

## OPINION 6

HOLISTIC HEALTH  
WITH AYURVEDA

## WORLD 9

US: AIRSTRIKES IN SYRIA TO  
SEND MESSAGE TO IRAN

## MONEY 10

BANK CREDIT GROWTH RATE  
SOARS TO 14.2% IN Q1: RBI

NEW DELHI, FRIDAY AUGUST 26, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3

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UNVACCINATED  
DJOKOVIC OUT  
OF US OPEN  
11 SPORTEC sealed letter lands  
Jharkhand CM in soup

Election panel has recommended disqualification of Soren as MLA, say media reports

PNS ■ RANCHI

A “sealed” letter sent by the Election Commission of India to the Governor of Jharkhand on the office of profit case against Chief Minister Hemant Soren suddenly increased the political temperature in the State on Thursday.

Amid unconfirmed media reports that the ECI has recommended disqualification of Soren from the membership of the House, Governor Ramesh Bais told the media at Ranchi airport upon his return from Delhi that he had no idea about the letter and its content.

He said he would be able to comment on the issue only after he went through the letter. The Governor was in Delhi for treatment of his wife at AIIMS Delhi and he returned to Ranchi only in the afternoon. However, even after hours of his arrival, there was no word from the Raj Bhavan on the issue.

Sources said the Governor may take up the matter on Friday and make public the contents of the said letter along



Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren being greeted after a State Cabinet meeting in Ranchi on Thursday

PTI

with his decision on the issue.

In case Soren is disqualified, he could still hold the office of the CM for six months during which he would be required to get elected to the Assembly. JMM(S) sources said Soren may seek re-election from the same seat to get public endorsement against the ECI's decision and the BJP's campaign against him.

In the 2019 Assembly polls, Soren was elected from Barhait and Dumka. He gave up the Dumka seat and retained Barhait. JMM(S) sources said there was no political crisis as

the alliance Government held a comfortable majority and Soren would continue to be CM come what may.

In its letter, the ECI is reported to recommended the disqualification of Soren as MLA under Section 9A of the Representation of the People Act. The Act prohibits elected representatives from entering into any contract with the Government for “supply of goods” or “execution of any works undertaken” by it.

The ECI, on the complaints of the BJP that Soren had secured a stone mining

Middleman held  
in mining case

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday arrested “middleman” Prem Prakash in connection with its ongoing money-laundering probe into an illegal mining case in Jharkhand.

Prakash was taken into custody under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and is being produced before a Ranchi court where the federal agency will plead for his custody, officials said. This is the third arrest in the case. Earlier, the agency had arrested Pankaj Mishra, a political aide of Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren, and Mishra's associate and muscleman Bachhu Yadav.

lease in Ranchi district in his name, had undertaken detailed hearing of the case and both Soren and the BJP had presented their versions on the issue before the court.

Speculation spread that the ECI has recommended Soren's disqualification, the CM office stated, “Several media reports about ECI sending a report to the Governor ‘apparently recommending his disqualification as a MLA. No communication in this regard has been received by CMO from either ECI or Governor.’”

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Sonali's autopsy hints at  
murder, 2 aides arrested

‘3 yrs ago, 1 of her aides had sexually assaulted her after spiking her food’

PTI ■ PANAJI

The Goa Police on Thursday evening arrested two associates of BJP leader Sonali Phogat after a post-mortem report mentioned that there were “multiple blunt force injuries” on her body. Both were booked for “murder”.

Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code was added to the case related to the death of the 42-year-old leader, a senior police official told PTI here. Sudhir Sagwan and Sukhwinder Wasi, who had accompanied Phogat when she arrived in Goa on August 22, were named as accused in the case, he added.

Her brother Rinku Dhaka had filed a complaint against the two men at Anjuna Police Station on Wednesday.

A panel of forensic experts from the Goa Medical College and Hospital conducted the autopsy on her body on Thursday morning after her family agreed to the procedure. Dr Sunil Shrikant Chimbolkar of the Forensic Science Department of GMCH in his report reserved the opinion on the cause of death.

“The cause of death due to the best of my knowledge and belief is reserved pending chemical analysis. Histopathology and serological reports of the tissues preserved,” the report said.

“However there are multiple



blunt force injuries over the body. In view of the above, the manner of death is for the investigating officer to ascertain,” it added.

Phogat, who hailed from Hisar in Haryana and found fame on TikTok, was brought dead to the St Anthony Hospital in Anjuna in North Goa district on August 23 morning.

The cause was given as a suspected heart attack. Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant told reporters in Panaji on Thursday that State Director General of Police Jaspal Singh was personally monitoring the investigation.

The autopsy was earlier scheduled for Wednesday, but Phogat's brother claimed she was murdered by two of her

associates and the family would agree to autopsy only after an FIR was registered against them.

On Thursday morning, Sonali Phogat's nephew Mohinder Phogat told PTI that the family had consented to autopsy on condition that it would be video-graphed.

Dhaka, her brother, had alleged that a short while before her death, Phogat had spoken to her mother, sister and brother-in-law.

She sounded disturbed during the conversation and complained against her two colleagues, he claimed.

Three years ago, one of her aides had sexually assaulted her after spiking her food and later blackmailed her, Dhaka further alleged in the police complaint.

## CAPSULE

FOR FIRST TIME, INDIA  
VOTES AGAINST RUSSIA

Washington: India for the first time on Wednesday voted against Russia during a “procedural vote” at the UNSC on Ukraine, as the 15-member powerful United Nations body invited Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to address a meeting through a video tele-conference. P4

9 KILLED, 13 INJURED IN  
K'TAKA ROAD ACCIDENT

Tumakuru: At least 9 people were killed and 13 others injured in a road accident near Kalambellahere during early Thursday morning. The incident happened when a tempo collided with a lorry. The deceased are said to be daily wage workers from various parts of Raichur district and were on their way to Bengaluru.

SC notice to  
Centre, Guj on  
remission to  
Bilkis' rapistsPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday issued notice to Centre and Gujarat Government on pleas challenging the release of 11 convicts in the 2002 case of Bilkis Bano's gangrape and murder of her family members.

A bench headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana asked the petitioners to implead all 11 who have been granted remission as parties in the matter.

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Kejriwal protests at Rajghat,  
BJP says CM insulted Bapu

BJP has mobilised funds to topple city Govt: CM; BJP compares Kejriwal with Goebbels

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing war of words between the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) and the BJP over the liquor excise policy, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, along with his MLAs, staged a protest at Rajghat and alleged that the BJP has mobilised a massive fund to topple his Government by poaching his MLAs.

Eight MLAs skipped a meeting called by Kejriwal at his residence. Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia was absent as he was in Himachal



Delhi Chief Minister and AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal, with party MLAs, pays homage to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat

Ranjan Dimri / Pioneer

Pradesh. While Satyendra Jain is in jail, seven MLAs were out of station and Okhla MLA Amanatullah Khan joined the meeting over the phone.

Ahead of the meeting, AAP leaders said some MLAs were incommunicado for a couple of days. The party claimed its in touch with the

missing seven MLAs and determined to defeat BJP's “Operation Lotus”.

On its part, the BJP said by protesting at Rajghat to defend its leader in the liquor scam, AAP was insulting the father of the nation, who lifelong battled for abstinence.

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Two aspects of  
PMLA verdict  
need relook: SC

NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday agreed to hear a review petition against its July 27 judgment upholding the Constitutional validity of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002 (PMLA). The court said two aspects of the PMLA — not providing an Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) and reversal of the presumption of innocence — “prima facie” requires reconsideration.

“There is no need for elaborate arguments. We feel that only two aspects may be necessary to be re-looked into the judgment,” said Chief Justice of India NV Ramana.

The bench, also comprising Justices Dinesh Maheshwari and CT Ravikumar, said the court is completely in support of the

prevention of black money and money laundering as the country cannot afford such types of offences.

Referring to the two aspects relating to not providing ECIR and reversal of the presumption of innocence, the bench said after reading the judgment, “prima facie” it feels that these are the two issues that require reconsideration.

The bench said that the object of the Act is noble and the offence of money laundering is serious. On July 27, the bench headed by Justice AM Khanwilkar upheld the PMLA rejecting around 200 petitions against the Act. The bench headed by CJI issued notice to the Centre on the review petition filed by Congress MP Karti Chidambaram, accused in the ED's cases along with his father P Chidambaram.

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SC-picked panel indicts SSP for  
PM's security breach in Punjab

Anurag Thakur slams Cong for risking PM's life

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

A Supreme Court-appointed committee to probe the security breach during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Punjab in January has found that the Ferozepur SSP failed to discharge his duty though sufficient force was available.

The committee headed by former judge Indu Malhotra also told the top court that there should be an oversight committee for periodic revision and update of “Blue Book” and sensitisation courses for police officers engaged in security of the Prime Minister.

The five-member panel also told the Supreme Court that there was sufficient time with the SSP after then Punjab



ADGP G Nageshwar Rao informed him that the Prime Minister will be taking the contingency route and that he failed to take action on his instruction.

The top court said it will send the report to the Government for appropriate action.

“Ferozepur SSP Avneet Hans failed to discharge his responsibility to maintain law and order or take steps to deploy forces to secure the

route despite knowledge that there were large hostile groups on the route. He failed to do this even though sufficient force was available and even though he was informed two hours before that the Prime Minister will enter that route,” the bench headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana and also comprising Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli said on Thursday while reading from the committee's report.

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Govt slaps curbs on wheat  
export to stem price risePIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

In a bid to control the rising prices, the Government on Thursday decided to put restrictions on the export of wheat or maslin flour at a meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The decision of the Cabinet “will now allow a restriction on the export of wheat flour which will ensure a curb on rising prices of wheat flour and ensure food security of the most vulnerable sections of the society”, an official statement said.

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) will issue a notification to this effect.



“The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs has approved the proposal for amendment of policy of exemption for wheat or maslin flour from export restrictions/ban,” it said. In July, a DGFT notification said the Government had imposed a condition on exports of wheat flour or atta, maida and semolina.

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Modi for flexible work hours, says  
States sit on ₹38K cr welfare cess

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Asserting that flexible workplaces, a work-from-home ecosystem, and flexible work hours are “the need of the future, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday stressed that “full utilisation of the cess for building and construction workers is a must”.

He said more than ₹38,000 crore construction workers welfare cess have not been utilised by the States.

Modi said a lot of credit goes to our workers for making India one of the fastest growing economies once again. The Prime Minister said in the last eight years, his Government has taken the “initiative to abolish the laws from the period of slavery and reflecting the mentality of slavery”.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi addresses the National Labour Conference of Labour Ministers of all States &amp; UTs through a video conference, in New Delhi on Thursday

PTI

Addressing the National Conference of Labour Ministers of all States and Union Territories at Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh, via video conferencing, Modi said “labour Ministry is preparing

its vision for the year 2047 in Amrit Kaal”.

Union Ministers Bhupendra Yadav and Rameshwar Teli and Labour Ministers of States were among those present on the occasion.

The Prime Minister emphasised that India's labour force has a huge role to play in realising India's dreams and aspirations to build a developed nation in the Amrit Kaal.

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Panel found malware  
in 5 phones, Pegasus  
use inconclusive: SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday said the technical panel appointed by it to probe the unauthorised use of Pegasus has found some malware in five mobile phones out of the 29 examined but it could not be concluded that it was due to the Israeli spyware.

After perusing the report submitted by former apex court Justice RV Raveendran, Chief Justice NV Ramana also noted that the Central Government did not cooperate with the Pegasus probe. The SC decided to upload portions of the report on its website.

The three-judge bench said the overseeing panel has submitted a “lengthy” report in

three parts. One of the parts suggested amending the law to protect citizens' right to privacy and ensure the nation's cyber security. “They (panel) have observed that the Government of India did not cooperate. Whatever stand you had taken here, you have taken the same stand before the committee also,” said the bench, also comprising Justices Surya Kant and Hima Kohli, said.

Referring to a report of the technical panel, the bench said it was “little concerned” as it appeared that out of 29 phones, which were submitted to the technical committee for examination, five had some “kind of malware” but it cannot be said that these are due to Pegasus.

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NCR PULSE

MAN WITH STAB INJURIES FOUND BY ROAD IN VIKASPURI

New Delhi: Delhi Police on Thursday said they recently found a man with stab injuries lying on a road in west Delhi's Vikaspuri area. He was rushed to Deen Dayal Upadhyay Hospital, but the doctors declared him dead. Deceased Omkar was a resident of Baprola and worked as a labourer-cum-manager at a small assembly unit in Chander Vihar.

LABOURERS INJURED AFTER BRICKS FALL ON THEM

New Delhi: Two labourers were injured after bricks fell on them during construction work at south Delhi's Sangam Vihar. Police said that information about the incident was received at around 12 noon on Wednesday. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) and the fire brigade were also alerted.

DELHI CHILDREN'S CHOIR ENTHRALLS AUDIENCE

New Delhi: Hailing from middle to lower middle income families, thirty students from Delhi Government schools enthralled the audience with their melodious voice at a musical event here recently under the Delhi Children's Choir run by Chennai-based NalandaWay Foundation. A group of 17 singers and musicians from Ambedkar Nagar area, one of Delhi's most underserved low-income neighbourhoods which has performed at FM radio stations too guides the interested school kids hone their skills in art subjects including music.

31-YR-OLD MAN BEATEN TO DEATH

New Delhi: A 31-year-old man was beaten to death allegedly by four people in north Delhi's Timarpur area. Police said the incident took place on August 13 but it came to light after a purported video of the incident surfaced online showing the victim held down on the ground as two people beat him up with sticks. The victim, Sunil of Sanjay Basti in Timarpur, was declared a "bad character" by the local police station and had earlier been convicted of murder.

GOVT TO LAUNCH 15-POINT ANTI-POLLUTION ACTION PLAN

New Delhi: To combat the air pollution level, the Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Thursday said the city government will launch a 15-point action plan in October. According to Rai, the plan will focus on stubble management, dust pollution, vehicular emission, open burning of garbage, industrial pollution, green war room and Green Delhi application, pollution hotspots, real-time apportionment study, smog tower, e-waste parks, plantation, eco-farming, public participation, firecrackers and joint action with neighbouring states.

FROM THE REALM OF NECESSITY TO THE REALM OF FREEDOM

New Delhi: The book "From the Realm of Necessity to the Realm of Freedom - A Study of Women Farmers Under Kudumbashree Collective Farming in Kerala", authored by Jaya Mehta and Vineet Tiwari from the Joshi-Adhikari Institute of Social Studies (JAISS) was launched on Monday. Reputed academicians, activists and politicians spoke about the relevance of the book extending far beyond the state of Kerala.

PROBIOTICS AWARENESS DAY OBSERVED

New Delhi: The first-ever "Probiotics Awareness Day", organised by SRM University and the Gut Microbiota and Probiotic Science Foundation (India), the apex body on probiotics in India, was observed at Sonipat. Prof NK Ganguly, president of the Gut Microbiota and Probiotic Science Foundation (India), said, "It has reaffirmed our belief on the importance of the intestine and strong immunity to ward off lifestyle diseases."

EC sealed letter lands Jharkhand CM in soup

From Page 1

The CM said, "It apparently seems that BJP leaders including a BJP MP and his puppet journalists have themselves drafted the ECI report, which is otherwise a sealed cover report. This blatant misuse of Constitutional authorities and public agencies and its complete takeover by BJP HQ in Deendayal Upadhyay Marg in this shameful manner is unseen in Indian Democracy."

Advocate General of the State and Parliamentary

Affairs Minister Alamgir Alam visited the CM residence. And soon several JMM leaders and MLAs also gathered at the place.

The State unit of the Congress party also held a meeting at its State headquarters with MLAs, who were available in the city. After the meeting CLP leader Alamgir Alam said there was no imminent threat to the Government in the State in any circumstances. The JMM also called a press conference and played the BJP stating that

NIA searches 20 locations in Mundra Port heroin seizure case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Thursday said it has conducted simultaneous searches at 20 locations in various States in the case related to seizure of 2,988 Kg of heroin at Mundra Port on September 13 last year. The agency arrested two suspects following the searches.

The searches were conducted at 14 places in the national capital, two in Gujarat, one in Punjab and three in West Bengal. Based on investigations so far and incriminating evidence obtained during the searches, two key

accused involved in smuggling of Heroin through import consignments from Afghanistan using maritime route, were arrested on Thursday, it said.

The arrested accused persons are Harpreet Singh Talwar alias Kabir Talwar and Prince Sharma, both residents of Delhi. "The arrested accused are a part of an international



drug smuggling network involved in smuggling of large commercial quantities of Heroin originating from Afghanistan into India. Heroin was being concealed in import consignments of material, such as semi-processed Talc, Bituminous coal etc.," it said. One such consignment of about 3,000 Kg of Heroin was intercepted and

seized at Mundra Port by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) on September 13, 2021. The accused persons were involved in import of narcotics through fake/shell import companies and further facilitated its transport to Delhi-based Afghan nationals involved in purification and distribution of Heroin in many States including Delhi, Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh among others.

Investigation continues to unravel the entire supply chain and network of money laundering, drug distribution and other players involved in this international drug network, it added.

Govt slaps curbs...

From Page 1

"Export policy of wheat flour (atta) remains free but export shall be subject to recommendation of the inter-ministerial committee on export of wheat," the notification had said. When asked about the Cabinet decision, an official said earlier the export regime for wheat flour was "free" but now it is restricted. In 2021-22, India exported wheat flour worth USD 246 million. The exports stood at about USD 128 million during April-June this fiscal. Russia and Ukraine are the major exporters of wheat, accounting for around one-fourth of the global wheat trade. The war between the two countries has led to global wheat supply chain disruptions, thus increasing the demand for the Indian wheat. As a result, the price of wheat in the domestic market has shown an increase.

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The court will now hear the matter after four weeks. "So far as the technical committee report is concerned and it appears that there is a request from the persons, who have given their phones, that the report not be shared...It appears that some 29 phones have been given and in five phones, they found some malware but it does not mean that it is a malware from the Pegasus..." the CJI said. The bench said the report of Justice Raveendran has suggestions on protecting the citizens' right to privacy, the future course of action, accountability, amending the law to improve privacy protection and the grievances redressal mechanism. It said that the report of the overseeing judge suggested some remedial measures and one is

that there should be "amendments in the existing laws and the procedures on surveillance and right to privacy."

"Second is enhancing and improving the cyber security of the nation," the bench said, adding that the report also suggested the "establishment of a mechanism for citizens to raise grievances of illegal surveillance." Noting that it was a "huge report", the bench said it will see what portion can be given and added that there was also a request not to release the report. "These are technical issues. So far as Justice Raveendran's report is concerned, we will upload it on the website," the CJI said. Senior lawyers Kapil Sibal and Rakesh Dwivedi urged the bench to release a "redacted report" to the litigants. When the bench said the Centre did not cooperate, Solicitor General Tushar

Mehta responded by saying he was unaware of that.

The technical panel, which included three experts on cyber security, digital forensics, networks, and hardware, was asked to "inquire, investigate and determine" whether Pegasus spyware was used for snooping on citizens and their probe would be monitored by Raveendran. The panel members were Naveen Kumar Chaudhary, Prabhakaran P and Ashwin Anil Gumaste.

Justice Raveendran, who headed the monitoring panel, was assisted by former IPS officer Alok Joshi and cyber security expert Sundeeep Oberoi in monitoring the inquiry of the technical panel. The top court last year ordered a probe into the allegations of the use of Israeli spyware by government agencies for targeted surveillance of politicians, jour-

Special Cell busts gang dealing in illegal arms; 2 held

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With the arrest of two men, the Special Cell of Delhi Police on Thursday claimed to have busted a gang dealing in illegal firearms allegedly sourcing weapons from Madhya Pradesh and supplying those in the Delhi-NCR, Haryana and western Uttar Pradesh. Police said that the duo had already supplied more than 500 firearms in the Delhi and its peripherals in three years.

The accused have been identified as Pramod Kumar (35) and Rohitash (31), both residents of Uttar Pradesh. They were arrested in Delhi,

the police said, adding they have been booked under sections of the Arms (Amendment) Act, 2019.

