANYU

An unofficial brand ambassador of the cult of Lord Jagannath, Acharya Abhimanyu is a consummate artist, a visionary and an exponent of Hindustani classical music, songs and Indian culture. He excels in the classical, light classical and devotional forms of singing. Having had topped in Post Graduation (Music) from the Utkal University, he bagged a gold medal from the Odisha Sangeet Natak Akademi. A devotee of Sangeet Martand Pandit Omkarnath Thakur and Padma Bhusan Ustad Amir Khan Saheb, he had had the singular good fortune to come under the tutelage of two exponents of Indian classical music, Dr Damodar Hota and Padma Shri Pt Surinder Singh consequently enabling him to master the intricacies and the subtle nuances of the classical musical tradition of excellence.

Today, his classical music singing is a beautiful blend of the two styles transmitted to him by his two gurus. As an exponent of devotional music, his crowning glory has been in rendering 'Shri Jagannath Mahaa Naam Mantra', scientific mythological multimedia film of 'Dashavatar', 'Shree Jagannath International Hindi Devotional Music Congregation', Hindi album 'Puri Jagannath', 'Shree Jagannath Jagaran', 'Shree Mandira Vaadya', 'Sai Darshan', 'Odia Tarini' album which are made into a lovely DVD while his Odia and Hindi Bhajans are available in CDs and cassettes. An ardent champion of the Guru-Shishya Parampara, he organises programmes where three generations of the same tradition are presented and gurus honoured. Importantly, he has taught music to physically-challenged children and even to psychiatric patients getting them healed through music therapy. His special concerts and ensembles include a series of events across the country. Awards and accolades have come cascading down upon him. In an interview to *The Pioneer*, Acharya spoke to Sugyan Choudhury at the Bhubaneswar airport on his way to Delhi.

How were you initiated into music and culture?

I was initiated into music and to the cult of Lord Jagannath from my childhood days. My parents inspired me to the cult of Lord Jagannath while my first guide in sangeet was Guru Baidhar Sahoo of village Sankhachila of Jajpur district. It was Guru Sahoo, who identified my love towards music and trained me into this beautiful world of music and the world of classical sangeet. Theren, I had the good fortune to come under the direct tutelage of legendary classical maestro Pandit Damodar Hota, who transformed my life at the Utkal Sangeet Mahavidyalaya. I won a gold medal for having stood first class first in Hindustani classical music from this premier institute of in 1999. Then, I had shifted to Delhi and came in contact of Padma Shri Pandit Surendra Singh, who taught me more on the subject. Pandit Surendra Singh was a direct disciple of Ustad Amir Khan. Pandit Damodar Hota was not only a great musician of Odisha but his name shines as a polestar in the galaxy of classical sangeet luminaries of India. Pandit Hota belonged to the classical genre as expounded by Pandit Omkarnath Thakur. Thus, I had the singular good fortune to be associated with the two tradition of excellence as represented by Pandit Hota and Pandit Singh and I felt like merged and mingled in the meeting of the streams of the Ganges and Yamuna. In 2000, my exploration in the world of sangeet began and I have never looked back since then.

What were your activities at Delhi thereafter?

At the behest of my guru, I started organising Pandit Guru Omkarnath Thakur Sangeet Samaroha at Delhi and got it continued for quite some years. I chanced upon the idea of undertaking my Guru Hota's dream project 'Kala ki madhyam se samaj seva' by organising in such a way the classical music event, I have obtained the patronage of many companies involving them and inviting them to the centre-stage of the programmes, wherein they supervised and donated kidney patients dialysis machines. The

hapless patients suffering from kidney diseases selected by the social service division of AIIMS were provided with dialysis machines from 2000 to 2004. Thereafter, the Government of India through the PM Relief Fund provided dialysis machines. I felt and successfully gave the message that an artist is meant not only to provide musical delight to the people but also is meant for serving the human society by wiping out its tears and agonies.

What are your plans for the cult of Lord Jagannath?

I consider myself fortunate to have been born in the land of Lord Jagannath. Odishi song, drama, dance and music have all the greatness and glory of Lord Jagannath. I have rendered the glory of the lord through my classical rendering of the much-orchestrated classical Sanskrit hymn of Adi Shankaracharya "Jagannath swami nayana patha gami bhaba tume", which has touched the hearts and souls of the sea of humanity. My classical rendering has been well-appreciated by Indians and by Odias outside. Since 2008, I have started a new outfit, 'Swara Samarpana', which aims at popularising the cult of Lord Jagannath. At the behest of the Gajapati Maharaja of Puri, I have rendered 'Jagannath Maha Nama Mantra' in classical music, the audio and video of which is now popular globally. The video was also exhibited the car festival of Jagannath at Delhi. Delhites are now very fond of the cult of Lord Jagannath. Thereafter, with the advice of Gajapati Maharaja, I have started a 'Sri Jagannath International Hindi Bhakti Sangeet Yatra', which has become a roaring success as it has reached the Hindi belt devotees who are enamoured of the music of Lord Jagannath. The Gajapati Maharaja appreciated my endeavour in popularising the Jagannath sangeet in the Rashtira Bhasha and offered me kudos for being the first Odia devotee of the lord in my effort of rendering the divine songs of the lord in Hindi. For this effort, the Government of India is sponsoring the cultural programme over the last 12 years through the National Book Trust Viswa Pustak Mela programme, wherein 28 countries are participating and witnessing the extravaganza relating to the lord. Ten years after I propagated the songs of Lord Jagannath in Hindi at the above stage, in 2020, a phenomenal change took place on the same stage when noted Bollywood singers Suresh Padekar, Anup Jalota, Sonu Nigam, Asha Bhosle started singing the songs of Lord Jagannath in classical Hindi. Our joy knew no bounds after witnessing this grandeur of the lord at this international stage.

OES webinar

'Mother Nature is humans' only saviour'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The wonderful living world in the form of diverse species of animals, plants and microbes is the experimental creation of Mother Nature. All the needs of the living organisms are met by nature in the form of numerous goods and services. However, human beings of the modern era have brought about massive destruction of natural ecosystems and impaired their sustainability by way of diverse detrimental activities.

Time has come when we need to recognise that a healthy planet is essential for our social and economic progress and resilience. We have to reset our relationship

and live in harmony with nature. In a recent convention of the United Nations 'Stolckholm+50' in Sweden, emphasis was laid on 'a healthy planet for the prosperity of all - our responsibility and our opportunity'.

Experts expressed such views while participating in a webinar on the theme "Mother Nature as the Saviour" organised by the Orissa Environmental Society (OES) here.

Chief guest Dr V Santhosh Kumar, Professor of Pharmacology and founder-chief, Elephant Research Centre, VELS University, Tamil Nadu, narrated how emphasis has been laid in the '2050 Vision for Biodiversity' to live in harmony with nature, halt and reverse

biodiversity loss, conserve and restore ecosystems and act resolutely for the implementation of befitting measures.

Chairing the programme, OES president Dr Sundara Narayan Patro said the moral responsibility of the human beings is to pay utmost importance to the conservation of natural wealth for the future generations. In his welcome address, OES secretary Dr Jayakrushna Panigrahi explained how an apathetic attitude towards nature and other living organisms is on the rise in the course of advancement of human civilisation, resulting in loss of natural balance and extinction of many species.

Deluge in N'rangpur as heavy rains lash dist

Woman swept away in river
Houses collapse;
highways dis-
rupted

MONOHAR MOHANTY
■ NABARANGPUR

Nabarangpur district received heavy rainfall since Saturday due to a low pressure over the Bay of Bengal. The Indian Meteorological Department has issued an orange warning for the district from August 7 to 9.

Due to the heavy rains, the water levels of the rivers in the district were increasing gradually. State Highway 39 connecting Nabarangpur to Umerkote had been cut off for a long time due to three-foot high water flowing over the



bridge of Turi river near Papdahandi.

Besides, it is presumed that many rivers of the district are likely to overflow if such rains continue for the next twelve hours. Apart from this, the National Highway 26 connecting Nabarangpur to Bhawanipatna and Raipur was disrupted for a long time as a number of mango trees near village Taragaon were

uprooted and fell on the road. A widow woman namely Pratima Santa of Bhainsibandha village in Jharigaon block was swept away in a river near her village and died.

According to information, Pramila had left home for work on Saturday but did not return home till evening. However, after a search, Pramila's body was found a

kilometer away from the village.

Being informed, Jharigaon police reached the spot, recovered the body and sent it for post-mortem. Villagers Trilochan Santa and Urden Santa said while Pramila was crossing the river to come home after work, she was swept away by the river current.

The district received a total of 327.4 mm of rainfall on Monday while the average rainfall is 32.74 mm. District Collector Kamal Lochan Mishra appealed the people to not go to the lower catchment areas.

Besides, over 300 houses collapsed in different blocks of the district. Rain water entered into the houses of lower catchment areas in Jharigaon, Papdahandi and Tentulikhunti blocks.

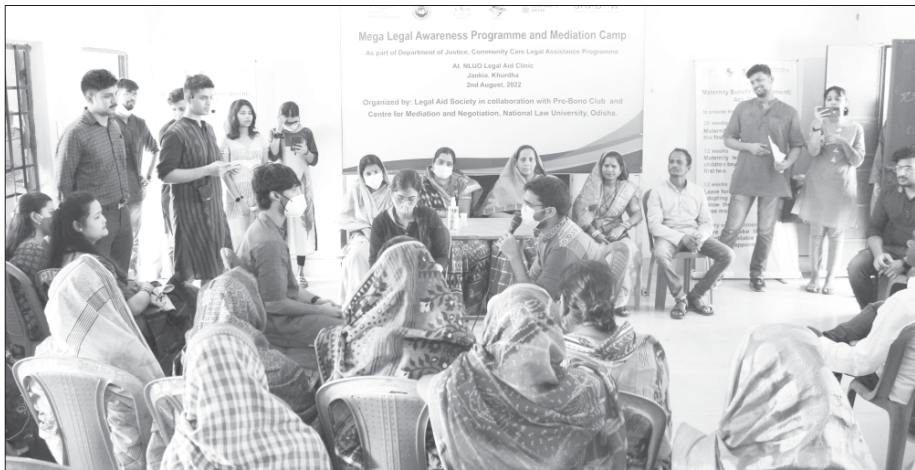
Women health legal awareness held in Khordha

PNS ■ KHORDHA

The Legal Aid Society of National Law University, Odisha, Cuttack (NLUO), in collaboration with Department of Justice Pro Bono Club and Centre for Mediation and Negotiation, organised a mega legal awareness programme and mediation camp under the scheme DISHA.

The program was held at NLUO's own legal aid clinic at Jankia, Khurdha, with an aim to spread awareness on menstrual hygiene and Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017.

As many as 23 students from the Legal Aid Society of NLU under the leadership of Faculty Advisors Dr Kuntirani Padhan, Nikita Pattajoshi and Akshay Verma of NLU created



awareness and distributed free sanitary napkins to all the attendees of the programme irrespective of their gender.

As part of the mediation camp, a group of students demonstrated the importance of mediation as a mode of dispute resolution to the

attendees and performed a skit. This was followed by a presentation on the changes brought to the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017 and

how women can be benefited, by DhirajBehera, Programme Manager and

Debapriya Das, from Shadow, Bhubaneswar, the implementing partner.

The programme was attended by members of the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), women members from self-help groups and girl students from a local school.

IT engineer missing in Derjang dam

Rescue operation on
PNS ■ ANGUL

An IT engineer went missing while bathing in the Derjang irrigation dam in Angul district on Monday. On being informed, fire brigade personnel reached the spot and launched a rescue mission.

Sources said Dibhanshu Hota, an engineer in Bangalore, along with a few youths including Ranjit Mohanty, Biplab Bose, MD Akij, Sumit Satapathy Ashish Sahoo, Dibya Ranjan Samal and Subrat Samal visited the dam to celebrate the Friendship Day.

Nalco DGM Trinath Shankar Hota and senior DPS teacher Pushpanajali Hota, went missing while taking bath. He reportedly entered into the water in a pair of jeans and swam around a distance of 100 meters before going missing.

The fire brigade personnel along with the local police launched an operation to rescue Dibhanshu. However, they could not trace him till the last report came in.

"The rescue operation is underway. The fire brigade personnel are facing trouble due rain. The Angul Sub-Collector and other senior officials are monitoring the operation," said a source.

Dibhanshu, son of former

NABARD spends Rs 2.33 cr for State weavers

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) on Sunday celebrated the National Handloom Day here in presence of weavers, farmers, NGO representatives and Government officials.

State Handlooms, Textiles and Handicrafts Minister Rita Sahu, Development Commissioner PK Jena, Principal Secretary Finance, Vishal Kumar Dev and CGM, NABARD C Udaybhaskar joined as guests and spoke

about the importance of the day.

The guests highlighted the State's rich cultural heritage, arts and crafts and the immense scope for improving the extent and quality of its handloom and textiles products.

The Minister thanked the NABARD as it is taking many initiatives for the off- farm sector which include formation of Off Farm Producer Organisations (OFPOs) and skill development of the weavers.

To help in the marketing

of the products of the weavers, the NABARD also is sponsoring exhibitions and supports the establishment of rural haat for better marketing of the handloom products, Minister Sahu informed.

She said the State has the highest number of OFPOs (10) in the country. NABARD till date has sanctioned an amount of Rs 2.33 crore for weavers development supporting 1,450 weavers.

Development Commissioner Jena urged all stakeholders to come forward for greater convergence

towards addressing challenges faced by the handloom sector like drudgery, lack of marketing, etc in the State and the rural economy at large for ensuring progressive growth in all spheres.

The NABARD has taken up GI registration of Odisha's rich handloom products like Mayurbhanj Saree, tribal Bhuba Saree and Jagatsingpur saree etc.

The NABARD launched "Stall in Mall" at Esplanade Mall, Bhubaneswar to help market the products of weavers of the State.

Ganjam College holds Foundation Day



PNS ■ CHHATRAPUR

The Ganjam College celebrated its 54th Foundation Day on Sunday with Dr Gobabandhu Dash, OSD to Chief Minister as chief guest. Dash urged the students to develop critical thinking, innovative skills and application of modern technology for the success of human society.

The programme was organised with Chhatrapur Sub-Collector and college GB President Prsanna Kumar Patra in the chair. Dr Sudhakar Patra, Professor of Economics,

Berhampur University, attended as guest of honour. Principal Dr Prabin Kumar Nanda, who presented the annual report of the college, referred to the various problems of the institution.

Foundation ceremony convenor Prof Amar Prasad Bishoyee introduced the guests and Prof LN Panda coordinated the programme. Dr Smaranika Hota read out the Vice-Chancellor's message. Prizes were distributed to meritorious students for their achievements in study, sports and NCC activities. Dr Pitambar Behera gave a vote of thanks.

Lawyers' stir: Courts fail to work in B'swar



PNS ■ BALESWAR

The courts of Baleswar district couldn't function on Monday as members of the Bar Association abstained from work pressing for their six-point charter of demands including filling of the vacant magistrate posts and a High Court Bench at Baleswar.

The lawyers locked the entry and exit gates of different courts displaying their banners containing the charter of demands and staged demonstrations. The judges, magistrates and judicial staffs couldn't enter into the court halls.

The advocates, alleging that the power and purview of the Sub-Judge have been

squeezed, demanded restoration of the extended power as earlier.

The other demands included posting of a magistrate for the NI Act (cheque bounce case), posting for the vacant Additional Commissioner for Settlement and Consolidation, establishment of Education, Labour and Cooperation Tribunals.

The call for the cease-work by the lawyers was given following a decision of the Bar Association for an indefinite period. "However, in the next general body meeting, we would decide the further agitation," said Bar Association president Manoj Nayak.

300 take benefit
PNS ■ CHHATRAPUR

The Gopalpur Ports Limited (GPL) under its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programme organised a mobile health check-up camp at Government Upper primary School in Kalipali panchayat with an aim to provide quality healthcare to people living in

the port's periphery.

Inaugurating the mobile health camp, Chief Executive Officer, Gopalpur Ports Limited VJ Rao said the Gopalpur Port is always committed to ensuring good health of the people in the port periphery. "We are happy to contribute back to the community under our CSR platform," he told.

Vice president (HR/IR) Ajay Kumar Mishra opined that the

Corporate Social Responsibility program will be accelerated in areas like education and environment ahead.

Over 300 people from different villages under the panchayat participated in the camp and discussed with the doctors about various health issues free of cost. Free medicines were also distributed among the

villagers. The villagers, elected representatives and intellectuals hailed the efforts of the port authorities in ensuring better healthcare of people in the region.

A health awareness street play prepared by the staff of Gopalpur Port was performed. Recently, the port authorities inaugurated a health check-up lab for benefit of the people in the area.

TSML-TERI pact for water audits at Odisha units

For efficient use of water

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Tata Steel Mining Limited (TSML) has partnered with New Delhi based the Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) to conduct water audits at five of its operational facilities in Odisha to ensure more efficient use of water and its conservation.

This will enable TSML to develop an integrated industrial water management

strategy that optimizes efficient use of water and improves water productivity at its units. Additionally, the results of the survey will contribute towards the National Water Mission's goal of improving water use efficiency.

TSML has also partnered with FluxGen Engineering Technologies, a Karnataka based company working on water solution, to install AquaGen mechanism to reduce water consumption.

AquaGen is a SaaS

(Software as a service) platform that will give a secure single window access system to digital data of the entire water infrastructure on parameters such as water flow, water level, and bore well water level.

To begin with, the company is deploying AquaGen at its Sukinda Chromite Mine in Jajpur and Ferro Alloy Plant at Athagarh in Cuttack district covering a complete value chain of ferrochrome making.

To ensure fulfillment of the company's commitment of net zero wastewater discharge,

the TSML has developed a 108 million liters per day capacity onsite Central Effluent Treatment Plant (ETP) at Sukinda Chromite Mine (SCM).

The central ETP effectively treats 100% of the generated effluent and allows the company to reclaim up to 95 - 90% of recycled water. SCM township has a Sewage Treatment Plant (STP) that treats domestic waste water into treated water, which is reused for gardening, washing of machineries and vehicles -

resulting in zero liquid discharge. The TSML is also working to install another central ETP of 1200 cubic metre per hour capacity for its Saruabil and Kamarda chromite mines in Sukinda.

TSMLs both the ferroalloy plants at Gopalpur in Ganjam district and at Athagarh have onsite effluent treatment plants that treat onsite process water. For its Athagarh plant it has already reduced its water intake by 0.50 cusecs.

The company has constructed garland drains

around its plant boundaries and a settling pit to channelize waste water from jiggling and hot metal cake quenching operations as well as surface run-off to the ETP.

The 100% recycled water is reused on-site in metal cooling and jigging for sprinkling water on the road and gardening. Both production plants have a sewage treatment plant that treat domestic wastewater. Treated water is reused for gardening purposes, making both the facilities zero liquid-discharge.

IT Act: Implications on social media giants

The Information Technology Act 2000 will have now a set of new rules which will mandate strict Government scrutiny over top social media players such as Twitter, Facebook, Google, Instagram and YouTube, over hosting illegal and inflammatory user content. The companies now run the risk of losing their immunity shield or safe harbour protection against third party content violation.

