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VODAFONE IDEA EXPOSED: CYBERX9

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DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

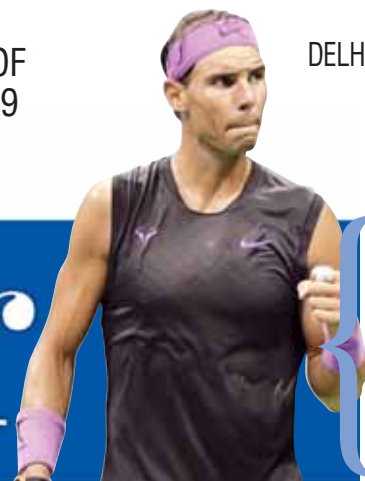
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ALL OVER IN A BLINK

Long legal battle of Noida residents ends in 12 seconds as twin towers collapse leaving behind dust, 75,000-80,000 tonnes of debris, ₹500 cr loss to Supertech

STAFF REPORTER ■
NOIDA/NEW DELHI

It's the end of the story for Noida's infamous twin towers. They disappeared in a cloud of dust leaving behind a mountain of debris after a 'waterfall implosion' detonated their 3,700 kg stockpile of explosives at 2.30 P.M. on Sunday. The Supertech twin towers in Sector 93A, Noida were brought to the ground within a span of just 12 seconds, ending a nine-year-long legal battle which resulted in a loss of ₹ 500 crore to Supertech Limited.

The implosion and its impact did not do any major damage to buildings and structures around. The boundary wall of a nearby residential society suffered some damage while windowpanes of some apartments developed cracks.

The Uttar Pradesh Pollution Control Board air quality monitoring station did not record an increase in pollution levels between 2 P.M. and 3 P.M.

Jet Demolitions Managing Director Joe Brinkmann said that it took 12 seconds to raze the Supertech twin towers in Noida to the ground.

As soon as the explosion took place at the press of a button at 2.30 P.M., the floors of the twin towers collapsed onto each

other in a stack, generating a cloud of massive dust.

Thousands of people watched from vantage points outside the 'exclusion zone' in Noida's sector-93 on the outskirts of New Delhi. Many others had travelled to Noida for what could be a once-in-a-lifetime spectacle. Many people across the country were glued to their TV sets since afternoon to watch the mega demolition event.

As the dust settled a few minutes later, officials reported cracked windows and a broken boundary wall but no apparent structural damage to the high-rises next to the demolished towers. The closest residential complex was just nine metres away.

"The blast has largely been successful. Teams of Edifice, CBRI (Central Building Research Institute), Jet Demolitions are making a physical inspection of the site to see if any leftover explosives are there," Noida Authority CEO Ritu Maheshwari said after the demolition.

The demolition waste is largely within the site. Some debris spilled over to the road, while a little went towards the ATS Village wall also, she said.

"The plumes of dust, as seen by all of us, dissipated immediately," she said.

Continued on Page 2



(Left to right) The Supertech twin towers stand tall in Noida just before the demolition. The implosion that brought down the two structures on Sunday afternoon.

RANJAN DIMRI/PIONEER

Twitter also explodes with comments, dark memes

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As Supertech's Twin Towers were reduced to rubble on Sunday, producing an ominous cloud of smoke, Twitter exploded with amusing comments, hilarious memes and dark humour.

While some users tweeted that the "Tower of corruption" was grounded, a few others said the media's ground coverage of the unprecedented event was "as if ISRO is sending Gaganyaan to the moon".

They were taking a jibe at the media as hundreds of cameras were placed at various vantage points in the nearby areas, including those brought by crew members.

Twitterati responded to the demolition with mirth, humour, sarcasm. Some even asked if it was really necessary to carry out the demolition and could it not have been reused for humanitarian purposes. *Continued on Page 2*

Historic fight between RWA, builder

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The demolition of Supertech's twin towers on Sunday comes nine long years after a residents association went to court over the illegally-built structures.

On August 31, 2021, the Supreme Court said that the nearly 100-metre-tall structures had come up in the premises of Emerald Court housing society in violation of building norms, and ordered their demolition.

Here is a timeline of the key events related to the twin towers' demolition:

■ 2004: Supertech gets land allotted for developing a group housing project by Noida Authority in the city's Sector 93A after which work started on 'Emerald Court' society.

■ 2005: Building plan for Emerald Court approved by Noida Authority. Permission to construct 14 residential towers of 10 floors.

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(Left to right) A massive cloud of dust enveloped the area seconds after the Supertech twin towers were demolished with the help of a controlled explosions. Curious onlookers gather to see the fallen towers hours after the cloud of dust settled on the historic demolition.

RANJAN DIMRI/PIONEER



RANJAN DIMRI/PIONEER

Will hand over Phogat murder case to CBI if needed, says Goa CM Sawant

Court remands three accused to police custody for five days

PTI ■ PANAJI

Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Sunday said his Government is ready to hand over the probe into the death of BJP leader Sonali Phogat to the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), if required.

Phogat (43), a former Tik Tok star from Hisar in Haryana and contestant on the reality TV show 'Big Boss' was brought dead to a hospital in North Goa August 23, a day after arrival in the coastal State. The State police have so far arrested five people in connection with the case.

These include two associates of Phogat who have been charged with her murder. Talking to reporters in Panaji, Sawant said Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar has already spoken to him requesting for a detailed investigation into the case. Sawant said his Haryana counterpart told him that the Phogat family wants the CBI to take over the case.

"I don't have any issue with it. After all formalities today, if required, will give this case to the CBI," the Goa CM said. Sawant also said the Goa Police are thoroughly investigating the case.

Meanwhile, a Goa court on Sunday remanded three of the accused arrested in the murder of Phogat to police custody for five days, a senior police official said. The police produced the three accused — Edwin Nunes, who owns the Curlies restaurant

in Goa, and two drug peddlers Dattaprasad Gaonkar and Ramakant Mandrekar — before the court in Panaji. The court sent them in police custody for five days, the official said.

However, in a fresh twist to the case, Edwin Nunes' lawyer on Sunday claimed his client didn't own the Curlies restaurant in north Goa where Phogat and two of her male companions had parted hours before her death. Nunes had also moved an application for bail, but the court rejected it, the official added.

Advocate Kamalakant Poulekar, representing Nunes, told the court that his client doesn't own Curlies restaurant located on the Anjuna beach and it is for the prosecution to find and prove who owns the place. He said there are no papers establishing that Nunes has the ownership rights of the restaurant.

Cong pushes back prez poll to Oct 17

Nominations to begin on Sept 24, says party after virtual CWC meet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Sunday delayed the election to pick a new full-time president by almost a month and announced that the poll would now be held on October 17.

The schedule of the election was approved at an online meeting of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) that took place amid a fresh upheaval in the party due to the resignation of veteran party leader Ghulam Nabi Azad followed by his scathing attack on Rahul Gandhi for "demolishing the party's entire consultative mechanism".

The party had announced in October last year that the election of the new president would be held between August 21 and September 20 this year.

Sources said that the election of the Congress president seems to be delayed now to assess the mobilisation of the party during the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' starting from September 7. The success of the yatra could bring Rahul back into the forefront to don the mantle of the president once again, despite his refusal to do so. Rahul remains the "number one" and the "only" choice of the Congress rank and file for the party chief's post, senior leader Salman Khurshid said on Sunday after the meeting.

Anand Sharma, ex-PM Manmohan Singh, the party's central election authority chairman Madhusudan Mistry were at the meeting. *Cont on Page 2*

There were conspiracies to defame Gujarat: PM

People tried to stop investments, Modi says during inauguration of projects in Bhuj

PTI ■ BHUJ

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said there have been conspiracies to defame Gujarat and stop investments to his home State, but Gujarat ignored them and charted a new path of progress.

He was addressing a rally after inaugurating and laying the foundation stone of development works in Kutch district



ahead of Gujarat elections slated later this year.

Modi said he can clearly visualise that in spite of many deficiencies now, India will be a developed nation by 2047.

The PM inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of projects worth about ₹ 4,400

crore in Bhuj, including Kutch branch canal of the Sardar Sarovar project, new automatic milk processing and packing plant of Sarhad Dairy, Regional Science Centre at Bhuj, Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Convention Centre at Gandhidham, Veer Bal Smarak at Anjar and Bhuj 2 substation at Nakhatrana.

"While Gujarat was dealing with natural calamities one after the other, there were conspiracies hatched to defame Gujarat in the country and the world. Repeated attempts were made to stop investment coming to Gujarat," Modi said.

He said Gujarat ignored all efforts to defame it, defied the conspiracies and the State charted a new industrial new path of progress.

Continued on Page 2

Himanta vs Kejriwal continues on Twitter

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Twitter spat between Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and his Delhi counterpart Arvind Kejriwal continued on Sunday as BJP leader reminded AAP chief of one of his electoral promises. Sarma said that Kejriwal came to power in Delhi by promising to transform the national Capital into London but has now started comparing the city with "small towns of Assam and Northeast".

The argument between the two leaders in the virtual space began after Kejriwal had on Wednesday tweeted that a closure of schools is not a solution and there is a need to open more schools across the country, and shared a link to a news report claiming a "closure" of some schools in Assam. The Assam chief minister lashed out at Kejriwal and asked him to "do his homework" before commenting. Sarma said that BJP will make a city "the most prosperous city in the world" if the party gets the resources like the national capital. In March 2017, Kejriwal had promised to transform Delhi into London if his party wins the



MCD polls, but he had later clarified that he only meant 'Delhi would be as clean as London'.

"When you couldn't do anything, you started comparing Delhi with small states of the Northeast. Trust me, if BJP comes to power in Delhi, it will make it the most prosperous city in the world," he wrote in Hindi.

"You came to power with the promise of making Delhi like London and Paris, don't you remember @ArvindKejriwal ji? When he could not do anything, he started comparing #Delhi with small towns of Assam and Northeast! Believe me, if the BJP gets a city and resources like Delhi, the party will make it the most prosperous city in the world," the Assam CM tweeted.

In another tweet, Sarma said, Kejriwal was showing a

desire to visit Assam, but "I feel sad and regretful that you don't feel such a desire when Assam struggles with massive calamities like flood. And, yes, your deputy chief minister @msisodia has been extended an invitation".