The police said 12 good-quality pistols and 45 live cartridges were seized from them. According to Jasmeet Singh, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Special Cell, police team has busted an interstate gun-running racket by arresting two arms suppliers.

"Both of them were arrested in the evening of August 22 near the Modi mill bus stop on Captain Gaur Marg in New Delhi where they had come to supply firearms and ammunition to one of their contacts," said the DCP.

Modi for flexible work hours...

From Page 1

He pointed out that the e-Shram portal is one of the key initiatives to bring the labour force into the ambit of social security. In just one year, about 28 crore workers from 400 areas have been registered on the portal. This has especially benefited construction workers, migrant labourers, and domestic workers. He requested all the Ministers to integrate state portals with the e-Shram portal.

"With this in mind, 29 labour laws have been converted into 4 simple labour codes". This will ensure the empowerment of workers via minimum wages, job security, social security and health security, he added.

Monsoon withdrawal from Sept 1st week

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) on Thursday predicted that the southwest monsoon is likely to enter its withdrawal phase in the first week of September, nearly a fortnight ahead of the normal date.

"Conditions are likely to become favourable for the commencement of withdrawal of southwest monsoon from some parts of northwest India during the week beginning September 1," the IMD said in the extend-

ed range forecast released on Thursday.

The normal date for withdrawal of the southwest monsoon is September 17. However, the actual withdrawal of the southwest monsoon usually happens either earlier or later given the dynamic nature of the weather systems.

Monsoon rains have been nine per cent above normal for the country as a whole, but states such as Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Manipur have reported deficit rainfall of over 40 per cent of the long period average, leaving the farmers in a lurch.

SC-picked panel indicts SSP for PM's security breach in Punjab

From Page 1

The committee has also identified some remedial measures to strengthen the safety and security of the Prime Minister while on tour. On January 5, Modi's convoy was stranded on a flyover due to a blockade by protesters in Ferozepur after which he returned from Punjab without attending any event, including a rally.

Reacting to the SC findings, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said that lapses in the Prime Minister's security can-

not be dismissed and questioned why then Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi, the DGP and the chief secretary did not receive the Prime Minister.

"Spot where his convoy stopped was in the middle of the bridge, only 100m away from protesters, only 10 km away from Pakistan. Anything could have happened. CM was not available even on call. PM stood there for 20 minutes but even 2 minutes were enough for anything to happen," Thakur said.

"This gives rise to ques-

tions. Who gave the protestors knowledge of the PM's route? Who was SSP speaking with repeatedly on call? Who was he taking instructions from?" he said.

He attacked the Congress saying the lapse could have also created a catastrophic situation.

"After all, at whose behest was Congress doing all this? The Congress runs at the behest of one family (the Gandhi family). Former Chief Minister Charanjit Singh Channi Ji should tell on whose behest the PM's security lapsed," said the Minister.

SC notice to Centre, Guj on remission to Bilkis'...

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The bench, also comprising Justices Ajay Rastogi and Vikram Nath, posted the matter for hearing after two weeks.

"Day in day out, those who are convicted and complete their sentence, they are eligible for remission.... What is the exception? ...Was there application of mind in deciding remission petitions" the bench observed. During the hearing, senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the petitioners, referred to the facts of the case and said several people, including minors, were killed and a pregnant woman was raped. "The only question is, in these

circumstances, what is the judicial review of the court in the context of remission," he said.

Sibal said the petitioners want the apex court to look at the record and find whether there was application of mind. The Chief Justice of India referred to an apex court judgment in May this year. It said the State of Gujarat was the "appropriate Government" competent to examine the application filed for premature release of a life convict in a murder case, which was transferred from a court there to a Mumbai court for trial in August 2004. "I have seen somewhere that it is as if the court has granted

permission for release. No," Justice Ramana, who retires on Friday, observed.

The plea in the apex court has been filed by CPI(M) leader Subhashini Ali, journalist Revathy Laul and activist Roop Rekha Rani. TMC MP Mahua Moitra has also filed a separate petition. One of the counsels appearing in the matter said the petitioners are "third party" to the criminal prosecution in this case and have not made those, who were granted remission, as party in the plea.

"Why have you not included him as a party respondent?" the bench asked Sibal. The lawyer said the petitioners

would make them party in the case. "Petitioners are directed to implead the persons who are released by virtue of order.... Issue notice. List after two weeks," the bench said.

Bilkis Bano was 21 years old and five months pregnant when she was gangraped while fleeing the riots that broke out after the Godhra train burning in 2002. Her three-year-old daughter was among the seven killed. The 11 men convicted in the case walked out of the Godhra sub-jail on August 15 after the Gujarat Government allowed their release under its remission policy. They had completed more than 15 years in jail.

Kejriwal protests at Rajghat, BJP says he insulted...

From Page 1

Minutes after AAP leaders went to Rajghat, the Delhi BJP said Kejriwal's Rajghat visit was part of his theatrics to divert people's attention from the liquor scam and the party will sprinkle 'gangajal' to sanctify the place. The BJP also compared Kejriwal with Goebbels. Kejriwal and several of his spokesperson and senior leaders throughout the day claimed that the BJP has kept aside Rs 800 crore to bring down the Delhi Government - Rs 20 crore per MLA.

"The country wants to know, The country wants to know, whose money is it and where is it kept? None of our MLAs will break. The Government is stable. The good work in Delhi will con-

tinue." Kejriwal said adding, that the citizens of the country want to know about the source of this money.

"Is it from GST or the PM CARES Fund? Have some of their friends given them this money?" the Chief Minister asked.

Addressing the recent political developments and snubbing the rumours aside, Kejriwal reposed faith in his MLAs and said that he is extremely happy to see that even a single MLA has bowed down to BJP threat.

At Rajghat, Kejriwal said nothing was recovered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) during its raid at Deputy CM Manish Sisodia's residence earlier this week. "Even mattresses and walls at my deputy Manish Sisodia's residence

were searched by the CBI, but not even a single unaccounted penny was found. A day after the CBI's raids, Sisodia was approached by the BJP with an offer of the chief minister's post and to betray Kejriwal. I am lucky to have Sisodia, who has no greed for the chief minister's post," Kejriwal told reporters.

Accusing Kejriwal of diverting the issue, party spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi and Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma said Kejriwal has not answered charges in the liquor scam and only brought baseless allegations against us.

"Kejriwal should talk about the liquor policy. But he is not saying anything about this. Instead, he has come up with his worn-out script," BJP MP Manoj Tiwari said in a separate video. The BJP leaders said the

fact that they (AAP leaders) have gone to the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi means they have definitely committed an act which is to be considered a sin. "So, in order to purify it, the BJP workers will sprinkle Ganga jal on the samadhi," Trivedi said.

"The BJP is asking pointed questions. However, the AAP is beating around the bush and evading the questions," Tiwari added.

Taking a dig at the Kejriwal, BJP MP Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma said Kejriwal must be watching movies and making scripts. "He alleges that BJP leaders are threatening them, but is not disclosing their names. Then he claims his MLAs are missing, but again he won't name them. If he gives us the name of the MLAs who

apparently were missing, we could have looked for them," Verma said.

In a video, Tiwari said Kejriwal has become the 'descendant of Goebbels' who used to think that repeating a lie will make it a truth. Tiwari said Kejriwal has come up with his same, worn-out script. "Kejriwal should talk about the liquor policy. But he is not saying anything about this. Instead, he has come up with his worn-out script. People never understand how much taxpayers' money you have amassed. You have 'become' the descendant of Goebbels who used to think that if you repeat your lies, it will come true. But now people have become conscious and taken to the street in protest," Tiwari said.



# AAP misleading public on liquor scam: BJP

BJP holds protests in 270 places in city, seeks resignation of CM, Deputy CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP-AAP clash over the Excise Policy probe intensified on Thursday with the saffron party comparing Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal with Nazi propaganda Minister Goebbels.

The Delhi BJP hit out at the AAP saying its allegations were like a "movie script" meant to mislead the public on the "scam" in Delhi's now-scrapped Excise Policy 2021-22. BJP workers on Thursday staged a massive protest at 270 places in the national Capital, demanding the sacking of Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia.

"This is a total flop show of the AAP. Kejriwal ji you have to speak on the Excise Policy but your silence on this issue says a lot. You always come up with the same old, worn-out movie script to divert public attention. Arvind, you have become a descendant of Goebbels, who used to think that if you keep telling the public a lie, they will start believing it as a truth," Tiwari said in a video. Tiwari said those who indulged in the "liquor scam"



visited the memorial of Mahatma Gandhi.

Meanwhile, thousands of saffron party workers staged protests and shouted slogans such as "Manish Sisodia istefa do". They also burned an effigy with the face of Sisodia on one side and Kejriwal's face on the other.

Addressing the protestors at RK Ashram, Gupta said that the AAP has no answers as it knows its deceptive promises to Delhiites have now been exposed. That's why AAP leaders are misleading people by talking about things other than the Excise Policy.

"The BJP has many ques-

tions including, if the Excise Policy was so good, why did the AAP Government take it back? Why was retailing allowed to the manufacturer? Why did they waive off Rs 144 crore of liquor mafia and then again, Rs 30 crore?" Gupta questioned. Union Minister of State, Meenakshi Lekhi said that the

AAP Government had said before implementing the Excise Policy that it would increase the revenue of the national Capital by crores of rupees but the fact was that it only helped Kejriwal fill his pockets.

"Kejriwal used to say that if there is any corruption, he is a traitor to the country and so in light of this he should not remain in office. In such a situation, now what does he have to say about Satyendra Jain and Manish Sisodia, who have remained in the party and post even after being involved in corruption," she asked.

Leader of Opposition Ramvir Singh Bidhuri also demanded the resignation of Sisodia and said that the AAP's truth is in front of the people of the Capital. "They are playing a game of accusation and counter-accusation but by doing all this they cannot escape their sins.

The AAP Government will have to answer why liquor vends were opened in violation of the Master Plan and rules," Bidhuri said, adding that those who campaigned against corruption are now themselves trapped in it.

# PM not solving inflation, joblessness woes: AAP

Modi's energy, hard work focused on trying to bring down State Governments: Atishi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



She further said that an attempt is being made to bring down the AAP Government in Delhi by levelling all kinds of false allegations and making all kinds of false cases.

"India is going through a crisis as there are many big problems in front of it. The biggest crisis in front of India is inflation, which is at its peak. Today poverty is at its peak.

This country has never seen so much unemployment. It's sad that Prime Minister Modi does not have the time to solve big problems. Instead, Modi's entire energy and hard work are focused on trying to bring down State Governments," she added.

Earlier, addressing a press conference after Kejriwal's meeting with party MLAs at his residence, AAP leader Saurabh Bharadwaj said the BJP's attempts to poach AAP lawmakers have failed. "Altogether 53 out of 62 MLAs were present

at the meeting.

Manish Sisodia is in Himachal Pradesh and Speaker Ram Niwas Goel is outside the country. CM spoke to other MLAs over the phone and everyone said they are with Kejriwal till their last breath," said Bharadwaj. Bharadwaj claimed that the BJP wanted to poach 40 of AAP's 62 lawmakers in the 70-member Delhi Assembly.

"BJP leader Manoj Tiwari claimed that the scam is worth ₹8,000 crore. Another BJP spokesperson said that the amount is ₹10,000 crore. Shehzad Poonawalla claimed that the amount is ₹144 crore. Two days ago, Gaurav Bhatia said the scam is worth ₹30 crore. But the alleged amount per the CBI's FIR is ₹1 crore," said Bharadwaj.

The AAP leader said that the reality of that ₹1 crore was that one liquor shop owner has transferred that amount to another liquor shop owner through a cheque. "They are calling it a scam and alleging that this money went to Sisodia. It is absolutely ludicrous and childish," claimed Bharadwaj. An AAP leader had earlier claimed some lawmakers were unreachable ahead of meeting without naming anyone and said party was constantly trying to reach them.

# Kejriwal's visit to Rajghat nothing but a high-voltage drama, says Alka Lamba

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Congress leader Alka Lamba on Thursday said that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's visit to Rajghat was "nothing but a high-voltage drama" and asked why his party hasn't approached the Delhi Police or the Enforcement Directorate if it has proof of the BJP's poaching attempts.

"If there is any truth to the AAP's claims that the BJP offered money to its MLAs to get them to switch sides, the Kejriwal-led party should make public the evidence. The Congress is ready to support the AAP, she said.

"The visit by Kejriwal and AAP MLAs to Rajghat was nothing but a high-voltage drama. If they have really been approached by the BJP and poaching attempts made, shouldn't they have gone to the Delhi Police Headquarters or the ED's office instead of going to the Rajghat," Lamba asked in a video message.

"AAP leader Saurabh Bharadwaj has claimed that they have all evidence of



poaching attempts, then what are they waiting for? Should they indulge in drama or make these details public and expose them (BJP)? If there is any truth to their claims, they should make it (the evidence) public. The Congress is ready to support them and even accompany them to the police and the ED," she added.

"The Chief Minister not only called the media to only Rajghat, but also threatened to withdraw advertisements worth crores if they asked any questions. The AAP has been exposed over its Excise Policy and now just because they have been caught, Kejriwal tries to take refuge behind the education policy," Lamba alleged.

# Cancel Munawar Faruqui's show, VHP tells Delhi Police

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) has written a letter to Delhi Police seeking the cancellation of stand-up comedian Munawar Faruqui's show scheduled for August 28. The VHP said that the workers and Bajrang Dal will hold a protest if the show is not cancelled.

According to the letter written by Surendra Kumar Gupta, General Secretary, VHP, Faruqui is set to perform at the Kedarnath Stadium in Delhi's Civic Centre on August 28. "This individual mocks Hindu gods and goddesses in his show.

As a result of this, communal tensions were triggered in Bhagya Nagar. We urge you to immediately cancel this show, or else, Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal activists will oppose the show and hold protests against the same," the letter in Hindi further read.

Faruqui was to perform in Bengaluru when the city police denied permission for the same scheduled for August 19. However, the day before the show, Faruqui said that it had been cancelled due to health reasons.

This was the second time that Faruqui's show has been called off in Bengaluru, the first time in November last year. However, his show in Hyderabad last week was a suc-



cess despite threats from right-wing groups.

On January 1, 2021, Faruqui performed a stand-up show at Munro Cafe in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, which was interrupted by Eklavya Singh Gaur, son of BJP MLA Malini Gaur, who accused him of making malicious jokes about Hindu deities and the Minister of Home Affairs of India, Amit Shah.

On January 2, 2021, he was arrested by Madhya Pradesh Police in the midst of his comic act, stating that he was arrested under the Hate speech laws in India.

His arrest was heavily criticised for not respecting a comedian's freedom of speech, including by a joint initiative of the global Indian diaspora on February 2, 2021 that said a group of South Asian American stand-up comedians will perform a virtual comedy show on February 6, 2021 to show their solidarity with jailed Faruqui. He was subsequently granted bail by the Supreme Court of India.

# Rules for convening Assembly session must be followed, Bidhuri tells L-G

If AAP does not follow rules, then House should be dissolved: LoP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

BJP leader and Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri on Thursday told Lieutenant-Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena that rules should be followed for convening the session of the Assembly and if the AAP does not follow the rules, then the Assembly should be dissolved.

The BJP leader demanded that the one-day special session called by the Government on Friday should be stopped and instead the Monsoon Session of the Assembly should be called for at least five days.

He further accused the AAP of making the Assembly an arena of politics and keeping all rules aside. He said the main agenda of the AAP Government will be Modibashing or Centre-bashing and they would not discuss the liquor policy "scam."

"In the past, whenever the Delhi Assembly session was convened, it ended with Modi Government bashing. Till date, Kejriwal is busy doing drama but he has not answered any query raised by the BJP," said Bidhuri. Earlier, Bidhuri held a meeting with BJP MLAs ahead of the session to discuss the strategy in the House. The



meeting was attended by all BJP MLAs including Mohan Singh Bisht, Vijender Gupta, Omprakash Sharma, Jitendra Mahajan among others.

Bidhuri said the one-day session of the Delhi Assembly has been called by breaking rules. "There have been Monsoon Sessions of all the Legislative Assemblies including the Parliament, but the Monsoon Session of the Delhi Legislative Assembly was not called.

The Kejriwal Government does not want to talk about the issues of the people, nor does it want to answer the questions of the people," he said.

"Whenever the AAP needs to talk on any subject of its choice, it calls a day-long session of the Assembly. Surprisingly, neither questions nor answers are asked in the session and even members are allowed to raise short-duration discussions," said Bidhuri.

"Before convening the session, 15 days' notice should be given, and the members should be allowed to express their views. If AAP is determined to kill democracy like this, then Delhi Assembly should be dissolved," Bidhuri added.

# CM-LG meet called off for Spl Session

NEW DELHI: Delhi Lieutenant-Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena and Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's weekly meeting scheduled for Friday has been called off owing to the Vidhan Sabha special session that will be held to discuss central probe agencies' action in the Excise Policy issue and the AAP's allegation that the BJP was trying to buy its MLAs.

The Assembly session is scheduled to be begin at 11 am on August 26. "The weekly meeting of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Lieutenant-Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena will not be held tomorrow. The meeting has been put off owing to the Vidhan Sabha session," a Government statement read.

Saxena and Kejriwal meet every Friday to discuss matters pertaining to the development of Delhi.

# Appeal to use waste from 3 garbage dumping sites has paid off: L-G



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has received an order for more than 10,000 metric tonnes (MTs) of inert and Construction and Demolition (C&D) waste from private entities, out of which 8421.75 MTs has already been lifted from the dumping sites.

This comes following the directions of the Delhi Lieutenant-Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena to utilise the C&D waste inert at the three garbage dumping sites.

According to the statement released by the Raj Niwas, the idea was to address the issue of accumulated C&D and inert waste at the three dumping sites of the MCD by appealing to the industry, contractors, road constructing agencies, builders and individuals in Delhi-NCR to pick up and use this reusable waste free of cost.

"The appeal first made on July 21 and later on August 4 has borne fruitful and encouraging results with people of Delhi-NCR as well as various agencies warming up to the idea of recycling the C&D waste and inert for their own use and ordering 10,500 MTs in less than one month," it read.

"The L-G had also asked to other government agencies involved in building and road construction like Delhi Development Authority (DDA), Public Works Department (PWD), New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC), and Central Public Works Department (CPWD), etc. to start using inert and C&D waste for their activities. DDA and PWD have already decided to use the same," it stated. "This exercise by MCD has effected a win-win situation for all stakeholders, which is resulting in three pronged benefits. While it is saving costs for MCD as well as people/agencies utilizing the waste, it is also ensuring that the height of the garbage mounds gets reduced,"

# Property tax in Delhi may rise

MCD's valuation panel has recommended increase in 6 factors used to calculate annual value of property

SAURAV GUPTA ■ NEW DELHI

In what could come as a setback to Delhiites, property tax in the city could soar as the BJP-ruled Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has come out with a plan to collect Rs 3,850 crore as revenue from house tax in the financial year 2022-23 and the fifth Municipal Valuation Committee (MVC) has recommended an increase in six factors which are used to calculate the annual value of a property.

In the financial year 2021-2022, the three civic bodies collected around Rs 2,000 crore. As many as 12 lakh households registered for property tax collection.

The MVC said in its recommendations made in an interim report to the MCD that an increase in the six factors used to calculate a property's value is needed due to inflation.

The MCD has uploaded the report on its website and issued a public notice inviting objections from the general public. Colonies in Delhi have been divided into eight categories from A to H. A and B category colonies comprise posh areas, C and D middle class neighbourhoods, E and F lower middle-class areas, and

the statement said.

"Encouraged by these results, the LG has directed the MCD to further augment engagement with concerned stakeholders and reiterate its appeal to them so that the process of off take of C&D waste and inert could be expedited. It may be noted that the LG himself is steering engagements with various government

G and H unauthorised colonies. The base unit area value for category A colonies is Rs 630 currently, Rs 500 for category B, Rs 400 for category C, Rs 320 for category D, Rs 270 for category E, Rs 230 for category F, Rs 200 for category G and Rs 100 for category H. The proposed values are Rs 800 for category A, Rs 680 for category B, Rs 550 for category C, Rs 440 for category D and Rs 370 for category E.