It may be recalled that Google had filed a case in the Delhi High Court to set aside a single judge order to remove offending content from the internet, as it had mischaracterised its search engine as an intermediary. They had also contended that their right to privacy, which was decreed by the Supreme Court as a fundamental right in the landmark Puttaswami Case (2017), was being infringed upon.

The IT Act of 2000 has a chequered history. The Supreme Court in the landmark Shreya Singhal Case (2015) had struck



SATYA NARAYAN MISRA

down Section 66A as unconstitutional, as it had put restrictions on online speech. It did not agree with the Government's view point that the restrictions imposed were reasonable in terms of Art 19(2), as they were arbitrary, having a 'chilling effect' on free speech (Justice Nariman). It, however, read down Section 79 (Exemption of Intermediary) by stipulating that online intermediaries would be obliged to take down content only on receiving an order of the court or Government authority.

In the IT Act of 2000, Section 79 of the Act has a safe harbor protection to social intermediaries, provided they are not actively involved in the dissemination of the message or modified the text in any way. In practice, however, the Cambridge Analytics Scandal in 2018 clearly revealed how data from Facebook was used in political sluffest between the Congress and BJP. In Zoom application for conducting online classes and webinars, e-mail address and passwords of over 5 million zoom users have been compromised and sold in dark web for less than a rupee! Passwords constitute a very sensitive data and as per IT Act 2000, any such misuse of password would attract five-year imprisonment.

With the rise of FAANG (Facebook, Apple, Amazon, Netflix and Google), the whole dynamics of global business, IT application, information storing and entertainment dissemination has changed humongous. Facebook is a data monster which churns out

1.3 lakh photos and 5.1 lakh comments per minute on a global basis. Amazon has reduced processing time and significantly increased shopping time. Covid-19 has been a godsend in boosting e-commerce as never before. Given such overarching reach of the social intermediaries, big data has become an enticing candidate for profiteering. Rise of professional hacking group, dark webs of drug trafficking and crypto currency users have become the sinister reality of a hyper connected world. Internet has not only made the world flat, as Thomas Freidman wrote, it has also hastened the pace of transfer of data and visuals but also muddled the ethical rectitude. Bob Reich, a Professor from Harvard University, believes that all these said intermediaries would bring 'net harm in the next decade.'

Noting these concerns, the US and EU have issued a joint statement to protect victims from encryption safeguard of criminals. The US Government insists that technology companies must

include a mechanism in the design of encryption products and services so that the Government has access to data, when such criminal activities or sexually explicit images of minors are peddled by the said intermediary. Quite clearly the global trend is to give primacy to national security over right to privacy, speech and expression in order to quell violence, smut and ill will. Given the imperative to tread with caution in matters involving national security, the present IT Regulations (2021) to ensure ethical behaviour, responsibilities and accountability on the part of social media platforms is well timed and necessary. The safe harbour protection under Section 79 of IT Act, 2000 has been violated in spirit and practice. The insistence on the social intermediaries to exercise due diligence, appoint a public grievance officer as a go-between the Government and aggrieved citizens is reasonable.

The new amendments to Section 79 of IT Act thus envisages due

diligence by intermediaries by specifying categories of content that users are not allowed to upload, take down content within 36 hours of Government/court order, retaining blocked content and a redress mechanism. It also wants technology based measures to identify content depicting child sexual abuse, and disproportionate interests of free speech. This is where the court will be called upon to decide whether free speech has been excessive or not.

The intermediaries are essential cogs in the wheel of exercising the right to freedom of expression on the internet. Most countries in the world have introduced a legislation to ensure that this wheel does not stop spinning. The Centre for Internet and Society in a study of seven intermediaries has found out that in most cases the process is flawed and the principle of natural justice has been followed. The first amendment to the US Constitution (1791) said: The Congress shall not make any law that abridges freedom of speech. Freedom of Press was

explicitly mentioned. The Indian Constitution has taken a more guarded approach to free speech and the Supreme Court is often called upon to decide if the restriction on free speech imposed by the State is reasonable or excessive/arbitrary. The court applies four tests, viz legitimacy, suitability, necessity and proportionality to arrive at a decision. Of these, proportionality test is most important, as per which the court tries to find out if the intended impact is disproportionate. In the Shreya Singhal Case, the two judges found that the impact would be disproportionate and upheld on line postings, as long as they do not incite violence and hatred. While Section 79 in its amplified form is welcome, the Government has to be more careful in ensuring due process and natural justice before hauling intermediaries in a high handed manner. Else, the slugfest between media giants and the Government will witness increased involvement of the court as a defender of free speech.

(The writer is a Professor Emeritus)

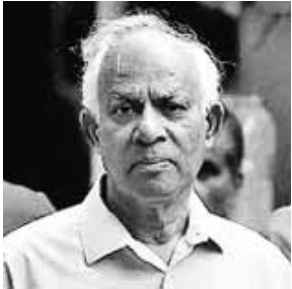
3-year prison term for ex-Secy in coal scam

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi Special Court on Monday awarded a three-year jail term to former Coal Secretary HC Gupta in a coal scam case related to irregularities in allocation of a coal block in Maharashtra, a lawyer associated with the case said.

Special Judge Arun Bhardwaj also awarded two year imprisonment to former joint-Secretary in the Ministry of Coal (MoC), KS Kropcha in the case and imposed a fine of Rs 50,000, while Gupta was asked to pay a fine of Rs one lakh.

The court had convicted both for criminal conspiracy, criminal breach of trust, cheating and corruption in the case related to allocation of Lohara East coal block. The court, meanwhile, awarded four year jail term to Mukesh Gupta, the director of convicted company, Grace Industries Ltd. (GIL), for



criminal conspiracy and cheating and imposed a fine of Rs two lakh on him, while the company was also directed to pay a fine of Rs two lakh separately.

Both were convicted for criminal conspiracy and cheating. The trial of the case was conducted by senior advocate RS Cheema, Deputy Legal Advisor for the CBI Sanjay Kumar and senior public prosecutor A P Singh. HC Gupta was earlier convicted in three other coal scam cases and his appeal against those convictions is pending before the

Delhi High Court. He is currently on bail along with other convict persons in the case.

According to the CBI, between 2005 and 2011, the accused persons hatched a criminal conspiracy and cheated MoC, Government of India by dishonestly and fraudulently inducing the MoC to allocate 'Lohara East Coal Block' in favour of GIL on the basis of false information about net worth, capacity, equipments and status of procurement and installation of plant.

The CBI also stated that the company, in its application, claimed its net worth as Rs 120 crore whereas its own net worth was only Rs 3.3 crore, and that the company also falsified its existing capacity as 1,20,000 TPA against 30,000 TPA. The Supreme Court had on August 25, 2014 cancelled the entire allocations of coal blocks. This is the 11th conviction in coal scam cases secured by prosecution.

DefExpo set be held in Guj from Oct 18 to 22

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The 12th edition of India's international defence exhibition DefExpo on land, naval and homeland security systems will be held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat from October 18 to 22.

Earlier scheduled to be held in March, it was postponed as many countries were not able to reach India due to logistical issues arising out of the Ukraine-Russia conflict.

The five-day event will witness three business days followed by two public days. Live demonstrations showcasing the equipment and skill set of the armed forces, defence public sector undertakings and industry will be held on all five days at Sabarmati River Front through active participation and synchronized efforts at all levels, the defence ministry said here on Monday.

DefExpo- 2022 will be held in a three-venue format across an area of 01+ lakh square metres at Helipad Exhibition Centre, inaugural event and seminars at Mahatma Mandir

Convention and Exhibition Centre and live demonstration at Sabarmati River Front.

The exhibition is being planned with events such as Bandhan for forging of partnerships between companies, seminars and webinars showcasing of start-ups including cutting-edge technology solutions for future battlefield, artificial Intelligence in defence, student visits and showcasing Gujarat as an investment destination for aerospace and defence sector.

DefExpo 2022 is in line with the vision of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to achieve self-reliance in defence and achieve export of \$5 billion by 2025.

India has successfully established itself as an emerging defence manufacturing hub with numerous international orders being bagged by Indian companies in recent years.

The Indian Defence industry has been keenly anticipating DefExpo-2022 which is Asia's largest event in the defence sector. It was postponed in March 2022 due to logistical problems being faced



by the participants.

As India celebrates its 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', DefExpo 2022 gains further significance with its theme 'Path to Pride' invoking nationalistic pride and encouraging citizens to partake in nation building through establishing a capable indigenous defence industry.

The reforms in defence manufacturing are attracting greater interest from Indian Defence manufacturers and it is therefore anticipated that DefExpo-2022 would attract active participation from Indian companies.

At DefExpo-2022, the participants will get an opportunity to showcase their equipment and platforms and also be able to explore the strengths and capabilities of the expanse of Indian defence industry for

forging business partnerships.

The event will help boost investment, expand manufacturing capacities and capabilities, discover avenues for technology absorption. The DefExpo-2022 website (www.defexpo.gov.in) is available providing online services to exhibitors, besides hosting informative content about the various indigenous defence products and promoting heritage and leisure at Gujarat.

The exhibitor booking would be available for Indian companies which will include Indian subsidiaries of Foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers(OEM) and joint ventures between Indian and foreign companies.

The website will be the first interface making the process of booking and information access effortless.

Jaishankar, Dmytro Kuleba discuss Ukraine war, global impact

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Ukraine on Monday discussed the ongoing conflict there since February and its global repercussions during talks between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba. Jaishankar assured Kuleba that the next consignment of Indian humanitarian assistance will reach Ukraine very soon.

"Appreciated the conversation today with FM @DmytroKuleba of Ukraine. Discussed recent developments in the conflict and its continuing global repercussions," Jaishankar said in a tweet. "Assured that the next consignment of Indian humanitarian assistance will be reaching very soon," he said. India has maintained that the crisis in Ukraine due to the continuing Russian military action there must be resolved through diplomacy and dialogue.

India-US commence joint drill in HP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The elite Special Forces of India and the US on Monday commenced their joint exercise 'Vajra Prahar' at the Special Forces Training School (SFTS) in Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh. It is the 13th edition of the Indo-US Joint Special Forces exercise and will last for 21 days.

The US contingent is represented by personnel from the 1st Special Forces Group (SFG) and Special Tactics Squadron (STS) of US Special Forces and the Indian Army contingent is formed by drawing Special Forces personnel under the aegis of SFTS, officials said here on Monday.

The 'Vajra Prahar' series of joint exercise aims to share best practices and experiences in areas such as joint mission planning and operational tactics

as also to improve interoperability between the Special Forces of both the nations. This annual exercise is hosted alternatively between India and the United States.

The 12th edition was conducted at Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington (USA) in October 2021.

During the course of next 21 days, teams of both armies will jointly train, plan and execute a series of special operations, counter terrorist operations, air borne operations in simulated conventional and unconventional scenarios in mountainous terrain.

This joint exercise is a significant step in strengthening the traditional bond of friendship between the special forces of both nations. It also improves bilateral defence cooperation between India and the USA.

Army signs MoU with Drone Federation of India

New Delhi: With increasing role of drones or unmanned aerial vehicles(UAV) in modern day warfare, the Army Design Bureau has signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Drone Federation of India to collaboratively work towards promoting research, development, testing and manufacturing of drones, counter-drone and associated technologies.

This MoU also signifies unwavering commitment of Indian Army in supporting Indian industry and complete eco system to develop indigenous equipment and weapon systems in line with Atmanirbharta in defence manufacturing, officials said here on Monday. The Army Design

Bureau is nodal agency of Indian Army to be facilitator for research and development efforts with industry, academia, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and defence public sector undertakings to enable them to understand and appreciate user requirements in depth.

The Drone Federation of India promotes drone industry by bringing about policy change, creating business opportunities, developing a robust skilling infrastructure, facilitating tech and knowledge transfers, developing standards, and promoting research and development efforts with industry-academia collaboration.



Times Now editor granted interim protection from arrest by SC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday granted interim protection from arrest to Times Now TV channels' editor Navika Kumar in connection with FIRs lodged against her over controversial remarks made by former BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma on Prophet Mohammad during a TV debate moderated by the news anchor.

A Bench of Justices Krishna Murari and Hima Kohli issued notices to the Centre, West Bengal government, and others on Kumar's plea seeking quashing of proceedings initiated against her. "As an interim measure, no coercive action shall be taken against the petitioner pursuant to the impugned FIRs/complaints or future FIRs/complaints which may be registered with respect to the broadcast of May 26", the bench said. Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Kumar, submitted that debate was going on over Gyanvapi mosque and suddenly one of the speakers said something, and then another retorted.

Rohatgi stated that the news anchor did not say anything and several FIRs were lodged against her. She in fact doused the fire by saying "we have to go by the Constitution", Rohatgi added. Senior advocate Menaka Guruswamy, appearing for the West Bengal Government, said the first FIR was registered in Kolkata and the FIR in Delhi is not connected with this.

At this juncture, Rohatgi said, "What is the special interest of the State of West Bengal in this matter? The bench then issued a notice in matter and sought replies in two weeks.

'Boarding gates too far, not enough buggies at T3'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A parliamentary committee in its report has said that many boarding gates in Delhi airport's T3 terminal are very far from the security gates and not enough battery-operated buggies are operating between the two points.

The members of the Parliamentary Committee on Estimates, headed by GB Bapat, visited T3 with the representatives of the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) on September 26 last year. Its report was tabled in Lok Sabha on Monday.

The Delhi airport, which is operated and managed by GMR Group-led DIAL, has three terminals. "The committee had observed that many of the boarding gates at this (T3) terminal were very far from the security gates which made it difficult for the passengers, especially old age, female and child passengers, to reach the boarding gates," the report mentioned.

Handheld electrostatic disinfection device developed by CSIR scientists

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A team of CSIR scientists has developed a portable handheld electrostatic disinfection device that can be used in all kinds of public places by the small shopkeepers, households, and small businesses for effective disinfection and sanitization to fight the spread of pathogenic infections.

CSIR-CSIO Chandigarh transferred 'Portable Handheld Electrostatic Disinfection Device' to M/s. Rite Water Solutions (I) Pvt. Ltd., Nagpur, Maharashtra

Dr. Manoj K Patel, Principal Scientist at CSIR-Central Scientific Instruments Organisation (CSIR-CSIO), Chandigarh, who led the team in designing developing the innovative and advanced technology for effective disinfection and sanitization to fight the spread of pathogenic infections, said that the technology has been transferred to Rite Water Solutions (I) Pvt. Ltd., Nagpur, India for commercialization and large-scale production.

"The technology is very efficient and effective to stop the spread of the CORONA virus and pathogens," said Dr Patel.

The technology works on two fronts. First, the charged droplets kill the virus in the air due to highly charged droplets. Secondly, the charged droplets reach the hidden areas of any target where the viruses hide. The device is very handy, portable, and handheld, which can be used by the small shopkeeper, households, and small businesses, further added by the innovator, explained Dr Patel.

On behalf of Rite Water Solutions, the Transfer of Technology (ToT) pact was inked by its Director Abhijeet Gan, Director, while Dr. A.K. Shukla, Senior Principal Scientist & Head, Business Development & Project Management (BDPM) represented CSIR-CSIO, Chandigarh in presence of Prof. S. Anantha Ramakrishna, Director, CSIR-CSIO among others.

Lok Sabha passes Bill to rename arbitration centre

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha on Monday passed a Bill to rename the New Delhi International Arbitration Centre as the India International Arbitration Centre.

Piloting the New Delhi International Arbitration Centre (Amendment) Bill, 2022, Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju said the objective of the amendment is to have world-class arbitration in the country.

He said that though it is a small Bill, sometimes "a small step can be a giant leap". The minister further said arbitration would also help in reducing pendency of cases in the country.

According to the statement of objects and reasons of the Bill, "it is considered imperative to change the name of the Centre from New Delhi International Arbitration Centre to India International Arbitration Centre so that a unique identity of the institute of national importance as conferred on it by law is evident and reflects its true objective".

"It has been felt that the (New Delhi International Arbitration) Centre, being an institution of national importance, gives an impression of being city centric whereas it should be reflective of the aspirations to promote India as a hub of institutional arbitration and establish itself as a centre of international commercial arbitration," the statement said.

On remarks by some members that corporates prefer Singapore and London for arbitration, the minister said work was going on and India would "definitely" become a global hub for international arbitration. "Businesses will come to India also," he added. On increasing pendency of court cases, Rijiju said judges were working to dispose cases at a faster pace now.

Participating in the debate, Amar Singh of the Congress said all big corporates were going to Singapore and London for arbitration. BJP's Ramesh

Bidhuri suggested that cases should be resolved within their stipulated time. Saugata Roy of the TMC described the Bill as a "superfluous legislation". He said international businesses, including those of Indian industrialists Ambanis and Adanis, go to Singapore for arbitration.

"Why has the government not made any progress to make New Delhi a major centre for arbitration," he asked. Supriya Sule of the NCP stated that the Bill talks only of a name change and is a "colossal" waste of Parliament's time.

There is really nothing else in this Bill and this is appalling, she said. Sule added that intellectual lawyers and high-net individuals were leaving India. "Why do you not introspect to improve and strengthen the system instead of bringing a law of just changing names?" BSP MP Kunwar Danish Ali flagged issues on the current judicial infrastructure in India, and referred to the case of journalist Mohammed Zubair's arrest.



JEE-Main: 24 candidates score perfect 100, result of 5 students withheld for using unfair means

New Delhi: Twenty four candidates have got the perfect score in the engineering entrance exam JEE-Main, results of which were announced on Monday, according to the National Testing Agency (NTA). Result of five candidates has been withheld by the agency for using unfair means.

Maximum candidates bagging top score in first edition of JEE-Main, 2022 are from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana (5) followed by Rajasthan (4) and Uttar Pradesh (2). One candidate each from Haryana, Maharashtra, Assam, Bihar, Punjab, Kerala, Karnataka, Jharkhand, has bagged the perfect score.

PTI



Street vendors were seen selling national flags on roads ahead of Independence Day celebrations in Delhi on Monday.

RANJAN DIMRI | PIONEER

Jamaat-e-Islami J&K raided over terror financing case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Monday conducted searches at Doda and Jammu Districts of Jammu and Kashmir in connection with the Jamaat-e-Islami J&K Terror Financing Case.

The NIA said it conducted searches at premises of six suspects in Doda and one suspect in Jammu in the case relating to Jamaat-e-Islami J&K, which even after its declaration as Unlawful Association in 2019, continues to raise funds in various forms purportedly for charitable purposes.

"These funds are however being diverted to terrorist organisations, such as Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, Lashkar-e-Toiba etc for promoting terrorist activities in Kashmir valley as well as

the rest of India," the agency said in a statement. The case was registered suo-moto on February 5, 2021. Earlier, the agency had filed a chargesheet against four persons in the case. The searches conducted during the day led to recovery of incriminating literature, receipts of funds raised by JEI J&K, bank and property related documents, and electronic devices. Further investigations in the case are in progress, it added.