As the Twitter spat between the two chief ministers stretched on to Sunday, AAP chief responded to Sarma, saying "you haven't answered my question". "When should I come to see your schools? If your schools are not good, then it is ok. We can together fix them," he wrote in Hindi.

In another tweet, Kejriwal said: "Trust me, when AAP forms a government, then we will be doing development there akin to Delhi's development. Will quell corruption and there would be no shortage of resources".

8 bodies recovered in tractor-trolley mishap; search ops called off



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A day after a tractor-trolley carrying 22 people fell in the river Garra, officials in Hardoi on Sunday recovered eight bodies and called off the search operations.

While 14 people swam out of the river safely on Saturday, a search was ordered for eight others.

Hardoi District Magistrate Avinash Kumar said, "The team of State Disaster Response Force recovered eight bodies in a 15-hour-long search and rescue operation in river Garra. The operation has been called off, he added.

The district administration will provide ex gratia of Rs 5 lakh each to the families of the deceased.

According to officials, a tractor-trolley carrying 22

people fell into the river Garra on Saturday when its driver lost control over the wheels and the tractor-trolley fell off a bridge in Pali police station area.

The people on the tractor-trolley were natives of Begrajpur village of the district who had gone to Pali town to sell their farm produce. They were returning to the village when at around 11 am on Saturday the tractor-trolley plunged into the river from the bridge near Pali.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has also taken cognisance of the accident. The IG of Lucknow zone was sent by the chief minister to supervise the rescue operation. The district magistrate and district police chief also remained present at the spot to ensure safety of maximum victims.

Minor girl delivers baby after being raped by uncle

PNS ■ GURUGRAM

In a shocking incident a fifteen-year-old girl who was allegedly raped by her uncle, a migrant worker from Uttarakhand, has given birth to a boy at a government hospital in Gurugram.

Based on a complaint given by the victim's mother the police have registered a case against the absconding accused uncle of the rape survivor under sections of IPC including rape, criminal intimidation and under section 6 of the POCSO Act at the Kherki Daula police station. In her complaint, the

mother said that she lives with family in a village under the Kherki Daula police station area both the woman and her husband work in a private company. Their 15-year-old daughter is a student in class 10 at a nearby school.

The woman alleged that her brother-in-law also lives in a rented house in their neighbourhood used to call her daughter on some pretext to his house and raped her.

"On August 26, my daughter's health deteriorated due to which the mother took her to ESI Hospital in Gurugram from where she came to know about her preg-

nancy," the mother told the police.

Seeing her condition, the ESI doctors shifted her to the Civil Hospital and informed the police. At the hospital, the girl gave birth to a boy.

Later the matter was reported to the police who recorded the statement of the girl along with her mother.

Inspector Rajender Singh, station house officer (SHO) of Kherki Daula police station said, "The case has been registered and the hunt to nab the accused is on. The rape survivor and her newborn are stable in condition and admitted to a government hospital."

Zero tolerance towards illicit liquor, drug trade: UP CM; asks youths to join fight

PNS ■ GORAKHPUR/LUCKNOW

Giving a strong message to those engaged in the illicit liquor and drugs trade, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Sunday urged youths to join the 'decisive fight' against this illicit trade, saying, "strictest action will be taken against those trying to play with the future of our talented youths".

Addressing the closing ceremony of the first foundation day of Mahayogi Gorakhnath University in Gorakhpur, Yogi Adityanath said, "Our resolve is to make the state healthy and to end drug addiction. Our youths must contribute to the state's fight against this national crime for their bright and successful future."

Highlighting the importance of challenges, the chief minister said that it was an opportunity to strive for better and make the most out of them. "We should take every challenge as an opportunity, deal with it by making an action plan without worrying about the immediate consequences," he said.

Stressing the importance of research, Yogi Adityanath said that it was essential to do research in various fields and bring out publications and research papers as envisioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the national education policy.

"This will take India to new heights globally in terms of education, medical education and health," he said.

Cong pushes back prez poll to...

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The meeting was also attended KC Venugopal, former Union Ministers Jairam Ramesh, Mukul Wastnik, P Chidambaram, and Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot along with his Chhattisgarh counterpart Bhupesh Baghel.

Azad was part of the group of 23 dissident leaders who had written to Sonia Gandhi in 2020 seeking large-scale reforms, including elections at all levels of the organisation.

The meeting comes amid noises made by the several leaders, including Gehlot, for the return of Rahul as the party chief. However, uncertainty and suspense continue on the issue.

The online CWC meeting was presided over by Sonia, who is abroad for medical checkups. She was seen flanked by former party chief Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra who are accompanying her abroad.

Congress central election authority chairman Mistry told the media the notification for the election will be issued on September 22, while the filing of nominations would begin on September 24 and continue till September 30.

The date of scrutiny of the nomination papers would be October 1, while the last date of withdrawal of nominations would be October 8.

The election, if there is more

than one candidate, will take place on October 17, while counting of votes, if necessary, and the declaration of results would be on October 19, Mistry said.

Addressing the press conference along with Mistry and Ramesh, AICC general secretary organisation Venugopal said the CWC reiterated its resolve to make the "Mehangai Par Halla Bol" rally in New Delhi on September 4 and the launch of the Bharat Jodo Yatra from Kanyakumari on September 7 and its continuation thereafter a resounding success.

While uncertainty over a suitable candidate prevails, former Maharashtra Chief Minister Prithviraj Chavan on Sunday

cautioned that the Congress will not survive if someone is made a "puppet president".

On the discussions related to the names of Gehlot and some other leaders for the post of Congress president, Chavan asked if the president's name will be decided before the election.

"Why are you taking the reverse path? You will confirm the name in advance and then conduct elections, does this ever happen? Hold elections, whoever has to fight, will fight," said the Congress leader who is part of the G-23.

"If backseat driving continues by making a puppet president, then the party will not be able to survive," he warned.

Power discoms issue advisory warning customers against fraudulent activities

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The power discoms in the national Capital issued an advisory to warn the customers against the multiple fraudulent activities that are taking place in Delhi to trap them.

According to the Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited advisory, many customers have raised this concern about receiving messages mentioning that their power supply will be disconnected because the bill payment was not updated. These

fraudsters ask the customers to call or send a WhatsApp message or even request an in-person visit. These swindle activities are rampant because people instinctively call the number or ask for help and get lured into providing confidential details.

"Through its communication to customers, the company has requested not to call any unofficial number, download any third-party app for such activities, or request an employee visit. However, if an employee visits the customers' premises, his/ her identity can be verified using company's official Mobile App TPDDL Connect," it read.

However, the BSES also issued an advisory related to the issue, it read, "BSES discoms have been sensitizing consumers and in fact, have undertaken a very aggressive campaign in last few months across multiple platforms including on social media, WhatsApp, SMS Alerts and consumer newsletter (that goes with the bills) to inform consumers to be vigilant against these fraudulent calls and messages."

"BSES officials are also sensitising consumers during in-person interactions and in RWA meetings to be alert on fraudulent calls and messages regarding electricity disconnection, bill payment, etc. and not click on unknown links or call on suspicious numbers received through SMS/e-mail," the advisory read.

"BSES urges it's around 47 lakh consumers to be alert and pay electricity bills only through bonafide platforms like BSES WhatsApp, BSES Website, E-Wallets and QR Code printed on the electricity bill," the advisory further stated.

There were conspiracies to defame Gujarat...

From Page 1

"After the 2001 Kutch earthquake, in the midst of the destruction, I had spoken about redevelopment of Kutch and we worked hard for it. In that hour of challenge, we had proclaimed that we will turn disaster into an opportunity and we achieved it. Today, you are witnessing the results," he said.

There were many who said Kutch won't be able to recover from the earthquake, but people there have changed the scenario, he said.

"When I say from the ramparts of the Red Fort that India will be a developed country by 2047, though you may see many deficiencies

now, I can clearly visualise it. What we resolve today, we will surely realise in 2047," Modi said.

He said Gujarat became the first State in the country to enact the Disaster Management Act.

"After drawing inspiration from this Act, a similar law was made for the whole country. This Act helped every government in the country during the Covid-19 pandemic," said.

Highlighting the incredible work done since Kutch's devastation in 2001, Modi said the Krantiguru Shyamji Krishna Verma Kachch University was formed in 2003 and more than 35 new colleges have also been established.

He also talked about earthquake-proof district hospitals and more than 200 functional clinics in the area, and said every household gets clean water of the holy Narmada River, a far cry from those days of scarcity.

Speaking about development of the area after the earthquake, Modi said Kutch has the largest cement plants in the world today. It is second in the world regarding welding pipe manufacturing.

"The world's second-largest textile plant is in Kutch. Asia's first Special Economic Zone (SEZ) came up in Kutch. The Kandla and Mundra ports handle 30 per cent of India's cargo and

Kutch produces 30 per cent salt of the country," he said.

Remembering one of the 'Panch Pran' (five resolves) of "pride in our heritage" that he proclaimed from the ramparts of the Red Fort, the prime minister highlighted the prosperity and rich heritage of Kutch.

The Smriti Van Memorial in Bhuj and Veer Bal Smarak at Anjar are symbols of the shared pain of Kutch, Gujarat and the entire country, said Modi who earlier in the day inaugurated the two memorials dedicated to nearly 13,000 victims of the 2001 Kutch earthquake.

"Many emotions went through my heart today at the time of inaugurating the

memorial. With all humility I may say that in commemorating the departed souls, the Smriti Van Memorial is at par with the 9/11 memorial in the US and the Hiroshima Memorial in Japan," he said.

Modi said he remembers that when the Kutch earthquake occurred, he reached here on the second day itself. "I was not the chief minister of Gujarat then, I was a simple (BJP) party worker. I didn't know in what way, and how many people I would be able to help. But I decided that I will be here among you all in that hour of grief. And when I became the chief minister, the experience of the service helped me a lot," he said.

ALL OVER IN A...

From Page 1

. All our anti-smog guns, mechanical sweeping machines, water tankers and sprinklers were pressed into service immediately," the senior IAS officer said. Maheshwari said once the safety clearance for the two residential societies is issued, cleaning those premises would begin there.

A team from Edifice and South Africa's Jet Demolitions - the two companies that carried out the challenging task - the Central Building Research Institute (CBRI) and the Noida Authority began a structural audit of the adjoining buildings. Water sprinklers and anti-smog guns were activated at the site soon after the demolition to help contain the dust. Soon after the demolition, Noida Authority launched a massive cleanliness drive to remove dust from the road.