Additionally, the MVC has also recommended 1.1 and 1.2 as the 'age factor' for buildings constructed from 2010 to 2019 and 2020 to 2029, respectively. "The age factor is 0.5 for properties constructed in the 1950s, '0.6' for those in the 1960s and '1' for those built between 2000 and 2010.

According to a senior MCD official, the property tax department is the backbone of the civic body in terms of revenue generation. The civic body has planned a massive campaign in unauthorised colonies to create awareness about property tax, and ease the process of payment of property tax for Delhiites.

The MCD will conduct a door-to-door campaign in JJ colonies along with the form through which the people can easily file property tax. Besides, they will also distribute pamphlets about the tax.

In the financial year 2021-2022, the trifurcated South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) had the highest property tax collection worth Rs 1,081 crore.

and private agencies and organizations to ensure reuse and recycling of the legacy waste in the City," it read.

"Due to continuous dumping for the last 35-40 years, heaps of garbage at these landfill sites have turned into garbage 'mountains' of 50 to 60 metres height, containing 280 lakh tonnes of garbage," the statement further added.

# White Tiger dies at Zoo due to old age

NEW DELHI: A 15-year-old white tiger has died at the Delhi zoo due to old age-related issues, officials said on Thursday. Tiger Vijay, who was born at the zoo, died on Wednesday. He did not have any health problems, an official

said. The zoo has two pairs of white tigers and four Bengal tigers — one male and three females — left. Normally, a white tiger has a lifespan of 12 to 14 years in the wild. As per RTI filed last year, the National Zoological Park located in the

national capital has lost around 450 animals, including tigers, lions and others since 2018. The Delhi zoo, hosts 1,347 creatures and in 2019, it saw death of maximum animals which was 189. There were 123 deaths in 2020 and 137 in 2018.







# Three heavily-armed Pakistani terrorists gunned down in Uri

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ SRINAGAR

Three heavily armed terrorists from Pakistan were gunned down by the alert jawans of the Indian Army along the Line of Control in the Uri sector of North Kashmir's Baramulla district on Thursday.

The infiltration bid was foiled near Madiyan Nanak post in Kamalkote area of Uri sector.

It seems the terrorist handlers sitting across the line of control have activated the launching pads to push small groups of infiltrators via Rajouri/Poonch and Uri sector.

The infiltration bid in the Uri sector was foiled close on the heels of two back to back incidents in the Nowshera sector of Rajouri.

Two infiltrators were killed

on August 23/24 in the Lam sector while one of them was caught alive while he was escorting two others inside the Indian territory on August 21 in the Jhangar sector.

A Srinagar based Defence Spokesman Col Emron Musavi Thursday said, "the operation was launched on the basis of military intelligence inputs about the presence of suspected infiltrators in the area". Subsequently, multiple ambushes were launched to trap the group of infiltrators on August 24.

According to a Defence Spokesman, the infiltrators had managed to sneak inside the Indian territory taking advantage of the thick foliage and blanket of clouds. The infiltration bid was detected by the alert troops with the help of Intensive electronic sur-



veillance around 7.00 a.m on August 25.

However, the first contact with the terrorists was established around 8.45 a.m leading to a heavy exchange of firing in which three terrorists were

neutralised. The general searches in the area continued till 2.00 p.m.

The troops also recovered two AK rifles, one Chinese M-16 rifle along with other war like stores.

# PM to grace Sept 2 commissioning of desi aircraft carrier INS Vikrant

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will preside over the ceremony on September 2 in Kochi to commission the first indigenously-designed and built aircraft carrier INS Vikrant into the Indian Navy.

With this induction, India will join the elite league of nations to have its own indigenously-made aircraft carrier. The other countries are US, UK, China and France.

Giving the details of the induction schedule, Vice-Chief of Navy Vice-Admiral SN Ghormade said here on Thursday the commissioning of the INS Vikrant, costing about ₹20,000 crore, will contribute in ensuring peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. Deliberations are on for constructing the second indigenous aircraft carrier, he said. At

present, India has lone aircraft carrier INS Vikramaditya built by Russia as per the Indian Navy's specifications.

The commissioning of the aircraft carrier will be an "unforgettable" day as it will significantly enhance the country's overall maritime capabilities, Ghormade said.

He said its commissioning will be a historic occasion and that it is also a symbol of "national unity" as its components came from a significant 18 states and Union Territories. Moreover, the ship has 76 per cent indigenous components.

The aircraft carrier successfully completed the fourth and final phase of the sea trials last month. The ship has over 2,300 compartments, designed for a crew of around 1700 people, including specialised cabins to accommodate women officers. The ship weighs more than 43,000 tons



and is the largest ship ever to be built in India.

It has a top speed of around 28 knots and a cruising speed of 18 knots with an endurance of about 7,500 nautical miles. The aircraft carrier is 262 metres long, 62 metres wide and it has a height of 59 metres. Its construction began in 2009. The ship is powered by four gas turbines totalling 88 MW power.

The ship also boasts of a fully-fledged state of the art medical complex with latest

medical equipment facilities.

Ghormade said the aircraft landing trials on board INS Vikrant will begin in November and they will be completed by mid-2023, adding MiG-29K jets will operate from the warship for the first few years.

The Navy is in the process of procuring 26 deck-based aircraft and it has narrowed down on Boeing's F/A-18 Super Hornet and French aerospace major Dassault Aviation's Rafale M aircraft.

# Didi asks HC not to be influenced by media trials

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday urged the higher judiciary not to get influenced by the media trial while delivering judgements in high profile cases.

Speaking during a function attended by Calcutta High Court judges the Chief Minister said media trials harmed people's personal prestige and reputation which was why it was necessary for the judges to ignore media trials while delivering their judgements.

"No media trials sirs ... I will also request the honourable judges that besides speedy justice it is also necessary that media trials harm personal reputation of people..." so it was necessary that judges discounted media trials, Banerjee



said reminding how her government had set up fast track courts which had been discontinued by the central government.

The Chief Minister made these statements in the presence of the Chief Justice and a galaxy of other judges.

Banerjee's statement came close on the heels of the arrest of two top Trinamool Congress leaders, Partha Chatterjee a former minister and Anubrata Mondal in corruption and cow smuggling cases.

Meanwhile a group of 81 advocates have petitioned the

Supreme Court to transfer the case of Mondal out of Bengal in the wake threats issued to the CBI court judge hearing his case.

The judge had earlier complained to the Calcutta High Court that he and his family had received threats that they would be implicated false narcotic cases should he not grant bail to the Trinamool Congress strongman.

In a related development the CBI had issued lookout notice for TMC MLA and deposed Primary School Services chairman Manik Bhattacharya after he failed to turn up before the Agency for interrogation on two successive occasions. Earlier the ED had raided his houses and grilled him for hours.

Lookout notices were issued in airports, sea ports and other places sources said.

# Jat strongman Bhupendra appointed UP BJP chief

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With an eye on the Jatland of western Uttar Pradesh in view of 2024 elections, the Bharatiya Janata Party has appointed Bhupendra Singh Chaudhary as the president of the Uttar Pradesh unit of the party.

Bhupendra Singh, a Jat leader, is Panchayati Raj Minister in the Yogi Adityanath government and is a member of the UP Legislative Council. He has replaced Swatantra Dev Singh, who is Jal Shakti Minister in the UP government and hails from Bundelkhand.

Bhupendra Singh Chaudhary's appointment as the UP BJP chief is a clear indication that the party wants to keep its Jat votes intact as this vote base is slipping away from the ruling party after last year's massive protests against the contentious farm laws and the indications are that the farmers might start their agitation before the Lok Sabha elections once again. His appointment is also seen as an



attempt to dent the influence of the Samajwadi Party-Rashtriya Lok Dal alliance in west UP where the Jat community holds sway in about 20 Lok Sabha constituencies. The post of UP BJP president had fallen vacant after Swatantra Dev Singh was made a minister in March 2022 as BJP has a policy under which one person cannot hold two posts. Many names had started doing rounds. On Sunday last, Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya had created a stir when he tweeted to say: "Sangathan sarkar se bada hai (organisation is bigger than the government)." The tongues had started wagging that Maurya could be the next UP BJP president.

But on Tuesday, Bhupendra Singh, who is considered close to

Home Minister Amit Shah, was suddenly called to Delhi by the party, sparking speculations that he might be made the state president. On Thursday the announcement was made.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath congratulated

Bhupendra Singh Chaudhary on his appointment, saying his "energetic leadership" will set new benchmarks for the party's success. "Hearty congratulations and best wishes to senior and popular politician Shri Bhupendra Singh Choudhary

on becoming the president of @BJP4UP. Undoubtedly, under your energetic leadership, BJP will set new benchmarks of success in the state with the spirit of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas,'" he tweeted in Hindi.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is known to all that I, Dr. Gurpreet Singh Dhillon S/o Sh. Baldev Singh, R/o 662, Sector-16-D, Chandigarh, am the owner of Residential Property bearing Plot No.04, Block-B, Sector-36, NOIDA, Dist. Gautam Budh Nagar-U.P. area 300.0 Sq.Mtrs. The original Share Certificate bearing Membership No.2923(A) issued by Kendriya Sarkari Sewa Sahkari Bhumi Tatha Grih Nirman Samiti Ltd. (U.P.) against the said property is misplaced/lost anywhere and could not be traced till date, if found I shall never misuse the same.

**Dr. Gurpreet Singh Dhillon**

**CORRIGENDUM**

**ICICI Bank** | Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

Notices under SARFAESI Act for Loan Account No. **LBGUR00002961874**, Name of the Borrower **KUNWER SACHDEV** property address **FLAT NO.1625 B, THE MAGNOLIAS DLF CITY, DLF GOLF LINKS, PHASE V, GURGAON HARYANA, (ADMEASURING AN AREA 9800 SQ FT.)** against which Symbolic publication dated October 16,2020 . We wish to mention that inadvertently and unintentionally a typographical error has occurred in the said publication and was mentioned as **FLAT NO.1625 B, THE MAGNOLIAS DLF CITY, PHASE V, GURGAON HARYANA, (ADMEASURING AN AREA 10174 SQ FT.)** instead of **FLAT NO.1625 B, THE MAGNOLIAS DLF CITY, DLF GOLF LINKS, PHASE V, GURGAON HARYANA, (ADMEASURING AN AREA 9800 SQ FT.)**. We therefore, request you to please read the same as **FLAT NO.1625 B, THE MAGNOLIAS DLF CITY, DLF GOLF LINKS, PHASE V, GURGAON HARYANA, (ADMEASURING AN AREA 9800 SQ FT.)** All other details mentioned in the said Notice dated will remain same. We sincerely regret the inconvenience caused to you in this regard.

**Date : August 26, 2022**  
**Place: Delhi/ NCR**

**Authorized Officer**  
**ICICI Bank Limited**

**SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE**

**ICICI Bank** | Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

**Whereas**  
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Tarun Lalwani/ Anita Lalwani/ Jawaharlal Mahender Kumar Lalwani/ Premilata Lalwani/ Neatxcess Communications Ltd/ Telexcell Information Systems Ltd/ LBDEL00002438189	Flat No 1603, 16th Floor, Gurgaon Gateway, Tower- B, Sector -112&113, Village Baghghera, Gurgaon Manesar, Gurgaonn 122001/ August 23, 2022	April 02, 2022/ Rs. 2,10,13,401/-	Delhi/ NCR
2.	Dhiraj Tyagi/ J Rajkumar./ LBDEL00004326210	Flat No-A-106, Solera Tower-A1,11th Floor, Solera Cluster A and A1, Sector-107, Haryana, Gurgaon, 122001/ August 23, 2022	April 25,2022 Rs. 17,92,120/-	Delhi/ NCR
3.	Anju Chaudhary/ Sharad Chaudhary/ LBDEL00002081263/ LBDEL00002084845	Flat No.4181, 18th Floor, Tower 4, Type-D, "Aits Tourmaline", Sector-109B, Gurgaon- 122001/ August 23, 2022	April 16,2022 Rs. 1,10,51,630/-	Delhi/ NCR
4.	Anita/ Pardeep Kumar/ LBND000005214533	Plot No-591, Urban Estate, Sector-47, Gurgaon Haryana/ August 23, 2022	April 26,2022 Rs.50,36,850/-	Delhi/ NCR

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

**Date : August 26, 2022**  
**Place: Delhi NCR**

**Authorized Officer**  
**ICICI Bank Limited**

# Recruitment of Gurkha soldiers to continue under Agnipath scheme

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Alaying apprehensions regarding recruitment of Gurkha soldiers from Nepal, India on Thursday said the process will continue under the newly-introduced Agnipath scheme. The scheme was launched on June 14 for all the three Services.

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said here on Thursday, "We have been recruiting Gurkhas soldiers to the Indian Army for a long time. We look forward to continuing to recruit Gurkha soldiers under the Agnipath scheme."

This reiteration came a day after Nepal requested the Indian Army to postpone the recruitment of Nepalis – which was planned to begin on Thursday – until there is more clarity about the



Agnipath tour-of-duty scheme. India has 43 battalions of Gurkha soldiers, including Indian and Nepalese. According to Nepali newspaper My Republica, Foreign Minister Narayan Khadka called Indian ambassador Naveen Srivastava to the ministry on Wednesday and asked him to postpone the plan to recruit Nepali youth – who are drafted into the Indian Army's Gurkha regiment – under the Agnipath

scheme.

The Indian Army had plans to recruit Nepalese in Butwal on Thursday and Dharan on September 1 in Nepal. According to My Republica, Nepal foreign minister Khadka told the Indian ambassador that all "political parties in Nepal should have a unanimous view about the plan to recruit Nepali youth – and requested India to stop the recruitment until a consensus is reached.

# CBI files chargesheet against 5 in connection with ₹9 lakh bribery case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has filed a charge sheet against five persons, including a Joint Drug Controller of the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation(CDSCO) and a Biocon Biologics executive in connection with a Rs 9 lakh bribery case.

In its charge sheet filed on August 18, the CBI had alleged that the bribe payment was made to Joint Drug Controller S Eswara Reddy after clearance from associate vice president of Biocon Biologics L Praveen Kumar, officials said.

The agency has also named Dinesh Dua, director at Synergy Network India Private Limited, who allegedly gave the bribe to Reddy, Guljit Sethi, an alleged conduit of Biocon Biologics, as well as assistant drug inspector Animesh Kumar in the charge sheet, they said.



The bribe was allegedly meant for favourably recommending the file of Insulin Aspart Injection to the Subject Expert Committee (SEC) meeting on May 18 for waiving the Phase 3 clinical trial, they said.

The sanction for prosecution against Reddy and other CDSCO officials is awaited, they said.

In a coordinated operation, the CBI had arrested all five accused.

Biocon Biologics is a subsidiary of Kiran Mazumdar Shaw-led Biocon. However, the company has denied the allegations of bribery.

# Aspirations of people in democracy expressed through Parliament: Birla

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker OM Birla on Thursday said the hopes and aspirations of people in a parliamentary democracy are expressed through the Parliament and it is the latter's responsibility to act accordingly. Birla, who is leading an Indian Parliamentary Delegation to the 65th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, being held in Halifax in Canada, was addressing the workshop on "A People's Parliament: Accessibility through Innovation".

Speaking on the successful democratic system in India, Birla said that the people in India have consistently reposed their faith in democratic institutions through free and fair elections in the 75 years since independence. The increasing



voter turnout in the elections has proved that the people consider democracy as the best form of governance.

Lauding the emergence of India at global stage, Birla said that we are celebrating this year as the Amrit Mahotsav of Independence to mark the successful journey of Indian democracy during the last 75 years. On this occasion, the people of India have also resolved to make our country the most developed in the comity of nations, he said.

Birla suggested that the Parliaments of Commonwealth countries should interact regularly, share best practices and help each other to implement these best practices.

# Nadda appoints Rajib Bhattacharjee party chief for Tripura

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

BJP president J P Nadda on Thursday appointed Rajib Bhattacharjee as the new party chief for Tripura.

Bhattacharjee was serving as the vice president of the Tripura Pradesh BJP since former Chief Minister Biblab Kumar Deb took charge. He was elevated from the post of general secretary to vice president after the BJP came to power in the state. He was also the Chairman of Khadi and Village Industries Board, Tripura.

"Bharatiya Janata Party's national president JP Nadda has appointed Rajib Bhattacharjee as the new Tripura party chief", according to a party Press statement.

Chief Minister Manik Saha was earlier holding an addi-



tional charge as state BJP president.

Taking to Twitter, Chief Minister Saha shared pictures of Bhattacharjee and congratulated him.

"Congratulated Shri @Rajibbhatbjp Ji, on being appointed President of @BJP4TripuraUnder the guidance of PM Sri @narendramo di Ji & President of @BJP4India Sri @JPNadda Ji together we will work hard to strengthen @BJP4Tripura ", he said

# Yogi stresses on upgrading security systems constantly



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Thursday, stressed the need to upgrade security systems at a constant pace, keeping in view the present and futuristic requirements, to deal with the evolving nature and changing crime trends.

Quoting a famous Sanskrit line "Ayogyo purusho nasti, yojakstatra durlabha", Yogi Adityanath, while presenting certificates to 250 trainees under Amrit Kausal Vikas Yojana 'Suraksharth', said no person was inefficient or incompetent, provided that his or her talent was recognised and refined.




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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Taming ED

The Supreme Court will not reconsider its judgment on the Prevention of Money Laundering Act

The Supreme Court has rightly decided to reconsider its verdict on the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), 2002. Reconsideration is over two issues: reversal of the presumption of innocence and sharing the Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR). On July 27 this year, the three-judge Bench of the apex court, headed by Justice Khanwilkar, had upheld the PMLA. This meant a leg up for the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for its powers to arrest, search, etc., in money laundering offences were validated. While maintaining “the principle of innocence of the accused/offender is regarded as a human right,” the Bench said “that presumption can be interdicted by a law” made by Parliament. It also said since an ECIR cannot be equated with a first information report or FIR, it was not mandatory to provide the ECIR in every case to the person accused. The court said that “it is enough if ED, at the time of arrest, discloses the grounds of such arrest.” This decision was

widely criticised by the Opposition parties and jurists. Opposition leaders have long been complaining about the wide powers enjoyed by the ED; they have also been accusing the Narendra Modi Government of using the ED for political purposes—a charge that the Government and the Bharatiya Janata Party leaders have been denying vociferously.

While politicians will continue to hurl allegations at each other, a couple of facts need to be underlined. First, if the PMLA has become toxic and the ED unrestrained, it is not the doing of this regime alone. As the SC Bench said in its July 26 judgment, former finance minister Yashwant Sinha in his



December 1999 speech “set the tone for the years to come in the fight against money laundering.” It also mentioned another former finance minister, P Chidambaram, whose speech in the Rajya Sabha in December 2012 explained the need for amendment(s) to the PMLA. But now the boot is on the other foot. Chidambaram himself is being investigated by the ED and the Central Bureau of Investigation. His son Karti Chidambaram, who is also being probed by the two agencies, wants the SC verdict to be reconsidered. Second, Opposition leaders just keep lamenting all the time about the abuse of Central investigation agencies; they never come out with something concrete. Nobody in the right frame of mind would say that these agencies should be misused, so their lamentations are of no utility; they must inform the people how they intend to make the functioning of these agencies efficient and impartial. Money laundering is a big problem, so also are corruption, terror, etc.; therefore, fight against such evils has to continue, but it should be in such a manner that there is no collateral damage in terms of political targeting. Just making bombastic statements and tweeting catchy one-liners will help neither politicians nor serve the cause of justice. Substantive action is needed.