The case relates to the activities of the JEI members, who have been collecting funds domestically and abroad through donations, particularly in the form of 'Zakat, Mowda and Bait-ul-Mal' purportedly to further charity and other welfare activities, but are using the money for "violent and secessionist" "JEI has also been moti-

2 Bangladeshi nationals held for propagating Jihad in India

New Delhi: Two "highly radicalised" Bangladeshi nationals, allegedly involved in propagating 'Jihad' in India by posting hateful and incriminating materials online, were arrested from Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh, a NIA spokesperson said on Monday. Hamidullah alias 'Raju Gaji' of Narayanganj district and Mohammad Sahadat Hussain alias 'Abidullah' of Madaripur district in Bangladesh were arrested on Sunday.

PNS

ED attaches deposits, shares worth ₹1.12 cr in Arunachal investors' cheating case

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday said it has attached bank deposits and shares worth Rs 1.12 crore in connection with a money laundering probe linked to a case of cheating people in Arunachal Pradesh after promising high returns on investments.

The agency issued a provisional attachment order under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against Algo Academy and some others, the agency said.

"Proceeds of crime generated by the accused have been layered by transferring amount to various bank accounts and thus (the accused) used banking channels to conceal the actual origin of tainted money.

Bihar politics: Cong hopes to be bridge between JD(U) and RJD

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/PATNA

The swift political developments in Bihar have given a fresh hope to the Congress that it may emerge as the 'bridge' between the ruling JD (U) led by Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and the partners of the Mahagathbandhan comprising major stakeholders Lalu Yadav's RJD, Left and the party itself, in case a new alliance is forged during the next couple of days. AICC sources said in any case whatever the role the grand old party would play, it is likely to not go beyond the popular opinion of Nitish Kumar as the CM of Bihar. The development is crucial as the Congress just recently lost power in Maharashtra as the Eknath Shinde-led revolt split the Shiv Sena and the MVA government was ousted.

The RJD with 80 MLAs, after four AIMIM MLAs joined it a couple of months ago, is the largest party in the Bihar Assembly while the BJP is the second largest with 77 legisla-



tors.

While the top leadership of Congress will take a call after the separate meetings of JD(U) and RJD in this regard on Tuesday, the State unit of the party has been asked to meet to discuss the political situation in the state and to "accept" Nitish Kumar into the opposition camp if he chose to sever ties with BJP. Sources said Nitish has already done his homework and spoken to Congress chief Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi in this regard.

Nitish has convened a meeting of JD(U) MLAs and MPs on Tuesday to discuss the scenario that emerged following the exit of former national president RCP Singh. Talking to media, JDU chief Rajiv Ranjan Singh

alias Lalan did not react to speculations that Nitish was planning to walk out of the NDA but took exception to the claim that the BJP had decided who would be a minister from the JD(U).

"The chief minister has called the meeting of party MLAs to know their views about the situation that has emerged in the wake of the RCP episode," said Lalan.

Amid the brewing political storm, RJD said it was ready to "embrace" Nitish and his JD(U) if he broke ranks with the BJP. RJD national vice-president Shivanand Tiwary said that convening meetings of legislators by both parties on Tuesday were a clear indication that the situation was extraordinary.

"If Nitish chooses to dump NDA, what choice do we have except to embrace him. RJD is committed to fighting the BJP. If the chief minister decides to join this fight, we will have to take him along," said Tiwary.

AICC secretary Shakil Ahmed Khan, who is also a party MLA, said the meeting will be held at the residence of

Congress legislature party leader Ajeet Sharma and is likely to be attended by the party's in charge of Bihar, Bhakt Charan Das, who would reach from Delhi.

"We always believe that parties with similar ideologies (samaan vichardhara) should come together. If the CM's JD(U), which believes in socialist ideology, quits BJP we will definitely welcome it. But these are early days. We will discuss the unfolding situation at the meeting in the evening," said Khan when sought for his comments on the sudden developments.

Asked to comment on reports that Kumar had spoken to Sonia Gandhi over phone, Khan said "I cannot confirm it. Only top leaders of the party can comment on such matters". He dismissed queries about any realignment hitting a roadblock on account of the Congress' estrangement with RJD and the Left. "We wholeheartedly participated in Sunday's 'Pratirodh march' in the State by the combined opposition," he said.

Don't accuse me of conspiracy, take on BJP, Chirag tells JD(U)

PTI ■ PATNA

Former Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) chief Chirag Paswan on Monday hit out at the JD(U) and dared it to take on the BJP directly instead of accusing him of involvement in a conspiracy to dent Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's popularity.

Addressing a press conference here, Mr Paswan claimed the chief minister faced "greater danger from his close aides than from me" even as he alleged that Kumar has insulted former JD(U) national president RCP Singh, and had previously humiliated Sharad Yadav and George Fernandes.

"Never before has one heard of a party accusing its own former national president of corruption. But, this is Nitish Kumar for you," Paswan said.

Paswan, who had in the 2020 assembly polls fielded candidates, many of them BJP rebels, in all seats fought by the JD(U) which saw its tally plummet from over 70 five years ago to under 45, bristled at the term "Chirag model" coined by Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan, the party's current national president.

"If there is a Chirag model, it stands for our call for 'Bihar First Bihari First', our vision for the state which the CM never respected. He should stop blam-



ing me for his party's debacle. The Janata Dal (United) is, indeed, a divided house. RCP has been made to quit. But Nitish Kumar needs to be wary of people like Lalan and Upendra Kushwaha," he alleged.

Paswan mocked the JD(U)'s claim of Kumar having transformed Bihar during the more than a decade and a half he has ruled the state and cited the state's poor rankings in reports of the NITI Aayog.

"And when the NITI Aayog met yesterday, our CM refused to attend the meeting. It was an opportunity for him to air the state's demands before the prime minister. In the process, Bihar suffers on account of his arrogance," alleged the son of late Union minister Ram Vilas Paswan.

"What problem did Nitish Kumar have in attending the meeting even if he wants to oppose the BJP? Can he be a more vehement opponent than Mamata

Bannerjee and Arvind Kejriwal, both of whom were present," Paswan asked.

He said that because of the "tantrums of the Bihar CM", the spotlight is on whether he will continue in chair when it should have been on the floods and the droughts that affect different parts of the state.

The Jamui MP, whose father's party was split by rebellious members of his family last year and who now heads a splinter group called LJP (Ram Vilas), seethed at the JD(U)'s allegation that he had worked as a "mohra" (pawn) in the last assembly polls.

"I act as per the values I have imbibed from my late father whom the chief minister never gave due respect. The JD(U) should stop making allegations against me and if it suspects BJP of having hatched a conspiracy, it should take on the ally directly," he said.

Paswan, who has remained consistent in his admiration for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, deplored the JD(U) for appearing sympathetic towards the opposition's allegations of corruption and price rise.

"When they had run short of issues to fight the last assembly polls, they raised the bogey of jungle raj, to dissuade people from voting for the RJD. Now, they seem to be in a mood to join hands," he said.

TMC wants Governor post scrapped

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Senior Trinamool Congress leader and Bengal Parliamentary Affairs Minister Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay on Monday demanded abolition of Governor's office saying it was not only redundant but also a burden on the exchequer.

The Bengal Minister said, "Our party has been bringing up this issue for quite some time that the office of the Governor has long lost its relevance and should be discontinued."

Chattopadhyay who replaced jailed minister Partha Chatterjee said in the State Assembly that the post of Governor was an "unnecessary burden on the State exchequer and should be discontinued... not only because it is a burden on the exchequer but also because it has outlived its utility ... it has been referred to in the

Sarkaria Commission report ... the Governor's office is a hindrance in a federal democracy ... at the most the functions of the Governor can be performed by the Chief Justice of the State."

The Trinamool Congress Government had been at constant loggerheads with the Raj Bhavan when former Governor and vice president designate Jagdeep Dhankhar was in office accusing the then Governor of playing in the hands of the opposition BJP.

Reacting sharply to Chattopadhyay's statement State BJP spokesperson Samik Bhattacharya said that it was the same Trinamool Congress that repeatedly fell back on the Governor during the Left rule.

"Today the Trinamool Congress is talking like Marxists ... but once upon a time when they were in the opposition and they were fighting against the Left



Government it was the same party that repeatedly rushed to the Governor's House ... like they did during the Singur and Nandigram movements," Bhattacharya said.

CPI(M)'s Sujan Chakrabarty accused the TMC of double speak saying "when we used to raise the issue of how the post of the Governor was misused by the Centre Mamata Banerjee not only opposed us but contributed to that misuse ... but today they are only following our path."

Kerala Guv, CM on collision course over university appointments

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The stand off between Arif Mohammed Khan, Governor of Kerala and the CPI(M) led State Government has reached a flash point by Monday as the former has expressed his displeasure over the goings in the institutions of higher learning in the State.

The Governor, who is also the chancellor of the Universities in the State is upset over the callous attitude shown by Gopinath

Ravindran, vice-chancellor of Kannur University for ignoring the letter from Raj Bhavan seeking explanation over the appointment of the wife of K K Ragesh, a CPI(M) leader who is also the private secretary to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Priya Varghese, wife of Raagesh, was appointed as assistant professor, in violation of all norms and the Governor had asked the vice-chancellor to explain how norms were violated in her appointment. "Though the Governor had given ten days

time to the vice-chancellor to submit his explanation, the latter preferred to ignore the directive. This has upset the Governor and he is sure to initiate disciplinary action against the vice-chancellor, who is also a CPI(M) activist," said sources close to the Governor. The source who did not want to identify himself, said the Governor has taken note of the complaints against such appointments seriously. This is not the first instance when the relatives and associates of CPI(M) leaders have been

appointed in all the universities in the State violating all basic norms," said the source.

He also said that the Governor is convinced that the vice-chancellor has committed serious violation of the law of the land and nepotism in the appointments. "The situation in Kannur University is similar to the phenomenon of the fence installed to save the crop itself is eating the crop. The Governor feels that this is blatant violation of all laws and can never be ignored" the source said.

Sanjay Raut remanded in judicial custody till Aug 22

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A Special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) Court on Thursday remanded Shiv Sena Rajya Sabha member and chief spokesperson Sanjay Raut to judicial custody till August 22 in a money laundering case linked to alleged Rs 1,034 crore Patra Chawl redevelopment scam.

After the Enforcement Directorate (ED) made a submission to him that it did not want to seek further custody, Judge MG Deshpande of Special PMLA court sent Raut to 14 days' judicial custody.

Having gone through the medical papers submitted by Raut indicating his heart disease, the court allowed home-cooked food and medicines to

the Sena MP while in judicial custody.

"ED has prayed to remand the accused (Sanjay Raut) to judicial custody. Accordingly, the accused is remanded to judicial custody till August 22", the Court said in its order.

Raut, who was detained by the ED on July 31 after a raid on his Bhandup residence and his questioning that lasted for more than nine hours, was formally placed under by the investigating agency at 12.05 am on August 1 under sub-section (1) of section 19 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002. The PMLA court had earlier remanded Raut to ED custody till August 4.

The ED is investigating the alleged irregularities in a money laundering case pertaining to the redevelopment of

Patra Chawl by Guru Ashish Construction Pvt Ltd a subsidiary of Housing Development and Infrastructure Ltd (HDIL).

The ED's action against Raut came nearly two months after the investigating agency attached provisionally properties worth Rs 11.15 crore belonging to three persons, including Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut's wife Varsha Raut, under the PMLA in a case relating to the alleged irregularities in the Patra Chawl redevelopment project in Mumbai.

The ED's action came as a follow-up of the arrest of Pravin Raut under PMLA on February 4 this year in connection with an alleged finding that Pravin Raut had received Rs 100 crore from the HDIL and "diverted" it to various

accounts of "his close associates, family member, his business entities" including the family of Sanjay Raut.

The ED's allegation is that in 2010, a part of the proceeds of crime of Rs 83 lakh was transferred to Varsha Raut from Madhuri Raut, wife of Pravin Raut. "This amount was utilized by Varsha Raut for purchase of a flat at Dadar. It is also revealed that after initiation of ED investigation, the amount of Rs 55 lakh was transferred by Varsha Raut to Madhuri Raut," the ED has said.

The ED's another allegation is that eight plots of land at Kihim beach at Alibaug were also purchased in the name of Varsha Raut and Swapna Patkar, wife of Sujit Patkar, a close associate of Sanjay Raut. Among other things, the

ED had told the court earlier that it had traced the amount of Rs 1,06,44,375 being transferred to the bank account of Sanjay Raut with his wife Varsha Raut

The ED counsel also told the court that the second allegation against Sanjay Raut related to the the purchase of certain parcels of land at Alibaug.

"Investigations have revealed that Sanjay Raut has infused/ utilised considerable amount of cash in the purchase of the land at Alibaug which has been confirmed by some other sellers and the cash component has been sourced from Pravin Raut," the ED counsel had told the court earlier..

It may be recalled that on April 5 2022, the ED had attached immovable properties worth Rs 11,15,56,573 under

PMLA in connection with the alleged irregularities in the Patra Chawl redevelopment project undertaken by Guru Ashish Construction Pvt Ltd at Goregaon in north Mumbai.

Apart from that of Sanjay Raut's wife Varsha Raut, the other individuals -- whose assets have been provisionally attached -- are businessman Pravin Raut, a relative of Sanjay Raut, and Swapna Patkar, wife of Sujit Patkar who is a close associate of Sanjay Raut.

According to the ED, the attached assets are in form of lands held by Pravin M Raut, former director of Guru Ashish Construction Pvt Ltd, Mumbai at Palghar, a flat at Dadar of Varsha Raut and eight plots at Kihim beach at Alibaug jointly held by Varsha Raut wife of Sanjay Raut and Swapna Patkar, wife of Sujit Patkar.



Soon PoJK displaced people will unfurl Tiranga in their homes: BJP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

A senior leader of the Bharatiya Janta Party's Jammu and Kashmir unit and former Member of the Legislative council Vibodh Gupta Monday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will execute the 1994 resolution shortly and the world will witness India's collective will to reintegrate PoJK.

Gupta asserted that soon PoJK displaced people will unfurl 'Tiranga' in their homes in PoJK.

Gupta, currently holding the charge of General Secretary, also took out a Tiranga Yatra along the Line of Control at Chakan- Da-Bagh in Poonch, Jammu and Kashmir under the Har Ghar Tiranga campaign on Monday. While addressing the gathering Vibodh said that the entire country is celebrating Aazadi ka Amrit Mahautsav-75 years of Independence enthusiastically which has illustrated the example of India's unity and



integrity. Hailing PM Narendra Modi, he said that his vision and model of governance have brought people together. "Har Ghar Tiranga programme has given a clear message to the world that India is united to usher into a new era of development, prosperity, security and culture", added Vibodh.

Referring to the resolu-

tion of Parliament passed in February 1994 wherein it was unanimously accepted that Pakistan was to vacate PoJK, Vibodh asserted that BJP under Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji will execute the 1994 resolution shortly and the world will witness India's collective will to reintegrate PoJK.

He asserted that soon

PoJK displaced people will unfurl Tiranga in their homes in PoJK.

Speaking on the occasion District President Poonch Mohd Rafiq Chistee said that Azadi Ka Amrit Mahaotsava is being celebrated across the nation in the 75th year of independence and the people of Poonch are also enthusiastically participating in it.

BJP's bulldozer action on Tyagi a sham: Priyanka

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Monday shared photographs of Srikant Tyagi, accused of indecency with a woman in Noida, with several Bharatiya Janata Party leaders and tweeted that the action of the bulldozer was just an "eyewash" in the name of stern action.

She also asked who had come to save Tyagi and did the BJP government not know that he had got illegal constructions done?

Priyanka tweeted, "Didn't the BJP government know for so many years that the construction of the Noida BJP leader is illegal? Bulldozer action is a sham."

She alleged, "The government is avoiding answering these questions. Who is giving a man the courage to openly hurl indecent remarks and threaten women by sending 10-15 goons? Who is it that is coming to save him?"

Priyanka asked, "Under whose protection did his hooliganism and illegal business



flourish?"

A case has been registered against Tyagi, who claims to be a BJP leader, for indecently assaulting a woman from the Grand Omaze Society. It is being said that the woman had objected to Tyagi planting saplings in the common area of the society, which enraged her.

The Noida authority demolished an "illegal" construction built outside Tyagi's residence in the city on Wednesday. Tyagi is still absconding and the Noida police have sought the help of Special Task Force (STF) in searching him.

A cash reward of Rs 25000 has also been announced for helping the police in getting Tyagi arrested.

Ayodhya residents facing demolition of houses by ADA meet Akhilesh

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The residents of Ayodhya facing the onslaught of demolition of their residential buildings by the Ayodhya Development Authority met the leader of opposition in UP Assembly, Akhilesh Yadav, here on Monday and sought his intervention for protecting their assets.

They demanded that the illegal drive by the development authority for demolishing their houses be immediately halted.

Most of the residents facing the wrath of demolition are retired and serving officers of the Indian army. The wives of the serving army men were also part of the delegation which met Akhilesh Yadav, the former chief minister of UP.

They told the Samajwadi Party chief that they purchased the plots from their savings and even borrowed money to construct the house and suddenly the Ayodhya Development Authority was saying that their houses were



illegal and unauthorised and had issued notice for demolition.

Several houses have already been demolished.

The residents told Akhilesh Yadav that in revenue records the land where they had constructed the houses was registered as housing land and the Ayodhya Nagar Nigam had provided all municipal facilities like sewage and water. They said they were regularly paying the electricity bills and municipal taxes.

The delegation was led by former SP MLA from Ayodhya, Pawan Pandey. The SP chief assured the delegation that he would look into the matter.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Justice at last

The long arm of the law finally reached Shrikant Tyagi but it took longer than it should have

The Yogi Adityanath Government's order—to bulldoze the illegal structures the absconding politician Shrikant Tyagi had built outside his residence in Noida—will restore some faith in the system. It's a case of better late than never, for Tyagi, who has reportedly been terrorising the residents of a posh housing society, claimed to be a leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (The BJP denies that he was ever a party member). The claim was loud and clear, complete with his photographs with important BJP leaders on his social media posts. Also loud was the message in parenthesis: don't mess with me; I am well-connected. This was perhaps the reason that the local police and administration took little, if any, action against him and his shenanigans, including encroachments and violence, for a long time. Tyagi had occupied a part of the common area in front of his flat by constructing structures using pillars and tiles, despite objections raised by the residents' welfare association. While the Uttar Pradesh Government must be lauded for acting against Tyagi,



it must also be questioned as to how he could continue with his rowdy ways in the housing society for so long. After all, one of the key planks of the Yogi administration has been its ability to tame goons and mafia dons; and yet there was Tyagi in Noida—which is in the vicinity of the national capital and not in some faraway place like, say, Bundelkhand—who was not just intimidating the neighbours and violating all rules and regulations but also brazenly claiming to be a member of the ruling party. Would there have been any action had the video in which he is shown badmouthing and manhandling a woman not gone viral? The answer may not be very comforting.