The Authority said that the demolition of the Apex (32 storeys) and Ceyane (29 storeys) towers would have left behind about 35,000 cubic metres or 75,000-80,000 tonnes of debris which chiefly includes concrete rubble, steel and iron bars that would take at least three months to be cleared. This debris will be treated at the sector 80 treatment plant. According to defence experts, the quantity of explosives used in the Twin Tower demolition is equivalent to three warheads of the Agni-V missile, or 12 of the BrahMos missile, or four Prithvi missiles.

The Supreme Court had on August 31, 2021, ordered the demolition, upholding a verdict by the Allahabad High Court. It held that illegal construction has to be dealt with strictly to ensure compliance with the rule of law.

Ahead of the demolition,

authorities had created an 'exclusion zone' in a radius of up to 500 metres around the twin towers where no human or animal was allowed except for the team of Indian and foreign blasters engaged in the demolition.

Before the towers were demolished, around 5,000 residents of the Emerald Court and ATS Village societies vacated their homes for the day. They will be allowed to return after the inspection team grants clearance. Nearly 3,000 vehicles and 150-200 pets, including cats and dogs, were also taken away. Nets, cloth, and perimeter curtains provided three layers of safety from dust and debris to the nearby buildings. Trenches were dug around the perimeter to protect nearby buildings from the shockwave of the implosion. A special dust machine has been installed to monitor the dust and pollution

levels. The demolition exercise took place under a Rs 100 crore insurance policy. This should cover damage to adjacent buildings if any. The premium and other costs have to be borne by Supertech. The company said it has incurred a loss of about Rs 500 crore, including construction and interest costs, because of the demolition of its twin towers in Noida. The cost of the demolition itself is estimated at about Rs 20 crore.

"Our overall loss is around Rs 500 crore, taking into account the amount we have spent on land and construction costs, the charges paid to authorities for various approvals, interest paid to banks over the years, and the 12 percent interest paid back to buyers of these two towers, among other costs," Supertech chairman RK Arora said.

Twitter also explodes with comments, dark...

From Page 1

"Done and Dusted. #TwinTowersDemolition #Noida #NoidaTowerDemolition #NoidaTwinTowers #SupertechTwinTowers #Supertech @indiatvnews," wrote user @ShivamG2711 and shared a clip of visuals of demolition playing on a TV set. Many people stood at a safe distance to "enjoy the sight of demolition" with balloon-sellers and street vendors, selling food-stuff, adding a layer of festivity to the environment with some even termed it as a "Supertech Sunday".

"Tower of Corruption of #Supertech grounded. #NoidaTowerDemolition #Noida #Noida #SupertechTwinTowersDemolition," wrote user @BhupendraNegi08. Another user @A.Parolia tweeted just before the exercise was carried out, "D-Day for these towers who I call Yin & Yang. They are

symbol of corruption between the builders & the authorities; but also for the fight, victory & justice for the #homebuyers. May this be a lesson for all, Satyameva Jayate. @jagorahak-jago #Demolition #TwinTowers #Supertech". Some Noida residents even live streamed it on social media from the balconies. User @akashrai_3575 wrote, "Twin tower History Now! #TwinTowers," while streaming it on Twitter.

But the mega demolition also spawned a flurry of memes with many Twitter users using famous dialogues and stills from Bollywood films like 'Gangs of Wasseypur' to add to the 'demolition humour'. "At 2:30 people Le Noida people," wrote a user and shared a clip from a comedy sketch.

Another Twitter user shared a meme with the caption "Noida people right now" and a still from movie 'PK', showing the

main character played by Aamir Khan, with his face smeared in dust.

One meme even talked of what may have been going in the minds of the engineers: "Engineers before explosion of #TwinTowers and a punchline 'Bharosa rakhiye purane khiladi hain'.

Using humour-laced tweets, many even poked fun at the massive coverage of the event by

the media. "Indian media covering twin tower demolition as if ISRO is sending Gaganyaan to the moon. #Supertech #TwinTowers #Building #Demolition #news #SupertechTwinTowers @isro, said user @spreemee.

"Noida Twin Tower demolition resembling the fall of Indian Media standards in last one decade! #TwinTowers," said another user @VishalVerma_9.

■BPIT

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Vehicles parked in the area; (L) police personnel deployed near the debris of the demolished Twin Towers.



Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Those with breathing issues must avoid going to that area: Doctors

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Following the demolition of nearly 100-metre-tall Supertech twin towers, the doctors said people living nearby, especially those suffering from respiratory diseases, should take extra care and avoid the area for a few days if possible. The demolition of nearly 100-metre-tall structures generated an estimated 80,000 tonnes of construction and demolition waste and sent huge clouds of dust billowing in the air. The doctors said most dust particles are 5 microns or less and can remain suspended in the air

for a few days in the absence of favourable meteorological conditions like strong winds and rain. Massive dust pollution can lead to itching in the eyes, nose and skin; coughing, sneezing, breathing difficulty, lung infection, nasal congestion, asthmatic attacks and aggravate heart problems, they said. Dr Jugul Kishore, head of Community Medicine department at the Safdarjung Hospital, said, "The dust particles will remain suspended for quite some time in case of low wind speed. People suffering from respiratory problems - chronic obstructive pul-

monary disease, asthma and bronchitis -- should avoid the area, if possible." Dr Kishore said people having respiratory diseases should keep taking medicine regularly and consult doctors if their problems aggravate. Dr Yudhyavir Singh, Assistant Professor, Critical Care, AIIMS, said, "Particulate matter of size smaller than 2.5 microns will be a problem. This is likely to increase episodes of coughing, sneezing, asthmatic attacks, lung infection, nasal congestion, breathing difficulty. Viruses may also piggyback the fine particles."

TWIN TOWERS' DEMOLITION 'Windowpanes of several flats adjacent to towers got cracks'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NOIDA

The boundary wall of ATS society residential society suffered damage while window panes of several apartments developed cracks after the Supertech Twin Towers were demolished on Sunday. The officials said a Gas Authority of India Limited (GAIL) pipeline that goes through the now-demolished structures is safe. The remarks came after a preliminary analysis of structural damages shortly after the Supertech twin towers' demo-

lition at 2.30 pm by a team of Edifice Engineering, Jet Demolitions, Central Building Research Institute and Noida Authority. There appears to be no significant structural damage to the adjacent buildings, officials had said earlier. "The boundary wall of ATS Village adjoining twin towers suffered damages of about 10 metres. Windowpanes of several nearby apartments in both Emerald Court and ATS Village also got cracked," CBRI Senior Principal Scientist D P Kanungo said.

"The GAIL pipeline is safe. Iron sheets measuring 5 by 5 metres were placed above the pipeline at two locations. Besides, several tyres were also placed on top of them to absorb debris shock," Kanungo said. Earlier, Noida Authority CEO Ritu Maheshwari said the demolition was largely successful. Edifice Engineering partner Utkarsh Mehta also described the demolition as a success. Mehta had earlier said that his firm had got a Rs 100 crore insurance done for any post-demolition damages.

People rush to witness 'historic' moment of Twin Towers falling

SAURAV GUPTA ■ NEW DELHI

As the Supertech Twin Towers were brought down to rubble like a pack of cards, after a series of controlled explosions, thousands of people watching from vantage points outside the 'exclusion zone' in Noida's sector-93, started clapping while lakhs of people glued to their TV set to witness the historic event. Besides a large number of locals, there were people from neighbouring Delhi, Haryana, Ghaziabad, Gurugram, reached Noida to witness the implosion of twin towers. Sumit Singh, a resident of Karnal drove for three hours just to witness the demolition live with his family. "I was stopped by the police around 800 meters

before the towers, despite several requests, the police personnel did not let me go closer to the towers for safety purposes. My son wanted to watch this epic demolition with his own eyes," Singh said. For the past three days, he was asking us to take him to the spot on the day of demolition. We tried really hard to convince him, but he refused to watch it on TV. That's why just to fulfill his wish, we traveled all the way from karnal to Noida," he said. Sanjana Arora, a resident of Lajpat Nagar was waiting from 12 PM in the afternoon just to watch the razing of the illegally constructed twin towers. Arora told *The Pioneer* that she was very curious that how the authorities will demolish these skyrocketing buildings in a manner that the near-

by societies won't be affected by this. "This will be a historic moment as for the first time in India, something of this sort is happening. It is a big win against corruption. I hope that people will learn from this that rule is equal for everyone," Arora said. A resident of Delhi, Kamla Nagar, Ashima that this is a lifetime event and I wanted to watch it live. "My family is constantly calling me as they prevented me to go to Noida to witness this special moment. I came by bus and I will only leave after the towers were being razed. I am so happy that the builders got what they deserve. They think that they can do anything they want and they are above the law of the land. This will be a lesson for the people who think that they can do anything

if they have money," she said. Prashant Kumar, a resident of the adjoining society Emerald Court, said, "I am very happy that this illegal building will be razed off today, as the land on which these towers were constructed was supposed to be the green belt on which the authorities has to develop the park for the nearby area residents." "After a fight of 13 years, these towers are finally being leveled and the residents will get the park for which they have paid for at the time of buying the house," Kumar said. Another resident of the Silver City society, Ankush Khurana said that he along with his family moved to the temporary accommodation provided by the society.

150 pets shifted to safety

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 150-200 pets and cats living in and around the Supertech twin towers in Noida have been shifted temporarily to shelters run by NGOs ahead of the implosion of the buildings on Sunday. Several NGOs, including House of Stray Animals, Friendicoes, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) and Happy Tails foundation have pitched in to accommodate the stray dogs temporarily. An NGO has also requested authorities to conduct a dummy explosion or a false firing just before the twin towers are razed in order to save the birds in the area. Founder of House of Stray Animals, Sanjay Mohapatra, who has been working to evacuate the stray animals from the twin tower area said they have requested authorities to carry out a dummy explosion in order to save the birds in the area from the blast.