### PICTALK



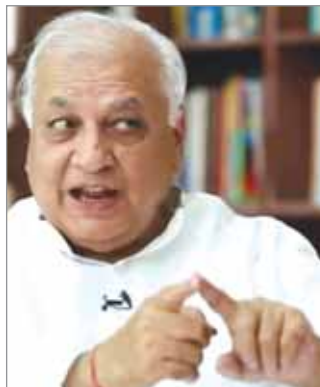
Women mourn in a Muharram procession on the occasion of martyrdom anniversary of Imam Sajjad

(PTI)

## (Un)learning morals

State-run varsities in Kerala are in a mess as the Govt plays favourites with card-holding cadres

The controversy involving Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan and the CPI(M)-led State Government over the appointment of faculty in universities and the process of selecting vice-chancellors does not augur well either for the Governor or for the State administration. The unfolding unfortunate developments are a blot on Kerala, rated as one of the States with high literacy rates. Cynics may take solace in the fact that the total literacy claimed by the State is nothing more than the ability of people to write down their name in their mother tongue and put a signature. That is the much-acclaimed ‘total literacy’ of the State! The Marxists, ruling the State uninterrupted since 2016, are on a mission to paint the academic institutions red by appointing card-holding cadres as faculty and vice-chancellors. This has led to deterioration in the standard of State universities. More than academic prowess, what matters in the State is one’s political leanings and the people known in the party hierarchy. The Congress, the main Opposition, is equally to be blamed for the state of affairs. Both the LDF and the UDF are vying with each other in giving two hoots to the dignity of higher education.



The vice-chancellors are appointed not only on political lines but even on caste and communal lines. For example, the Calicut University was established in 1968 by the then EMS Namboodiripad-led Government to keep the Muslim League in good humour. Of the 11 vice-chancellors who served the university, eight were from the Muslim community. When the CPI(M) catered to the demands of Muslims, could the Congress be a mute spectator? It carved out the Mahatma Gandhi University to appease the powerful Christian community. Of the 23 varsities in Kerala, 13 are owned by the State. The vice-chancellors and faculty members of these universities are appointed from among the relatives and associates of party leaders. The recent appointment of the wife of the Chief Minister’s private secretary as an associate professor in Kannur University has opened a Pandora’s box. The appointee had just 156 marks and did not meet the norms. Joseph Skariah, who scored 651 marks in the selection process, was sidelined in her favour. The State universities were also in the news for appointing wives and sisters of party commissars, ignoring any semblance of transparency and honesty. That is higher learning in Kerala!

# Holistic health with Ayurveda

Ayurveda has provided holistic health to mankind since ancient times, it needs a little support to become an alternative to allopathy



PRAFULL GORADIA



If all the medical experts knew the background of medicine in India, the current controversy might not have taken place. For centuries, India subsisted on Ayurveda and Unani (or Greek) medicine that came to India with Muslims. They are still in practice, unfortunately without research and development. Lately, they have been given a lease of life by the government near Sarita Vihar in Delhi.

The other schools of medicine in our country are Homeopathy, Naturopathy, and Allopathy which alone is a beneficiary of research, especially on a grand scale in several western countries. Ayurveda suffered a decline in the late 19th century in the absence of research and development. For example, Susruta was as great a name as Charak and was often referred to as the father of Indian surgery. Charak had confined himself to pure medicine and mainly to gastronomy. It is said that he confined himself to gastronomy and the treatment of the alimentary canal without ever opening an abdomen. Ayurveda was the backbone of health care through ancient and medieval times, until the 19th century, because it was a discipline for ensuring longevity rather than merely treating the symptoms of illness. As scholars have claimed it was a science of life; not merely to cure the sick but also to make the healthy healthier; Chavanprash is an elementary example while Rasayana or rejuvenation is its advanced face.

Until Allopathy took long strides in the early decades of the 20th century, Ayurveda commanded its place. It had, for instance, Sarpina for treating high blood pressure while Allopathy had no answer except placing live leeches on the patients’ forehead to draw out blood and reduce its supply. My grandfather died at the age of 45 because of nephritis which made his kidneys dysfunctional. His final treatment was four weeks each in Vienna and London; this was in 1933. There was no antiseptic not to talk of an anti-biotic.

The discovery of anti-septic

was a blow to Ayurveda; while that of penicillin during World War II proved to be a body blow. Yet Indian scholars have not strategized the recovery of this science of life. Our science of life — Ayur Veda — is potentially a champion of Indian civilizational revival and deserves our serious attention. Its concept of positive health care must be fully discovered. Who does not wish to live well and long? When I began to work, I was 20 and it was considered to be too early. My employers retired its staff and executives at 55. Today, those retired at 60 complain about how to occupy themselves. Most of them are fit to continue working. Death at 71 or 72 is considered tragically young. At Independence time, 60 was an acceptable age to wind up from life. Give or take, life span expectation has jumped by 20 years in better-to-do families.

The new challenge before Ayurveda, or any other school of treatment, is how to make the lengthening of lives more interesting, and more readily enjoyable. Ayurveda and its Rasayana have rejuvenation. It was a two-month treatment in a well-shaded

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THE NEW  
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camp. The two central thrusts were to keep clearing the bowels and scrupulously avoiding sunlight.

Similarly, Naturopathy can work wonders. I have witnessed my cousin being made to lose weight and how. When her therapy began she was 18 years old weighing 216 lbs. In twelve months the weight came down to 130 lbs. The medicines were few, the diet was strict for six days a week. Once a week she could have even a bar of chocolate.

In a country with rampant poverty, Homeopathy can be a good alternative. In some persons, a few drops of its medicines work wonders. All for a few rupees — no pain, no injections, no surgeries. Germans invented it and they must be generously complimented. Unfortunately, hardly anyone has pursued it with research. Hence this wonderful cure has not gone very far. Nevertheless, the system deserves encouragement and greater patronage.

Incidentally, Homeopathy is so named because it is not an antagonistic treatment. It is sympathetic in the sense that the medicine aggravates symptoms of the ailment in the hope

that they get pushed out of the body. Most other schools of medical treatment are known to be antagonistic which means attacking the symptoms in the hope of killing them. Ayurveda and Naturopathy are different in the sense that one takes a broad view of the patient’s whole life or ayu. Naturopathy again leans on nature and tries to bring the patients’ living in step with what nature expected. Antagonist treatment can provoke reactions. Homeopathy is different from others in this regard.

Ayurveda must be given the credit for innovating the vocation of nursing. Both male and female nursing began centuries ago although the practice took a long time to spread. Indeed, Ayurveda has a record of innovativeness, sustaining a whole Indian civilization with its holistic approach to life. However, more confidence in its practitioners is necessary; investors would come given this ingredient.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### ‘BHARAT JODO YATRA’ CAMPAIGN

Sir — Congress has officially launched the website and tagline for its pan-India effort to unite India, named the ‘Bharat Jodo Yatra’, which is scheduled to begin on September 7 from Kanyakumari; to come together and get the country back on its feet. The Yatra, with an aim to unite the country, protect India’s diversity, to ensure equality and to end hatred, will start on September 7 from Kanyakumari. It will pass through 12 States and two Union Territories to finally culminate in Jammu and Kashmir — spanning a distance of nearly 3,500 kilometers in a time period of about 150 days.

In addition, the Bharat Jodo Yatra will also be organised by the party in other states simultaneously. The Yatra is aiming to bring the nation’s people together to deal with the tremendous challenge of economic inequality which is dividing India, to overcome social polarisation in the country which is taking place in the name of caste, religion, food, dress, language etc and to overcome the political division and the conflict between Centre and the States. Its purpose would be to exhort people to shed hatred and come together for the betterment of the country.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

### ACT WITH AN IRON HAND

Sir — The actions on Nupur Sharma and T Raja Singh for their allegedly controversial remarks (even if factual) by the BJP may be politically correct for a party in power but is morally unjustified and dangerous to the already painful condition of the Hindus, who are forever being denied their freedom of expression just because jihadi forces are up in arms against ‘kafirs’ by chanting ‘Sar Tan Se Juda’ and actually committing the act occasionally. Nothing can be farther from the truth than considering Islam “a religion of peace and tolerance”.

The PFI has already declared its agen-

## Wild claims are not virtuous



Baba Ramdev is back in the spotlight for making unsavoury remarks against allopathy. This time, the Chief Justice of India has issued an advisory for him to refrain from making such undesirable remarks. The Supreme Court slammed Ramdev for running advertisements against a modern medical system and asked him: ‘What’s the guarantee that ayurveda will cure all diseases?’ Baba Ramdev can pub-

licise his system but why should he criticise other systems? We all respect him for popularising yoga. He cannot refuse the doctor system and he must exercise restraint in abusing other systems,” the CJI remarked. The IMA had pleaded that Patanjali’s advertisements claimed to ‘cure’ COVID-19 and made claims against allopathic medicine negatively impacted the medical profession and ‘spread misinformation’ among the “gullible common public who shall suffer the consequences of this misinformation campaign”, the plea added. The court asked Ramdev to refrain from saying anything more than what was official while speaking in favour of Patanjali’s products. There was uproar in the Rajya Sabha, too, after JD(U) MP KC Tyagi flashed a packet labelled ‘PutrajeevakBeej’ (son-bearing seed), allegedly produced by Ramdev’s company. Health Minister JP Nadda called it a ‘serious matter’ and assured the House of appropriate action.

Yash Pal Raihan | Jalandhar

da to make India an Islamic State by 2047 and while there is enough evidence of its unfettered effort for their common goal, the Government and the Supreme Court seem the least worried about the trouble ahead. The BJP must focus on cultural nationalism and stop lectures on Islamic mercy-compassion to let the people learn Islam themselves from the Quran/Hadith’s history themselves. The Government must stop the ongoing Christian conversion drive and drop its idea of ‘Sabka Vishvas’. Else, it would be a false dream to make our Bharat strong and sound.

Jai Prakash Gupta | Ambala Cantt

### 137 FARMER SUICIDES IN 51 DAYS

Sir — We find that not much importance is being paid to this sensitive subject. The number of farmers committing suicide is increasing by the day. It is happening from Punjab to Maharashtra and Karnataka. The lackadaisical approach of politicians in ignoring the suicides by farmers and the

absence of such noting in their manifestoes is another case of callous attitude towards our farmers. No party is ready to touch the real issue of the farmers. They all are buying time and seeking only votes from farmers and their family members.

It is high time the farmers’ issues were truly addressed and a viable and amicable solution found to the pressing problems resulting in their suicides. Farmers are the backbone of our country and a high number of deaths in a single State rings alarm bells and cautions us to act swiftly. It is time to call an emergency meeting to solve this sensitive issue. The nationalisation of rivers could have solved the irrigation problem in these barren lands. I request the new Governments in Maharashtra and Punjab to take up the case on a war footing and plug the loopholes to avoid any more deaths by suicide of farmers.

CK Subramaniam | Navi Mumbai

Send your feedback to:  
[letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto:letterstopioneer@gmail.com)

## SOUND BITE

Respected Mata Amritanandamayi Ji is a living manifestation of India’s glorious tradition of living for others. Her efforts in social welfare are outstanding.



Prime minister  
—Narendra Modi



The picture is not appropriate. I apologise for it. That kind of a picture should not have been taken

but otherwise, nothing extraordinary happened at the get-together.

Finland PM  
—Marin

When it comes to commercial cinema, you pick and choose what you want and package it in a way to sell it to the audience. That is not something that excites me. I choose films that make a little more sense with a genuine story that wants to be told.



Director  
—Nithya Menen



I could not find time for gym daily. After buying the bike, I joined the Jaipur Cycling Community and started riding to

Nahargarh with JCC members. This boosted my confidence.

Cyclist  
—Renu Singhi

The same model which worked on Shinde in Maharashtra failed on Sisodia, but now the BJP is targeting our MLAs.



AAP MP  
—Sanjay Singh



FIRST COLUMN

DROP QUAD ANCHOR FOR INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY

India should work to align Quad for Indo-Pacific bond



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar was in Thailand last week, where he delivered a detailed lecture on India's Indo-Pacific vision. India has been highlighting its Indo-Pacific vision in diplomatic circles at multilateral and plurilateral platforms. However, this was perhaps the first time a roadmap and way forward plan was outlined for students, academicians, and other relevant stakeholders.

Jaishankar delivered the lecture at Chulalongkorn University in Thailand. The Indo-Pacific region as defined by India spans from eastern shores of Africa to western shores of America. This region contributes nearly 60 per cent to global GDP and most of the trade takes place through the sea routes.

At the end of World War II, the US emerged as the primary provider of security umbrella for the nations dotting the Pacific Ocean and a watery borderline emerged between the otherwise connected Indian and Pacific Ocean. India too has in the past many decades focussed more on inland continental security due to its regional concerns (Pakistan, China) and has been less focussed on the maritime domain as an important area of strategic interest.



However, the aggressive stance of China in India's backwaters (Indian Ocean), its aggressive tactics in the South China Sea, its non-transparent binding financial support for infrastructure development in smaller nations, thereby threatening their sovereignty and a deterioration of relationship with the US has forced India to aggressively launch a multi-pronged engagement in the Indo-Pacific region.

Jaishankar highlighted that India's Indo-Pacific vision builds heavily on the stated foreign policy direction 'Act East Policy'. India has been vouching for security and growth for all in the region (SAGAR) and envisages a "free, open, inclusive, peaceful, and prosperous Indo-Pacific region".

This highlights the key priority areas for India's engagement with and beyond the region amid an aggressive China. Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2019 announced Indo-Pacific Ocean's initiative during the East Asia Summit and outlined seven pillars of cooperation between the member countries, focused towards a safe, secure, open maritime region.

The East Asia summit (EAS) is an annual forum at a leadership level summit for 18 countries from East, Southeast and South Asia. The EAS is an important forum for dialogue for the Indo-Pacific region as it places ASEAN at its focal point of leadership and member nations, including the US, Japan, China, Australia, Russia, and India gets a platform for articulating their priorities for the region.

In India's vision of the Indo-Pacific, it envisages EAS members to pick on the seven pillars, and many like Australia, France, Singapore, and the UK have announced their willingness to lead the verticals.

At the plurilateral level, India has in May 2022 joined as the founding partner of the US-led Indo-Pacific Economic framework (IPEF). This regional arrangement primarily aims to contain China's military economic influence in the Indo Pacific region. The four pillars of cooperation amongst the 14 member IPEF rests on trade, clean energy, supply chains and tax and anti-corruption.

While details regarding the IPEF, a basic text for agreement and negotiation between the members, are still some time away, India could use its relationship with the US to bring the forum and the EAS vision for the Indo Pacific region closer. It might be argued that given China and Russia's presence in the EAS, alignment between the IPEF and the EAS might be impossible, but it can still be worth a try.

The Quad should be propped up judiciously towards furthering India's Indo-Pacific strategy. It can assume a key role in the Indo-Pacific strategy.

*(The author is a foreign affairs commentator.)*

# MLAs quitting in last year of term unethical

## The Telangana by-poll for Munugodu seat when Assembly polls are less than a year away defies logic



VANAM JWALA NARASIMHA RAO

Yet another Assembly by-election in Telangana is in the offing. When Assembly elections are due in Telangana in about a year from now, Munugodu legislative constituency MLA resigned, causing perhaps an expensive by-poll on the exchequer, as well as on the contesting candidates and political parties. For reasons best known to them, some legislators in the recent past are choosing to resign from their respective seats at will and pleasure before completion of their terms and quit the party from which they were elected.

Political analysts term this trend as attempts to gain personal political benefit rather for any ideological preferences. This leads to a byelection for the seat vacated and sometimes a few months before the completion of tenure of legislature. If byelection is delayed, the elected MLA will be hardly left with six months or less to serve and may not even get a chance to sit in the House.

The legislator who resorts to resignation does not sense that it is a rare privilege and honour bestowed on him by the voters to sit in the prestigious legislative Assembly for a period of five years and resigning before completion of tenure is unethical, illogical and shirking the responsibility. It has also become a known practice that the individual who vacates the seat contests again on a different party ticket.

What is the rationale to resign and contest again is an unanswered question. Some national parties admit them overnight and offer party tickets with a one-point agenda of defeating the opponent, generally of a popular regional party. The morals of earlier days to give tickets after a long wait are no longer observed.

An individual normally resigns to a position he or she is holding in order to take a more challenging assignment and not for an equal or lower than the present one. Lack of opportunities for advancement and feeling disrespected in the present position are also the reasons for tendering resignation. This in effect is not happening in the resignations of the majority of legislators of late. Resigning in a professional and polite way on good terms rather than blaming the organization that he or she is leaving often in unparliamentary language has also become an unhealthy feature which is highly deplorable.

Unfortunately, the majority of legislators who resort to resignation give reasons which are not palatable. For instance, differences with the party president or not being placed in a high position in the party, or not given a minister's berth or not getting an appointment with top leaders or not being recognized, etc., are not valid reasons.

In January, 2013, in the united Andhra Pradesh Assembly, 10 TRS MLAs quit the Assembly and not the party, protesting against the terms of reference (ToR) of the Sri Krishna Committee. The move fol-



RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE OF COMMONS HAS NEVER BEEN ALLOWED IN BRITAIN IN THEORY. TECHNICALLY MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT SITTING IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ARE NOT PERMITTED TO RESIGN FROM THEIR SEATS BUT CAN ONLY BE DISQUALIFIED.

*(The author is Chief Public Relations Officer to Chief Minister, Telangana.)*



lowed the call of the all-party Telangana Joint Action Committee (JAC) to legislators from Telangana to submit their resignations en masse, rejecting the ToR to mount pressure on the Centre for taking immediate steps for the formation of Telangana. The Speaker accepted the resignations.

Five YSR Congress Party MPs resigned in April 2018 over the failure of the Centre to grant Special Category Status to Andhra Pradesh. These were examples of resignations for a cause and not for individual political gains. One of the best examples is that of Neelam Sanjiva Reddy who resigned twice in 1969 and 1977 as an MP to contest as President of India; that was a challenging assignment, once as congress candidate and afterwards as a consensus candidate.

India models its democracy in Britain. Resignation from the House of Commons has never been allowed in Britain in theory. Technically Members of Parliament sitting in the House of Commons are not permitted to resign from their seats but can only be disqualified or lose an election for which there is a well laid down procedure.

To circumvent this, MPs who wish to step down are instead appointed to an 'Office of profit under the Crown', which disqualifies them from sitting in Parliament. For this purpose, a legal fiction is maintained where two unpaid offices are considered to be offices of profit: Steward and Bailiff of the Chiltern Hundreds, and Steward and Bailiff of the Manor of Northstead.

The US Constitution explicitly

provides for the resignation of senators, but, curiously, it does not say anything about resigning from the House of Representatives. If a vacancy occurs due to a senator's death, resignation, or expulsion, state legislatures empower the Governor to appoint a replacement to complete the term or to hold office until a special election can take place. The Governor of the represented state may immediately appoint a successor. Since special elections cost taxpayers, activists even suggested that the retiring member should cover the costs of the election.

Every rule of law can be traced to a statute or a judicial decision, but conventions cannot be traced to any particular regulation. There are clear consequences for a violation of a rule of law, but a breach of a convention attracts no consequence. A rule of law can be amended but a convention cannot be amended. Although there are conventions in the society, what determines whether a thing is properly done or not is not the convention but the prevailing rule of law as regards that subject matter.

The constitutional structure of India is based largely on the Westminster model of parliamentary system. Indian and the UK systems of traditions, conventions and procedures in a way are similar since both the countries follow parliamentary form of democracy. While India has adopted most of the rules, regulations and conventions of the United Kingdom Parliament, it has failed to follow the spirit and the basic tenets of constitutional morality and prop-

riety of an elected member resigning his post in the middle of his term.

There is, however, always something new about Westminster and, hence, it is something that might be a good idea to adopt in India. Unfortunately, the conventions guiding resignations of lawmakers are not properly spelt out yet.

In the election law as it stands now in India, there is no bar on a lawmaker resigning his or her seat before completion of tenure of Assembly or Lok Sabha and then contesting the byelection to fill up the vacancy caused by his or her resignation. It is high time that in India frequent resignations of legislators and Parliament members purely to gain political interests and without any ideological compulsions be avoided either by law on the British model or by convention.