The entire episode highlights four points. First and foremost, governance and maintaining law and order are reactive rather than proactive. Action should have been taken against him not after but before the video became viral. About half a dozen cops have been suspended on grounds of dereliction of duty; it's a good decision. But even better would be efforts to bring about a system which precludes dereliction of duty in the first place. Second, sloganeering and rhetoric are not substitutes for statecraft and policing. Setting narratives, smart one-liners, and clever memes have their importance in politics, but to keep public opinion on their side—or at least not opposed to them—the powers that be have to do something more substantive than continuous messaging. Third, social media, often blamed for a lot of bad things, can also help ensure justice. It was after all the viral video that led to action against Tyagi. And, finally, we come to... well, a cliché: the power of one. The guts and gumption of one woman will bring him to justice. The citizens of India need not shout or fight like Sunny Deol to get justice. They just have to take a stand.



Under-15 and 17 hockey players make a formation of '75' to celebrate 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' in Mumbai

Is religious freedom waning?

India's image as a tolerant society is under duress due to untoward incidents happening rather frequently

The Indian government has sharply reacted to the comments made by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken that religious freedom is being undermined in India and the attacks on a place of worship were on the rise. Losing no time MEA spokesperson debunked the statement saying vote bank politics was being practiced in international relations and that the comment was ill-informed and advised the US to 'avoid making an assessment based on biased views.' Indeed the MEA spokesperson Arindam Bagchi did the right thing by rejecting the report on international religious freedom on which Blinken made a statement. Though it will take some time to decipher what he actually meant by saying 'vote bank politics is at play in international relations.' The report on international religious freedom was released some time back and took a serious note of religious intolerance manifesting in attacks on minorities and places of worship in India. We have to make it clear to everyone in unequivocal terms that it is nobody's business to tutor us. India is a sovereign country capable of dealing with such incidents if any. It has been our long-standing policy. We have maintained that no one has the right to interfere in our internal affairs. But now it seems we are wobbling in our approach. When Nupur Sharma made comments that didn't go down well with the gulf countries, she was quickly admonished and an FIR was filed against her.



The fact of the matter is that today the old plank of 'don't meddle in our internal affairs' doesn't work. Several human rights organizations and individuals take it to the international fora and that becomes an embarrassing situation for the government. In today's world nothing can remain under wraps for long and becomes headlines around the world. Besides, no country can survive in isolation, sanctions and boycott by the world community can hurt. The best way to avoid it is to not let such things happen in the first place. The government should take strict steps so that religious freedom is protected. Let's face it no matter how hard we try to sell that everything is hunky-dory in the country but there aren't buyers for it. Reason, it is not. We all know it and sweeping it under the carpet doesn't help. If we can criticize Pakistan for the plight of minorities and religious intolerance there, we cannot stop others from pointing fingers at us. The world has changed and it is becoming difficult for all governments to hide their dirty secrets. Even the US has a lot to explain when it comes to human rights abuses there.

Fighting terror the Husain way

We can draw lessons from the life of Imam Husain to deal with the people who revel in hatred and have scant regard for humanity and human life

John Bradshaw once said, "Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God." Can man stand up to these conditions? "Man can but not necessarily with ease", Imam Husain managed to say daringly from the battlefield of Karbala (Iraq).

From Plato to Locke, all philosophers have been concerned about the danger of power being cornered by unscrupulous elements. The lust for power has been the seed of all-around corruption. There are certain crucial moments in the evolution of the human race, in which according to Ludwig Beethoven, "fate knocks at the gate of existence." These are instances in which socially active individuals are called upon to defend what is right and true, even risking their lives. Virtuous people who were endowed with sagacity and foresight always disliked sitting on the fence just listening to scheming, transgressor, and libertine despots. They acted as if they were the people who valued rectitude and struggled hard to preserve righteousness.

One such most critical situation arose when after the demise of Holy Prophet Mohammad, the school of Islamic thought, philosophy, culture, and administration was shifted to Caliphate with temporal and ecclesiastical powers. The four caliphs were Abu Bakar, Umar, Usman and Imam Ali Murtaza. Ali was assassinated by the henchman of the conspirator and hypocrite Muawiya son of Abu Sufian while Imam Ali was prostrating before Allah in the mosque. Subsequently, Muawiya deceitfully usurped the seat of the Caliphate in Syria and with the might of a sword declared himself the self-appointed caliph. Muawiya, the first ruler of the House of Umayyads displaced the democratic Islamic rule by oligarchical and barbaric despotic rule.

After the death of Muawiya, his son accursed Yazid ascended to the Caliphate seat of Syria. He was a heartless brute and had surpassed all his ancestors in practicing evil and vices. Yazid ibn Muawiya was a hard-core terror-



ist and libertine. The barest mention of Yazid's objectionable character is taboo in this civilised society. Yazid was the mammon of unrighteousness whose lust for power prompted him to beat society into the mould he favoured. Yazid's criminal behaviour indicated the extreme occurrence of vulgar, inhuman innovations in the established Islamic values.

On the contrary, Husain was recognised throughout the Arab world for his excellence of behaviour, wisdom, compassion, and piety. Yazid instructed his governor Walid in Medina to force Husain to pledge allegiance to Yazid. Husain refused.

Husain's patience snapped when Yazid firmly demanded homage from him. Husain refused to subscribe to Yazid every time he was asked for allegiance as caliph and the leader of the faithful. Husain realized that the consequences of this prolonged anarchy in Islam and a wrecking triumph for immorality will permanently deface the true faith and a distorted pseudo-religion will emerge in the guise of Islam. Yazid bargained hard to choose between allegiance to him or facing death. Husain had a clear choice: either stand

“THE HEADS OF 72 MARTYRS, INCLUDING THE SIX-MONTH-OLD ASGHAR, WERE SEVERED FROM THEIR BODIES AND RAISED ON LANCERS. THE BODIES WERE TRAMPLED BY HORSES. THE TENTS OF HUSAIN'S REMAINING FAMILY MEMBERS WERE TORCHED.

aside and let Yazid act according to his whims, justifying his abominable escapades, or counter and confront his lurking menace and acrimonious campaign. Husain who had to ensure the pristine purity of Islam refused allegiance.

The Karbala episode dates back to the 10th of Moharram, 61 Hijri (October 10, 680 AD), when there unfolded a grim spectacle. Husain be sought Yazid's commander-in-chief to let him go to 'Hindustan' but the proposal was rejected. On the morning of 10th Moharram, Husain and 72 immediate family members, including the children and a few companions were mercilessly massacred. Youngest among the martyrs was Husain's infant son, Ali Asghar.

The heads of 72 martyrs including the six-month-old Asghar were severed from their bodies and raised on lancers. The bodies were trampled by horses. The tents of Husain's remaining family members were torched. The children and ladies were made prisoners, paraded handcuffed, and fettered through the bazaars of Kufa and Syria until produced before the tyrant Yazid who was Satan in human form.



HASAN KHURSHID

To remember the great sacrifice of the Lord of Martyrs, Imam Husain, men, and women, young and old, not only from the Muslim community but also from other faiths gather in homes and Imam bargahs to conduct majlis (congregation), where mournful tributes are paid to Husain through elegies called salam, soz, marsia, nauha and lyrical dirges. The congregation moves inexorably towards a crescendo of grief. The audience groaning heartbreakingly with tears, "Wa Mohammada, kushtashud Husain (O Mohammad, Husain has been assassinated).

Imam Husain is revered not only by Muslims but people of other faiths. The painting by Italian artist Bruno Cabrini shows how Muharram processions had tazias (relicas of Imam Husain's mausoleum in Iraq), during the 18th and 19th centuries in Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Maharashtra. Not only this, the Scindia of Baroda and Holkar of Indore conducted majlis. Even today, in Lucknow and heart of the Hinduism, Varanasi, Hindus join Muslims in mourning sessions.

(The writer is a senior journalist. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

AKASA AIR IN THE SKIES

Sir — Akasa Air, India's newest airline backed by billionaire Rakesh Jhunjhunwala expects to start operations in one of the world's most competitive aviation markets later this month.

Akasa received its flying license from the Indian aviation regulator Directorate General of Civil Aviation after successfully operating test flights. Chief Executive Officer Vinay Dube hailed Akasa Air's entry as India's greenest, most dependable and most affordable airline.'

Akasa is trying to stand out from rivals by taking an unusual approach of offering stock options to a larger pool of top employees, rather than a select group of senior executives. With a focus on sustainability, Akasa's cabin crew will wear clothes made from recycled fabrics such as plastic bottles recovered from marine waste.

Sadiksha Agrawal | Ujjain

DHANKHAR WINS HANDS DOWN!

Sir — Dhankhar's huge victory margin indicates that he managed to draw support even from the Opposition ranks. The VP, who is mandated by the constitution to serve as the Rajya Sabha's ex-officio chairperson, has the difficult task of conducting important legislative business in a polarised House. Since as a Governor, he often exceeded his brief, leading to conflicts with the duly elected West Bengal Government, there is every doubt that under his chairmanship it is unlikely to be a genuine forum for the voice of opposition. The best way for him to do so is to remain tuned to the legacy of his distinguished predecessors.

He should neither allow himself to be dictated to by the Treasury benches nor be guided by the pressure of the Opposition. He should be mindful of the illustrious personalities who have occupied that high constitutional office and set an exemplary benchmark of excellence while performing their duties and conducting the proceedings of the Rajya Sabha with

WILD SPECULATION ON MAMATA-PM MEET

Speculation is rife on the Mamata-PM meet. Former Meghalaya Governor Tathagata Roy has asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi to convince people that there is no 'setting' between him and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. There is indeed no permanent friend or permanent enemy in politics. The apprehension of Roy is that the 'thieves of Trinamool and/or the murderers of BJP workers' would go scot-free. The abstention of TMC from voting in the Vice Presidential election gives fillip to the suspicion that there is a 'setting' between the PM and CM (of West Bengal). Roy has missed the point that the meeting between Modi and Mamata has not taken place secretly. TMC sources said that Mamata took up various issues like MNGREGA dues and GST with the submission of a memorandum quantifying the total dues at ₹1,00,968.44 crore. This could be true also. But BJP's Dilip Ghosh has alleged



that Mamata uses these meetings to send out a signal that a setting has been made. He has advised that the center realize this and not fall for it. Congress's Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury has felt consternation after the meeting fearing rapprochement between the two ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha election. He has alleged that both of them want a Congress-mukt Bharat. CPI(M) has also echoed the voice of Congress. Commonly, political opponents make allegations.

KV Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

impartiality, dignity, and decorum. He should rise to the challenge by deriving appropriate lessons from the legacy of Shekhawat, who, while hailing from the BJP, acted in a highly bipartisan manner and emerged as a role model.

KV Chandra Mouli | Mysuru

IT IS A GOLD RUSH

Sir — India's gold rush, so to say, in the Commonwealth Games event can largely be attributed to athletics, boxers, and other field sports. The Indian contingent is participating for the 18th time in the Commonwealth Games and has attained position 5 in the medal tally table. It all started when the famous Indian weightlifting champion, Mirabai Chanu, won the first gold medal for India in the Women's Weightlifting Championship (49 kg). Sanket Sagar was the first Indian athlete to win a silver medal in men's weightlifting (55 kg) at CWG 2022 Birmingham. Sudhir won the first gold medal for India in para-sports. In the last edition of the games, when it was held on Gold Coast,

India finished third with 66 medals including 26 gold medals. Now, with the country excelling in other sports like table tennis and shuttle badminton, a bigger medals tally is expected at the Commonwealth Games 2022.

Krishnan S Maniam | Calicut

BRIBE GIVER IS EQUALLY GUILTY

Sir — Saddened to read the article "Pandora's box of corruption" published in the August 8 issue that 269 government primary teachers were not eligible for the post of teacher. They got this job by giving bribe. Recently, the way Kubera's treasure was found in the house of Bengal's Education Minister and one of his female friends, it became clear why such parties want to come to power and why the MLAs of these parties want to become ministers. Bribing must be condemned as it is a social evil as well.

Rajender Kumar Sharma | Rewari

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUNDBITE

Every state has played a 'crucial role' in fight against Covid and the country's federal structure has emerged as a "model for the world"



Prime Minister —Narendra Modi



As the climate crisis gets worse, extreme weather will pose a rapidly growing danger...we are investing more than \$1 billion to fund climate resilience projects.

US Vice President —Kamala Harris

I think they've run out of new things to write about me. So when I got married, I was newly-wed Alia.



Now, I'm pregnant Alia, pregnancy glow Alia, or mom-to-be Alia, baby bump hiding Alia and, baby bump flaunting Alia.

Actor —Alia Bhatt



"I want to thank my teammates (Paul and Chithravel). We are all supporting each other. We have been training together. Now we all will celebrate together.."

Athlete —Abdulla Aboobacker

I believe Government will complete the incomplete you (Naidu) are leaving behind.



Congress Leader —Mallikarjun Kharge

FIRST COLUMN

SHARING HAPPINESS
GIVES GREATEST JOYS

Happiness need not be outside;
it is an expression of self




RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR **NIKUNJ JI**

As per World Happiness Report 2021 released by New York based Sustainable Development Solutions Network, India stands at rank 92 in the global happiness ranking list. Happiness is an aspiration of every human being, and it can also be a measure of social progress. Search for happiness is said to be as old as mankind. However, most of us tend to look outside for happiness, feeling that it must be lying somewhere else since we are not experiencing it within ourselves.

Happiness actually is an innate quality of the soul. Hence, each one of us should be experiencing it all the time. But most of us do not. Right? Why is that so? Simply, because we are more focused on the external aspects of our life – our body, roles, responsibilities, possessions, etc., as a result of which we lose our connection with this inner resource of happiness.

When our focus is external, we also tend to blame other people and situations for our state of unhappiness. We think that if the people or circumstances that make us unhappy go away, we will be happy. In doing so, we forget that whether to be happy or not is a matter of our choice. People or situations cannot alter the state of my mind unless I allow them to. So, if I decide to be happy, come what may, I can be so all the time. How we feel in any situation is decided not by the situation but by how we choose to respond. So, if things are going my way, I will certainly have no reason to be cross. But if they are not, I need not get upset, because I can see what I can do about it and get things done differently next time.



And even if there is nothing I can do about it, I can learn from the experience and move on. Then why do we get disappointed and irritated? It only takes away our happiness and reduces our ability to deal with the situation. That is why one must remember this forever, ‘Happiness is my property, why should I allow any person or situation to rob me of it?’

Having faith in the intrinsic goodness of every human soul, and understanding that everyone is playing his or her role in this world, also helps us accept all kinds of situations and appreciate different types of people. It saves us from being judgmental, which can make our attitude towards others very negative and damage our relationships.

The biggest secret to happiness is to have good wishes and pure feelings in our heart for everyone. When we hold pure, good wishes in the heart for others, we can maintain a state of constant happiness, because good feelings are like a bouquet of flowers in our heart that spreads its fragrance inside and keeps ourselves happy.

We need to go within ourselves to tap the eternal source of happiness and for that firstly we need to be true to the self, know the self and be the self. Once we have understood the happiness that comes from within and as a result of the manner in which we conduct our lives and ourselves then it is possible to understand how to share that happiness with others. Increasing the happiness of others brings happiness to the self. So, keep distributing it to everyone, as this is the wealth that multiplies by giving, and brings the giver the added bonus of the good wishes and blessings of others.

(The author is a spiritual educator)

Unstable world energy market worries India

India has to tread cautiously to protect energy security amid growing global order uncertainty in fossil fuels

The unstable world energy market, volatile prices and uneven supplies may have repercussions on India’s energy security. The first to take the hit is the GAIL LNG deal followed by Russian demand for payment in the UAE dirhams converted in dollar terms.

The GAIL’s troubles are traced to the German energy regulator taking over Gazprom Germania, which operates gas to storage and supplies to industries. The move followed Gazprom moving out of the subsidiary so that it could continue business without attracting sanctions. It has led to the default in delivery of five cargoes as per a 20-year-deal agreed in 2012 for 2.5 million tonne LNG a year.

It is dicey on oil supplies as well though Russian oil in April was about 10 per cent of India’s oil basket. As much as 40 per cent of the Russian oil has been bought by private refiners—Reliance Industries and Rosneft-backed Nayara Energy.

Russian Rosneft is dithering on supplying crude oil to two Indian state refiners, BPCL and Hindustan Petroleum, as it has committed sales to other customers. The stoppage of supply becomes a problem for GAIL, which meets 50 per cent of the nation’s LNG needs. It is scouting for alternative fuel. But it faces the problem of Russia stopping supplies to Gazprom Marketing & Trading that owned the future gas contracts for supplying to Gazprom Germania and other subsidiaries. It used to supply from the Yamal LNG facility. After Russia’s stoppage of supplies, Gazprom GM&T initially managed supplies from its floating international portfolio.

As prices rose to \$40 a unit and supplies to Europe became lucrative, it diverted supplies leaving GAIL in the lurch. In fact, the prices are so high that Gazprom Germania is said to have margins after paying damages under the take-or-pay clause. The GAIL has the option to take legal recourse but it is cumbersome, may take years and would not address the problems of the Indian consumers.

The GAIL has long-term liquefied natural gas (LNG) supply contracts from the US to Australia supplementing domestic gas supplies though it may cost a bit more in the prevailing circumstances. Prior to the war, the US LNG used to cost one-third of the price of gas available in the spot or current market.

GAIL has a 5.8 million tonnes per annum LNG contract with US suppliers. These are all linked to the US gas market, where the current rate is \$10 per million British thermal unit. In comparison, the spot price of LNG in Asia is between \$37 and \$40 per million British thermal unit.

The GAIL and the petroleum ministry are scouring the markets for ensuring the supply. The Asian LNG prices are rising with intense demand from Japan, Korea and India. Trading activity in the Asia

“

THERE HAVE BEEN LONG QUEUES AROUND FUEL PUMPS IN SEVERAL PARTS OF THE COUNTRY IN THE LAST FEW DAYS. SEVERAL PETROL PUMPS IN AND AROUND SRINAGAR AND RAJASTHAN HAVE ALSO FACED SHORTAGES.

(The author is a policy analyst)



LNG market rose as traders and end-users dipped back into the spot market to secure cargoes amid increasing global supply uncertainty as the Gazprom reduction of gas flow into Europe spooked an already fractured market due to the Freeport outage.

The world energy markets are seeing too many oddities. Domestic exports though have seen curtailment but of late with Russian crude being supplied to the private refiners, it is being exported again. The cap through an export tax clamped on July 1 for ensuring at least 50 per cent of the private refiners’ production has been removed. The duty, imposed following fuel shortage in a number of states, has been waived off on petrol, and cut by a third on diesel and brought down the wind-fall tax by 27 per cent. The tax has been reduced from Rs 6 to Rs 4 on diesel and done away on petrol. The duty has been waived off on refined products and shipped from SEZs. This will give a big boost to mainly two private refiners Nyara and Reliance. A major benefit will be to the latter, as its refining is based in an SEZ in Jamnagar.