'Who actually got punished': Homebuyers after razing of Supertech skyscrapers

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As the Supertech twin towers in Noida were razed to dust on Sunday, homebuyers who have invested in the developer's other projects across the NCR wondered "who actually got punished" as they are clueless whether they would get possession of their flats booked years ago. However, the administration has initiated action against the officials but till now no one from Supertech, Noida Authority and the fire department is in jail. In August 2021, the Apex Court came down heavily on the Supertech, which allegedly was in cahoots with the Noida authority officials, had constructed the now demolished towers, after violation of the building norms. Earlier, on Apex court's order, the Uttar Pradesh Government had formed a special investigation team (SIT) to probe the alleged collusion between the Supertech group and the Noida authority. Police had also registered an FIR against the three officials from

the Noida fire department. Later, the deputy inspector general of fire services, Akash Kulhari, director J K Singh and Animesh Kumar submitted their own departmental enquiry report. As per sources, three former chief fire officials, Rajpal Tyagi, I S Soni and Mahavir Singh, now retired, violated norms by granting a no-objection certificate to Supertech group. The SIT in its investigation has found the involvement of 26 officials of the Noida authority, who allegedly gave approval to the Supertech group's changed building plans that led to the construction of the twin towers. According to sources, out of these 26 officials, 20 have retired, two are dead and four, who were in service, have been suspended. On the basis of the SIT report, a case was registered on October 4, 2021, in which four directors of Supertech were also named. The vigilance department in Lucknow registered an FIR against the concerned officials.

Man sleeping in nearby flat after missing deadline evacuated before explosion

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A special task force comprising members of the Emerald Court here had evacuated all residents on time. But hours before the Noida twin towers' demolition, the core team in charge of the exercise went into a tizzy after an alert guard raised an alarm on finding a man sleeping in his apartment beyond the evacuation deadline. Acting fast, the security guards managed to wake the man on time and evacuated him. The residents of the society, where the illegal twin towers were also located, had started moving out from Friday itself. Those who had to leave Noida left earlier while those planning to accommodate themselves in nearby locations waited till Sunday morning. By 7 am, almost all of the residents, including children and senior citizens, had vacated the 15 residential premises in a well-coordinated exercise by the society's special task force. Emerald Court's Gaurav Mehrotra headed the task force

team that also had Avinash Rai, Amit Arora, Colonel (retd) Rajesh Kashyap, Wing Commander (retd) Mohit Garg, Anil Saxena besides Naresh Keswani. But a little after 7 am, a security guard raised alarm to the special task force about a person being inside a top floor apartment of a tower who appeared to have not vacated. "We got to know about it because of our double verification process for evacuation. It turned out that of all residents of the towers, one had not left. This resident, it turned out was fast asleep inside apartment and totally missed the evacuation deadline," Naresh Keswani, a member of the special task force, said. "Somehow, the security guards managed to wake him up and he was also evacuated at just around 7 am," Keswani said. Explaining their evacuation strategy, Keswani said the special task force had it brainstormed over a month's time. They came up with a double verification process. A sticker with all evacuation-related

guidelines was to be pasted by every flat resident once they had locked their homes and left. Then there was also a register of residents' details with the tower captains, who did the second round of verification to check how many people have left and how many were yet to evacuate. "It was because of this double step verification that this sleeping resident was identified in time and safely moved out," Keswani said. The task force also heaped praises on their private security guards who rose to the occasion to ensure smooth evacuation of the residents, their vehicles over two days without any hassle or causing traffic snarls outside the society roads. Emerald Court has 15 residential towers, each having 44 apartments and total around 2,500 residents and 1,200 vehicles. The special task force comprised seven members who are resident of the society. Besides the STF, the society also had a 'captain' for each of the 15 towers.

Huge win for flat owners, ego of builders, development authorities demolished: Homebuyers' body

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Forum For People's Collective Efforts (FPCE), an umbrella body of homebuyers that played an important role in enactment and implementation of real estate law RERA, on Sunday termed the demolition of Supertech's twin towers in Noida as a huge victory for flat owners and said it has also demolished the ego of builders and development authorities. The Forum added that the responsibility of development authorities should have been fixed in this case. In August last year, the Supreme Court had ordered demolition of the 40-storey twin towers (Apex and Ceyane), which were part of Supertech's Emerald Court project in Noida, Uttar Pradesh. There were over 900 flats in these two towers with height of around 100 metres. "My first reaction when the demolition happened is that it was the demolition of not just the building but also the builders' and the authori-

ties' ego and complacency that they could do as they please," FPCE President Abhay Upadhyay said. Upadhyay, who is also member of the Central Advisory Committee- RERA, said it is certainly a huge victory for homebuyers. The FPCE president said the episode is also indicative of the changing builder-buyer equation as it shows that money and muscle power of builders can no longer deter homebuyers and they are ready for long-drawn legal battles. "Unfortunately, the Supreme Court has failed to identify and fix accountability on those involved in the (Noida) authority and also behind-the-scenes actors influencing them at the behest of the builders. "It was better if the court had done so or ordered a CBI enquiry to unearth all those people involved since any departmental enquiry might try to cover up and save those at fault," Upadhyay said.

They were planning and working since August 8 to save these stray animals from the impacts of demolition. "We had requested the authorities concerned to make two or three false firing or dummy explosions first so that the birds do not get affected due to the blasts," he said. He said around 40-50 stray dogs have been shifted to shelters. The volunteers of the NGOs also carried out awareness campaigns outside the premises of the twin tower and advised people to vacate the area along with their pets temporarily. "We have been working in association with Noida Authority and Noida police to evacuate stray animals. When we got to know that demolition date was postponed to August 28, we formed a team on August 21 considering we had some more time to save these voiceless creatures," Mohapatra said. He said the evacuated stray animals will be returned to the area by evening.

AAP education model misleading Delhiites: BJP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri on Sunday slammed the AAP Government over the education model and said that the model is misleading the people of the national Capital. Addressing the media, Bidhuri challenged the Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's over his claim that children are leaving private schools in Delhi and coming to government schools for education. "The number of children in government schools has dropped by one lakh in the last seven years. Even out of the number of children coming to government schools, 40 percent are absent every day. In seven years, the number of children in Delhi's private schools has also increased from 31 percent to 43 percent," he claimed. Bidhuri while citing the



government data, said that the number of children in Delhi's government schools was 16.1 lakh in 2013-14 but decreased to 15.1 lakh in 2019-20. If we look at the figures before 2013-14, every year the number of children in government schools was increasing by about 60 thousand, but after the coming of the Delhi government, the number of children in government schools started to decline. "It came down to 15.4 lakhs in 2014-15, 15.1 lakhs in 2015-16, 15.3 lakhs in 2016-17, 14.6 lakhs in 2017-18, 14.9 lakhs in 2018-19 and 15.1 lakhs in 2019-20. After this, the schools remained closed due to Covid for two years. The remarkable thing is that the

increase in the number of children in schools by 60 thousand per year never happened. If that regular increase is included then today the number of children in government schools should have been 20 lakhs whereas it is 15.1 lakhs," he said. Bidhuri also said that the Delhi government is misleading the public on the present number of children in the schools. If we look at the figures, there were a total of 14,56,313 lakh children in government schools in 2017-18, but out of them 5,67,816 children remained absent. It clearly indicates that 38.09 percent of the total number of children did not attend the schools. Similarly, 44.70 percent children were absent from schools in 2018-19. In 2019-20, this number stood at 39.35 percent. This means that the number of children reported in schools is actually about 40 percent less than that.

LG inspects Dhaula Kuan-IGIA road beautification work

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Work on beautification of 8-km long road stretch from Dhaula Kuan to IGI Airport here will be completed in three months, and similar aesthetic upgrading projects in several other parts of the city will be undertaken in a phased manner. Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Sunday inspected the ongoing pilot project (spanning 1 km) of the aesthetic upgrade of the road from Dhaula Kuan to IGI Airport. As part of it, the 8-km stretch will be uniformly developed with flowering plants of different heights to achieve a stepped three-coloured pattern on the vacant spaces besides pavements and on the central verges, the Raj Niwas said in a statement. The LG was informed that work has already commenced at different locations on the stretch. Locations have been identified for installing seven to eight fountains at traffic islands. Marble and sandstone statues are also planned to be installed at traffic tri-junctions near Terminal 1 of the airport, officials said. The 8-km stretch from Dhaula Kuan to IGI Airport was just a begin-

ning and similar aesthetic upgradation projects in several other parts of the city will be undertaken in a phased manner, the LG was quoted as saying in the statement. "Inspected the 1km long pilot project of Aesthetic Upgradation work on Dhaula Kuan-IGI Airport stretch on Sunday. Remaining 7 km stretch will be beautified & upgraded on similar lines in 3 months time. This will give the city a facelift & add to the national capital's image globally," he later tweeted. "Our grass root workers including gardeners & Swachhata Sainiks carry a big responsibility of keeping the city clean & maintaining its aesthetics. Today, had lunch with these workers at Dhaula Kuan - IGI Road & lauded their efforts in city's makeover & making it beautiful," the LG said in another tweet and shared pictures. The beautification of the 1-km stretch near the Air Force Station, which was taken up as a pilot, has been completed with joint efforts of multiple government agencies including Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Public Works Department (PWD) and Delhi Jal Board (DJB). Work on the remaining 7-km stretch up to the IGI Airport will be completed in



the next three months. The LG, accompanied by Delhi Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar and other senior officials, during the inspection, also launched the plantation work on remaining parts of the corridor.

Mann Ki Baat: Modi stresses on water conservation

Urges people to popularise healthy millet dishes on social media

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

While appreciating the use of mobile technology and localised innovative ways in 'Anganwadi kendras' in the country to fight malnutrition among children, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday also asked people to popularise "healthy millet-made dishes" on social media ahead of the festivals season and before the commencement of the UN-announced 'Millet-year' 2023.

Modi said that millets- the coarse grain- of which India is the "largest producer" in the world have been categorised as "superfood".

Addressing people in his monthly radio talk 'man ki baat', the Prime Minister touched on a range of issues including the countrywide 'josh' for the tricolour in the celebrations of 'Amrit Kal' and the need for water conservation and resurrecting water bodies all over the country.

Speaking about the need for water conservation Modi cited many successful efforts toward making 'Amrit Sarovars' and recharging of water bodies, particularly in rural areas.



He informed viewers about the Amrit Sarovar built-in Mocha Gram Panchayat in Mandla, Madhya Pradesh which is constructed near the Kanha National Park and has "further enhanced the beauty of this area."

Similarly, he said the newly constructed Shaheed Bhagat Singh Amrit Sarovar in Lalitpur, Uttar Pradesh, built in the Niwari Gram Panchayat, is spread over 4 acres and the "tree plantation on the shoreline of the lake is enhancing its beauty and People are also coming from far and wide to see the 35 feet high tricolor near the lake."