This not only puts an end to political hopping by those who frequently change parties but also helps in doing away with huge costs that are incurred for the frequent elections. Alternatively it may be considered to empower the Speaker to appoint a replacement to complete the term of the legislator who resigned. Let the law also be amended so as not to allow a person to contest from more than one constituency. Further, the Election Commission should consider the British practice of no-resignation of a person once elected.

But will this ever happen in our country, which is supposed to be the largest democracy but where all the democratic, ethical and moral norms are slowly and steadily thrown to the winds?

## POINT COUNTERPOINT

THE JD (U) COULD NEVER WIN ANY POLLS ON ITS OWN IN THE STATE. NITISH ONLY CHANGES HIS DEPUTY AND WANTS TO REMAIN CM. —BJP LEADER TARKISHOR PRASAD



BIHAR HAS GIVEN A SPECIAL MESSAGE TO THE NATION. OUR PARTNERSHIP (WITH NITISH) WOULD DO WONDERS. THIS WILL BE A LONG INNING. —DY CM BIHAR TEJASHWI YADAV

# How do we know when a recession has begun?

## The US economy is contracting for the last six months. Can we say it is in recession? Some signs to ponder over...

The US government on Thursday updated its estimate of the U.S. economy's performance in the April-June quarter and confirmed what it had reported last month: That the economy shrank for two straight quarters.

Six months of contraction is a long-held informal definition of a recession. Yet nothing is simple in the post-pandemic economy. Growth may be negative, but the job market is strong. The economy's direction has confounded Federal Reserve policymakers and many private economists since growth screeched to a halt in March 2020 as COVID-19 struck and 20 million Americans were suddenly thrown out of work.

Even as the economy shrank over the first half of this year,



CHRISTOPHER RUGABER

*(The writer is an economic journalist)*

employers added 2.7 million jobs — more than in most entire years before the pandemic struck. In July, the economy added over a half-million more jobs. The unemployment rate sank to 3.5%, a half-century low. Robust hiring and exceedingly low unemployment aren't consistent with a recession.

While most economists — and Fed Chair Jerome Powell — have said they don't think the economy is in recession, some analysts still predict that an economic downturn will begin later this year or next.

Either way, inflation remains near its highest level in four decades, though gas costs and other prices have eased in recent weeks. Inflation is still so high that despite pay raises many have received, Americans' purchasing power is eroding.

The pain is being felt disproportionately by lower-income and Black and Hispanic households, many of whom are struggling to pay for higher-cost essentials like food, gas, and rent.

Compounding those pressures, the Fed is jacking up interest rates at the fastest pace since the early 1980s, thereby magnifying borrowing costs for homes and cars, and credit card purchases. As a result, regardless of whether a recession has officially begun, Americans have soured on the economy.

So how, exactly, do we know when an economy is in a recession? Here are some answers to such questions: **WHO DECIDES IF IT IS A RECESSION**

Recessions are officially declared by the obscure-sounding National Bureau of

Economic Research, a group of economists whose Business Cycle Dating Committee defines a recession as "a significant decline in economic activity that is spread across the economy and lasts more than a few months."

The committee considers trends in hiring as a key measure in determining recessions. It also assesses many other data points, including gauges of income, employment, inflation-adjusted spending, retail sales and factory output. It puts heavy weight on jobs and a gauge of inflation-adjusted income that excludes government support payments like Social Security. **DO SOME PEOPLE KNOW IF IT IS COMING**

Yes, because many people now feel more financially burdened. With wage gains trailing

inflation for most people, higher prices for such essentials as gas, food, and rent have eroded Americans' spending power.

Walmart has reported that higher gas and food costs have forced its shoppers to reduce their purchases of discretionary spending such as new clothing, a clear sign that consumer spending, the leading driver of the economy, is weakening. The nation's largest retailer, Walmart has reduced its profit outlook and said it would have to discount more items like furniture and electronics. **SIGNS OF AN IMPENDING RECESSION**

The clearest sign that a recession is underway, economists say, would be a steady rise in job losses and a surge in unemployment. In the past, an increase in the unemployment

rate of three-tenths of a percentage point, on average over the previous three months, has meant that a recession will soon follow.

Many economists monitor the number of people who seek unemployment benefits each week, which indicates whether layoffs are worsening. Weekly applications for jobless aid, averaged over the past four weeks, are just below 250,000, the highest level since last November. Though that is a potentially concerning sign, it is still a low level historically. **THE FED KEEP RAISING RATES**

The economy's flashing signals — slowing growth with strong hiring — have put the Fed in a tough spot. Chair Jerome Powell is aiming for a "soft landing," in which the economy

weakens enough to slow hiring and wage growth without causing a recession and brings inflation back to the Fed's 2% target.

But Powell has acknowledged that such an outcome has grown more difficult to achieve. Russia's invasion of Ukraine and China's COVID-19 lockdown have driven up prices for energy food, and many manufactured parts in the U.S.

Powell has also indicated that if necessary, the Fed will keep raising rates even amid a weak economy if that's what's needed to tame inflation.

"Is there a risk that we would go too far?" Powell said recently. "Certainly there's a risk, but I wouldn't agree that's the biggest risk to the economy. The biggest mistake to make...would be to fail to restore price stability."



# Death toll from train station attack in Ukraine rises to 25



AP ■ POKROVSK (UKRAINE)

The death toll from a Russian rocket attack as Ukraine observed its Independence Day has risen to 25, including an 11-year-old boy found under the rubble of a house and a 6-year-old killed in a car fire near a train station that was the target, a Ukrainian official said on Thursday.

Russia's Defence Ministry said its forces used an Iskander missile to strike a military train that was carrying Ukrainian troops and equipment to the front line in eastern Ukraine. The ministry claimed more than 200 reservists "were destroyed on their way to the combat zone."

The deputy head of the Ukrainian presidential office, Kyrylo Tymoshenko, did not say if the 25 victims he reported from Wednesday's attack all were civilians. A total of 31 people sustained injuries, he said.

The lethal strike in Chaplyne, a town of about 3,500 residents in the central Dnipropetrovsk region nonetheless served as a brutally painful reminder that Russia's military force is causing civilians to suffer and testing Ukraine's resilience after six months of a grinding war.

In Geneva on Thursday, the UN's human rights chief, Michelle Bachelet, decried the time since Russian President Vladimir Putin sent troops into the neighbouring country as "unimaginably horrifying." She called on Putin "to halt armed attacks against Ukraine."

The train station strike took place after Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky warned that Moscow might attempt "something particularly cruel" this week as Ukraine marked both its 1991 declaration of independence from the Soviet Union and the six-month point of Russia's invasion on Wednesday.

Tetyana Kvitnytska, deputy head of the Dnipropetrovsk regional health department, said

the people wounded in the attack suffered a range of injuries.

"There are craniocerebral injuries, limb fractures, many patients with explosive and shrapnel injuries, burns," she said. "People were in a difficult condition, both physically and psychologically."

"Now our efforts are focused on the children who suffered. We work with four children. Three children out of four are in serious condition. In addition to severe stress, they have blast and shrapnel injuries, burns, and fractures," Kvitnytska said. "The children are in serious condition."

The Russian government has repeatedly claimed following attacks in which civilians died that its forces only aimed at legitimate military targets. Hours before the train station attack, Russia insisted it was doing its best to spare civilians, even at a cost of slowing down its offensive in Ukraine.

Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu, speaking Wednesday at a meeting of his counterparts from a security organisation dominated by Russia and China, said Russia was carrying out strikes with precision weapons against Ukrainian military targets, and "everything is done to avoid civilian casualties."

"Undoubtedly, it slows down the pace of the offensive, but we do it deliberately," he said.

It was the second time Shoigu has made such a claim; he said the same thing in late May.

Elsewhere in Ukraine, three people were killed in the eastern region of Donetsk on Wednesday and one more was wounded, Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said on Telegram.

Nikopol, a city across the river from the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, came under more Russian shelling overnight, Valentyn Reznichenko, the governor of the Dnipropetrovsk region, said.

# ‘World’s future being decided in Ukraine’

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Wednesday that "the world's future" is being decided in its war against Russia's "insane aggression" and that maintaining his country's independence is "the security of the entire world."

He warned the UN Security Council on the six-month anniversary of the invasion that if Russia isn't stopped, "then all these Russian murderers will inevitably end up in other countries — Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin America."

"There are traces of Russian war criminals everywhere and we must all get united and act decisively as soon as possible so there are no more traces of Russian missiles, and no more cities burned by Russian military — so that there would be no threat of the radiation catastrophe ever, ever again," he said.

Zelenskyy addressed the UN's most powerful body not only on the anniversary of the invasion but on Ukraine's independence day, stressing the crucial link between what happens in the war to the future security and geopolitical architecture of the world.

As his country celebrates its 1991 independence from the former Soviet Union, "everyone can see how much the world is dependent on our independence," Zelenskyy said.



He stressed the sovereignty and territorial of all countries and demanded that Russia withdraw from all Ukrainian territory it has captured and end its territorial ambitions.

Zelenskyy claimed Russia "rewards murderers and encourages executioners" and told council members that his government will introduce a UN General Assembly resolution to hold Russia accountable for the crime of aggression against Ukraine.

UN Secretary-General

Antonio Guterres has called for a "Summit of the Future" next year and Zelenskyy said it would be symbolic to hold it in Ukraine, because "it is on the territory of Ukraine that the world's future is decided, whether we will have a future at all."

Zelenskyy spoke by video over objections from Russia's U.N. Ambassador, Vassily Nebenzia, who said council rules require leaders to be present in the council chamber at UN headquarters in New York

to deliver a speech. He said the Ukrainian leader already had been allowed to give video addresses on two previous occasions because of special circumstances and should not be allowed a third time.

The overwhelming majority of the 15-member council disagreed — 13 countries voted in favor of another video speech by Zelenskyy; Russia voted against it and China abstained.

Guterres called the six-month anniversary of the Russian invasion "a sad and trag-

ic milestone," with no end in sight to the war.

He pointed to thousands of civilian casualties, grave violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, millions of Ukrainians who have lost their homes and are displaced or refugees, and rapidly rising humanitarian needs as winter approaches.

"The consequences of this senseless war are being felt far beyond Ukraine," Guterres said. "We are seeing new vulnerabilities emerge in a global environment already worn out by conflicts, inequality, pandemic-induced economic and health crises, and climate change — with a disproportionate impact on developing countries."

Guterres warned that the acceleration of already high food, fertilizer and energy prices "has triggered a global crisis that could drive millions more into extreme poverty."

U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield addressed Zelenskyy, saying the United States stands with Ukraine "today and every day, and every Russian bomb that falls only strengthens our resolve to support your sovereignty and your independence."

Six months after the invasion, she said, "Russia's goal is as clear as ever: to dismantle Ukraine as a geopolitical entity and erase it from the world map."

# Putin orders Russian military to start beefing up in 2023



AP ■ MOSCOW

Russian President Vladimir Putin has ordered the Russian military to increase the size of the country's armed forces by 137,000 amid Moscow's military action in Ukraine.

Putin's decree signed Thursday didn't explain whether the military will beef up its

ranks by drafting a bigger number of conscripts, increasing the number of volunteer soldiers or using a combination of both.

The Kremlin has said that only volunteer contract soldiers take part in what it calls the "special military operation" in Ukraine, rejecting claims that it was pondering a broad mobilisation.



# S Korea signs \$2.25 bn deal with Russia nuclear company

AP ■ SEOUL

South Korea has signed a 3 trillion won (\$2.25 billion) deal with a Russian state-run nuclear energy company to provide components for Egypt's first nuclear power plant.

South Korea's government said Thursday the contract between the state-run Korea Hydro and Nuclear Power and ASE requires the South Koreans to provide turbine-related equipment and construction work for the plant being built in Dabaa, about 130 km (80 miles) northwest of Cairo on the Mediterranean coast.

ASE is a subsidiary of Rosatom, a state-owned Russian nuclear conglomerate.

A senior aide of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said the negotiations were slowed by "unexpected variables," mainly Russia's war on Ukraine and the US-led sanctions campaign against Moscow over its aggression.

Choi Sang-mok, Yoon's senior secretary for economic affairs, said South Korea provided an explanation to the United States in advance about its plans to participate in the Dabaa project and that the allies will maintain close consultation as the work proceeds.

South Korea has been participating in economic pressure campaign against Russia orchestrated by the Biden administration, ending transactions with Russia's central bank and sovereign wealth funds and banning the exports of strategic materials to Russia.

Choi did not specify how the crisis in Ukraine and the sanctions on Moscow caused difficulties for the negotiations between Korea Hydro and Nuclear Power and ASE, which has a contract with Egypt to build four 1,200 megawatt reactors.

He stressed there's no possibility that the technologies being supplied by South Korea to the project would clash with international sanctions against Russia.

"Any kind of issue can be met by various uncertainties, but those have all been resolved as of now, and that's why we were able to finalize the agreement," Choi said.

He expressed hope that South Korea's participation in the Dabaa project would help the country gain a foothold in future nuclear projects across Africa and also improve its chances to export to countries such as the Czech Republic, Poland and Saudi Arabia.

Korea Hydro and Nuclear Power had been engaging in negotiations with ASE as the preferred bidder for the turbine-related project since December, before Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February this year.

Yoon's office said the participation in the Dabaa project is the country's biggest export of nuclear power technology since 2009, when a South Korean-led consortium won a \$20 billion contract to build nuclear power reactors in the United Arab Emirates.

Yoon, a conservative who took office in May, has pledged to boost South Korean exports of nuclear power technology, which he insists were dented under the policies of his liberal predecessor, Moon Jae-in, who sought to reduce the country's domestic dependence on nuclear energy.

Yoon in a statement on Facebook said the deal reaffirms South Korea's "advanced technology and safeness and strong supply chains" in the nuclear power industry. His government has set a goal of exporting 10 nuclear power reactors by 2030.

# Ukrainian fears run high over fighting near N-plant

AP ■ NIKOPOL (UKRAINE)

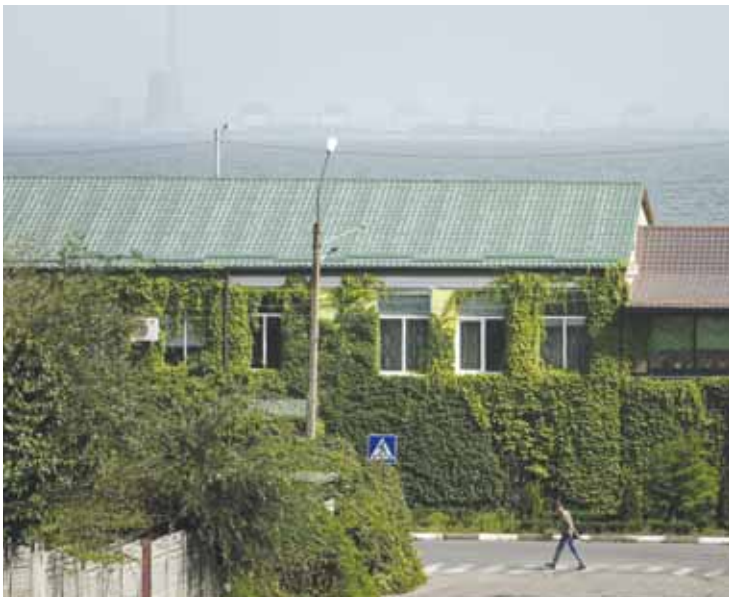
Ukrainians are once again anxious and alarmed about the fate of a nuclear power plant in a land that was home to the world's worst atomic accident in 1986 at Chernobyl.

The Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant, Europe's largest, has been occupied by Russian forces since the early days of the war, and continued fighting near the facility has heightened fears of a catastrophe that could affect nearby towns in southern Ukraine — or potentially an even wider region.

The government in Kyiv alleges Russia is essentially holding the Soviet-era nuclear plant hostage, storing weapons there and launching attacks from around it, while Moscow accuses Ukraine of recklessly firing on the facility, which is located in the city of Enerhodar.

"Anybody who understands nuclear safety issues has been trembling for the last six months," said Mycle Schneider, an independent policy consultant and coordinator of the World Nuclear Industry Status Report.

Ukraine cannot simply shut down its nuclear plants during the war because it is heavily reliant on them, and its 15 reactors at four stations pro-



vide about half of its electricity. Still, an ongoing conflict near a working atomic plant is troubling for many experts who fear that a damaged facility could lead to a disaster.

That fear is palpable just across the Dnieper River in Nikopol, where residents have been under nearly constant Russian shelling since July

12, with eight people killed, 850 buildings damaged and over the half the population of 100,000 fleeing the city.

Liudmyla Shyshkina, a 74-year-old widow who lived within sight of the Zaporizhzhia plant before her apartment was bombarded and her husband killed, said she believes the

Russians are capable of intentionally causing a nuclear disaster.

Fighting in early March caused a brief fire at the plant's training complex, which officials said did not result in the release of any radiation. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says Russia's military actions there amount to "nuclear blackmail." No civilian nuclear plant is designed for a wartime situation, although the buildings housing Zaporizhzhia's six reactors are protected by reinforced concrete that could withstand an errant shell, experts say.

The more immediate concern is that a disruption of electricity supply to the plant could knock out cooling systems that are essential for the safe operation of the reactors, and emergency diesel generators are sometimes unreliable. The pools where spent fuel rods are kept to be cooled also are vulnerable to shelling, which could cause the release of radioactive material.

Kyiv told the International Atomic Energy Agency, the UN's nuclear watchdog, that shelling earlier this week damaged transformers at a nearby conventional power plant, disrupting electricity supplies to the Zaporizhzhia plant for several hours.

"These incidents show why the

IAEA must be able to send a mission to the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant very soon," said the agency's head, Rafael Mariano Grossi, adding that he expected that to happen "within the next few days, if ongoing negotiations succeed".

At a UN Security Council meeting Tuesday, UN political chief Rosemary DiCarlo urged the withdrawal of all military personnel and equipment from the plant and an agreement on a demilitarised zone around it. Currently only one of the plant's four power lines connecting it to the grid is operational, the agency said. External power is essential not just to cool the two reactors still in operation but also the spent radioactive fuel stored in special facilities onsite.

"If we lose the last one, we are at the total mercy of emergency power generators," said Najmedin Meshkati, a professor of civil and environmental engineering at the University of Southern California.

He and Schneider expressed concern that the occupation of the plant by Russian forces is also hampering safety inspections and the replacement of critical parts, and is putting severe strain on hundreds of Ukrainian staff who operate the facility.

# Grave with WWII soldiers destroyed by Belarus: Poland

AP ■ WARSAW

Poland's government alleged on Thursday that authorities in Belarus were levelling a memorial site containing the graves of Polish soldiers who died during World War II.

Lukasz Jasina, the spokesman for Poland's Foreign Ministry, said on Twitter that a cemetery in Surkonty, Belarus, where members of Poland's largest wartime resistance force battled Soviet army troops, was being "devastated by the services of the Minsk regime."

"Those who think that the

human memory of heroes can be eradicated are very mistaken. The regime will pay for these acts of barbarism," Jasina wrote.

The allegation came a day after the Polish government said it was demolishing a monument to Soviet Red Army soldiers in Poland, one of dozens marked for destruction since Russia's invasion of Ukraine six months ago.

There was no immediate comment from Belarus, and it was not clear if the developments were related. Belarus has destroyed other Polish memorial sites in the past.



Poland, like many of its neighbours, was invaded and occupied by Germany and the Soviet Union during World War II and then spent decades under Moscow-backed rule.

Before Russia invaded Ukraine, there was an effort to

remove hated communist symbols from public spaces in Poland.

However, cemeteries with the graves of Red Army soldiers are not disturbed in Poland.

The cemetery in Belarus is the final resting place of soldiers with Poland's Home Army, a resistance force that also fought the occupying German forces throughout World War II.

The Home Army was under the command of a Polish government-in-exile that was based in London during the country's occupation by Nazi

and Soviet forces.

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# US: Airstrikes in Syria to send message to Iran

AP ■ WASHINGTON

US military airstrikes in eastern Syria were a message to Iran and Tehran-backed militias that targeted American troops this month and several other times over the past year, the Pentagon said Wednesday.