The duty reduction is also said to benefit ONGC and Oil India and Vedanata. Of late, according to tenders by Indian Oil and Bharat Petroleum, diesel imports are expected to rise to its highest since February 202 at over 48,000 barrels per day. India’s increased imports are telling on Asian fuel supply as planned petroleum supplies from China have been decreasing.

India is the world’s third-largest oil consumer at about 5 million barrels a day. It is growing at 3-4 per cent a year and the demand is likely to go up to 7 million barrels a day in a decade. According to the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC), India’s oil import dependence was 85 per cent in 2019-20, which marginally declined to 84.4 per cent in 2020-21 and again rose to 85.6 per cent in 2021-22, while in April 2022 it rose to 86.6 per cent. This year’s imports are to surge beyond the 212.2 million tonnes of crude last year.

The new exploration licenses announced are a good move but it may take a decade to start new production. The aim is to reduce imports to 50 per cent, which is too ambitious, by 2030. Apart from long gestation, the capital requirement is extremely high. India, despite odds, remains dependent on Russian oil. India’s crude oil imports from Russia have jumped over 50 times since April and now make up for 10 per cent of all crude bought from overseas. Russian oil made up for just 0.2 per cent of all oil imported by India prior to the Ukraine war.

Unwillingness of Rosneft to give crude to three Indian state refiners—Indian Oil Corp (IOC.NS), Bharat Petroleum Corp (BPCL.NS) and Hindustan Petroleum—is pushing Indian refiners to turn to the spot market for more expensive oil.

The country is facing some petrol and diesel shortages as fuel pumps are reportedly in several

states, including Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, and Madhya Pradesh and some parts of eastern and north-eastern states.

There have been long queues around fuel pumps in several parts of the country in the last few days. Several petrol pumps in and around Srinagar and Rajasthan have also faced shortages. The US-led sanctions on the energy tie-up with Russia have been contested by a number of gas-starved NATO members, including Germany, Europe’s largest economy. Even Japan, the world’s third largest economy after the US and China, says it will maintain oil and gas projects in Russia, citing the country’s energy security concerns as the reason.

Germany and Japan are the most important US strategic partners in Europe and Asia, respectively. Only a week ago, Japan’s Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Koichi Hagiuda made an emphatic statement that his country “does not intend to withdraw” from oil and liquefied natural gas development projects in Russia as they make a choice between energy security and tightening sanctions on Russia for the war in Ukraine.

Several Japanese trading and other firms have invested in the Sakhalin-1, Sakhalin-2 and Arctic LNG 2 (ARC 2) projects. Each has been deemed essential to Japan’s energy security. A neutral India has to trudge through a difficult phase to maintain supplies from Russia and the West as well as keep the domestic prices low.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

NO HOPE LEFT IN SUPREME COURT, SENSITIVE CASES ASSIGNED TO ONLY CERTAIN JUDGES.
—ADVOCATE & RAJYA SABHA MP KAPIL SIBAL



JUDGMENTS CAN BE CRITICISED BUT INSTITUTIONS SHOULDN'T BE DENIGRATED.
—ADVOCATE & RAJYA SABHA MP MAHESH JETHMALANI

Rising US-China tensions can boost Indian manufacturing

While the US and China spar, India should seize the opportunities in the global supply chain shifts

The Indian economy has the world’s most remarkable growth rate and is projected to grow at 7.1-7.6 per cent in 2022. The rising fuel prices caused by the Russian-Ukraine war have created instability worldwide. The South Asian nations like Sri Lanka and Pakistan are already experiencing the consequences, and even Bangladesh is now requesting a bailout loan from the IMF.

A recent report by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projected India has a zero per cent chance of getting into recession. Whereas a country like the U.S. has a 40 per cent chance, and China has a 20 per cent chance of getting into recession. So, it’s important to note how the US-China rivalry could affect India’s economy in the long term.



NEERAJ SINGH **MANHAS**

(The author is Director of research in the Indo-Pacific Consortium at Raisina House, New Delhi)

The rivalry started more recently on Donald Trump’s last day in office. The US raised the issue of China’s crime against humanity and genocide in the Xinjiang region against the Uyghurs and banned all imports from the area.

Second, the Joe Biden administration continued some of Trump administration policies, with more focus on action. It maintained the tariffs on Chinese imports and sanctioned Chinese officials over policies in Hong Kong and Xinjiang. The US banned dozens of Chinese companies and stressed competing with China.

Third, the collaboration on climate change and agreed to boost cooperation and work together on increasing renewable energy as both the countries are the world’s top emitters of

greenhouse gases. But, the collaboration on climate change got more tension.

Fourth, the US imposed a diplomatic boycott on the Beijing Winter Olympics, citing the Chinese government’s human rights abuses in Xinjiang and elsewhere.

Fifth, amid the Russian-Ukraine war, Biden pressed Xi Jinping on Russia’s war in Ukraine. China refused to condemn Russian President Vladimir Putin for the war and the resulting humanitarian crisis.

Sixth, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken emphasised the importance of strengthening the US competitiveness toward China and called China the most serious long-term challenge to the international order.

Seventh, the visit of



Congress member Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan. China warned that US support for Taiwan is like playing with fire. The current situation of small-scale war between both countries arose. Biden has clearly stated that he would come in support of

Taiwan if China attacks it. The US deployed their nuclear warships, men in the Taiwan strait, for regular patrolling as China saw it as their internal matter, even supported by Russia. It will be essential to see further development in China’s invasion of Taiwan.

India is one of the developing countries, so bad trade and tariff policies hurt India. India is seeking to give a boost to the manufacturing sector. This could be an excellent chance for India, as a report from the United Nations said that a few countries would benefit from the trade tension, and India is one of them.

The impact on India is both an opportunity and a threat. Everything has two sides, good and evil, and the trade problems between the two countries can

be a good thing for India. It will be an excellent chance for those who sell goods abroad. Since the US taxes Chinese goods heavily, Indian traders can fill the gap and take advantage of the opportunity.

Trade tension between the US and China has some adverse effects on India. Because of the trade tension between the US and China, other countries like India are also affected because they have to deal with the constant changes and can run out of finished goods or raw materials if demand increases. Also, taxes and fees became more expensive in the country.

At 80 rupees per dollar in July 2022, the value of rupees has already gone down. This happened simultaneously with Biden’s threat of a new round of export tariffs, which automati-

cally hurt India’s trade deficit. Investors are being more careful because of the global trade war.

As trade tensions between the US and China continue, the world economy and India’s economy become less stable. Indian traders can fill the gap, and companies that make iPhones can establish factories in India, which is good for the country’s growth. As the value of a country’s currency falls, trade tensions are likely to rise. The CEOs of Indian companies need to come up with a business-friendly strategy and other plans to help the economy. If the US and China want to avoid a trade war, they must cut taxes as the economic growth of each country depends on trade, which is the backbone of every country.

Grain ship from Ukraine docks in Turkey, nuke plant shelled

AP ■ DERINCE (TURKEY)

The first of the ships to leave Ukraine under a deal to unblock grain supplies and stave off a potential global food crisis arrived at its destination in Turkey on Monday, as Russia again accused Ukraine of shelling Europe's largest nuclear power station.

The Turkey-flagged Polarnet docked at Derince port in the Gulf of Izmit after setting off from Chornomorsk on Aug. 5 laden with 12,000 tons of corn. "This sends a message of hope to every family in the Middle East, Africa, and Asia: Ukraine won't abandon you," Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba tweeted. "If Russia sticks to its obligations, the 'grain corridor' will keep maintaining global food security."

Polarnet Captain Ahmet Yucel Alibeyler highlighted the risks faced by the three grain-carrying ships that left Ukraine.

"These were, of course, dangerous areas, corridors that had been cleared, demined," he said, adding that the convoy was escorted by a harbor pilot ship until it left the risky waters.

A total of 12 ships have now been authorized to sail under the grain deal between Ukraine and Russia, which was brokered by



Turkey and the United Nations - ten outbound and two headed for Ukraine. Some 322,000 metric tons of agricultural products have left Ukrainian ports, the bulk of it corn but also sunflower oil and soya.

Four ships that left Ukraine on Sunday are expected to anchor near Istanbul on Monday evening, Turkey's Defense Ministry said. They are due to be inspected on Tuesday.

Ships leaving Ukraine are checked by officials from the three countries and the U.N. To make sure they carry only grain, fertilizer or food and not any other commodities. Inbound vessels are checked to ensure

they are not carrying weapons.

But the grain deal remains far from plain sailing. The first ship to leave Ukraine, the Sierra Leone-flagged Razoni, which left on Aug. 1, will no longer dock in Lebanon and will change course, the director of the Tripoli Port told The Associated Press on Monday.

The Sierra Leonian-flagged Razoni ship, carrying 26,000 metric tons of corn for chicken feed that departed from Odesa last Monday was set to dock in the northern Lebanese port on Sunday. But according to Marine Traffic, it changed its status on Saturday to 'order,' meaning the ship was waiting for someone to

buy the corn.

"All that I know is that the ship is no longer coming here," Tripoli Port director Ahmad Tamer said.

Ukraine's embassy in Beirut tweeted Monday that the corn's final buyer in Lebanon refused to accept the cargo due to delivery delay beyond a contractual limit and that the shipper was now looking for another buyer.

The shipment had been a grain of hope for the economically-shattered tiny Mediterranean nation, also suffering from a food security crisis. Soaring food inflation, wheat shortages, and breadlines have crippled a population, of which

about half are food insecure, according to the United Nations World Food Program.

Meanwhile, Moscow again accused Ukrainian forces of shelling the territory of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Station from Marganets on the opposite bank of the Dniper River on Sunday.

The station, occupied for months by Russian forces, also came under fire late Saturday and each side accused the other of the attack.

Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Lt. Gen. Igor Konashenkov said in a statement Monday that the Ukrainian attack a day earlier caused a power surge and smoke erupted at the power plant's switch facility, causing an emergency shutdown.

Fire teams extinguished the fire, and the plant's personnel lowered the output of reactors No. 5 and No. 6 to 500 megawatt, Konashenkov said.

Rafael Grossi, director general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, recently warned that the way the plant was being run and the fighting going on around it posed grave health and environmental threats.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov urged Western powers to force Kyiv to stop attacking the plant.



Water crisis looms for eastern Ukrainian city of Sloviansk

AP ■ SLOVIANSK (UKRAINE)

The echo of artillery shells thundering in the distance mingles with the din of people gathered around Sloviansk's public water pumps, piercing the uneasy quiet that smothers the nearly deserted streets of this eastern Ukrainian city.

The members of Sloviansk's dwindling population only emerge — a few minutes at a time — to fill up at the pumps that have been the city's only water source for more than two months. Fighting between Ukrainian and Russian forces near the key city in the Donetsk region has damaged vital infrastructure that has cut residents off from gas and water for months.

The water flows for now, but fears grow that come winter the city only seven miles (12 kilometers) from Russian-occupied territory could face a humanitarian crisis once the pipes begin to freeze over.

"The water infrastructure was destroyed by the constant

battles," said Lyubov Mahlii, a 76-year-old widow who gathers 20 liters (around five gallons) of water twice a day from a public tank near her apartment, dragging the plastic bottles up four flights of stairs on her own.

"When there are bombings and sirens, we keep carrying it," she said on Sunday. "It's a great risk for us, but what can we do?"

Only a fifth of the city's pre-invasion population of 100,000 remains. With heavy fighting raging only miles away as Russian forces continue their push on Donetsk — part of the industrial Donbas region where Moscow-backed separatists have been battling Ukrainian troops since 2014 — residents defy the shelling to make do with the only water source left. And local officials believe things will only get worse once the cold sets in.

Locals fill their bottles with hand pumps or from plastic tanks at one of five public wells before hauling them home in bicycle baskets, wheeled carts and even children's strollers.

Myanmar's ambassador to China dies



AP ■ BEIJING

Myanmar's ambassador to China has died, the Chinese government said on Monday.

"I can confirm what you mentioned," Foreign Ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said in response to a question about the reported death of Ambassador Myo Thant Pe.

He did not say when the diplomat had died or what the cause of death was.

Myo Thant Pe had been ambassador to China since 2019, Wang said.

"He dedicated himself to the development of China-Myanmar relations," he said. "We express our deep condolences and regret over his sudden passing and our sincere sympathies to his family."

China is one of Myanmar's closest allies and has expressed unequivocal support for the country's ruling military that seized power last year.

Fragile ceasefire between Israel, Gaza militants holding

AP ■ GAZA CITY

A fragile cease-fire deal to end nearly three days of fighting between Israel and Palestinian militants in Gaza held into Monday morning - a sign the latest round of violence may have abated.

The flare-up was the worst fighting between Israel and Gaza militant groups since Israel and Gaza's Hamas rulers fought an 11-day war last year, adding to the destruction and misery that have plagued blockaded Gaza for years.

Since Friday, Israeli aircraft had pummeled targets in Gaza while the Iran-backed Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant group fired hundreds of rockets at Israel. Over three days of fighting, 44 Palestinians were killed, including 15 children and four women, and 311 were wounded, the Palestinian Health Ministry said. Islamic Jihad said 12 of those killed were militants and Israel said some of the dead were killed by misfired rockets.

Israel on Monday said it was partially reopening crossings



into Gaza for humanitarian needs and would fully open them if calm was maintained.

Fuel trucks were seen entering a cargo crossing for the first time since crossings with the strip were closed last week, prompting a fuel shortage that ground Gaza's lone power plant to a halt on Saturday. The plant was set

to resume full operations later Monday. Gaza suffers from a chronic power crisis.

Life for hundreds of thousands of Israelis was disrupted during the violence. Security precautions imposed in recent days on residents of southern Israel were being gradually lifted Monday, the military said.

The Nawanshahr Cooperative Sugar Mills Ltd.; Nawanshahr
(Distt. Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar)
Ph.: 01823-222021, E-mail : desm_nar@yahoo.com;dcsmnsr@gmail.com
Website : www.nawanshahrsugar.com GSTIN No. 03AAAFD5602K2ZV

ON LINE SHORT TERM E-TENDER NOTICE

E-tender are invited from registered nominal members of the mills for the sale of 123100 qtls. Molasses of season 2021-22 lying with various cooperative Sugar mills in the state of Punjab. Tender can be submitted up to 16.08.2022 upto 11:00 AM & the same will be opened on 16.08.2022 at 02:00 PM. The Earnest money is @Rs. 50.00 per qtls. For participating in the above E-tendering process, Bidders shall have to get themselves registered with <http://eproc.punjab.gov.in> and get user ID, Password, digital signature which is mandatory to participate in the e-tendering process. For any clarification regarding e-tendering process flow, please contact us on 9463284703, 8146556014, 0172-2791226. The undersigned reserve the right to reject any or all tender, without assigning any reason. DNIT, terms & conditions and molasses sale policy can be downloaded from website <http://eproc.punjab.gov.in>. Corrigendum if any, will be uploaded on the above said website only.

General Manager

Public Notice

TO WHOM SO EVER IT MAY CONCERN

It is informed to public at large that I, Asad Farooqi, was director in a company Ambar Infratech Pvt Ltd, till 26.07.2021. It is also informed to general public that I was never an active director in the above said Company and I did not take part in the management of the affairs of the Company. Anyone dealing with the said Company shall deal with them at their own risk and cost, the undersign will not be responsible for any loss suffered by anyone. The undersign also informs that Amber Infratech Pvt. Ltd is in possession of various documents belonging to undersign which might be misused, therefore the general public must ensure all the precautions before dealing with the company.

Date: 08.08.2022 (Asad Farooqi)

LOST & FOUND

Lost our original documents of form 38.

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Finder please contact Rahul Bhargav # 9718436765

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Telephone.: 0135-2763508, 2763808 Fax- 0135- 2763507
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866

Ref. No.: 502 **"E" Procurement notice** Dated : 08.08.2022

Office of the Executive Engineer, (M&G) Mohammadpur Power House, Gurukul Narsan - Hardwar invites sealed tenders from experienced firms for following works/supply for Mohammadpur Power House:-
Tender No. 7 & 8/EE(M&G)/MPH/2022-23

1. Name of work – 1- Supply of 1 No TGB Shell.
2- Annual Maintenance of Machine no 1 & 3.
2. Estimated Cost - Rs 5,59,00,00 (GST Extra), Rs 49,23,04,00 (GST Extra) respectively.
3. Date of availability of Tender document on website - 09-08-2022 from (11:00 Hrs)
4. Last date of submission of tender on website - 29-08-2022 upto (17:00 Hrs)

For all details, bidders are advised to see "E" Procurement Portal uktenders.gov.in

Executive Engineer (M&G), Mohammadpur Power House

"Avoid Wasteful use of Electricity"

PUBLIC NOTICE

General public is hereby informed that **Sh. Balkrishna S/o Sh. Ramswaroop** is intending to sell Residential House area measuring 53.33 Sq. Yds., i.e., 44.58 Sq. Mtrs., out of Khel No. 323, Situated in the Village Surapur, Pargana Dadr, Tehsil & District Gautam Budh Nagar, to **Sh. Manoj Kumar S/o Sh. Ram Ratan**, to be financed & mortgaged by M/s. Piramal Capital and Housing Finance Pvt. Ltd. The Original Sale Deed dt. 20.03.2015, vide doc. No. 6401 pertaining to the aforesaid property has been lost and complaint has been registered on 01.08.2022, with PS Surapur, Gautam Budh Nagar.

Any person(s) found in possession of aforesaid original sale deed, then kindly contact the undersigned along with original property document, within 7 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid sale deed shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.

Raghav Tiwari (Advocate)
Ch. 830, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi – 110001
Mob.: +91-8076188328

PUBLIC NOTICE

General public is hereby informed that **Mr. Venkatesh S/o. M. J.N. Verma and Mrs. Vandana Arora and Mrs. Sumita Saluja** both D/o Mr. J.N. Verma are the owners of property bearing Plot No. 827, area measuring 500 Sq. Yds., situated at Sector 4, Huda, Tinsel & District Faridabad, Haryana, by virtue of Conveyance Deed dated 15.04.1998 regd. Vide doc. No. 235 and Will dated 26.03.2015 regd. Vide doc. No. 1288, respectively and they are intending to sell the aforesaid property to **Sh. Amanpreet Singh**, to be financed & mortgaged by M/s. Tata Capital Housing Finance Ltd. The Probate of Will has not been obtained in respect of aforesaid property from Court.

If any person(s) have any objection(s) or claim in this property, then contact the undersigned within 10 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, it will be assumed that there are no claims or issues in respect of the aforesaid property.

Raghav Tiwari (Advocate)
Ch. 830, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi – 110001
Mob.: +91-8076188328



'Senseless to pressure' Lanka, says China after Colombo asks it to defer high-tech ship arrival

PTI ■ BEIJING

Riled by Sri Lanka's request to defer the planned docking of a high-tech Chinese research vessel at the strategic Hambantota Port, China on Monday took a dig at India, saying it was "senseless to pressure" Colombo by citing the issue of security concerns.

According to reports from Colombo, Sri Lanka has asked Beijing to defer the arrival of the Chinese space and satellite tracking research vessel 'Yuan Wang 5' which was scheduled to dock at the Hambantota Port from August 11 to 17 due to security concerns expressed by India.