The Prime Minister said this campaign of Amrit Sarovars is going on in full swing in Karnataka as well. He said in village 'Bilkerur' of Bagalkot district, people have built a very beautiful Amrit Sarovar to channelize all the flooding water and thus also solve the problem of floods in the area.

"The Amrit Sarovar Abhyan

Amrit Sarovars are being used for quenching the thirst of animals as well as for farming. Due to these ponds, the groundwater table of the surrounding areas has risen", he said.

"I urge all of you, especially my young friends, to actively participate in the Amrit Sarovar campaign and lend full strength to these efforts of water conservation & water storage and take them forward", Modi said. Prime Minister spoke about the use of technology and local innovative ways to in 'Anganwadi kendras' to deal with malnutrition among children.

"My dear countrymen, an interesting project is being run in Bongai village of Assam – Project Sampoorna. The purpose of this project is to fight against malnutrition and the method too is very unique.

"Under this, the mother of a healthy child from an Anganwadi center meets the mother of a malnourished child every week and discusses all the nutrition-related information. That is, one mother becomes a friend of another mother, helps her, and teaches her.

With the help of this project, in this region, in one year, malnutrition has been eradicated in more than 90 percent children", said the Prime Minister.

"The "Mera Bachha Abhiyan" in Datia district of Madhya Pradesh organises bhajan-kirtans in the district, in

which teachers as nutrition gurus were called. A Matka program was also held, in which women bring a handful of grains to the Anganwadi center and with this grain, a 'Balbhoo' is organized on Saturdays. Besides this increase in the attendance of children in Anganwadi centers, malnutrition has also shown a dip", he said. A unique campaign is also going on in Jharkhand to increase awareness about malnutrition. A snake-ladder game has been prepared in Giridih, Jharkhand. Through play, children learn about good and bad habits.

Modi said "better use of technology and also public participation has become an important part of the Nutrition campaign. From providing mobile devices to millions of Anganwadi workers in the country, a Poshan Tracker has also been launched to monitor the accessibility of Anganwadi services", he said.

Modi said the 'Jal Jeevan Mission' is also going to have a huge impact in making India malnutrition free.

The Prime Minister appealed to countrymen to make millet dishes popular in the coming festive seasons. He said at Indian initiative United Nations has declared 2023 as Year of Millets.

Modi said Sridevi Varadarajan from Chennai has sent him "a reminder" also "sent me a millet map of the country."

India bans import of 780 sub-systems to promote domestic defence industry

This is third such list in last two years to shore up local production

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to speed up self-reliance in defence manufacturing, the Government on Sunday banned the import of 780 sub-systems and components for the defence public sector undertakings (DPSUs). This is the third such list in the last two years to shore up local production in a time-bound manner.

The sub-systems are used in the manufacturing of weapons and allied equipment and their production here will also positively help the economy. Giving details of the latest list, defence ministry officials said here the Government has set specific timelines for import ban of the items, spanning a period from December 2023 to December 2028.

In the continuous pursuit of self-reliance in defence manufacturing and to minimize imports by Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) under 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan', Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved the third Positive Indigenisation List (PIL) of 780 strategically important Line Replacement



Units (LRUs) and subsystems.

The latest list is in continuation to the two PILs that was published in December 2021 and March 2022. These lists contain 2,500 items that are already indigenized and 458 (351+107) items which will be indigenized within the given timelines. Out of 458, 167 items (1st PIL -163, 2nd PIL - 4) have been indigenized, so far.

Indigenization of these items will be taken up through different routes under the 'Make' category. 'Make' Category aims to achieve self-reliance by involving greater participation of the Indian industry. Projects involving the design and development of equipment, systems, major platforms or upgrades thereof

by the industry can be taken up under this category.

The indigenous development of these sub-systems will bolster the economy and reduce the import dependence of DPSUs. In addition, it will help to harness the design capabilities of the domestic defence industry and position India as a design leader in these technologies, officials said.

The DPSUs will soon float tenders and industry may come forward to participate in large numbers, they added.

In the last few years, the government has taken a series of measures to promote domestic defence production.

India is one of the largest importers of arms globally. According to estimates, the

Indian armed forces are projected to spend around USD 130 billion (one billion is equal to Rs 100 crore) in capital procurement over the next five years.

The government now wants to reduce dependence on imported military platforms and has decided to support domestic defence manufacturing. The defence ministry has set a goal of a turnover of USD 25 billion (Rs 1.75 lakh crore) in defence manufacturing in the next five years which includes an export target of USD 5 billion worth of military hardware.

In a related development, the Indian Navy on Saturday achieved yet another milestone in its mission to achieve AatmaNirbharta by inducting the first ever 100% indigenous 30mm HE gun ammunition for the services by the private industry.

The Economic Explosives Ltd., Nagpur, a Solar Group Company has manufactured the ammunition, and Managing Director Satyanarayan Nuwal of the company handed over the first consignment to Vice Chief of Navy Vice Admiral SN Ghormade.

It is the first time that the services have placed an order on the Indian private industry for the delivery of complete gun ammunition and the same has been completed successfully within a short time period of 12 months.

13th Indo-US military exercise on fighting terrorism held in Himachal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The 13th Edition of India-US joint exercise between the elite commandos of their respective Special Forces named 'VAJRA PRAHAR' 2022 focussing on fighting terrorism culminated at Bakloh (HP) on Sunday. This annual exercise is hosted alternatively between India and the United States. The 12th edition was conducted at Joint Base Lewis Mc Chord, Washington (USA) in October 2021.

The 21-day joint training in India provided an opportunity for the Special Forces from both nations to train in air borne operations, special operations and counter terrorism operations in a joint environment under the United Nations Charter, army officials said here.

The exercise was conducted in two phases; the first phase involved combat condi-



tioning and tactical level special missions training exercises and the second phase included 48 hours of validation of training received by both contingents in the first phase.

Both contingents expressed immense satisfaction on the outcomes of the exercise, in terms of the standards achieved and sharing of best practices, when both contingents undertook joint training, planning and execution of a series of mock operations in simulated conventional and unconven-

tional scenarios in mountainous terrain.

The exercise VAJRA PRAHAR with the US Special Forces is significant in terms of security challenges faced by both nations in the backdrop of the current global situation. The joint military exercise has further strengthened the traditional bond of friendship between the special forces of both countries as well as improved bilateral defence cooperation between India and the USA.

Trolley suitcase to replace jawans' steel trunk

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

In its bid to impart corporate character to the paramilitary forces, the Government may replace the iconic steel trunks allotted to every jawan at the time of induction with modern trolley suitcases made of polycarbonate or polypropylene.

The alloy trunks have been the hallmark of the jawans' identity since the inception of the respective paramilitary forces. Over the decades, the trunks have earned an emotional chord with the jawans and have long served as storage of troops' valuable items like official correspondences, medals and commendations as also family photographs, etc.

The Union Home Ministry has constituted a committee for authorization of suitcase with trolley. A meeting for formulating the QR (Qualitative Requirement/Specifications for suitcase with trolley held with the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) or paramilitary forces along with the repre-



sentatives of Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), Bureau of Police Research And Development (BPR&D) and Northern India Textile Research Association (NITRA).

During the discussions, various points were deliberated like the use of three way locking system, use of materials like polypropylene/polycarbonate, size and capacity, durability, warranty, flexibility, weight of the bag and cost viability vis-s-vis the alloy boxes

that are being sought to be replaced.

These trolley bags are already available in the canteen of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)/CAPFs. The stakeholders have been asked to show these trolley bags to their respective personnel (Constable to Subordinate Officers or SOs) who are the actual users of the trunks. The SOs comprise Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) to Subedar Major.

After showing these trolley

bags to them and narrating about the benefits as well as drawbacks of each type of trolley bags, their views are also to be taken.

Following the exercise, the matter is expected to be taken up for further discussion for identifying the suitable trolley bags for the jawans.

The old school of thought within the forces still vouch for the traditional trunks to remain as a mainstay of the jawans' luggage as they are trained to respond to crisis and are even entitled to hefty hardship allowances. The jawans are often mobilized at short notice for deployments in hostile security environments two to three times in a year and often in arduous terrains in the Northeast, Jammu and Kashmir or the Naxal-hit States besides their regular deployments in their respective domains.

An official said the trunks are sturdy in build and can withstand substantial jerk during long travels in force's trucks even though they do not offer

easy mobility by an individual.

"There should be an additional authorization of such modern trolley bags for carrying light luggage instead of replacing the steel trunks completely which have become synonymous with the troops' paraphernalia like the uniform and the weapons. In any case, the trolley bags are already available in the canteens and the jawans can procure them as a matter of individual choice and any further appeasement of the troops may not help the operational agility of the personnel," he said.

The trunks typically with black paint bear the name and service number of every jawan painted in white. In the unfortunate cases where a jawan gets martyred in action, the trunks along with the belongings and mortal remains are handed over to the family with due respect.

Another section of the officials is okay with the proposal that seeks to replace the trunks with trolley bags of American Tourister or Samsonite brands.

Sharma raises questions on electoral rolls for party prez poll at CWC meet

Is due process under party's constitution followed or not, asks leader

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



the sanctity of the election process.

The veteran leader had a week ago resigned from the chairmanship of the party's steering committee for Himachal Pradesh, saying he was left with no choice after the "continuing exclusion and insults".

Sharma also called for making public the electoral lists of delegates voting for the election, to which Mistry said the same will be made available to any candidate desiring to contest as well as the PCCS.

Mistry said there are over 9,000 delegates who will vote for the Congress president's election and all the lists have been verified and signed by the public relations officers and assistant public relations officers (PROs and APROs).

UNESCO to adopt ICH dossiers in regional languages from now

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a move that would go a long way in ensuring that the cultural identity and basic flavor of any community remained intact, UNESCO will accept International Cultural Heritage (ICH) dossiers in the language of the practitioners along with English or French versions for the evaluation.

This was informed by Tim Curtis, Secretary, Convention for Safeguarding the Intangible Culture Heritage, UNESCO at an event here to celebrate the successful inscription of 'Durga Puja in Kolkata' on the Representative List of ICH of Humanity in 2021.

The event was organized by the Union Ministry of Culture along Sangeet Natak Akademi, the designated nodal agency for ICH, in collaboration with the National Museum and National Museum Institute.