Colin Kahl, the undersecretary of defense for policy, told reporters that the US airstrikes overnight on facilities used by "the United States will not hesitate to defend itself against Iranian and Iran-backed aggression when it occurs."

He said the US decision to launch the strikes was based on both the nature of the militia attacks on August 15 at the al-Tanf Garrison, where US troops are based in the south, and the fact that, based on recovered drone parts, "we believe we have Iran dead to rights on attribution."

Hours after the US strikes, two US military locations in northeastern Syria near large oil and gas fields were hit with rocket fire. According to US Central Command, the rockets hit near Green Village and the Conoco gas field in Deir el-Zour. One US service member was treated for a minor injury and has been returned to duty, and two others were under evaluation for minor injuries.



CENTCOM said US forces responded by destroying three vehicles and equipment used to launch some of the rockets, killing "two or three suspected Iran-backed militants."

The opposition war monitor the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights and Deir Ezzor 24 said the U.S. Airstrikes targeted the Ayash Camp run by the Fatimiyoun group made up of Shiite fighters from Afghanistan. The war monitor reported that at least six Syrian and foreign militants were killed in the airstrikes, while Deir Ezzor 24 reported 10 deaths.

Deir el-Zour is a strategic province that borders Iraq and contains oil fields. Iran-backed militia groups and Syrian forces control the area and have often been the target of Israeli war planes in previous strikes.

In Iran, Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani issued a statement condemning

the American strike "against the people and infrastructure of Syria." He denied Iran had any link to those targeted.

Iran routinely denies arming militia groups that target US forces in the region, despite weaponry linking back to them.

Kahl said the US strikes underscore that while the US continues to pursue negotiations with Iran to resume its compliance with the 2015 nuclear deal, those talks are not connected at all to America's willingness to take against when attacked.

"The threats that they engage in against our people in the region or elsewhere, are not linked to wherever we end up on the nuclear deal," said Kahl. "It actually has nothing to do with our willingness and resolve to defend ourselves. And I think the strike last night was a pretty clear communication to the Iranians that these things are all on different tracks."

# Rohingyas mark 5th anniv of exodus to Bangladesh

AP ■ DHAKA

Hundreds of thousands of Rohingya refugees on Thursday marked the fifth anniversary of their exodus from Myanmar to Bangladesh, while the United States, European Union and other Western nations pledged to continue supporting the refugees' pursuit of justice in international courts.

Bangladesh is hosting more than 1 million Rohingya refugees who fled from Myanmar over decades, including some 740,000 who crossed the border in August 2017 after the Myanmar military launched a "clearance operation" against them following attacks by a rebel group. The



safety situation in Myanmar has worsened since a military takeover last year, and attempts to send them back failed.

In March, the United States said the oppression of

Rohingya in Myanmar amounts to genocide after authorities confirmed accounts of mass atrocities against civilians by Myanmar's military in a widespread and systematic

# Shootings in western Mexico leave 8 dead

AP ■ MEXICO CITY

Prosecutors in western Mexico said Wednesday they found eight people dead with gunshot wounds.

The bodies were found Wednesday in the township of Tuzantla, in the state of Michoacan, near the wintering grounds of the monarch butterfly.

Michoacan has been riven for years by bloody turf wars among drug cartels, and there

was no immediate indication the killings had anything to do with the monarch butterfly reserve.

Michoacan state prosecutors said they found shell casings at the scene, and were investigating the circumstances surrounding the killings.

Monarch butterflies migrate every year from the United States and Canada to spend the winter in the mountaintop pine and fir forests west of Mexico City.

# UN rights chief hints report on Xinjiang may miss deadline

AP ■ GENEVA

The outgoing UN human rights chief suggested Thursday that her office may not make good on her promise to release its long-awaited report on China's Xinjiang region by the end of her term next week.

Speaking to reporters, Michelle Bachelet said her office is "trying" to meet the deadline that she herself set in June, shortly after announcing that she would not seek a new

four-year term after the current one ends on Aug 31. The office of UN Security-General Antonio Guterres has not indicated who her successor might be.

The final months of Bachelet's term have been overshadowed by extended delays in releasing the report about Xinjiang, which many Geneva diplomats believed to be nearly completed a year ago.

Bachelet said her office - as is common practice when the UN rights office reports on

countries - has informed China about its "findings" and officials have come back with a "substantial" number of comments. She said her office was focusing only on possible factual errors now.

Independent human rights groups have denounced what Beijing has called vocational centres for ethnic Uyghurs and other minority groups as detention centres, while some countries including the United States have accused Beijing of committing genocide in Xinjiang.

# Political uncertainty in Thailand with PM's suspension

AP ■ BANGKOK

Thailand entered a phase of political uncertainty on Thursday, with its prime minister suspended and his deputy taking over in his stead pending a ruling from a top court on whether the premier has reached his constitutional term limit.

Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-ocha came to power in a military coup in 2014, and would have hit the 8-year term limit earlier this week if the clock started when he seized power.

The Constitutional Court suspended Prayuth, the army's commander at the time of the coup, on Wednesday as it considers arguments in his case.

His supporters argue that his term as prime minister should be calculated from when he won the job legally after a general election in 2019, or, if nothing else, from when the term-limit provision became part of the current constitution in 2017. Deputy Prime Minister Prawit Wongsuwan has assumed the role of acting prime minister, taking over Prayuth's duties.

Prawit, 77, is closely associated with



the military clique behind the 2014 coup, and is expected to toe the same line as Prayuth.

On Thursday, Prawit chaired a meeting of a committee on communications during national disasters that he was previously scheduled to attend.

Prayuth, who has kept his other Cabinet position as defence minister, attended a monthly meeting of the gov-

ernment's Defence Council in that capacity, participating via video.

No date has been set for the court's ruling, but Thitinan Pongsudhirak, a political science professor at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University, said there is a good possibility they will decide in favour of keeping Prayuth as prime minister even though public sentiment is seen to favour the "literal interpretation" of his

eight years in office.

"Looking at how the court has always ruled in his favour, it would not be a surprise if the Constitutional Court comes up with a technicality," he said. "We must remember it was appointed during the military regime."

Prayuth's popularity has been falling over accusations he botched Thailand's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and mishandled the economy, but his coalition government survived four no-confidence votes.

Prayuth has argued against his detractors that his government has successfully steered the economy through the pandemic, allowing it to now reopen and start generating the tourist revenue upon which it relies heavily.

If he is allowed to remain in power by the court, it risks invigorating a protest movement that has long sought to oust him and reopening deep fissures in Thailand.

After the court's ruling on Wednesday, opposition politicians called for Prayuth to resign and make way for new elections.

# 1 yr on, Afghans at risk await evacuation, relocation

AP ■ BARCELONA

More than a year after the Taliban takeover that saw thousands of Afghans rushing to Kabul's international airport amid the chaotic US withdrawal, Afghans at risk who failed to get on evacuation flights say they are still struggling to find safe and legal ways out of the country.

Among those left behind is a 49-year-old interpreter who worked for a NATO contractor in 2010 accompanying convoys in Kandahar. Only six days after the Taliban reached the capital last August, they came looking for him.

"They come to my house and they threatened my son and my wife (when) I was not at home. They (then) destroy my office," he told AP via WhatsApp referring to the place where he taught English. He asked that his name not be revealed for security reasons.

This month, he was interrogated by the Taliban again for more than two hours.

During the chaotic days of the US pullout, he had tried several times to reach Kabul Airport but, like many, failed to get through massive crowds made even more dangerous by attacks around the airport that killed dozens. He then tried to leave Afghanistan by crossing the land border with Pakistan but was stopped by the Taliban who demanded \$700 per person to cross - money he did not have. To make matters worse, his passport is no longer valid.

Like millions of Afghans, he's also been impacted by the country's economic freefall, caused in part by international sanctions and vanishing foreign aid.



"We eat once a day," the interpreter said. Still, he continues hoping he and his family will leave Afghanistan at some point.

"I never give up because of my future and my children future," he said.

Since their return to rule, the Taliban have been trying to transition from insurgency and war to governing, with the hard-liners increasingly at odds with the pragmatists on how to run a country in the midst of a humanitarian and economic crisis. But a year on they have so far failed to gain international recognition. Initial promises to allow girls to return to school and women to continue working have been broken.

Those who have failed to evacuate include interpreters and drivers but also women journalists, activists and athletes who say they cannot live freely under a Taliban-led government.

The US, together with other Western nations, hastily evacuated more than 120,000 people, both foreign nationals and Afghan citizens, in August last year.

# 'Monkeypox cases drop 21%, reversing month-long increase'

AP ■ GENEVA

The number of monkeypox cases reported globally dropped by 21% in the last week, reversing a month-long trend of rising infections and a possible signal the outbreak in Europe may be starting to decline, according to a World Health Organisation report issued Thursday.

The UN health agency reported 5,907 new weekly cases and said two countries, Iran and Indonesia, reported their first cases. To date, more than 45,000 cases have been reported in 98 countries since late April.

Cases in the Americas accounted for 60% of cases in the past month, WHO said, while cases in Europe comprised about 38%. It said infections in the Americas showed "a continuing steep rise".

In early July, just weeks before the agency declared the international spread of the disease to be a global emergency, WHO's Europe director said countries in the region were responsible for 90% of all laboratory confirmed cases of monkeypox.

British health authorities said last week after seeing a decline in the number of new cases getting reported daily that there were "early signs" the country's monkeypox outbreak was slowing.

The UK's Health Security Agency downgraded the country's monkeypox outbreak last month, saying there was no evidence the once rare disease was spreading beyond men who



were gay, bisexual or had sex with other men.

Since monkeypox outbreaks in Europe and North America were identified in May, WHO and other health agencies have noted that its spread was almost exclusively in men who have sex with men.

Monkeypox has been endemic in parts of Africa for decades and experts suspect the outbreaks in Europe and North America were triggered after the disease started spreading via sex at two raves in Spain and Belgium.

WHO's latest report said 98% of cases are in men and of those who reported sexual orientation, 96% are in men who have sex with men.

"Of all reported types of transmission, a sexual encounter was reported most commonly," WHO said. "The majority of cases were likely exposed in a party with sexual contacts," the agency said.

Among the monkeypox cases in which the HIV status of

patients was known, 45% were infected with HIV.

WHO has recommended that men at high risk of the disease temporarily consider reducing their number of sex partners or refrain from group or anonymous sex.

Monkeypox typically requires skin-to-skin or skin-to-mouth contact with an infected patient's lesions to spread. People can also become infected through contact with the clothing or bedsheets of someone who has monkeypox lesions.

With globally limited vaccine supplies, authorities in the US, Europe and the UK have all begun rationing doses to stretch supplies by up to five times.

WHO has advised countries that have vaccines to prioritize immunisation for those at high risk of the disease, including gay and bisexual men with multiple sex partners, and for health workers, laboratory staff and outbreak responders.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Be it known to all that my clientless Mst. Jumrat Khatoun W/o Late Abdul Aziz, aged 64 yrs. R/o D-53, Gali No.1, Chand Bagh, Karawal Nagar, Delhi-94, has severed all her relations with her son Sh. Ravi Bhushan Chopra and his wife Ms. Tooba as they both follow their own ways and are living separately, and they also do not support and maintain my clientless in her old age despite duty bound by law. Moreover, they are disobedient and disloyal and are hereby declared from inhering all movable and immovable properties of my clientless, he/she who deals with them shall be doing so at his/her own risk and responsibility and my clientless shall not be responsible for their any act of omission and commission.

**NAVIN KUMAR CHAUDHARY**  
**ADVOCATE**  
Ch. No. - 3, Civil Wing  
Tis Hazari Courts, Delhi110053

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Sub: Transfer of ownership in respect of constructed property plot no. 1178, Sector-37, Faridabad (HR) consequent upon the intestate death of allottee Smt. Vijay Luxmi Chopra W/o Late Sh. Ravi Bhushan Chopra. Smt. Vijay Luxmi Chopra who was the allottee of the subject cited property as per record, after the death of her husband Sh. Ravi Bhushan Chopra the original allottee, has died on 12.08.2022 leaving behind following legal heirs: (i) Sh. Rajan Chopra (son) (2) Smt. Vibha Shulnar W/o Sh. Sunit Inderpal Singh Bhullar (Daughter of Late Sh. Ravi Bhushan Chopra). Sh. Rajan Chopra S/o Late. Sh. Ravi Bhushan Chopra R/o 714, Block-AE, Shalimar Bagh, Delhi - 110088, intends to apply for transfer of the said property in his favour, as per the will of the original allottee Sh. Ravi Bhushan Chopra, being the legal heir and requests for transfer/re-allotment in the name of Sh. Rajan Chopra.

If any person is having any objections to the above transfer of the said property, he/she can submit objections in writing to the Estate Officer, RSC/P, Sec-12, Faridabad along with supporting Documents, within 30 days from the date of publication of this notice, otherwise the Estate Officer may accord permission to transfer/re-allotment of the said property as per Huda policy and may not entertain subsequent claim, if any.

**Sh. Rajan Chopra, Legal Heir,**  
**on behalf of Estate Officer,**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

This is to inform the Public at large that Smt. Manju Roy W/o. Late Sh. Sarthak Kumar Roy is the "Title Holder" in possession of "Vidya First Floor of Plot Bearing No. 75, Block-E, Greater Kailash - I, New Delhi with One Servant Quarter in the Basement and One Car Parking Space in the Slit Area", hereinafter referred to as "Schedule Property". That Sh. Sarthak Kumar Roy had purchased Plot No. 75, Block-E, Greater Kailash - I, New Delhi from M/s. DLF Housing & Construction Pvt. Ltd. vide Sale Deed dated 21.12.1963, registered as Regn. No. 8876, Book No. 1, Vol. No. 1072, pp. 157-158 on 31.12.1963 in the Office of the Sub Registrar, Delhi. Sh. Sarthak Kumar Roy died intestate on 25.01.2004. Consequent to his death, the Schedule Property was mutated in favour of Smt. Manju Roy (Wife & Sole Survivor) in the records of MCD vide Mutation Letter dated 17.03.2004. Smt. Manju Roy executed a Collaboration Agreement with M/s. Ishta Constructions Pvt. Ltd. through its Director, Sh. Ajay Sharma for re-development of the Schedule Plot. After completion of re-development, Smt. Manju Roy as per the terms of the Collaboration Agreement is the rightful legal owner and the holder of the Schedule Property, which is mutated in the name of Smt. Manju Roy vide Mutation Letter dated 12.07.2022. That the original Documents i.e. (i) Sale Deed dated 21.12.63, (ii) Re-Conveyance Deed dated 18.09.79, (iii) Mutation Letter dated 17.03.04, (iv) Collaboration Agreement with M/s. Ishta Constructions Pvt. Ltd. (v) Sanction for Construction Letter and (vi) Will, dated 25.11.11 w.r.t. the Schedule Property have been lost/ misplaced and are untraceable as on date, in lieu of which Information Report bearing LR No. 724575/2022 dated 25.08.2022 has been filed with Delhi Police. This notice is issued to Public at Large having any knowledge, custody or possession of lost/ misplaced documents, to come forward, to be delivered to the undersigned within 7 days from the date of this Publication.

**Apeksha Sharan**  
**On Behalf of Mrs. Manju Roy**  
**Mobile No. 9891639395**

**PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY**  
**PARADIP-754142, ODISHA (INDIA)**  
(An autonomous body under Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Govt. of India)  
No. AD/RSC-22/106/2015(Pt.-I)/2155 Dated, the 17th August, 2022  
**Advertisement**  
Applications are invited from Indian Nationals for engagement of 01 (one) **Chief Manager (Business Development & Trade Promotion)** on contractual basis in Paradip Port Authority.  
For further details, visit our website [www.paradipport.gov.in](http://www.paradipport.gov.in).  
**Dy. Secretary,**  
**Paradip Port Authority**  
187/PR/22-23, dtd.25.08.2022

**PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY**  
**PARADIP-754142, ODISHA (INDIA)**  
(An autonomous body under Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Govt. of India)  
No. AD/RSC-II-21-17/2017 Dated, the 23rd August, 2022  
**Notice**  
The result for the post of Hindi Assistant and Hindi Typist held on **06.08.2022** is available at Paradip Port Authority website. Candidates appeared in the skill test may visit our website [www.paradipport.gov.in](http://www.paradipport.gov.in) under "Career" to know the result.  
**Dy. Secretary,**  
**Paradip Port Authority**  
188/PR/22-23, dtd.25.08.2022

**Gujarat State Board of School Textbook**  
**"Vidhyayan," Sector-10/A, Gandhinagar-382010**  
**E-Tender / Two Bid**

Online tender are invited for Request for proposal of empanelment for Job work of offset Printing of Textbooks, Year 2022-2024 from offset printing press all over India.

- The Detail and terms & conditions are given in the tender.
- Board reserves the rights to reject the online tenders without mentioning any reason.
- More details regarding the tender are available on the website [www.nprocure.com](http://www.nprocure.com). The tender downloading and submitting facility are available on [www.nprocure.com](http://www.nprocure.com) only.
- Kindly contact in person this office for further details regarding the tender during office hours.

No	Details	Date	Hrs.
1.	Bid Document Download Start Date	25/08/2022	11:00 a.m.
2.	Pre-bid meeting Date & Time	01/09/2022	12:30 p.m.
3.	Bid Document Download End Date	15/09/2022	05:00 p.m.
4.	Last Date and Time For Receipt of Bid Submission of EMD , Tender Fees, Other Document	16/09/2022	05:00 p.m.
5.	Opening Technical Bids	17/09/2022	11:30 a.m.
6.	Verification of Original Documents	date will be notified to qualified bidders separately.	
7.	Opening of Commercial Bid (Only For Qualified Bidders)		
8-	RA Bid		

**Director**  
**Gujarat State Board of School Textbooks, Gandhinagar**  
**INF/NPN/2022/G/1177**



# Bank credit growth accelerates to 14.2% in June quarter: RBI data



PTI ■ MUMBAI

Bank credit growth accelerated to 14.2 per cent in the quarter ended June 2022 from 6 per cent in the same period of the previous year, RBI data showed on Thursday.

In the quarter ended March 2022, bank credit had expanded by 10.8 per cent.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Thursday released the 'Quarterly Statistics on Deposits and Credit of SCBs for June 2022'. This data is collected from all scheduled commercial banks (SCBs), which include regional rural banks (RRBs), small finance banks (SFBs) and payments banks (PBs).

"Credit growth has been broad-based: all the population groups (i.e., rural, semi-urban, urban and metropolitan), all the bank groups (i.e., public/private sector banks, foreign banks, RRBs and SFBs) and all the regions of the country (i.e., central, eastern, north-eastern, northern, southern and west-

ern) recorded double-digit annual credit growth in June 2022," as per the data.

Aggregate deposit growth (year-on-year) has remained in the range 9.5 - 10.2 per cent during the last five quarters.

Metropolitan branches continue to account for over half of the bank deposits and their share increased marginally over the last one year.

The share of current account and savings account (CASA) deposits in total deposits has been increasing over the last three years (42 per cent in June 2020, 43.8 per cent in June 2021 and 44.5 per cent in June 2022).

As credit growth is outpacing deposit growth in the recent period, credit-deposit (C-D) ratio has been on the rise, the data showed.

In June 2022, C-D ratio stood at 73.5 per cent at all-India level (70.5 per cent a year ago) and 86.2 per cent for metropolitan branches of banks (84.3 per cent a year ago).

# Sensex snaps two-day rising streak on fag-end sell-off

## IT, finance stocks weigh

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks capitulated in the last hour of trade on Thursday to break their two-session winning run, with IT, finance and bank stocks playing spoilsport amid expiry of monthly derivative contracts.

A weakening rupee also weighed on sentiment, traders said.

After remaining in the positive territory for most part of the session, the 30-share BSE Sensex suddenly came under selling pressure towards the fag-end, tumbling 310.71 points or 0.53 per cent to settle at 58,774.72.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty dropped 82.50 points or 0.47 per cent to 17,522.45.