Responding to the reports, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin told a media briefing here that Beijing has taken note of the reports and asserted that "the cooperation between China and Sri Lanka is independently chosen by the two countries and meets common interests. It does not target any third party".

It is "senseless to pressure Sri

Lanka" by citing the issue of security concerns, he said, in reference to the reports that Sri Lanka's move was attributed to concerns expressed by India.

"Sri Lanka is a sovereign state. It can develop relations with other countries in the light of its own development interests," he said.

"China urges relevant parties to see China's scientific explorations in a reasonable and sensible way and stop disturbing the normal exchange between China and Sri Lanka," Wang said.

Sri Lanka is a transport hub in the Indian Ocean. Many scientific exploration ships including those from China have stopped at the port of Sri Lanka for resupplies, he said. "China has always exercised the freedom of navigation in the high seas and fully respects the jurisdiction of coastal states for the scientific exploration activities within their waters," he said.

According to media reports, India informed Sri Lanka that the docking of the high-tech Chinese research vessel could pose a threat to its national security.

Sri Lanka received strong messages of protests from India as the ship was said to have the capability to track satellites and intercontinental ballistic missiles, the reports said.

UN chief urges nuke powers to abide by no-first-use pledge

AP ■ TOKYO

United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Monday urged countries with nuclear weapons to stick to their no-first-use commitment of their atomic arsenals, warning that the nuclear arms race has returned amid growing international tension.

"This is the moment ... to ask the nuclear-armed countries to commit to the principle of non-first-use and to commit to not use and not threaten the non-nuclear countries," Guterres said at a news conference in Tokyo, two days after he visited Hiroshima to commemorate victims of the August 6, 1945, atomic bombing. "I think that nobody, nobody can accept the idea that a new nuclear war would happen. This will be the destruction of the planet," Guterres said.

"What is clear is if nobody



uses for the first time then there will be no nuclear war."

Fears of a third atomic bombing have been on the rise amid Russia's threats of a nuclear attack since its war on Ukraine began in February.

On Thursday, Moscow shelled the Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia, which holds Europe's largest nuclear plant. When asked about the attack, Guterres said, "Any attack to a nuclear plant is a suicidal thing." He said he fully supports the International Atomic Energy Agency in their effort to stabilise the plant and have access to the facility to exercise its mandate.

Two more Lankan protesters arrested as they brace for national day of protest on Tuesday

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan police on Monday arrested two more anti-government public protest leaders as they were preparing for a national day of protest on Tuesday, marking one month since the ouster of former President Gotabaya Rajapaksa.

August 9 marks one month since the ouster of Rajapaksa. He fled the island nation two days later and sent in his resignation from Singapore on July 14.

On July 9, the anti-government protesters stormed Rajapaksa's office-cum-official residence forcing him to flee after continuous protests since early April calling for his res-

ignation for his handling of the worst economic crisis faced by the island nation since 1948. At least two of the protesters who had defied a court order in May were arrested on Monday while a prominent trade union leader who was arrested last week and had been ordered remand till August 12 was given bail by the court. Mangala Maddumage and Piyath Nikeshala are the two protesters arrested on Monday.

The police said the magistrate's court had refused two applications to ban the protest action scheduled for Tuesday. The court while refusing the orders said the police have the necessary power to crack down on any unruly protests.

Protesters block roads in Iraq after third day of power cuts

AP ■ BAGHDAD

Demonstrators blocked roads as protests broke out in southern Iraq on Monday after power outages left many without electricity during scorching peak summer heat.

Temperatures reached 50 degrees Celsius (122 degrees Fahrenheit), nearly matching last year's record high. Southern provinces, where the heat wave is most intense in Iraq, suspended working hours.

The Electricity Ministry last week announced a state of alert, anticipating outages as temperatures rise.

In the oil-rich province of Basra, dozens of people took to the streets for a third straight day and burned tires, blocking the main road to the provincial capital, to protest the power cuts.

While protests against power cuts took place in the south, the followers of Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr entered their ninth day of a sit-in outside the Iraqi parliament building to demand early elections.

Many protesters in Basra said they



supported al-Sadr's protest and demands and said they were tired of rampant government corruption. Protests in the south are common in the summer. In 2018, protests over the lack of basic services turned violent. In 2019, they paved the way for mass anti-government demonstrations in the capital.

"It's not the first time we protest and it won't be the last," said Ali Hussein, 35, in Basra. "We are continuing our protests for electricity and water, which are very basic demands."

China continues unprecedented military drills around Taiwan even after end of 4-day schedule

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Monday continued its unprecedented military drills around Taiwan, extending the schedule of war games launched in retaliation to the visit by US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to the breakaway island which Beijing claims is part of its territory.

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) Eastern Theatre Command, which oversees Taiwan, said on Monday it would continue drills in waters near Taiwan island, focusing on anti-submarine and air-to-ship strikes, state-run Global Times reported.

The PLA conducted joint drills involving all wings of its armed forces in six areas around the island from August 4 to 7.

The PLA's latest announcement notice did not specify the location of the exercises nor did it mention when they would end.

The PLA on Sunday proceeded with the plan and continued realistic combat-scenario joint exercises in the sea and air space around the island of Taiwan practicing island capturing drills and bomber deterrence flights in



Taiwan Strait, a rehearsal for real operation, state-run Global Times reported on Sunday.

The PLA Command in a late last night press release said its forces continued its joint combat training exercises as scheduled on Sunday in the waters and airspace around the Taiwan island.

The focus on Sunday was set on testing the capabilities of using joint fires to strike land targets and

striking long-range air targets, an early Monday state-run Xinhua news agency report said.

The air force under the theatre command deployed multiple types of warplanes, including early warning aircraft, bombers, jamming aircraft, fighter-bombers and fighter jets, to conduct drills on such combat missions as joint reconnaissance, airspace control operation, strikes

Australia calls for cooling off Taiwan Strait tensions

AP ■ CANBERRA

Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong on Monday called for a cooling of tensions after Beijing accused her of "finger-pointing" in her criticism of China's military exercises in response to US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan.

Wong criticised China's launch of ballistic missiles during the ongoing air and sea drills around Taiwan, which Beijing claims as part of its territory.

She also signed a joint statement with the US and Japan on Saturday that condemned firing of missiles into Japanese exclusive economic zones and accused China of "raising tension and destabilising the region". The Chinese Embassy in Australia replied to the trilateral statement, saying: "It is absolutely unacceptable for the finger-pointing on China's justified actions to safeguard state sovereignty and territorial integrity."

on ground targets, and air support and cover.

Supported by naval and air combat systems, the air strike forces, together with long-range multiple launch rocket systems and conventional missile troops, conducted drills of joint precision strikes on targets.

Multiple bomber formations flew across the Taiwan Strait from north to south and from south to

north, while several fighter jets conducted joint drills with destroyers and frigates.

The operation has tested the tactics of systems warfare under information-based conditions, and honed and improved the capabilities to destroy crucial island targets with precision strikes, Zhang Zhi, an air force officer of the PLA Eastern Theatre Command, said according to the report.

US-China relationship unlikely to improve soon: Singapore PM

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

The relationship between the US and China is unlikely to improve soon and the world is not likely to return to the low levels of inflation and interest rates it has enjoyed in recent decades, Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said on Monday, warning that a "storm is gathering around us".

China has announced halting of cooperation with the United States in a number of

areas, including dialogue between senior-level military commanders and climate talks, in retaliation to US House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan.

Last week, Pelosi visited Taiwan, prompting Beijing to hold military exercises in waters around the self-ruled island.

"Around us, a storm is gathering. US-China relations are worsening, with intractable issues, deep suspicions and limited engagement between



them," said Lee in his National Day message.

Singaporeans also have to be prepared that the region may not be as peaceful and stable as it has been so far, he said on the eve of Singapore's 57th National Day. He said the world is not likely to return to the low levels of inflation and interest rates it has enjoyed in recent decades.

While Singapore has weathered the test of the COVID-19 pandemic, the road ahead will not be easy and Singaporeans have to stand united, Lee said.



Top TTP commander Omar Khorasani, 3 others killed in mysterious blast in Afghanistan: Report

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

A top commander of the outlawed Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Omar Khalid Khorasani and three other top militant leaders have been killed in a mysterious blast in eastern Afghanistan's Paktika province, a Pakistani media report said on Monday.

A vehicle carrying senior commanders of the militant group, including Khorasani, was on Sunday targeted with a mysterious explosive device, according to Afghan officials and local sources, The Express Tribune newspaper reported.

The top militants were travelling in the Birmal district of the province for a meeting when their vehicle hit a roadside mine, the report said.

All aboard the vehicle, also carrying other TTP commanders such as Abdul Wali Mohmand, Mufti Hassan, and Hafiz Dawlat Khan, were killed in the explosion, The Express Tribune quoted a senior Afghan official as saying.

According to a local source, the TTP leaders were travelling "for consultation" when their vehicle hit a roadside mine on Sunday.

Khorasani, who belonged to the Mohmand tribal district, was considered a top member of the TTP — the militant group which wants to impose the law of Sharia across Pakistan. Khorasani, who carried a bounty of Rs 10 million on his head.

Hafiz Dawlat from the Orakzai tribal district was an important member of the group and a close trustee of Khorasani, while Mufti Hassan hailed from the Malakand division and pledged allegiance to Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the deceased leader of the Islamic State terrorist organisation.

TTP intelligence chief Abdul Rashid alias Uqabi Bajauri was also killed in a landmine blast in Kunar province of Afghanistan on Sunday morning, according to local Afghan sources.

The TTP is yet to confirm these targeted killings of its top commanders, an incident that would certainly undermine the Afghan Taliban-brokered peace negotiations between the TTP and the Pakistan government.

Allies accuse UK Parl panel of Johnson's 'witch-hunt'

PTI ■ LONDON

The allies of Boris Johnson have accused a UK Parliament committee of conducting a "witch-hunt" against the outgoing British Prime Minister.

Johnson, who resigned in early July triggering a leadership election for the governing Conservative Party to pick a new party leader and the Prime Minister, continues to be investigated by the House of Commons Privileges Committee over whether he knowingly misled Parliament when he denied any breaches of COVID lockdown laws at Downing Street - known as the Partygate scandal.

The members of Parliament close to the 58-year-old outgoing leader believe that probe must now be dropped as he is on his way out.

"If this witch hunt continues, it will be the most egregious abuse of power witnessed in Westminster," said UK Culture Secretary Nadine Dorries, one of Johnson's staunchest allies.

One year after Afghanistan, spy agencies pivot towards China

AP ■ WASHINGTON

In a recent closed-door meeting with leaders of the agency's counterterrorism center, the CIA's No 2 official made clear that fighting al-Qaida and other extremist groups would remain a priority — but that the agency's money and resources would be increasingly shifted to focusing on China.

The CIA drone attack that killed al-Qaida's leader showed that fighting terrorism is hardly an afterthought. But it didn't change the message the agency's deputy director, David Cohen, delivered at that meeting weeks earlier: While the US will continue to go after terrorists, the top priority is trying to better understand and counter Beijing.

One year after ending the war in Afghanistan, President Joe Biden and top national security officials speak less about counterterrorism and more about the political, economic and military threats posed by China as well as Russia. There's been a quiet pivot within intelligence agencies, which are moving hundreds of officers to China-focused positions, including



some who were previously working on terrorism.

The last week makes clear that the US has to deal with both at the same time. Days after Ayman al-Zawahri was killed in Kabul, China staged large-scale military exercises and threatened to cut off contacts with the US over House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan.

The US has long been alarmed by China's growing political and economic ambitions. China has tried to influence foreign elections, mounted campaigns of cyber and corporate espionage, and detained millions of minority Uyghurs in camps. Some experts also think Beijing will in coming years try to seize the self-ruled democratic island of Taiwan by force.



US Secretary of State Blinken sees South African counterpart

AP ■ JOHANNESBURG

South Africa's stance on Russia's war in Ukraine and the adverse effects of the conflict on African countries are expected to feature in a meeting between U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken and South Africa's Minister of International Relations Naledi Pandor on Monday.

Blinken is in South Africa as part of a three-nation tour of Africa including Congo and Rwanda in what is seen as a contest between Western nations and Russia to win support from African countries over the war in Ukraine. Blinken's tour follows similar trips to African countries by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and French President Emmanuel Macron. South Africa is among many African countries that have taken a neutral stance on the Ukraine war and avoided public criticism of Russia.

Singapore's Padang from where Netaji made 'Delhi Chalo!' call to be declared nt'l monument



PTI ■ SINGAPORE

Singapore's iconic green site S'Padang from where Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose gave the slogan of 'Delhi Chalo!' in July 1943, will be declared a National Monument of Singapore on the city state's National Day on Tuesday.

The iconic site will be the first green, open space to join a list of 74 other national monuments of Singapore.

The monument will be preserved and accorded the high-

est level of protection in Singapore under the Preservation of Monuments Act in view of its "strong national, historical and social significance", said the National Heritage Board (NHB) on Monday.

"The Padang stands as a testament to Singapore's historical journey, anchoring our Singaporean identity and reflecting our place in the world," said Edwin Tong, Minister for Culture, Community and Youth, who attended a preview of some of the commemorative initiatives

on Monday.

The historic site is associated with key milestones in Singapore's history, including the victory parade celebrating the formal surrender of the Japanese in Singapore on September 12, 1945; the victory rally of the first fully elected Legislative Assembly on June 3, 1959; the installation of Yusof Ishak as the first Malayan-born Yang di-Pertuan Negara (head of state) and the unveiling of National Symbols on December 3, 1959 as well as the inaugural National Day Parade on August 9, 1966.

The Padang is also one of Singapore's oldest spaces for public recreation and celebrations, and has been hosting sporting events from the early colonial period. Professor Rajesh Rai, Head, South Asian Studies at the National University of Singapore, elaborated on the Padang's link to Indian National Army (INA).

Fire engulfs historic wooden bridge in southern China



AP ■ BEIJING

Authorities are investigating the cause of a fire that engulfed a covered wooden bridge with 900 years of history in southeastern China over the weekend.

The entire length of the Wan'an Bridge appeared to be in flames in video and photos of the Saturday night fire in Fujian province's Pingnan

county. No one was reported injured in the blaze.

The 98-metre bridge is the longest of its kind in China. It has been rebuilt many times over the centuries, most recently in 1932.

The wooden structure, standing on five stone pillars, crosses a river and had a roofed, open-air walkway.

The original bridge was built during the Song dynasty.

UK PM race: Sunak, Truss feel heat over cost-of-living crisis



PTI ■ LONDON

The race to elect a new Conservative Party leader, who will take charge as British Prime Minister early next month, heated up on Monday as the two finalists - Rishi Sunak and Liz Truss - clashed over their proposals to tackle the soaring cost-of-living crisis across the country.

The issue of inflation and how best to curb it has emerged as the main battle line in the race to 10 Downing Street, with both candidates offering different approaches. While Truss has pledged immediate tax cuts if elected, Sunak has promised more targeted support for the

most vulnerable households and tax cuts further down the line.

A fresh row brewed out over the weekend after Foreign Secretary Liz Truss told 'The Financial Times' that her plan to lower taxes rather than offer handouts was more Conservative. This prompted an immediate rebuke from former Chancellor Rishi Sunak that it is "simply wrong to rule out further direct support" for struggling families this winter.

"Families are facing a long, hard winter with rising bills. Yet Liz's plan to deal with that is to give a big bung to large businesses and the well-off, leaving those who most need help out in the cold," Sunak writes in 'The Sun'.

"Worse still, she has said she will not provide direct support payments to those who are feeling the pinch most. We need clear-eyed realism, not starry-eyed boosterism. That means bolder action to protect people from the worst of the winter. I have the right plan and experience to help people through," he said.

RATHI STEEL AND POWER LIMITED	
CIN: L27109DL1971PLC005905	
Regd. Off.: 24/1, Block A, Mohan Cooperative Industrial Estate, Mathura Road, New Delhi- 110044	
Email ID: investors@rathisteelandpower.com, Website: www.rathisteelandpower.com	
Notice and Agenda of Board Meeting	
This is to inform you that pursuant to the Regulation 33 of SEBI (Listing Obligations And Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 meeting of the Board of Directors of M/s Rathi Steel and Power Limited is to be held on Saturday the 13th Day of August 2022 at the Registered office of the Company at 12:30 PM to consider and approve following businesses as under :-	
ITEM NO. AGENDA FOR DISCUSSION	
Take note and confirm the following:-	
1.	To appoint Chairman of the meeting to call the meeting to order.
2.	To Ensure Quorum of the Meeting
3.	To grant leave of absence, if any.
4.	To take note and confirm the minutes of previous meeting of board of directors of the Company.
Consider and Approve following:-	
1.	To consider and approve Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter ended on June 30, 2022
2.	Any other businesses with permission of the Chair.
For and on behalf of Board	
Sd/- (PREM NARAIN VARSHNEY)	
MANAGING DIRECTOR DIN: 00012709	
Place: New Delhi	
Date: 04-08-2022	

JINDAL LEASEFIN LIMITED					
CIN: L74899DL1994PLC059252					
Regd. Office: 110, Bahar Road, New Delhi - 110001					
EXTRACT OF STATEMENT OF STANDALONE UNAUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED 30.06.2022					(Rs. in Lacs)
Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended			Year Ended
		30.06.2022 Unaudited	31.03.2022 Audited	30.06.2021 Unaudited	30.06.2021 Audited
1	Total Income from Operations		20.37	-	19.92
2	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items#)	-5.22	20.45	-5.04	8.97
3	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items#)	-5.22	20.45	-5.04	8.97
4	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional and/or extraordinary Items#)	3.39	33.87	-6.35	19.47
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	4.22	34.14	0.86	40.1
6	Equity Share capital	300.89	300.89	300.89	300.89
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous year	494.24	491.59	450.76	491.59
8	Earning per Share (face Value of Rs. 10/- each) (not annualised)				
	1. Basic	-0.21	1.13	-0.21	0.65
	2. Diluted	-0.21	1.13	-0.21	0.65
NOTE :					
1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly/Annual financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly/Annual financial Results are available on the Stock Exchange website www.bseindia.com. The same is also available on the Company's website www.jltd.co.in.					
2. The above results duly reviewed by the Audit Committee, were approved by the Board of Directors in their meeting held on 08.08.2022.					
For Jindal Leasefin Limited					
Sd/-					
(SURENDER KUMAR JINDAL)					
Managing Director					
Date : 08.08.2022					
Place : New Delhi					

ORIENTAL NAGPUR BETUL HIGHWAY LIMITED				
Regd. Off.: OSE Commercial Block, Asset 5B, Aerocity, Hospitality, District, IGI Airport, New Delhi-110037, Tel: 91-11-46044604, Email: spv.ose@gmail.com CIN: U45400DL2010PLC203649				
FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER ENDED JUNE 30, 2022				
(Amount in Lakhs)				
Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended 30.6.2022 (Un audited)	Quarter Ended 30.06.2021 (Un audited)	Year Ended 31.03.2022 (Audited)
1	Total income from operations (net)	12,671.00	13,179.00	126,032.50
2	Net Profit/(Loss) for the period (before Tax and Exceptional items)	5,651.00	6,118.00	24,289.08
3	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax (after Exceptional items)	5,651.00	6,118.00	24,289.08
4	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax (after Exceptional items)	10,482.00	3,927.00	16,499.19
5	Total Comprehensive Income for the period [Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax)]	10,482.00	3,927.00	16,499.19
6	Paid up Equity Share Capital	1,813.45	1,813.45	1,813.45
7	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve)	121,193.29	117,239.90	121,721.60
8	Securities Premium	34,436.55	34,436.55	34,436.55
9	Net Worth	123006.74	119,053.35	123,535.05
10	Paid up Debt Capital/Outstanding Debt	232,493.98	251,929.96	232,440.00
11	Outstanding Redeemable Preference Shares	-	-	0.00
12	Debt Equity Ratio	1.89:1	2.12:1	2.11:1
13	Earnings Per Share (of Rs 10/- each)			
	1. Basic:	57.80	21.65	90.98
	2. Diluted:	57.80	21.65	90.98
14	Capital Redemption Reserve	0.00	0.00	0.00
15	Debt Redemption Reserve	19,231.40	0.00	19,231.40
16	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	1.05:1	1.12:1	1.32:1
17	Interest Service Coverage Ratio	2.01:1	2.02:1	2.03:1
18	Asset Coverage Ratio:	1.92:1	1.76:1	1.61:1
19	Current Ratio	3.08:1	4.60:1	4.01:1
20	Debtor Turnover Ratio	0.04:1	0.04:1	0.15:1
21	Inventory Turnover Ratio	NA	NA	NA
22	Long Term Debt to Working Capital	2.36:1	2.42:1	2.43:1
23	Bad Debts to Accounts Receivable	NA	NA	NA
24	Current Liabilities Ratio	0.11:1	NA	0.11:1
25	Total Debts to Total Assets	0.61:1	0.67:1	0.68:1
26	Operating Margin	0.53:1	1.07:1	0.21:1
27	Net Profit Margin	0.98:1	0.35:1	0.14:1

Verify transitional credit claims, CAG asks CBIC

New Delhi: The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) on Monday recommended that the indirect tax department should complete the verification of transitional credit allowed under the GST mechanism.