'Durga Puja in Kolkata' was inscribed on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity during its 16th session held in Paris, France from 13th to 18th December 2021.

Curtis pointed out that non-formal education is something the UNESCO convention has been working on for four years.

"Since safeguarding living



Durga Puja in Kolkata inscribed on ICH representative list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2021

heritage involves transmitting the knowledge to the next generation, education becomes central to this process," he said.

Director and UNESCO Representative to Bhutan, India, Maldives, and Sri Lanka, Eric Falt said, "I think it is very important to bring together all of the stakeholders and different groups who are involved in such nominations..."

On the occasion, Lily Pandeya, Joint Secretary, Union Culture Ministry said, "With 40 UNESCO World Heritage sites, 14 intangible cultural heritage elements inscribed on Representative List – the latest being Durga Puja of Kolkata, 9 documentary heritage elements

recognized in the International Memory of the World Register, and 6 Creative Cities, India continues to strengthen the intercultural dialogue among nations."

India now has 14 intangible cultural heritage elements on the prestigious UNESCO Representative List of ICH of Humanity.

Among those present on the occasion included Ritu Sethi, ICH expert, Shikha Jain and Prof. Manvi Seth from the National Museum Institute, Arvind Kumar, Director/ UNESCO, Ministry of Culture, Suman Kumar of Sangeet Natak Akademi besides officials from the Union Ministry of External Affairs.

Over 60 million Indo-Gangetic plain dwellers exposed to black carbon: Study

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

More than 60 million inhabitants of the Indo-Gangetic plain (IGP) are exposed to enormous concentrations of atmospheric health hazardous Black carbon (BC), a sooty material emitted by fossil fuel and the burning of agricultural waste among others, a study conducted by an international team, including researchers from IIT Kharagpur, has said.

They said that the black carbon leaves the natives of this region which has populous rural areas as well mega cities vulnerable to various cardiovascular diseases (CVDs), particularly during winter times.

During the research titled 'Black carbon health impacts in the Indo-Gangetic plain: Exposures, risks, and mitigation,' published in the latest issue of Science Advances, the authors found that the wintertime all-day black carbon surface concentrations for the urban belt and the megacities were about three and eight times higher, respectively, than the rural belt.

"People living in megacities such as Delhi and Kolkata are at greater risk of dying from CVDs. Black carbon contributes to 400,000 deaths annually over the IGP" warned the researchers.

The researchers found that during wintertime, emissions of biofuel (BF) combustion for



cooking and heating in the residential household sector accounted for more than 60 per cent of black carbon concentration over most of the IGP.

"The BF combustion in the residential sector (40 to 50 per cent) and FF combustion in industrial and transportation sectors (50 to 60 per cent) are dominant contributors to the wintertime black carbon concentration over the urban area in the central IGP (including Kanpur, Agra, and Varanasi).

"The wintertime black carbon concentration over the northern IGP (in and around megacity Delhi including the semirural area of Haryana) and eastern IGP (in and around megacity Kolkata) is found to be mainly more than 60 per cent originating from fossil fuel combustion," said the study.

However, the researchers said that black carbon emissions from fossil fuel combustion sources such as diesel vehicles, coal-fired power plants and brick kiln industries could potentially be reduced by 87 per cent in urban areas and megacities. This could save about 160,000 lives in urban

areas and 50,000 lives in megacities each year.

"The inhabitants can be saved by implementing prioritized emission reduction from the combustion of domestic biofuel in the semiurban area, diesel oil in transportation, and coal in thermal power plant and brick kiln industries in megacities in the region," said the study conducted by Shubha Verma and Sanhita Ghosh, both from IIT Kharagpur, Olivier Boucher and Laurent Menut, both from France universities and Rong Wang from Fudan University, Shanghai.

Notably, the black carbon emission rate for rural/semi-rural population belts is lower by 15 times and 2 to 4 times the emission rates for megacity and semiurban/urban areas, respectively.

About 12 million people over the two megacities of the IGP (population density of more than 5000 people per km) are exposed to the extreme levels of wintertime all-day (daytime) black carbon concentration of magnitude as large as 40 µg m-3 (12 µg m-3), said the study.

Govt to make forensic probe must for certain crimes: Shah

PTI ■ GANDHINAGAR

Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Sunday that the Centre has set a target of taking India's conviction rate higher than even the developed countries and integrating the criminal justice system with forensic science investigation. The Government aims to make forensic investigation "compulsory and legal" for offences attracting punishment of more than six years, Shah said addressing the graduating students of the National Forensic Sciences University (NFSU), Gandhinagar, at its first convocation.

The government will provide a forensic mobile investigation facility in each district of the country and create a legal structure to ensure that independence and partiality of investigation is maintained, he

said.

"Under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, the central government is going to make changes in the Indian Penal Code (IPC), Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) and the Evidence Act, because nobody saw these laws from an Indian perspective after independence," he said.

"These laws need to be reframed from the perspective of independent India. Therefore, we have been consulting a lot of people to change the IPC, CrPC and the Evidence Act," Shah said while delivering the convocation address as its chief guest.

For this, the government is going to make provision of forensic evidence compulsory and legal for offences with more than six years of punishment, the Union minister said. This will require a large

number of forensic science experts, he said, adding that none of the graduating students from the NFSU will remain without placement.

Shah said the country's conviction rate would increase only when the forensic science evidence is made legal for serious crimes.

He said that the government has worked to strengthen the forensic infrastructure, create forensic manpower, provide forensic technology and promote forensic research to take the country to the top position globally in the field of forensic science.

"We want to strengthen the forensic science sphere of the country on the basis of these four pillars. In these four areas, a lot of work has been done in the last three years," he said.

To strengthen forensic sci-

ence infrastructure, the central government has provided support to several states in the last three years, Shah said.

"We have also strengthened central forensic laboratories. The NFSU will create a number of experts and manpower that will help in slowly setting up its campus in every state. I believe we shall be able to complete it by 2025," he said. A total 1,132 students, including 91 from 21 different foreign countries, graduated from the university.

Shah also launched a 'Made in India' forensic mobile laboratory and said such labs will be made available in every district.

He also assured that the government would provide a forensic mobile investigation facility to each district of the country and create a legal structure to ensure that inde-

pendence and partiality of investigation is maintained.

"When the entire structure is created, we shall be able to take the changes in the IPC, CrPC and Evidence Act to their logical end," he said.

Shah further stressed the importance of reforms in the criminal justice system and law and order infrastructure.

"This is not the age of third degree. They are our own people, there is no need to treat them with third degree. We will have to stress on convicting criminals on the basis of scientific evidence.

This is how we shall be able to increase the conviction rate," he said.

The third degree is the use of interrogation methods that inflicts physical or mental pain on suspects in order to get the suspect to make a confession.

He said that to increase the conviction rate through forensic science evidence, the country will need trained manpower. The NFSU was set up by PM Modi with the same foresight to make provision for their training, Shah said.

In a very short time, the NFSU has started its campuses in several states like Madhya Pradesh, Goa, Tripura, Manipur, and Assam. Discussions are on for setting it up at Pune (in Maharashtra) and Karnataka.

"When all these campuses start working together, the entire country will get trained manpower," he said.

As the country moves towards achieving USD 5 trillion economy, it will face many challenges like narcotics, fake currency, and cyber attacks, Shah said, adding that in order to tackle such challenges, foren-



sic science will have to be made stronger.

The Home Ministry has taken many initiatives in the area of forensic science.

The central government has worked to strengthen central forensic science laboratories (CFSL) across the country. The CFSLs in Pune, Guwahati, Bhopal and Kolkata are being

upgraded, he said.

Shah said that students from more than 70 countries and many organisations have signed MoUs with the NFSU, which has also trained officers from different wings of the criminal justice system like police, judiciary, officers, with more than 28,000 officers trained so far.

Modi inaugurates Smriti Van memorial dedicated to Guj earthquake victims

PTI ■ BHUJ (GUJARAT)

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday inaugurated Smriti Van memorial, which celebrates the resilience shown by people during the devastating 2001 earthquake in the Kutch region of Gujarat.

Modi said Smriti Van is a tribute to the lost lives and the remarkable fighting spirit of the people of Kutch.

The grand structure, which is the first such memorial in the country according to a Gujarat government official, is spread over 470 acres on Bhujio Hill near Bhuj town.

It celebrates the spirit of resilience in the wake of the death of nearly 13,000 people during the earthquake on January 26, 2001, which had its epicentre in Bhuj.

The memorial carries names of the people who lost their lives during the earth-

quake. It also has a state-of-the-art Smriti Van Earthquake Museum.

PM Modi, who is on a two-day Gujarat visit, on Sunday inaugurated the first phase of the project, spread across 170 acres on the hill.

After the inauguration, Modi, accompanied by Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, took a stroll inside the museum premises where officials and tour guides informed him about its various aspects.

Notably, it was PM Modi who came up with the idea of setting up such a memorial when he was the chief minister of Gujarat, officials earlier said.

The museum showcases Gujarat's topography, rebuilding initiatives and success stories after the 2001 earthquake, and informs about different kinds of disasters and future



readiness for any type of disaster. It also has a block to relive the experience of an earthquake with the help of a 5D simulator and another block for people to pay homage to the lost souls.

Many people from Kutch district, especially from Bhuj, were among those killed in the

earthquake, which had its epicentre near Chobari village of Bhachau taluka, about 20 km from Bhuj town.

One of the key attractions of this project is a special theatre where visitors can experience an earthquake through vibration and sound effects.

Azad-led group is A-Team of BJP, says Cong leader Mir

PTI ■ SRINAGAR

Senior Congress leader G A Mir on Sunday described the leaders who left the Congress following Ghulam Nabi Azad's resignation from the party as the "A-Team of the BJP".

Azad would meet the same fate as ex-Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh, said the former president of the Congress' Jammu and Kashmir unit at a press conference here. He was flanked by Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee president Viqar Rasool and other party leaders.

The Jammu and Kashmir unit of the Congress put up a united face at former Union minister Saifuddin Soz's residence where about a dozen party leaders held a meeting to deliberate upon the situation. Asked how he saw Azad's



future, Mir replied, "Captain Amrinder Singh".

"Till now we used to say (about some parties in J-K) as B-Team, C-Team (of the BJP). But now, they (Azad-led group) are coming forward as the A-Team. The veil is being lifted, and the people of Jammu and Kashmir will decide what happens to them," Mir said.