Bajaj Finance led the losers among the Sensex constituents, falling 1.81 per cent, followed by PowerGrid, Infosys, TCS, IndusInd Bank, Axis Bank, NTPC and Larsen & Toubro.

Only five counters clocked gains -- Maruti Suzuki, SBI, Dr Reddy's, Kotak Mahindra Bank and Titan, rising up to 0.46 per cent.

"Amid heightened volatility, investors pruned their long positions on the F&O expiry day due to the uncertain global economic scenario. There are concerns that the Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell's speech at the Jackson Hole symposium on Friday would focus on more rate hikes to rein in inflation.

"Also, benchmark indices had come close to slipping into negative zone in the last two sessions, and hence correction was on expected lines," said Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Equity Research (Retail), Kotak Securities Ltd.



In the broader market, the BSE mid-cap gauge climbed 0.20 per cent and the smallcap index went up 0.17 per cent.

Among the BSE sectoral indices, IT and tech fell 0.88 per cent each, FMCG declined 0.45 per cent, oil & gas 0.40 per cent and industrials 0.35 per cent.

Consumer discretionary goods and services, consumer durables, metal and realty ended in the green.

Ahead of the Jackson Hole symposium, investors across the world are eagerly expecting the Fed chair's speech to evaluate the outlook for monetary policy and determine whether the central bank can achieve a soft landing for the economy.

"Crude prices rose as Saudi Arabia suggested that OPEC+ supply may be reduced to address market instability. Although Indian equities are trading at a

# India poised to become next global SaaS capital: Study



PTI ■ BENGALURU

The Indian IT sector continues to charge ahead on its trajectory of growth and transformation, with SaaS (Software as a Service) setting the stage for the next wave of disruption, according to a study.

India is home to about 100-plus unicorns across different segments with an accelerated pace of entrepreneurship and is rapidly emerging as a hub for SaaS start-ups, cited the study by EY and CII, titled "India: The next global SaaS capital."

Based on in-depth interviews with 50 SaaS promoters and funders from early stage to Series E and beyond, the study highlights operational characteristics owing to which the Indian SaaS industry is growing at an accelerated pace, an EY statement said on Thursday.

Over 80 per cent of the SaaS promoters who contributed to the report feel there is the need to build a robust talent pool; 50 per cent of SaaS providers feel driving greater awareness for SaaS products continues to be a prerequisite for customer acquisition, it said. India is poised to become the global SaaS capital over the next few years, mainly driven by Small and Medium Businesses with a focus on large enterprises.

SaaS providers are also doubling down on their customer acquisition, retention, and success strategies by upselling and cross selling to existing customers.

To enhance customer maturity levels, large delivery teams are being deployed to onboard, train and support

customers throughout the product life cycle, it was stated.

One-third of the SaaS providers are being increasingly cautious with their go-to-market strategy and mainly targeting niche segments to acquire marquee clients by understanding new digital buying preferences of the customers, following a digital-first approach and offering innovative pricing models.

Technology Sector Leader, EY India, Nitin Bhatt, said, "Macro-economic environment notwithstanding, the funding activity in the first two quarters of this year surpassed the funding activity in 2021 - which was a breakout year with over USD 4.3 billion in funding for SaaS start-ups."

The large consumer base in India, coupled with a technology-first mindset is paving way for the emergence of consumer-focused SaaS solutions as adoption levels continue to rise, the statement said.

According to some data points covered in the study based on secondary research, the Indian SaaS market is expected to grow multi-fold by 2025, accounting for almost seven to ten per cent of the global SaaS market from two to four per cent at present.

India now has 18 SaaS unicorns as compared to one in 2018, with the country being the third largest SaaS ecosystem globally, after the USA and China, it said.

The number of SaaS companies in India have more than doubled in 2021 as compared to 2019 and the funding too increased from USD 2.6 billion in 2019 to USD six billion in 2021, the statement said.

# Google removes over 2,000 loan apps from India Play Store since January

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Google has removed over 2,000 loan apps from India Play Store since January this year for violating terms, misrepresenting information, and questionable offline behaviour, a senior official said.

The tech giant also looks to tighten policies in the coming weeks for greater checks in this space, the official said.

Saikat Mitra, Senior Director and Head of Trust and Safety, Google APAC (Asia Pacific region) said the company is committed to complying with regulations in all jurisdictions it operates in, and termed online harm as a "global phenomenon".

Asked about concerns in some quarters, that the digital platforms are not doing enough

to curb online harm and are in fact pushing back on new regulations coming in, Mitra asserted that Google's priority and its core values have always been around user safety.

The company believes in having open, multi-party industry dialogues with governments on regulation, he said adding "in our world everything starts with user safety and security".

"We have removed 2000-plus loan apps from India Play Store from January till now," Mitra said, adding the crackdown was based on leads and inputs received, violation of policy, lack of disclosures, and misinformation.

The loan app problem has "peaked", and may subside given the focus and attention the issue is garner-



ing, he suggested.

"We are in the process of some more policy changes that are going to come out in a matter of few weeks...Which will make it more explicit on requirements...." he said, adding that the proposed move will lead to tighter checks.

The nature of the 'loan app' problem varies between markets, Mitra explained.

The US market, for instance, has a problem of predatory loans, while in India it is a combination of misrepresentation, non-compliance with policies and regulations, and improper offline or "real world" behaviour of such apps on recovery and other actions.

"It entails questions like...Is the loan app prominently disclosing what people

are signing up for, the rates for instance...Are you tied-up with approved NBFC or bank...Is that bank on blacklist of RBI... It also gets into offline things for which we don't have visibility but we get inputs from law enforcement agencies," he elaborated.

On the issue of new regulations and government policies, Mitra said "as and when regulation comes, we work very closely with the government and industry".

"We think, we all are trying to achieve the same goals...Which is respecting privacy and security. We feel our policies should actually help us achieve that. As and when regulation comes, we have a dialogue and we ensure that we present our perspective," he said.

# Polyester yarn makers to laugh all way to bank this year too: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Robust demand from end-users and increased blending with cotton yarn due to decadal high prices of cotton will boost the revenue of polyester yarn makers by 18-20 per cent this fiscal, a report said on Thursday.

This will have the industry's growth spree continuing this fiscal as well leading to operating margins expansion, and the resultant stronger balance sheets and better credit outlook, rating agency Crisil said in a report on Thursday.

The revenue of the polyester yarn industry grew 60 per cent last fiscal due to massive price hikes on healthy demand. Polyester yarn is used mostly in athletic and leisure wear, home textiles and garments.

Operating profitability (difference between prices of polyester yarn and its raw materials) of the industry is also expected to increase by 100 basis points to 11 per cent this fiscal, driven by continued higher capacity utilisation (over 90 per cent) due to demand growth and healthy polyester yarn spread, said the report.

The average spreads rose to a five-year high of Rs 29 per kilogram last fiscal from Rs 22 a kilogram in the previous fiscal and should sustain at Rs 28-29 per kilogram this fiscal, it added.

Better profitability and



expected modest capital spending will improve credit profiles of yarn makers, shows an analysis of 24 players that account for about 40 per cent of the sectoral revenue, the report said.

Recovery in demand from these end-user segments and multiple price hikes had led to a revenue growth of 60 per cent last fiscal, though on a low base, with sales volume picking up 15 per cent.

Demand is seen to remain healthy this fiscal too, with garments and home textiles segments expected to grow at 16-18 per cent and 12-13 per cent in this fiscal respectively, driven by recovery in domestic demand and moderate growth in exports, according to the agency.

# Govt exempts garment, hosiery sold loose or open from 6 key declarations

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Thursday said it has exempted garments and hosiery sold loose or open at the point of sale from six declarations, including 'best before use' and 'consumer care address'.

The consumer affairs ministry has brought amendments to this effect in the Legal Metrology (Packaged

Commodities) Rules 2011, following various representations, it said in a statement.

Now, only four key information relevant to consumers are to be given, it added.

They include maximum retail price; sizes with globally recognisable indicators along with details in metric notation in terms of centimetres and metres; and consumer care email ID and phone number.



Name and address of the manufacturer, marketer, brand owner and importer with "country of origin or manufacture" in case of imported products are also required to be given, the statement said.

The changes to the rules have been done to ensure ease of doing business and reduce the compliance burden on industries without compromising the interest of consumers, it added.

## BSES Rajdhani wins top honour

New Delhi: BSES Rajdhani Power Limited (BRPL) won the 2022 Switch Delhi EV award in the category of 'Discom with the highest number of charging points installed in Delhi'. BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) was the runner-up. BRPL has also been felicitated as the runner up in the category 'Commercial building/ Workplace with highest number of charging points in Delhi'.

The awards were presented by Minister of Transport, GoNCTD Kailash Gahlot in the presence of Jasmine Shah, Vice Chairperson, Dialogue and Development Commission of Delhi and others.

## Gem, jewellery exports down marginally at ₹24,913 cr in July

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's gem and jewellery exports declined marginally to Rs 24,913.99 crore (USD 3,129.91 million) in July compared to the year-ago month, the Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (GJEPC) said on Thursday.

The overall exports stood at Rs 25,157.64 crore (USD 3,375.62 million) during the same month of the previous year, GJEPC said in a statement.

"July and August are traditionally dull seasons for gem and jewellery exports. However, the shipments were marginally lower due to the

jump in exports of plain gold jewellery," GJEPC Chairman Colin Shah told PTI.

According to the GJEPC data, the overall gems and jewellery exports during the April-July period rose by 10.99 per cent to Rs 1,03,931.14 crores (USD 13,367.91 million) compared to Rs 93,640.44 crores (USD 12,655.55 million) in the same period of the previous year.

During July, however, the total gross export of plain gold jewellery jumped by 24.22 per cent to Rs 2,591.67 crores (USD 325.59 million) compared to Rs 2,086.41 crores (USD 280.02 million) recorded in July 2021, which mainly

gained traction post the India-UAE Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), the GJEPC stated.

"We are seeing good traction in plain gold jewellery exports post the CEPA signed with the UAE. We hope to see the successful conclusion of similar FTAs with the UK and Canada soon, which will further boost exports from India," Shah said.

There is consistent, robust demand for jewellery from key global markets and the next few months will be a crucial period for exporters as they get into high gear to fulfil the holiday season orders, he said.

## 'Rooftop solar installations fall 25% to 389 MW in Apr-Jun'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Rooftop solar capacity installations in the country fell by 25 per cent to 389 MW during April-June 2022 compared to the year-ago period, according to Mercom India Research.

In the second quarter of 2022, the rooftop solar accounted for 10 per cent of total solar installations. India's cumulative rooftop solar capacity was over 7.9 GW at the end of Q2 2022, the research firm's 'Rooftop Solar Market Report Q2 2022' said on Thursday.

In January-June, rooftop solar installed capacity was 2 per cent down at 845 MW over the same period of the last year.

"...Supply chain issues and



higher component costs and the basic customs duty took a toll on the market in the second quarter. Rooftop project costs have risen for six quarters in a row. But the economic case for rooftop solar is stronger than ever, and we expect the market to show strength going forward," said Raj Prabhu, the CEO of Mercom Capital Group.



# PRANNOY BEATS SEN TO ENTER QFs

Kapila-Arjun, Satwik-Chirag too reach last eight but Saina exits



PTI ■ TOKYO

India's H S Prannoy staged a spirited comeback to beat compatriot and CWG champion Lakshya Sen to enter the singles quarterfinals while the men's doubles pairing of Dhruv Kapila and M R Arjun continued their impressive run to make the last eight stage at the World Championships here on Thursday.

It was a gruelling one hour and 15 minute battle between Lakshya and Prannoy who eventually eked out a 17-21, 21-16, 21-17 over his teammate. It was the fourth meeting of the year for the two Indians after Prannoy's win, their head-to-head record standing at 2-2.

Prannoy will now face China's Zhao Jun Peng in the quarterfinals.

Besides Prannoy, the two Indian

men's doubles pair of Dhruv Kapila and MR Arjun and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty also moved into the quarterfinals.

However, Olympic bronze medallist Saina Nehwal was knocked out of the World Championship after going down to Busanan Ongbarmrunghan in a hard-fought women's singles pre-quarterfinals.

The 32-year-old went down 17-21, 21-16, 13-21 to her Thai opponent, who extended her head-to-head record against the Indian to 5-3.

Saina was immediately put under pressure by Ongbarmrunghan as she raced to 11-3 in the opening game.

The two-time World Championship medallist was able to bridge the gap to 17-19 but Ongbarmrun-

ghan held her nerve to take the first game.

The late surge in the previous game gave Saina confidence as the former world No.1 led 11-7 at the break. Playing aggressively, she continued to dictate terms, forcing the match into decider.

The third game was played on an even keel until the interval, but Ongbarmrunghan started to gain momentum and opened up a five point lead as Saina slowly started losing steam.

In the end, the 26-year-old Ongbarmrunghan, who has now won the last five matches against Saina, had seven match points as she sealed her quarterfinal berth.

The unseeded Indian duo of Arjun and Kapila had to toil hard for 58 minutes as it came from behind



## Lee's bid meets surprise early end

AP ■ TOKYO

Lee Zii Jia's bid to become Malaysia's first badminton world champion ground to a halt on Thursday with a third-round loss to China's unseeded surprise-package Zhao Junpeng.

Number five seed Lee was one of the main contenders for the title this week in Tokyo but he fell into an early hole that he could not dig himself out of, going down 21-19, 11-21, 21-19.

Three of the top five men's seeds in Tokyo have now crashed out before the quarter-finals and Lee said that Zhao had "controlled the match".

"This is sport," said the 24-year-old, who joined number two seed Kento Momota and number three Anders Antonsen in making an early exit.

"You've got to win, you've got to lose, and I think no matter what the result is, we have to accept it."

Danish number one seed Viktor Axelsen made it through to the quarter-finals with a 21-19, 21-16 win over Thailand's Sitthikom Thammasin, but China's Shi Yuqi fell by the wayside.

Shi was returning from a 10-month ban from the Chinese Badminton Association for making "inappropriate comments" following a 2021 match where he withdrew on match point.

Indonesian Anthony Sinisuka Ginting nipped his comeback in the bud with a 21-11, 13-21, 21-18 win and the number six seed's reward was a quarter-final match-up against Axelsen.

"Today was not an easy game and tomorrow's will be more tough, so I will do my very best and enjoy it," said Ginting, who was cheered on by a small but vocal group of Indonesian fans.

"Of course (Axelsen) has weak points but it's a secret for me."



Axelsen has not dropped a game so far in Tokyo but he needed several attempts to finish Thammasin off when he had him on the ropes.

The Dane is looking to be more ruthless against Ginting and said he would "have to be 120 percent ready".

"I have to play better than I have done so far," said the top-ranked Axelsen.

"It's always my goal to do so."

Defending champion Loh Kean Yew also reached the quarter-finals after opponent Angus Ng of Hong Kong withdrew during the second game.

On the women's side, defending champion and number one seed Akane Yamaguchi made short work of Japanese compatriot Sayaka Takahashi in a 21-18, 21-7 win.

Yamaguchi will next face former world number one Carolina Marin after the Spaniard fended off four match points to beat China's He Bingjiao 16-21, 21-15, 22-20.

"To be away for more than one year, not playing these kinds of games against top players, sometimes your confidence is not really high," said Marin, who only returned from a serious knee injury in May.

"But today, to get this victory gives me some confidence for sure."

## AIFF elections: Bhutia files fresh nomination for president's post



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian football legend Bhaichung Bhutia on Thursday filed a fresh nomination for the post of president ahead of the All India Football Federation (AIFF) elections that are scheduled to be held on September 2.

The 45-year-old former India captain's nomination was proposed by the Andhra Football Association (AFA) and seconded by the Rajasthan FA.

"I have filed my nomination for AIFF president's post and I feel I am the right person for the job," Bhaichung said.

"I have played so many games for the country and top clubs and I also know a bit on the administrative side as I am in Mission Olympics Cell of sports ministry as well as in other committees. I want Indian football to reach new heights," he added.

Bhaichung had earlier filed his nomination for the president's post and was backed by his former teammate Deepak Mandal and seconded by eminent woman footballer, Madhu Kumari.

Former Mohun Bagan and East Bengal goalkeeper Kalyan Chaubey, a BJP leader from West Bengal, has also filed his nomination and is considered to be firm favourite for the top post.

Chaubey's nomination was proposed by the Gujarat Football Association and seconded by Arunachal Pradesh.

## Trapp says he's turning down Man Utd offer

AP ■ FRANKFURT

Eintracht Frankfurt goalkeeper Kevin Trapp says he has turned down an offer from Manchester United to stay with the German club.

United had reportedly offered a four-year deal to the 32-year-old Trapp, a Germany international who previously played for Paris Saint-Germain and Kaiserslautern.

"It's true that there's a written offer," Trapp wrote on Thursday on Instagram. "Manchester United is a global club and I hope everyone can understand that I consider such an offer and think about it."

Trapp said he decided to stay in Frankfurt, where he won the Europa League last season and has a contract till 2024.

"Yesterday I told the representatives of both clubs that I decided for Eintracht. I've experienced the unforgettable here in Frankfurt and we wrote history together," Trapp said. "The start of the season has been bumpy but I've absolute confidence in us."



## Colak puts Rangers in CL group stage

AP ■ PARIS

Antonio Colak scored the goal that took Rangers into the Champions League group stages on Wednesday, a year after he had been responsible for knocking the Scottish side out of Europe's elite club tournament.

Colak found the target on the hour mark to secure a 1-0 win at PSV Eindhoven and seal a 3-2 aggregate victory in their play-off.

The Croatian international tacked the ball away after Malik Tillman had created the chance following a mix-up in the Dutch defence.

Rangers will join Glasgow rivals Celtic in the draw, the first time in 14 years that both of the Scottish giants have been in the group stage at the same time.

The draw for the third round was also made and it features seven all-Premier League matchups — including Manchester City hosting Chelsea.

Other all-Premier League matches include Manchester United vs. Aston Villa and Arsenal vs. Brighton, while Liverpool begins its title defense at home to third-tier Derby.

Newcastle was pushed the hardest of the three top-flight teams in action Wednesday, needing to come from behind to beat fourth-tier Tranmere Rovers 2-1 thanks to goals by Jamaal Lascelles in the 40th minute and Chris Wood in the 52nd.

Coming off a 3-0 win over Chelsea in the league, Leeds beat third-tier Barnsley 3-1 after Colombia winger Luis Sinisterra scored his first goal for the club. Mateusz Klich scored the other two goals for Leeds, one of them a penalty.

Brighton has already won away against Manchester United and West Ham in the league and found third-tier Forest Green easy to deal with.

## Draper beats Thiem to reach last 8 at Winston-Salem

AP ■ WINSTON-SALEM

Britain's Jack Draper defeated 2020 US Open champion Dominic Thiem 6-1, 6-4 on Wednesday to reach the ATP Winston-Salem Open quarter-finals.

The 20-year-old Englishman, who reached his first ATP Masters Series quarter-final two weeks ago at Montreal, ousted the Austrian who won his first major title two years ago in New York.

Thiem missed most of last year with a right wrist injury, including the chance to defend his US Open title.

World number 231 Thiem hadn't played a hardcourt match since March 2021 until this week but advanced to the third round when top seed Grigor Dimitrov retired in the second set of their second-round match.

Dutch second seed Botic van de Zandschulp advanced by beating Spain's Jaume Munar 6-3, 6-3 to book a quarter-final match against French 10th seed Benjamin Bonzi, who dispatched Brazil's Thiago Monteiro 7-5, 6-2.

Two other Frenchmen advanced with Richard Gasquet rallying past American Steve Johnson 6-7 (3/7), 6-4, 6-3 and Adrian Mannarino ripping Spanish eighth seed Albert



Ramos 6-3, 6-3.

Mannarino will next face US fourth seed Maxime Cressy, who ousted Italy's Lorenzo Sonego 6-7 (4/7), 6-2, 7-6 (7/3) while Gasquet faces Serbian Laslo Djere, who outlasted Australian Jason Kubler 7-6 (7/4), 6-7 (9/11), 6-3.