As part of transition to GST with effect from July 1, 2017, taxpayers were allowed to file Form TRAN-1 and avail tax credit on the basis of closing balance of the credit declared in the last return under the pre-Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime

In the Compliance Audit Report on GST for the year ended March 2021, tabled in Parliament on Monday, the CAG said audit review disclosed significant irregularities in the transitional credit claims of taxpayers.

It said that though the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) in 2018-

19 had identified top 50,000 cases which claimed maximum transitional credit for verification, the exercise was not yet completed, and the department was yet to verify 8,849 cases.

“The rate of recovery of detected irregularities was low. Cross jurisdictional issues and lack of co-ordination in central tax jurisdictions in some zones impeded verification and initiation of recovery actions,” the CAG said.

Irregularities noticed were relatively higher in four categories viz; ineligible credit of duty paid goods in stock without documents, irregular claim on unavailed credit on capital goods, ineligible credit on inputs or input services in transit, and irregular claim on closing balances.

The audit recommends “ensuring verification of the high risk claims reflected in

Table 7aB of Tran 1 (credit on duty paid stock without invoices) and the cases where the transitional credit claim under Table 5a (closing credit balance of legacy returns) was in excess of the closing balance of legacy return.”

The CAG audit also found significant data inconsistencies between the taxable value and declared tax liability.

Inconsistencies were also noticed between the CGST and SGST components of GST, and between ITC figures captured in GSTR-3B and GSTR-9 returns.

“Due to significant inconsistencies in the GST data, audit could not establish the reliability of data, for the purpose of finding audit insights and trends in GST revenue, and assessing high risk areas such as tax liability and ITC mismatch at the pan-India level,” the CAG said. **PTI**

Sensex climbs 465 points; Nifty above 17,500



Mumbai: Equity benchmark Sensex jumped over 465 points on Monday, tracking gains in index majors HDFC twins and Reliance Industries amid positive global market trends.

The 30-share BSE gauge climbed 465.14 points or 0.80 per cent to finish at 58,853.07. During the day, it jumped 546.97 points or 0.93 per cent to 58,934.90. The broader NSE Nifty gained 127.60 points or 0.73 per cent to end at 17,525.10. Mahindra & Mahindra was the biggest gainer from the Sensex pack, climbing 3.13 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finserv, NTPC, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, Larsen & Toubro, HDFC, Dr Reddy's, IndusInd Bank and Reliance Industries.

State Bank of India, UltraTech Cement, Nestle, Wipro and Power Grid were among the major laggards.

In Asia, markets in Seoul,

Shanghai and Tokyo ended higher, while Hong Kong settled with losses.

European bourses were trading in the green during mid-session deals. The US markets had ended mostly lower on Friday. Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.68 per cent to USD 94.32 per barrel.

Foreign institutional investors remained net buyers in the capital markets as they bought shares worth Rs 1,605.81 crore on Friday, as per exchange data.

“Sustained FII buying and falling oil prices are the major drivers for the ongoing market rally. Heavyweights played a significant role in today's rise, while PSU banks remained under pressure following weak results of the PSB major,” said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. **PTI**

Rupee falls 40 paise to close at 79.64 against US dollar

Mumbai: The rupee fell 40 paise to close at 79.64 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday amid waning risk appetite among investors.

Lower global crude prices and a rally in domestic equities restricted the losses to some extent, forex dealers said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the domestic currency opened weak at 79.50 per dollar. It oscillated between a high of 79.45 and a low of 79.65 during the session.

It finally settled at 79.64, down 40 paise over its previous close of 79.24.

The dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, slipped 0.25 per cent to 106.57.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, declined 0.54 per cent to USD 94.38 per barrel.

On the domestic equity



market front, the BSE Sensex ended 465.14 points or 0.80 per cent higher at 58,853.07, while the broader NSE Nifty advanced 127.60 points or 0.73 per cent to 17,525.10.

Foreign institutional investors remained net buyers in the capital market on Friday as they purchased shares worth ₹1,605.81 crore, as per exchange data.

After turning net buyers last month, foreign investors continued their positive stance on Indian equities and invested over ₹14,000 crore in the first week of August amid softening of the dollar index. **PTI**

Gold gains ₹97; silver jumps ₹527

New Delhi: Gold in the national capital on Monday rose by ₹97 to ₹52,490 per 10 gram amid rise in international precious metal prices along with depreciation in rupee, according to HDFC Securities.

The yellow metal had closed at ₹52,393 per 10 gram in the previous trade.

Silver also jumped by ₹527 to ₹58,465 per kg from ₹57,938 per kg in the previous trade.

The rupee depreciated 22 paise to 79.46 against the US dollar in early trade on Monday, tracking subdued sentiment in the domestic equities.

In the international market, gold was trading higher at USD 1,777 per ounce while silver was flat at USD 20.07 per ounce. “Gold prices traded firm with spot gold prices at COMEX trading at USD 1,777 per ounce,” said Tapan Patel, Senior Analyst (Commodities) at HDFC Securities. **PTI**

JSW Steel outlays ₹20,000 crore capex for FY23: CMD Sajjan Jindal

New Delhi: JSW Steel will invest over ₹48,000 crore in the next three years as part of its capex plan, the company's Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) Sajjan Jindal has said.

Out of ₹ 48,700, ₹20,000 crore capex (capital expenditure) is for the 2022-23 financial year, he said.

Besides, JSW Steel is also eyeing to amalgamate JSW Ispat Special Products with it by the end of the ongoing fiscal.

According to a regulatory filing on Monday, Jindal addressing a shareholder's query said: “The total planned capex for the next three years is ₹48,700 crore, which includes ₹20,000 crore planned for this current financial year.”

The composite scheme of amalgamation between the company and JSW Ispat Special Products Limited (Monnet Ispat) is expected to be completed during this financial year, he said.

In August 2018, a joint consortium of AION Investments Private II Ltd (AION) and JSW Steel Limited acquired controlling stake in JSW Ispat Special Products



Limited (formerly known as Monnet Ispat & Energy Limited).

The consortium was the sole bidder for the 1.5-million-tonne asset in Chhattisgarh. The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) had approved a ₹2,875-crore bid to acquire the bankrupt Monnet Ispat & Energy, which owed over ₹11,000 crore to a clutch of lenders.

As per JSW Steel, “The 5 MTPA (million tonne per annum) brownfield expansion at Vijayanagar is progressing well, with civil works underway at the site. The project is expected to be completed by the end of FY2024.”

The remaining downstream projects at Vasind and Tarapur are expected to be completed in the second quarter of FY23. **PTI**

Equity mutual funds' inflow drops 43% to ₹8,898 crore in July

New Delhi: Equity mutual funds attracted ₹8,898 crore in July, a sharp decline of 43 per cent from the preceding month, amid volatile market conditions.

Although, this was the 17th straight month of positive inflow in equity schemes.

The net inflows in July were lower compared to the net inflow of ₹15,495 crore seen in June, ₹18,529 crore seen in May and ₹15,890 crore in April, according to data released by Association of Mutual Funds in India (Amfi) on Monday.

Equity schemes have been witnessing net inflow since March 2021, highlighting the positive sentiment among investors. Prior to this, such schemes had consistently witnessed outflows for eight months from July 2020 to February 2021, losing ₹46,791 crore. All the equity-oriented categories received net inflows in July with the Small Cap Fund category being the biggest beneficiary with a net inflow of ₹1,780 crore. This was followed by the Flexi Cap Fund fund that witnessed ₹1,381 crore net infusion. Besides, Large Cap Fund, Large & Mid Cap Fund and Mid Cap Fund witnessed over ₹1,000 crore net inflow each.

Apart from equity, debt mutual funds witnessed an inflow of ₹4,930 crore last month after witnessing a net outflow of ₹92,247 crore in June. However, Gold Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs) experienced a net outflow of ₹457 crore, which was in sharp contrast to a net infusion of Rs 135 crore seen last month. **PTI**

Paddy acreage down 13% so far this kharif season; oilseeds, coarse cereals area up

New Delhi: Area sown with paddy is down 13 per cent till August 5 of the ongoing kharif season as acreage continues to lag in states like West Bengal, Jharkhand, Bihar and Chhattisgarh due to deficient rains.

As per the data of the agriculture ministry, the area covered under paddy stood at 274.30 lakh hectare (LH) as on August 5, as against 314.14 LH in the year-ago period.

Less paddy acreage is reported from West Bengal (12.28 LH), Jharkhand (9.34 LH), Bihar (4.85 LH), Chhattisgarh (4.39 LH), Uttar Pradesh (3.82 LH), Madhya Pradesh (3.72 LH), Odisha (3.56 LH) and Telangana (2.89 LH).



India is the world's second largest producer and top exporter of rice. The country commands 40 per cent share in the global trade.

Rice output stood at record 129.66 million tonne in the 2021-22 crop year (July-June). India exported 21.2 million tonne of rice in 2021-22 fiscal year, of which 3.94 million tonne was basmati rice.

Apart from paddy, area sown with pulses is down marginally to 116.45 LH from 119.43 LH.

However, the acreage of coarse cereals, oilseeds, cotton, sugarcane and jute & mesta is higher. The data compiled by the ministry showed that the acreage of coarse cereals increased to 160.37 LH from

154.40 LH, while oilseeds sowing area was up at 174.79 LH from 173.82 LH.

Cotton sowing increased to 121.12 LH from 113.50 LH, while sugarcane area rose to 54.67 LH from 54.42 LH. Jute and mesta area declined to 6.92 LH from 6.94 LH.

Total area under coverage is down at 908.61 LH so far this kharif season as against 936.65 LH in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Lower acreage of paddy has raised concern about rice output and prices in the kharif season, which accounts for about about 80 per cent of the total production.

On the back of bumper production and high procurement in the last few years, the Centre is sitting on a stock of 47 million tonne of rice (including rice equivalent of unmilled paddy) as on July 1 as against the buffer norm of 13.5 million tonne.

The Centre can use rice

from its own godowns to intervene in the market, in case of price rise. Already, the Centre is supplying more rice instead of wheat through ration shops as its procurement of wheat fell sharply to 19 million tonne this year from 43 million tonne last year. Armed with high levels of stocks in the central pool, the government is providing rice at Rs 3 per kg under the food law and free of cost under the Prime Minister Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PMGKAY) to around 80 crore people, incurring huge amounts of subsidy.

The Centre is providing 5 kg of foodgrains (wheat and rice) per person per month under the National Food Security Law (NFSA) and another 5 kg per person per month under PMGKAY.

The PMGKAY is valid till September and it will be interesting to see whether the government further extends it or not, given the tight stock situation in wheat. **PTI**

SBI shares fall over 3 pc after Q1 earnings



New Delhi: Shares of State Bank of India (SBI) on Monday fell over 3 per cent in the morning trade after it posted a 7 per cent decline in standalone net profit for the first quarter of the current financial year.

The stock declined 3.13 per cent to ₹514 on the BSE.

At the NSE, it went lower by 3.23 per cent to ₹513.85.

The country's biggest lender State Bank of India on Saturday posted a 7 per cent

NTPC seeks shareholders' nod to raise up to ₹12K crore via bonds



New Delhi: NTPC will seek shareholders' approval to raise up to ₹12,000 crore through issuance of non-convertible debentures in annual general meeting on August 30.

The funds to be raised in one or more tranches (not exceeding 12) through private placement will be used as capital expenditure, working capital and for general corporate purposes, as per the notice for the AGM.

As the company is under capacity expansion mode, major portion of the capital expenditure requirement has to be funded by debt.

The company's board approved the proposal on July 29, 2022. **PTI**

IOC's ₹169 crore LPG plant in Agartala launched

Guwahati: PSU major Indian Oil Corporation has inaugurated its latest greenfield LPG bottling plant at Agartala, set up at an investment of Rs 169.11 crore, a senior official said on Monday.

The foundation stone for the plant was laid in 2017 and the project got completed as per schedule in February 2020, Indian Oil Corporation Executive Director (Indian Oil AOD) Ganesan Ramesh said.

“The Agartala bottling plant started commercial production in November 2021. The futuristic plant was built keeping in view the rising energy demand in Tripura and is designed using industry best



practices over a sprawling 40 acre land,” he said.

The plant was officially inaugurated by Union Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Rameswar Teli and Minister of State for Social Justice and Empowerment Pratima Bhounik on Sunday. Ramesh said the company

has invested Rs 169.11 crore in building the facility and there shall be “more investment” in the days to come.

“The plant has a rated capacity of 60,000 Thousand Metric Tonnes Per Annum (TMTPA) and can bottle 17,000 cylinders every day, including domestic and commercial ones. It can also store 1,350 MT in leakproof mounded bullets of LPG,” he added.

The Executive Director said that the new plant will cater to all the eight districts of the Northeastern state -- West Tripura, South Tripura, North Tripura, Dhalai, Unakoti, Sepahijala, Gomati and Khowai. **PTI**

Bharti Airtel Q1 profit rises 5-fold to ₹1,607 crore

New Delhi: Telecom operator Bharti Airtel on Monday reported an over five-fold rise in its consolidated profit to ₹1,607 crore for the first quarter ended June 30.

The company had posted a profit of ₹283.5 crore in the year-ago period.

Its consolidated revenue from operations increased by about 22 per cent to ₹32,805 crore during

the reported quarter from ₹26,854 crore a year ago.

The company's revenue rose 24 per cent to ₹23,319 crore in June 2022 quarter from ₹18,828.4 crore in the year-ago quarter.

Bharti Airtel's mobile services revenue in India grew 27 per cent year-on-year to ₹18,220 crore for the first quarter from ₹14,305.6 crore. **PTI**

Adani Ports Q1 net profit drops 17 pc to ₹1,091.56 cr

New Delhi: Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ) on Monday reported a 16.86 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to ₹1,091.56 crore for the first quarter of the current financial year despite record cargo volumes.

The country's largest integrated logistics player had clocked a consolidated net profit of ₹1,312.9 crore in the corresponding period a year ago, according to a regulatory filing.

Its total income during the June quarter rose to ₹5,099.25 crore, as against ₹5,073 crore in Q1 FY22.

The company's total expenses also increased to ₹4,174.24 crore from ₹3,660.28 crore earlier.

APSEZ said it recorded its highest-ever quarterly cargo of 91 MMT (million metric tonnes).

The growth in cargo volume was led by dry cargo (11.2 per cent increase), followed by containers (3.2 per cent), and liquids including crude (5.6 per cent). The automobile segment, though a small proportion of overall volumes, saw a 120 per cent jump in volumes. **PTI**

Asian stocks mixed after US job gain paves way for rate hike

Beijing: Asian stocks were mixed on Monday after strong US jobs data cleared the way for more interest rate hikes and Chinese exports rose by double digits.

Shanghai and Tokyo advanced while Hong Kong and Seoul retreated. Oil prices edged higher.

Wall Street's benchmark S and P 500 lost 0.2 per cent on Friday after government data showed American employers added more jobs than expected in June. That undercut expectations a slowing economy might prompt the Fed to postpone or scale back plans for more rate hikes to cool inflation.

“Now it seems they will be

debating whether they need to be even more aggressive,” Edward Moya of Oanda said in a report.

The Shanghai Composite Index rose 0.2 per cent to 3,233.07 after China's July exports beat forecasts. Exports in July surged 18 per cent compared with a year earlier while imports rose just 2.3 per cent, reflecting weak global demand, Chinese customs data showed on Sunday. The country's global trade surplus swelled to a record USD 101 billion. The Hang Seng in Hong Kong fell 0.8 per cent to 20,040.21 while the Nikkei 225 in Tokyo gained 0.2 per cent to 26,230.90. **PTI**

BUSINESS BRIEFS



Union Minister of Power, New & Renewable Energy, R.K. Singh releasing the “Ranking & 10th Integrated Rating of State Distribution Utilities” in presence of Alok Kumar, Secretary (Power), IndushekarChaturvedi, Secretary (MNRE), R.S. Dhillon, CMD, PFC and other senior officers of Ministry of Power, in New Delhi

BEST AGROLIFE REVENUE JUMPS
New Delhi: India's fastest-growing agrochemical company Best Agrolife Ltd has reported strong financial results for the first quarter. It posted a multi-fold jump in its consolidated revenue at Rs 463.7 crores jumping 49.9% QoQ.