Questioning the timing of Azad's resignation, Mir said he should have waited for Congress president Sonia Gandhi's return from abroad.

He said the whole country knows that there are only two

camp in the country now. "On one hand, there is a party in government with a thinking of breaking India, and on the other is the thinking of uniting the country which the Congress party is leading under the leadership of Rahul Gandhi."

"The whole country, NGOs and the civil society are appreciating the step taken by Rahul Gandhi and are supporting his mission," Mir added.

He said at a time when all Congress workers were thinking that "such a towering leader (Azad) will stand with the party he, unfortunately, parted ways". "We do not need to understand where he is going... Does he want to go with those parties, with that thinking which took away Jammu and Kashmir's statehood, its special status and has taken it to the verge of unemployment?" Mir asked.

The former Jammu and

Kashmir Congress president said all leaders present at the meeting have unitedly vowed to support the Congress' ideology, leadership and secular character till their last breath.

"We stand with Sonia and Rahul Gandhi, are at their beck and call and will work with greater zeal to strengthen the party," Mir said.

About those who left the Congress immediately after Azad's resignation, Mir said they were 'hero-worshipping' kind of people who did not know the ABC of the Congress.

"They will leave when some personality they worship leaves, but those who follow the party's ideology and its leadership will stand with its secularism, socialism. We all are one and united," he said.

Mir said leaders come and go, but it is the people who make leaders.

TMC slams Opp for 'thief' slur

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

After some of their senior leaders were arrested on charges of corruption sparking protests throughout Bengal, a section of Trinamool Congress leaders have publicly threatened the leaders of Opposition BJP, Left and Congress for calling them thieves.

As protests against corrupt Trinamool Congress leaders intensified after the arrest of former Minister Partha Chatterjee and TMC strongman Anubrata Mondal, senior Trinamool MP Saugato Roy on Sunday said if the Opposition leaders did not mend their habits then they should be prepared for getting shooed up in public by TMC men.

"TMC never endorses corruption and the party has snapped all connections with people like Partha Chatterjee after getting sufficient evidence... But this does not mean that every TMC man is a thief... a narrative that is being created by the



Opposition ... they are shouting 'thief' wherever we are going ... I warn all CPI(M), BJP and Congress leadership if they fail to reign in their men then they should not complain or regret if they are shooed up publicly," Roy told in a meeting.

"BJP is shouting 'thief' but they are the fathers of all thieves... They are looting the country with the help of private players... They are the 'chamcha' (stooges) of Ambanis and Adanis," he said.

Roy a retired professor of physics had earlier asked his party men to make shoes from the skin of CPI(M) and BJP workers.

Protests have intensified throughout Bengal — following the arrests of Chatterjee and Mondal — demanding arrest of other TMC leaders who are in the scanner of central agencies. Earlier senior advocate and TMC Lok Sabha member Kalyan Banerjee too asked party men to thrash opposition workers if they took out rallies asking corrupt Trinamool leaders' arrest. The BJP hot back at Roy saying the senior MP was angry with the opposition parties because he was seen accepting money in Narada case

"Saugato Roy is a retired professor... But the way he is using unparliamentary languages is not acceptable... People will take account of his statements," said Bengal Opposition Leader Suwendu Adhikari. CPI(M) central committee member Sujan Chakrabarty dared Roy to send his men to shoe up the protesters saying, "Saugato Roy is a senior politician... He knows what he is saying... He is doing so to get additional marks from Mamata Banerjee."

Shiv Sena: Is felicitating Bilkis' rapists Hindu culture?

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Shiv Sena on Sunday questioned the silence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on the release of 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano case and also asked if felicitating of rapists was "Hindu culture".

The comments were made in Rokhthok column of the Sena mouthpiece Saamana which carried the 'Kadakhnath Mumbaikar'

byline and not of the Marathi daily's executive editor Sanjay Raut, who is currently in jail on money laundering charges.

Bilkis Bano was five months pregnant when she was gang-raped while fleeing the riots which 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.

Some reports had claimed that they were felicitated by local leaders upon release.

The column in Saamana said NCP president Sharad Pawar says PM Modi does not practice what he preaches.

"The Bilkis case has proven him right," it said.

It is surprising that the convicts were released when PM Modi spoke of women empowerment in his Independence Day speech, the Marathi publication said.

Why are PM Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah quiet on this issue? it asked.

"Is felicitating rapists Hindu culture?" the Sena sought to know.

Just because Bilkis Bano is a Muslim, the crime against her cannot be forgiven, it said.

"It is not a Hindu-Muslim issue, but a matter of the soul of Hindutva and prestige of our great culture," the Sena said.

"When the PM visits Gujarat, he should visit her (Bilkis Bano) and extended his support," it said.

Japanese Encephalitis claims 85 lives in 2 months in Assam

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

At least 85 people have died of Japanese Encephalitis (JE) in Assam in the last two months, a bulletin by the health department said.

Ten deaths were reported over the last nine days, including one on Saturday.

Since July this year, as many as 390 cases of the infection have been detected, the

bulletin said.

JE is a viral brain infection that spreads through mosquito bites. The virus, found in pigs and birds, is passed to mosquitoes when they bite infected animals.

Given the surge in JE cases over the past few months, a District Rapid Response Team was formed in July to deal with the situation.

All Standard Operating

Procedures and guidelines communicated by National Health Mission, Assam, are being followed in the districts for case detection, management and referral, official sources said.

Nine medical colleges and 10 district hospitals in the state, equipped with requisite facilities, have been designated as JE treatment centres, they added.

Many products Mumbaiers buy through unrecognised apps are fake, says EOW

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The investigation by the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) has found that many of the daily-need products Mumbaiers purchase online through unrecognised apps are duplicates. The EOW has seized fake copyright items and edible products used as daily needs worth Rs five crore in the last eight months and arrested 61 people, officials said.

An EOW crime branch (CB) control unit official said 14 cases related to the copyright products and 11 cases regarding other duplicate products have



been registered in Mumbai.

"The accused persons own shops and many of them sell products online. During the probe, we found that people in Mumbai are using online platforms to purchase daily-need products, but they should be aware that 99 per cent of these products purchased through unrecognised apps are fake and duplicate," an EOW official said. He said people fall prey as

the rates of the merchandise available online are cheaper compared to genuine products.

"This year we have seized duplicate copyright products like floor cleaners, make-up items, branded shoes, iPhone mobile accessories, single-touch diabetic machine, salt, jeans etc. The duplicate consumable products include palm oil, paneer, milk, lubricants used in bikes, watches, e-cigarettes and other items," the official added.

He advised people to go to nearby shops, malls, and departmental stores to purchase products after checking their expiry date and the company name.

PTI ■ AGARTALA

Efforts to protect and conserve clouded leopard, marked as 'vulnerable' on IUCN Red List, seemed to have borne some fruit in Tripura, as two cubs were successfully hand-reared over the past few months at a breeding centre and subsequently released in Sepahijala zoo.

This was the 'first successful instance of hand-rearing clouded leopard in India', claimed Biswajit Das, the wildlife warden of Sepahijala sanctuary, where the cubs were raised for three months.

"The two cubs, one male and the other female, were

born in the month of May. They were hand-reared with care and affection by the staff of the breeding centre at Sepahijala. It is the first such instance of hand-rearing of clouded leopard in India. We have fondly named the cubs 'Antarip' and 'Julekha'," Das said.

Clouded leopard (Neofelis nebulosa), threatened by deforestation and commercial poaching, has large dusky-grey blotches and irregular spots and stripes reminiscent of clouds.

It rests in trees during the day and hunts by night on the forest floor.

"Mothers have the habit of



devouring cubs immediately after giving birth. We had to segregate the newborns. Hand-rearing of such animals demands a lot of patience, especially for activities such as like night-feeding. Dedicated care takers looked after the two all day long," Das told PTI.

flock to Sepahijala zoo later this year to catch a glimpse of 'Antarip' and 'Julekha', the wildlife warden of the sanctuary said.

Very little is known about these elusive cats as they are shy, agile and nocturnal in nature, with conservationists still seeking to learn more about their reproduction process and lifestyle.

In India, clouded leopards are largely restricted to the country's northeastern region.

Forest officials said India in 2018 added clouded leopard to its recovery programme for critically endangered species to aid more research and strengthen conservation efforts.

Send your feedback to:
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FIRST COLUMN

BANK ACCOUNTS ARE NOT SAME AS DEMAT

Demat, bank accounts have contrasting functions



S KALYANASUNDARAM

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recently appreciated the trust shown by the country's retail investors in the equity market. She said that the Indian retail investors have played a key role, especially during the last two years, as they stood up and became shock absorbers, unlike foreign portfolio investors or FPIs.

Thanking the Indian retail investors, she pointed out that while on an average four lakh new demat accounts opened every month in 2019-20, it tripled to 12 lakh per month in 2020-21 and has further increased to around 26 lakh per month in 2021-22.

The number of demat accounts being opened shows the interest of retail investors in market-linked investment options. However, some of the finer points of dematerialization of securities have not been clearly understood by the investors. Recently, a note in the letters to the editor section of a newspaper suggested that demat accounts should be allowed to be converted from single account to joint account as permitted in bank accounts.

In India, trading used to take place by transferring securities in the form of physical certificates. However, in 1996, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) introduced demat accounts in the country, and it revolutionised investing by making it a digital process.

A depository is an organisation which holds securities (like shares, debentures, bonds, government securities, mutual fund units, etc.) of investors in electronic form at their request through a registered Depository Participant (DP). It also provides services related to transactions in securities. A DP is an agent of the depository through which it interfaces with the investor and provides depository services.



It is true that there are some similarities between bank accounts and demat accounts. SEBI has made a comparison between the two on the following lines. Bank holds funds in an account, and allows transfers between accounts on the instruction of the account holder, facilitates transfer without having to handle money and facilitates safe keeping of money. But DP holds securities in an account, transfers them between accounts on the instruction of the (beneficial owner) account holder, facilitates transfer of ownership without having to handle securities and also ensures their safe keeping.

But one must understand that the similarities stop here and the bank accounts are in some way similar to demat accounts and they are not identical. When someone deposits money into bank accounts, the funds become part of the general pool of the deposits of the bank and they make use of the funds for lending operations. Banks pay interest on deposits. These are not applicable for demat accounts. Depository maintains a securities account and actually the securities are with the companies which have issued them.