## JOHN ISNER & DE MINAUR FILL OUT WORLD TEAM SPOTS FOR LAVER CUP

AP ■ PARIS

Australia's Alex de Minaur and big serving American John Isner were announced on Thursday as the final members of the Team World for the Laver Cup which takes place from September 23-25 in London.

This year's edition is notable as it features the former "Big Four" — Novak Djokovic, Rafael Nadal, Roger Federer and Andy Murray lining up in a dream Team Europe team.

Bjorn Borg's European

team -- bidding to make it six wins from six editions — will take on John McEnroe's Team World at London's O2 Arena.

Seven-time Wimbledon champion Djokovic will be appearing at the Laver Cup for the first time since 2018, when it was held in Chicago.

It will also be Federer's return to competitive play for the first time since a quarter-final defeat at Wimbledon last year.

The four players have dominated men's tennis for nearly two decades, capturing

66 of the past 76 Grand Slams and winning every Wimbledon title since 2003.

Played on a black indoor court, the Laver Cup debuted in Prague in 2017 and has since rotated destinations between Europe and the World, staged in Chicago in 2018, Geneva in 2019 and Boston in 2021.

Next year it will be held between September 22-24 at Vancouver's Rogers Arena. The 2024 edition will be from September 20-22 at the Mercedes-Benz Arena in Berlin.

## Barcelona loan Umtiti to Lecce

AP ■ BARCELONA

French international Samuel Umtiti bedevilled by injuries and a loss of form since winning the 2018 World Cup has been sent on a season long loan to Serie A side Lecce by Barcelona.

The 28-year-old defender is due to undergo a medical later on Thursday at Lecce, who won Serie B title last season.

"Barcelona and Lecce of Italian Serie A have reached an agreement on the loan of defender Samuel Umtiti until 30 June 2023," read a statement on the Barcelona website.

"There is no purchase option."

Spanish sports paper Marca reported that Lecce and Barcelona will share his salary, but that Barca will get bonus payments depending on games played.

Umtiti has played just 133 times for Barcelona, scoring twice.

He still managed to win seven trophies including two Liga titles and three Copas del Rey.



## Barca, Man City draw in friendly to help fight ALS

AP ■ BARCELONA

Barcelona and Manchester City drew 3-3 in a friendly to raise money and awareness for the fight against ALS on Wednesday.

More than 91,000 fans were at the Camp Nou for the match, with the proceeds going to help raise funds for research against ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease, an incurable neurodegenerative disorder.

The honorary kickoff was taken by Juan Carlos Unzué, the former Barcelona goalkeeper and goalkeeping coach who has

the disease and helped promote the friendly.

"We want to continue living and enjoying life," he said before the match. Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, Frenkie de Jong and Memphis Depay scored for the hosts. Man City got goals from Julian Alvarez, Cole Palmer and Riyad Mahrez deep into stoppage time.

Man City defender Luke Mbete had to be substituted late in the game after a clash of heads with Barcelona defender Andreas Christensen. Mbete had to be immobilized and carried out on a stretcher.

AP ■ NEW YORK

Novak Djokovic will not play in the US Open, as expected, because he is not vaccinated against COVID-19 and thus is not allowed to travel to the United States.

Djokovic announced his withdrawal from the year's last Grand Slam tournament on Twitter on Thursday, hours before the draw for the event was revealed.

"Sadly, I will not be able to travel to NY this time for US Open," Djokovic wrote, wishing luck to his fellow players, and said he would "keep in good shape and positive spirit and wait for an opportunity to compete again."



Play is scheduled to begin at Flushing Meadows on Monday.

Djokovic is a 35-year-old from

Serbia who owns 21 major championships, one behind Rafael Nadal for the men's record. Three of Djokovic's Slam trophies came at the US Open, in 2011, 2015 and 2018.

He also was the runner-up there a half-dozen times, including last season, when his pursuit of the first calendar-year Grand Slam in men's tennis since 1969 ended with a loss in the final to Daniil Medvedev.

Foreign citizens who have not been vaccinated against COVID-19 are currently unable to enter the US or Canada, and Djokovic has said he won't get the shots, even if that prevents him from playing in certain tournaments.

The US Tennis Association has

said all along it will follow government rules about vaccination status for this year's Open. There is no vaccine mandate at the tournament for players or their support teams — meaning that an unvaccinated American would be allowed to compete.

Djokovic missed the Australian Open in January after a protracted legal saga ended with his deportation from that country because he isn't vaccinated against COVID-19. He also sat out four significant tournaments in North America in 2022, including in Montreal and Cincinnati recently.

He did play in the French Open, where he lost in the quarterfinals to Nadal, and at Wimbledon, where Djokovic won the title.



# 'India has ability to squash everybody'

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Former New Zealand cricketer Scott Styris believes India have the ability to impose and win over every team in the upcoming Asia Cup, including arch-rivals Pakistan.

The 2022 Asia Cup, in 20-over format, will see India entering the competition as defending champions, having won the competition in the 50-over format in 2018 in the UAE as well as in the T20I format in 2016 in Bangladesh.

Styris pointed out that not imposing themselves in the start of Men's T20 World Cup last year was something which costed India matches against Pakistan and New Zealand. "Well, as we know, India has a very strong T20 league as well. I think it's the ability to come together and play the style and brand of cricket that best suits your players."

"I thought that was the big trick that India missed at the last T20 World Cup as it took them about two games. The two losses they had before they just started to go after the opposition, impose themselves with the talent and skill that they've got," said the former Blackcaps all-rounder on 'Sports Over The Top' show on Sports18.

Since last year's T20 World Cup, where they crashed out in the Super 12 stage, India have seen a revival of fortunes with Rohit Sharma as the



full-time captain and Rahul Dravid as the head coach through a new attacking approach with the bat, resulting in them winning six of their seven

bilateral T20I series, barring the one against South Africa, which was shared 2-2 after rain had washed out the decider in Bengaluru in June.

## Hong Kong qualify for Asia Cup

AP ■ MUSCAT

Hong Kong reached the Asia Cup on Wednesday where they will face India and Pakistan after defeating the United Arab Emirates by eight wickets in the final qualifying round.

Chasing 148 to win, Hong Kong reached their target with an over to spare with Yasim Murtaza top scoring on 58.

The 31-year-old Murtaza made his runs off 43 balls and hit seven boundaries and one six.

But it was 37-year-old spinner Ehsan Khan who was named man of the match for his 4-24 in his four overs as the brakes were applied to the UAE innings.

He removed both of the Gulf team's top scorers, skipper Chundangapoyil Rizwan (49), who



was smartly stumped by Manchester-born wicketkeeper Scott McKechnie, and Zawar Farid (41).

The Asia Cup gets underway on Saturday with India, Pakistan and Hong Kong drawn in Group A and Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in Group B.

"I want to see India do that in this Asia Cup. I want them to impose themselves on the other teams and I think they've got the ability to do that. I think they've got the ability to squash everybody, including Pakistan, in this Asia Cup. But if they're going to go into this with this middling attitude of how they want to play the

game, then I don't think it's going to happen."

"I think that's where Pakistan have figured things out a little bit more. So yes, they've got a great T20 competition, but so does India. I don't think that's going to be a defining moment or factor in this match," concluded Styris.



## PBKS part ways with Kumble

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India spin legend Anil Kumble's stint as head coach at Punjab Kings has ended after the IPL franchise decided against renewing his contract.

According to a report in *ESPNcricinfo*, the decision to part ways with Kumble was taken by a board comprising multiple owners, including Bollywood actor Preity Zinta, industrialists Mohit Burman, Ness Wadia and Karan Paul and the team's chief executive officer Satish Menon.

The franchise is looking for a new coach, and an announcement is expected soon.

Former India captain Kumble was appointed as Punjab Kings head coach ahead of the 2020 IPL season. The franchise finished in the

lower half of the points table since then.

Kumble was in charge of the team in 42 matches, winning 18 and losing 22 of them. Under him, two of the team's matches were tied.

Kumble had earlier served as the mentor for Mumbai Indians and Royal Challengers Bangalore before taking over the coaching responsibilities of the Indian team in 2016.

Meanwhile, the franchise also rubbished speculation that Mayank Agarwal may be replaced as captain this year.

"News reports published by a certain sports news website pertaining to captaincy of the Punjab Kings franchise have been making the rounds in the last few days. We would like to state that no official of the team has issued any statement on the same," said the franchise.

## Lynn to play in both BBL and UAE's ILT20

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australian batter Chris Lynn is set to feature in 11 matches in the Big Bash League before heading to the UAE to play in the inaugural International League T20 (ILT20) after signing a ground-breaking deal that will allow him to split time between the two overlapping tournaments.

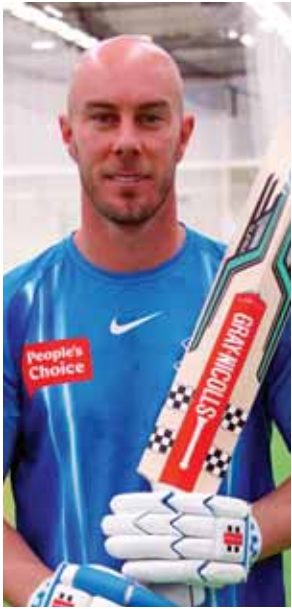
The 32-year-old, the leading run-scorer in BBL history, has struck a deal with Cricket Australia to feature in both tournaments.

CA will provide him with a No Objection Certificate (NOC), which is a requirement to participate in a foreign league as per International Cricket Council regulations, for the ILT20.

Lynn, who was announced as one of 21 marquee recruits for the ILT20, signed with Gulf Giants last week and then put pen to paper on a 11-match deal with the Adelaide Strikers on Thursday.

"Cricket Australia welcomes the Adelaide Strikers' signing of Chris Lynn, the highest run-scorer in KFC BBL history, for 11 out of 14 games in the upcoming KFC BBL12 season," a CA spokesperson said.

"He will be released from 20 January to participate in



UAE's ILT20 competition from that date."

While the BBL will go on from December 13 to February 4, the ILT20 starts on January 6.

"Lynn does not hold a CA or State contract and has not done so since his last Queensland Cricket contract expired in June 2019. Each matter regarding release for overseas competitions is subject to the individual's circumstances," the spokesperson said.

## England bowl out SA for 151 runs

AP ■ MANCHESTER

James Anderson and Stuart Broad, England's experienced fast bowlers, took three wickets each to help dismiss South Africa for 151 after tea on Day 1 of the second Test at Old Trafford on Thursday.

It could have been a lot worse for the Proteas, who slumped to 92-7 after choosing to bat before pushing to a more respectable total thanks to Kagiso Rabada's 36. Rabada was the last man out, with the innings only lasting 53.2 overs.

The 40-year-old Anderson, playing on his home ground in Manchester, had figures of 3-32 to take his national-record haul of wickets to 661. Broad took 3-37.

Earlier at lunch, England captain Ben Stokes followed up Stuart Broad's double strike with two wickets of his own as South Africa collapsed to 77-5.

South Africa captain Dean Elgar took a calculated risk in deciding to bat first upon winning the toss Thursday in overcast conditions that favoured fast bowlers.

But all of the Proteas' top order were dismissed in the morning session, with veteran seamer Broad taking 2-17 in six overs and all-rounder Stokes 2-6 in just two.

England had an early breakthrough when Sarel Erwee, fresh from a fine 73, inside edged James Anderson — bowling from the end named after him at his Lancashire home ground — and was caught behind for three, with wicket-keeper Ben Foakes holding a good diving catch.

Elgar had a couple of reprieves before he fell for 12, with the recalled Ollie



Robinson, in for Matthew Potts in the only change to their side at Lord's, denied his wicket by a marginal no-ball.

But Broad, coming on as first change after Robinson had been given the new ball, twice beat him outside off stump, before dismissing the Proteas skipper

with a fine ball from around the wicket that straightened and took the edge, with Jonny Bairstow holding a good low catch at third slip.

South Africa's 35-2 became 41-3 when Keegan Petersen (21) edged Broad to first slip Joe Root.

## Anderson 1st player to play 100 Tests at home

IAN S ■ MANCHESTER

Adding another feather to his cap, veteran England fast bowler James Anderson on Thursday scripted history by becoming the first cricketer in the history of the sport to play 100 Test matches at home.

The 40-year-old pacer achieved the landmark during the second Test between England and South Africa in Manchester.

While 72 players have played over 100 Test matches in their career, none have appeared in more than 100 Tests at home. Sachin Tendulkar, who is the only player to play 200 Tests, has 94 appearances in India and comes behind Anderson in the list.

England teammate Stuart Broad is fourth on the list with 91 appearances while former teammate Alastair Cook is fifth with 89 Tests at home.

Overall, Anderson comes behind Tendulkar with 174 Test appearances. Cook and Broad are the only other England players with more than 150 Tests under their belt.

Stokes then got in on the act, taking a wicket with just his third ball when Aiden Markram miscued a pull on 14, Foakes holding the top edge.

He struck again when he had Rassie van der Dussen lbw for 16 after beating the inside edge.

## Adani, GMR Group acquire franchises in LLC

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Legends League Cricket on Thursday announced that Adani Group, and GMR Group had acquired franchises in the competition.

This will be GMR Group's third investment in franchise cricket while this will be the second investment in T20 leagues for the Adani Group. Both groups had recently acquired teams in the UAE's ILT20, with GMR Group also being the co-owner of Delhi Capitals team in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

The upcoming edition of the League is a four-team franchise model, which is a change from the three-team format in its last season.

The league had announced that the upcoming season has been dedicated to the 75th year celebration of India's Independence and is being held in India from September 16 onwards, starting from a special match between India vs World as India Maharajas vs World Giants.

As per a recent announcement, LLC season two will be starting from the special match in Eden Gardens at Kolkata followed by games in Lucknow, New Delhi, Cuttack and Jodhpur.

## Boult named in NZ team for Australia ODIs

AP ■ WELLINGTON

Trent Boult has been named in the New Zealand team for the Chappell-Hadlee series of ODIs against Australia next month days after relinquishing his central contract with Cricket New Zealand.

Boult is one of five fast bowlers named on Thursday in a 15-man New Zealand squad for the three ODIs which will be played at Cairns in North Queensland state.

Matt Henry has been recalled after being forced out of New Zealand's just-completed white ball tour to the West Indies with a rib injury. He joins Boult, Tim Southee, Lockie Ferguson and



newcomer Ben Sears.

Kane Williamson will lead the New Zealand team, back to fitness after missing the second and third ODIs against the West Indies with a quad muscle strain. Hard-hitting allrounder Glenn Phillips also has been retained.

Batsmen Henry Nicholls and Will Young again have been omitted and wrist spinner Ish Sodhi also has been left out to make way for an extra seamer.

"The fact we're having to leave out players of the calibre of Ish, Henry and Will shows the increased depth we currently have at our disposal," coach Gary Stead said in a statement. "Glenn's a versatile player who can cover most places

in the batting order for us - as well as providing a bowling option if needed."

Stead said Ben Sears' pace and bounce could be useful in Australian conditions.

"It'll be nice to have Kane back after missing the final two games of the West Indies series through injury," he said. "He's obviously a world-class player and his leadership and experience is invaluable to our group."

**Squad:** Kane Williamson (captain), Finn Allen, Michael Bracewell, Trent Boult, Devon Conway, Lockie Ferguson, Martin Guptill, Matt Henry, Tom Latham, Daryl Mitchell, Jimmy Neesham, Glenn Phillips, Mitchell Santner, Ben Sears, Tim Southee.

## Pujara aims to win WTC for India

IAN S ■ NEW DELHI

Indian batter Cheteshwar Pujara said that one of his goals is to win the ICC Test Championship for his country.

India's Test veteran held a Q&A session with his fans on Twitter, which saw his fans asking many questions about his career and life.

On being asked by a user about goals for the rest of his career, Pujara answered, "I like being in present and don't set too many goals for the future but winning the WTC title is one."

Coming to the World Test



Championship 2021-23, India is currently placed at number four with a win percentage of 52.08. Team India has won six Test matches, lost four and drawn two.

It will have to do extremely well and go for a win in its next fixtures to take either of the top two spots, occupied by South Africa and Australia respectively.

India had reached the final of the World Test Championships 2019-21, in which they lost to New Zealand at Rose Bowl, Southampton by eight wickets in June last year.

## Kotak to be in charge of India A for NZ series

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Domestic batting stalwart Sitanshu Kotak will be in charge of the India A team in the upcoming series against New Zealand A starting September 1.

Former India leg spinner Sairaj Bahutule will join Kotak in the coaching staff for the three Test matches in Bengaluru and Hubballi, and three one-dayers in Chennai.

Normally the NCA chief heads the A teams, but with VVS Laxman named interim head coach of the senior team after Rahul Dravid tested positive for COVID-19, Kotak was given the job.

The BCCI now has a pool of coaches employed under the aegis of NCA and they are



rotated across assignments of A, Emerging (U20) and U19 teams. At times, they are also sent on overlapping senior team assignments, like Kotak was in Ireland and Hrishikesh Kanitkar was in Zimbabwe.

Kanitkar is likely to oversee the U-23 Emerging Intra NCA tournament.

## US Open qualifiers: Yuki advances, Ramanathan & Nagal knocked out

PTI ■ NEW YORK

India's Yuki Bhambri advanced to the men's singles second round after a hard-fought win over Moldovan Radu Albot in the US Open qualifiers here.

However, the country's highest-ranked men's singles player, Ramkumar Ramanathan, and Sumit Nagal made early exits after losing their respective qualifying matches in straight sets.

While world number 241 Ramanathan went down to American teen Bruno Kuzuhara 3-6, 5-7 in one hour and 28 minutes, Nagal lost to Canadian Vasek Pospisil 6-7, 4-6.

Yuki, who is ranked world



number 552, downed a higher-ranked Albot (107) 7-6(4), 6-4 in a match that lasted one hour and 34 minutes.

While Yuki got off to a slow start in the first set, the Indian bounced back and stretched the opening set to a tie-breaker, in which he triumphed.

With a far better breakpoint conversions in the second set coupled with a decent net play, Yuki pocketed the second set to enter the next round.

The 30-year-old will take on Belgium's Zizou Bergs in the second qualifying round of the Grand Slam event on Thursday.

## Duleep Trophy: Mandeep appointed North Zone captain, Bengal's Manoj Tiwary to lead East

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Punjab's hard-hitting top-order batter Mandeep Singh was on Thursday appointed captain of the North Zone squad for the upcoming Duleep Trophy.

The tournament is scheduled to be played in Tamil Nadu from September 8-25.

Experienced Delhi batter Dhruv Shorey will be Mandeep's deputy in the premier zonal event.

Bengal's seasoned run-machine Manoj Tiwary will lead the East Zone team, and he will be assisted by Jharkhand's Virat Singh.

Meanwhile, veteran India pacer Ishant Sharma has made himself available for the Ranji Trophy.

Among others, the North Zone side also comprises India pacer Navdeep Saini, Punjab seamer Siddharth Kaul and India U-19 World Cup-winning captain Yash Dhull of Delhi.



**North Zone squad:** Yash Dhull (Delhi), Dhruv Shorey (vc, Delhi), Manan Vohra (Uttarakhand), Mandeep Singh (captain, Punjab), Himanshu Rana (Himachal Pradesh), Akash Vashisht (Himachal Pradesh), Anmol Malhotra (wk, Punjab), Mayank Dagar (Himachal Pradesh), Pulkit Narang (Services), Navdeep Saini (Delhi), Siddharth Kaul (Punjab), Jagjit Singh (Uttarakhand), Nishant Sindhu (Himachal Pradesh), Qamran Iqbal (Jammu and Kashmir), Vikas Mishra (Delhi).

**East Zone squad:** Manoj Tiwary (captain), Sudip Kr Gharami, Anushtup Majumdar, Abhishek Porel (wk), Shahbaz Ahmed, Ishan Porel, Akash Deep (all Bengal), Virat Singh (vc), Nazim Siddiqui, Kumar Kushagra, Shahbaz Nadeem (all Jharkhand), Mukhtar Hussain, Riyan Parag (Assam), Mani Shankar Mura Singh (Tripura), Shantanu Mishra (Odisha).