NOMINATION SOUGHT FOR UNIVERSAL DESIGN AWARDS
New Delhi: Terming the 13th edition of its Universal Design Awards as special as it coincides with Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People (NCPEDP) has appealed to innovators to send their nominations, the last date for which is August 10. NCPEDP-Mphasis Universal Design Awards were instituted to recognize innovative efforts that create an impact in the area of accessibility and thus ensuring a life of equality and dignity for people with disabilities. Entries can be made on NCPEDP's website www.ncpedp.org. “As India celebrates 75 years of her independence, it's time to step up efforts to ensure absolute freedom for the disabled. The Universal Design Awards is an attempt to celebrate ideas and innovations that promote accessibility and universal design - be it in physical infrastructure, transport, ICT, products or services. It is given to those individuals or organisations who are doing exemplary work to create a level playing field for people with disabilities to access the same opportunities and rights as all other citizens of India,” said Arman Ali, Executive Director, NCPEDP. A concept intrinsic to any kind of access is ‘Universal Design’, which means a design usable to the greatest extent possible by everyone, regardless of age, ability, or situation. To spread awareness about Universal Design and to popularise this concept, NCPEDP, in association with Mphasis, instituted The NCPEDP – Mphasis Universal Design Awards in 2010. “Awareness of Universal Design is close to none and there have been very few attempts to educate stakeholders about this.

SINDHU'S WAIT IS OVER

Indian superstar wins her maiden Commonwealth Games Gold medal

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Glasgow 2014 bronze, Gold Coast 2018 silver and Birmingham 2022 gold, PV Sindhu has finally achieved what she has been longing for at the Commonwealth Games.

But the yellow metal didn't come easy for Sindhu. It took her three attempts, 13 years of toil, and many sacrifices to claim the top prize at the multi-sport event.

Sindhu had won a gold in the mixed team event at the CWG in 2018, but it has been eluding her in singles since her Games debut.

But on Monday, the world number seven outplayed 13th ranked Michelle Li of Canada 21-15, 21-13 in front of a packed crowd at the NEC arena to fulfil her long-cherished dream.

"I've been waiting for this (gold) for a long time now. Of course I'm super happy. I've finally done it. From day one it was important to keep my tempo high and be confident that I can do it," an elated Sindhu said after claiming the top honour.

"We've waited four years now and we're finally here. The Commonwealth Games was really good for me, it was a good tournament."

Contrary to the final scoreline, Sindhu said overcoming Li was not an easy task.

"It was very important to be very focused and in the rhythm. We know each other's game.



There are no easy points so even though I was leading I made sure I was very focused."

The double Olympic medallist said she would take a short break now to re-energise herself before her next goal -- the World Championships -- to be held in Tokyo from August 21 to 28.

"I have the world championships soon, so I'm hoping for the best there. I need to enjoy this moment, take a bit of a break and come back stronger again," Sindhu said.

Sindhu said she can't wait to return home and celebrate her success with her parents.

"Definitely I'm going to celebrate. We will just go out as a team or something like that. I'll go back to India and celebrate with my family members.

"Soon we're going to go back home and I'm going to celebrate with my parents. They've really supported me and they're back there watching the match. It will really mean the world to meet them, it's their hard work and dedication, too," she said.

Lakshya Sen, who won the men's singles gold, rated the CWG medal as one of the "top ones" in his short inter-

national career so far.

"Each one of them has its own importance but this is one of the top ones," said Sen, who has a World Championships bronze and a Youth Olympic Games gold to his kitty.

Sen threw his racket in the crowd after claiming the gold and he said it was just an instantaneous reaction.

"I didn't really plan it well, everything was just coming to me, I just did it."

The 20-year-old shuttler from Almora lost the first game before getting his act right to emerge 19-21, 21-9, 21-16 winner over Malaysia's Ng Tze Yong.

"The length was not very good in the first game. In the second game I got a good length and tried to play more freely. That worked. The third



game was all about keeping the nerves and maintaining that three-point lead the whole time," Sen said.

"He (Young) won the first set and he had an advantage or luxury to not play that second set and to focus on the third game if he was not doing so well.

"I just focused on getting the lead and keeping the lead. When I got it I thought, 'now I have to not give him any easy points', and as the lead grew he gave up on the points and that gave me a lot of confidence," he said.

"The first five, six points were very important. Then he just gave up, he was trying to conserve his energy for the third game because I don't think he could see a light at the end of the tunnel for the second set. Then he came back very motivated for the third set."

Sharath wins singles Gold after 16 years



PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Sharath Kamal showed age is just a number as the 40-year-old capped his best ever performance at the Commonwealth Games by winning the men's singles gold here on Monday.

After losing the first game that he should have closed, Sharath beat a much younger yet experienced Liam Pitchford of England 11-13, 11-7, 11-2, 11-6, 11-8 at the NEC arena.

Sharath, who had first won the singles gold back in 2006, had already claimed two golds here in the team and mixed doubles event alongside Sreeja Akula.

With this yellow metal, he increased his tally to a staggering 13 medals across five CWG appearances.

In the final, he was at his finest, firing winners from both sides. Long rallies away from the table was the order of the day and Sharath won majority of them. He was also brilliant in cutting the points short with perfectly placed backhand winners.

In what turned out to be the final game of the title clash, Sharath led 6-1 before Pitchford reduced the deficit to 5-6 by winning the best rally of the match. Sharath absorbed the pressure to make it 10-6 after time out.

He thought he had converted his second match point but the umpires awarded the point to his opponent as the ball was close to Sharath's body at the time of his retrieve.

He converted the next

one to complete a memorable run in Birmingham.

G Sathiyam secured the bronze after a marathon battle against England's Paul Drinkhall.

Sathiyam bagged his maiden CWG singles medal after beating home-favourite Drinkhall 4-3 in front of a packed crowd.

The Indian thus avenged his men's doubles final loss against the same opponent by winning 11-9 11-3 11-5, 8-11, 9-11, 10-12 and 11-9.

The bronze was Sathiyam's sixth overall medal at the CWG since Gold Coast 2018.

On Sunday, Sathiyam paired up with the Sharath to claim the men's doubles silver after going down to the English duo of Drinkhall and Pitchford.

Sagar wins Silver on international debut

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Fast-rising Indian boxer Sagar Ahlawat concluded an impressive Commonwealth Games campaign by clinching the silver medal in the super-heavy weight (+92kg) division here.

Competing in his maiden international event, Sagar lost the gold medal bout to home favourite Delicious Orié via a 5-0 unanimous decision late on Sunday.

The 20-year-old, who surprised everyone with his powerful performance in the early



bouts, was forced to defend in the opening round as Orié assumed the role of the aggressor.

But the Indian defended well and also managed to land some counter punches with all five judges ruling in his favour.

However a minute into the second round, the Haryana

pugilist, who belongs to a family of farmers, seemed to have tired as he repeatedly resorted to clinching, which also earned him a warning by the referee.

By the third round, Sagar looked completely spent but managed to land a few jabs. He also started bleeding as one of Orié's punches left a cut above his left eye. The Englishman took full advantage of that connected a flurry of upper cuts to take the title.

Despite the loss in the final it was a successful campaign for the youngster, who took up the sport five years ago.

India 'A' crush Kazakhstan in women's event

PTI ■ MAMALLAPURAM

The top-seeded India 'A' team outclassed Kazakhstan 3.5-0.5 for a crucial win in the 10th and penultimate round of the women's section in the 44th Chess Olympiad here on Monday.

Top player Koneru Humpy returned to winning ways, beating Zhansaya Abdumalik while Tania Sachdev and Bhakti Kulkarni scored over Xeniya Balabayeva and Gulikshan Nakhbayeva respectively. R Vaishali drew with Bibisara Assaubayeva on the second board.

In the Open section, the India 'B' team, which has been in sparkling form, had to settle for a 2-2 draw against Uzbekistan as the in-form D Gukesh lost to Nodirbek

Abdusattorov, the reigning world rapid chess champion.

The teenaged GM Gukesh, who had scored 8.5 points from nine rounds leading into Monday's match, faltered against fellow teenager Abdusattorov in a 72-move match.

Gukesh's talented compatriot R Praggnanandhaa defeated Javokhir Sindarov after Nihal Sarin and B Adhiban had drawn their respective games against Nodirbek Yakubboev and Jakhongir Vakhidov.

The India 'A' team, the second-seeds, overcame a loss for P Harikrishna on the top board to Param Maghsoodloo to beat Iran 2.5-1.5 and improve the chances of a podium finish.

The India 'C' team (seeded 16) was held to a 2-2 draw by 34th-ranked Slovakia.

Armenia, who were in the lead after the eighth round, roared back to join Uzbekistan again following a 3-1 demolition of Azerbaijan. Both Armenia and Uzbekistan moved up to 17 match points with a round to play.

India 'A' has 16 match points. The top-seeded USA roared back into contention with a convincing 3-1 defeat of Turkey and joined India 'A' on 16 points.

Important results: Open: India 'B' drew with Uzbekistan 2-2 (D Gukesh lost to Nodirbek Abdusattorov, Nihal Sarin drew with Nodirbek Yakubboev, R Praggnanandhaa beat Javokhir Sindarov, B Adhiban drew with J Vakhidov).

India 'A' beat Iran 2.5-1.5 (P Harikrishna lost to Param Maghsoodloo, Vidit S Gujrathi

beat M Amin Tabatabaei, Arjun Erigaisi drew with Pouya Idani, S L Narayan beat Bardiya Daneshvar).

India 'C' beat Slovakia 2-2 (SS Ganguly drew with Jergus Pechac, S P Sethuraman lost to Viktor Gazik, Karthikeyan Murali drew with Juraj Druska, Abhimanyu Puranik beat Christopher Repka).

Azerbaijan lost to Armenia 1-3, USA beat Turkey 3-1, Serbia drew with the Netherlands 2-2, Spain beat Czech Republic 2.5-1.5, Hungary drew with Ukraine 2-2, Germany beat Israel 3-1, England beat Italy 3-1, France drew with Lithuania 2-2.

Women: India 'A' beat Kazakhstan 3.5-0.5 (Koneru Humpy beat Zhansaya Abdumalik, R Vaishali drew with Bibisara Assaubayeva,

Tania Sachdev beat Xeniya Balabayeva, Bhakti Kulkarni beat Gulikshan Nakhbayeva).

India 'B' beat the Netherlands 3-1 (Vantika Agrawal lost to Zhaoqin Peng, Padmini Rout beat Machteeld van Foreest, Mary Ann Gomes beat Rosa Ratsma, Divya Deshmukh beat Tea Lachava).

India 'C' beat Sweden 3-1 (Easha Karavade drew with Pia Cramling, P V Nandhidhaa beat Inna Agrest, Varshini Sahiti drew with Bel Cramling, Pratyusha Bodda beat Viktoria Johansson).

Georgia drew with Poland 2-2, Germany lost to Ukraine 1.5-2.5, Armenia lost to Azerbaijan 0-4, USA beat Indonesia 3-1, Cuba lost to Slovakia 1.5-2.5, Mongolia drew with Bulgaria 2-2, Hungary beat Italy 3.5-0.5.



Sindhu 'phenomenal', Sen 'India's pride': PM Modi

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday heaped praise on India's medal winners at the Commonwealth Games, lauding P V Sindhu as "phenomenal" and Lakshya Sen as "India's pride" after both won gold in women's and men's singles in badminton.

He also praised the women cricket team for fetching silver, saying the first-ever CWG medal in cricket will always be special.

Congratulating Sharath Kamal for winning the gold medal in table tennis, the prime minister said it will be recorded in history as a very special one. "He has shown the power of patience, determination and resilience and also demonstrated great skills," Modi said, adding that this medal is a big boost for Indian table tennis.

Hailing Sharath Kamal and Sreeja Akula for winning the gold in mixed doubles table tennis, Modi lauded their grit and tenacity and said "they showed superb teamwork".

"Playing and winning together has its own joys," he said.

Sharath reaching the finals of all CWG events he competed in is outstanding, Modi added.

"Proud of the men's hockey team for a spirited performance through the CWG and winning a silver medal. I am confident this team will keep making India proud in the times to come and also inspire youngsters to pursue hockey," he said.

After ace badminton player Sindhu clinched gold with a convincing straight-game win over Canada's Michelle Li, Modi said, "The phenomenal P V Sindhu is a champion of champions! She repeatedly shows what excellence is all about. Her dedication and

commitment is awe-inspiring. Congratulations to her on winning the Gold medal at the CWG. Wishing her the best for her future endeavours."

"Elated by the accomplishment of Lakshya Sen. Congratulations on winning the Gold medal in Badminton. He's played excellently through the CWG and showed outstanding resilience during the Finals," Modi said in a tweet.

"He is India's pride. Best wishes to him for his future endeavours," he said after Sen came from behind to end Ng Tze Yong's giant-killing run in the men's singles badminton competition. The 20-year-old defeated the world number 42 from Malaysia 19-21, 21-9, 21-16.

Congratulating Kidambi Srikanth for winning a bronze medal in badminton, the prime minister called him "one of the stalwarts of Indian badminton".

"This is his fourth CWG medal thus showing his skill and consistency. May he keep inspiring budding athletes and make India even prouder," the prime minister added.

Praising the women cricket team, he tweeted, "Cricket and India are inseparable. Our women's cricket team played excellent cricket through the CWG and they bring home the prestigious silver medal. Being the first ever CWG medal in cricket, this one will always be special."

Lauding Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand for winning bronze in badminton doubles, Modi said he is proud of them.

"Before leaving for the CWG, Treesa told me about her friendship with Gayatri but she was not sure about how she will celebrate if she won a medal. I hope she's made her plans now," Modi said in a lighter vein with a video clip of their interaction ahead of the Games.

Australia hammer India 7-0 in men's hockey final

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

In one of its worst performances in recent times, the Indian men's hockey team suffered an embarrassing 0-7 drubbing at the hands of defending champions Australia to settle for a silver medal at the Commonwealth Games here on Monday.

Australia blew away India with their whirlwind speed and relentless attacks, extending their dominance of the CWG stage.

Since hockey's introduction at the Games in 1998, Australia has always stood on top of the podium.

This is India's third defeat against Australia in a CWG final, having lost to them in the 2010 and the 2014 editions of the Games.

Nathan Ephraums and Tom Wickham scored a brace



each while Blake Govers, Jacob Anderson, and Flynn Ogilvie also found the net in the lop-sided contest.

It was a far cry from what was expected in a gold medal clash as a dominant Australia pumped in five goals in the first half to take the game away from India.

The other time India suffered such a heavy defeat in CWG was in 2010 edition in New Delhi, where Australia hammered the hosts 8-0.

The Indians looked rusty and clueless as they conceded too much space to the Australians in the mid-field, which allowed the Kookaburras

to make inroads.

The structure which the Indians are known for was nowhere to be seen. The defence looked shaky, while there was no co-ordination between the midfield and forward-line.

The past problem of mis-passing and trapping returned to haunt the Indians. It allowed Australia to play free-flowing hockey.

The Indians made very few circle penetrations and whenever they did, they lacked the final pass or looked out of sorts.

Such was India's struggle that the team could not secure a single penalty corner.

Australia secured their three penalty corner inside the first 10 minutes and broke the deadlock from the third through Govers, whose flick went in between India custodian PR Sreejesh's legs.

A minute before the first quarter, Ephramus scored from a counter-attack from the right flank.

It was raining goals for Australia with Anderson making it 3-0 in the 22nd minute, scoring of a rebound, tapping in from close range after Sreejesh made the initial save.

Australia added two more goals to their tally in a span of two minutes before half time through Wickham (26th), who deflected in Tim Brand's pass, and Anderson (27th) to take complete control of the match at half-time.

In the 42nd minute, Ephramus scored his second goal with a neat deflection before Ogilvie added another four minutes later.

Six minutes later, Australia scored another but the goal was disallowed for backstick after India went for the referral.

Time to do more for chess in India: FIDE deputy president Anand

PTI ■ MAMALLAPURAM

Indian chess legend Viswanathan Anand, who has been elected deputy president of FIDE, on Monday said it is time to do more for the sport in the country.

"We are going to work as a team... Especially do more for India. There are plans to hold more tournaments. Our youngsters are playing very well. We have to use that momentum and do something."

"We have to see what we can do in association with the Tamil Nadu government," Anand, who was part of incumbent FIDE president Dvorkovich's team that contested the elections to the world chess body, told reporters here.

Dvorkovich won the elections convincingly on Sunday to retain his post.

"It is a good time for India, when everybody is talking about chess to do more for the sport,"



the five-time world champion said and underlined the presence of numerous players from Tamil Nadu in the various Indian teams competing at the 44th Olympiad.

Anand further said he was happy because the Olympiad was happening in Chennai and added that "it (the Olympiad) has been an out and out success."

Asked about his vision for India now that he has been elected as FIDE deputy president, he spoke about the need to push the game in schools and various other programmes that are already in place.

"In a sense, we are already one of the top (chess) nations. Now we are one of the top organising nations... With the Olympiad. The next step is to see how to cover the gaps. We need to push it in schools, social programmes that the president spoke about. "We are strong in some areas. Very happy with the way this Olympiad has been organised," Anand added.

Bumrah ruled out of Asia Cup 2022 due to back injury



While he is an automatic choice as and when he makes a comeback, the same can't be said about someone like Avesh Khan, who had to prove his worth to remain in the mix.

"Maybe if Pooja (Vastrakar) or I were around, we could've won the game. But that is part of the game;



said. "Fingers crossed, we've got our foot in the door and there's a few more CWG and the Olympics too."

"We've been working on our fielding for a long time. I'm happy with the way we fielded today. That is something we wanted to do as a team," Harmanpreet said.

Lewandowski scores his first Barca goal


Kyrgios wins 1st ATP title in 3 years

Medvedev retains top spot

The Australian climbs 26 places to 37th, his best ranking since February 2020.

Kasatkina beat Rogers in WTA San Jose final

Kasatkina denied the 45th-ranked Rogers a maiden title. The 29-year-old American was playing in just her third WTA final, and her first since Rio de Janeiro in 2016.


B-467

WORKS DEPARTMENT
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDING ENGINEER,
BHADRAK (R&B) DIVISION
e-mail: - bhadrakrnbdivision@gmail.com
Government of Odisha "e" Procurement Notice
Bid Identification No.SE (R&B) BDK- 4/2022-23
No- 2760 /dt... 3.8.2022

1. Nature of work:- Building Works,
2. Number of works:- 2(Two) Nos of Buildings
3. Amount put to Tender:- Rs. 98,98,902/-, 98,98,902/-
4. Class of Contractor:- "B" & "A", "B" & "A",
5. Date & Time of availability of bid document in the portal:- 20.08.2022 at 10.00 AM
6. Last Date / Time of receipt of bid in the portal:- 30.08.2022 up to 05.00 PM
7. Date of opening of bid :- Dt. 02.09.2022 at 11.30 AM
8. Name & address of the Office inviting bid:- Superintending Engineer , Bhadrak (R&B) Division
9. The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the e-procurement portal "http/tendersodisha.gov.in." All future corrigendum will be available on ONLINE mode only.

OIPR-34079/11/0005/2223

Superintending Engineer
Bhadrak (R & B) Division

Duleep Trophy back in old format, Irani Cup slotted in calendar

Since South Africa will also host the inaugural U-19 Women's T20 World Cup in January, the women's U-19 T20

As the ICC Women's T20 World Cup is scheduled to take place in South Africa in February 2023, the women's calendar begins with the Senior Women's T20 Trophy on October 11 and concludes on November 5.