Banks allow different types of operation in joint accounts. It can either be in the name of 'Survivor', 'Former' or 'Survivor', and joint operation when the account is in the name of two persons. If it is an account with more than two persons, the operative clauses can be 'Anyone or Survivor', 'First named person or Survivor/s', 'All jointly to operate', 'Any two or three to operate', etc. There can be various operative possibilities. These are possible because the account holders are primarily dealing with the bank only and the dealings are as per the contract between the bank and the customer.

However, in case of demat accounts, as there is no such relationship between the account holder and the depository, such operations cannot be permitted. A single demat account cannot be converted as a joint account or vice versa.

(The author is a former banker,)

Loneliness is pushing morbidity among elderly

A survey has conclusively proved that loneliness among senior citizens is main cause of various ailments



BISWAJEET BANERJEE

If you want to keep the elders of the family healthy, keep them busy. A study has revealed that elders who are busy tend to be healthier than those who live in isolation. Being alone and living with a sense of emptiness is a danger for senior citizens.

The study, carried out by Meerut's Lala Lajpat Rai Medical College in both rural and urban areas, has shown that elders with no social life tend to be sick, which leads to stress and depression. The study was carried out by Dr. Darksha Sayeda under the guidance of Dr Seema Jain, professor at the Department of Community Medicine in the LLR Medical College, Meerut. The data was collected from the Urban Health and Training Centre, Surajkund, and adjoining areas in which 220 people above 60 years of age were interviewed. This includes 1962 families with 43.18 per cent males and 56.82 per cent females.

The survey found that stress, depression and mental illness were found in about 76.82 per cent of the elderly persons who lacked a social life, while the remaining 23.18 per cent were healthy. According to age stress, depression and diseases were found in elderly people above 85 years of age.

It was also seen in the research that elderly women were sicker than men. More than 56 per cent of women were suffering from all kinds of diseases. Most of the women had stress, depression, and amnesia. They had problems of weakness in the bones and pain in the joints. Most women were also found to be victims of diabetes. Out of 125 women interviewed for the study, 80.80 per cent were ill.

Among 111 elderly were gloomy vis-a-vis their life, their main reason for sadness was found to be the loss of spouse (25.23 per cent), poverty (15.32 per cent), bad behaviour of spouse or children (13.51 per cent), and 11.71 per cent elderly felt lonely for reasons other than these.

The study found that almost all who were sad because of loneliness were sick at the time of the survey, followed by 93.33 per cent who were morbid as they were ill-treated by their spouses or children.

"The present study was conducted to assess various aspects of ageing such as its effect on the morbidity profile, psychosocial impacts of ageing, and various geriatric welfare services provided by the government and the extent to which they were being utilised by the studied population," Dr. Seema Jain said.

In this study, the maximum population of the elderlies belonged to the 60-74 years (74.54 per cent) age group, followed by the 75-84 years age group (22.73 per cent) while 2.73 per cent of the aged were 85 years and above. After interaction with these people, their mental and physical alertness were evaluated. Depression levels, lifestyle, causes of depression, and

PREVALENCE OF MORBIDITY AMONG THE ELDERLY HAVING A SAD (83.78 PER CENT) ATTITUDE. IN COMPARISON, THOSE WHO HAD A HAPPY-GO-LUCKY ATTITUDE (68.35 PER CENT) WERE LESS MORBID AND THE ASSOCIATION WAS FOUND TO BE STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT



nutritional factors were checked during the survey.

"The survey is clear that if you want to keep the elderly people of your family healthy, give them company. Talk to them and listen to their views. Encourage them to have an active social life. Allow the elders to interact with their friends. Let them go to a neighbour's house or introduce them to social activities. This way, they will feel rejuvenated," Dr. Seema Jain said.

Many people experience loneliness and depression in old age, either as a result of living alone or due to a lack of close family ties and reduced connections with their culture of origin, which results in an inability to actively participate in community activities. With advancing age, it is inevitable that people lose connection with their friendship networks and they find it more difficult to initiate new friends and to belong to new networks.

The problem begins after a person starts staying at home all the time after retirement. The person who lives in a nuclear family faces the dilemma quicker than the person who is in a joint family as he has no one to talk to. "The crux of the matter is that the person who is not tired after retirement and leads an active life is both mentally and physically fit, while a person, who is lonely, is likely to fall sick," the study says.

Loneliness is a subjective, negative feeling related to the person's

own experience of deficient social relations. Senior citizens who have a social life, who like going to clubs, or join an NGO or have a part-time job are found to be fit. In the research, 60.91 per cent of the elderly fit people were those who were socially active. The study found that 76.82 per cent of the surveyed people were sick. The top five morbidities found in the sample were hypertension (57.73 per cent), osteoarthritis (45.91 per cent), chronic gastritis (45.45 per cent), obesity (44.54 per cent), and anemia (43.64 per cent).

All of the elderly aged 85 years and above were morbid, followed by 88 per cent of elderly falling in the 75-84 years age group. This increase in morbidity was found to be significantly associated with the increasing age of elderly people.

With the passage of time, the attitude towards life also changes. The study points out that elderly, when asked about their attitude towards life, most of them (50.45 per cent) said they were sad followed by 35.91 per cent who were happy. Prevalence of morbidity was maximum among the elderly having a sad (83.78 per cent) attitude. In comparison, those who had a happy-go-lucky attitude (68.35 per cent) were less morbid and the association was found to be statistically significant.

The despondency towards life has spread across all sections of society – be it rich or poor. The

proportion of the sample elderly belonging to a high standard, medium standard, and low standard of living index was 70.45 per cent, 22.73 per cent, and 6.82 per cent respectively. In a startling revelation, the study found that morbidity was found to be maximum in the elderly population belonging to a high standard (77.42 per cent). The people who have money, live a luxurious life and can afford costly medical treatment, were found to be more depressed than a person who is poor and cannot afford treatment in a private nursing home.

"The reason could be that children of rich people have moved out and neglected their parents. In some cases, children put their parents in old age homes and wait for their death. Whereas among the poor, there is still peer bonding. If one falls sick, the family comes for help, which is lacking in rich families," said Dr. Seema Jain.

The study found that 43.64 per cent of the elderly were usually in contact with their neighbours or friends, 23.18 per cent were partly social only with their relatives, while 33.18 per cent had no social contacts. Elders who were socially active were observed to be less ill (68.75 per cent), whereas those who were partly active or inactive were more ill (86.27 per cent and 80.82 per cent respectively) and this association of social interaction with morbidity was statistically significant.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THIS ONE SINGLE ACTION (RAHUL TEARING UP A GOVERNMENT ORDINANCE) CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE UPA GOVERNMENT'S DEFEAT IN 2014. —FORMER CONGRESS LEADER GHULAM NABI AZAD



ALL OF US WERE ASSOCIATED WITH AND PART OF THE UPA GOVERNMENT. SINGLING OUT A PERSON FOR THE 2014 DEFEAT WOULD NOT BE RIGHT. —CONGRESS LEADER SACHIN PILOT



Rein in current account deficit for better fiscal health

More than fiscal deficit, FM Sitharaman has to worry on current account deficit challenges and work on composite plan



RP GUPTA

As per the current trend, the current account deficit (CAD) of India might exceed 3 per cent of GDP in FY-2022-23. The CAD is more damaging compared to the fiscal deficit. Typically, CAD is financed by the external debt (private and sovereign) and equity investments by global investors. Hence, India's forex reserves are accrued from the external capital receipts which are "international liabilities".

But the fiscal deficit is majorly financed by the domestic debt liability. Out of the total sovereign debt, the external debt is barely \$131 billion and the balance is domestic debt in rupee. This provides comfort to India over many other nations. In the next 12 months, out of total external debt (private & sovereign) of about \$620 billion,

about \$267 billion is due for payment. This may have implications for the forex reserves.

More so, in the current global turmoil, the global investors are shifting their investments to safe destinations such as the US and such other countries into debt portfolios. Falling Rupee against US Dollar is a big deterrent for retaining such investment in India. So far, forex reserves of about \$590 billion provide comfort to India.

But considering the rising trend of CAD, depleting forex reserves and falling rupee, India must not be complacent. International liability of India is much higher compared to its forex reserves.

Recently, the RBI has taken a few good steps to arrest volatility of rupee and outflow

of forex.

In such a global turmoil, India must draw a composite plan for mitigating any probable external risk instead of taking piecemeal steps. In the past, India had faced several crises. There is no dearth of experts within the Government. However, well-known experts may also be outsourced and included in a team for response work. Wider consultation is always preferred instead of leaving the matter to the RBI alone.

The composite plan should essentially include "structural reforms" to improve "global competitiveness" for boosting exports and replacing imports. In a short/medium term, fiscal incentives with a sunset clause may be opted. More so, higher taxes on minerals, coal, diesel

and gas must be reduced. That will push exports and GDP growth, besides cooling inflation.

The loss of revenue shall be compensated in future years. Resolving CAD stress must get priority over the fiscal deficit. India must gradually develop self-dependency on the front of energy, fertilizer, food, medicine, electronic chips and rare minerals. Import of thermal coal must be reduced by boosting domestic production. New exploration of petroleum and gas must be done in an aggressive manner. Railways must increase the share of goods traffic to reduce diesel consumption and logistic cost.

Public transport must be given a boost to reduce petrol consumption in private vehicles. Power cuts must be

reduced to save diesel consumption in generators and pumps. Likewise, a series of reforms are needed which have common bearing on the GDP growth and stability of the external sector. Both are inter-linked to a large extent.

Gold imports must be brought to almost nil in the next three to four years by using an innovative modified gold scheme, as I recommended in my book, Turn around India-2020.

That alone shall augment forex reserves about \$450 billion in next five years, as estimated therein. This will be without increasing international liability and, therefore, rupee shall stabilize. It could be a game changer.

Capital market also needs more reforms, particularly for

raising new capital, may be equity, corporate bonds or debt instruments. So far, the share of global investment in Indian debt & equity is too low compared to the size of its economy. Vibrant capital market shall certainly attract global investors and facilitate producers for new investments. Facilitation must co-exist with regulations for healthy growth.

Likewise, the easing of business and taxation laws shall attract private and global investment. Financial sector reforms, including easement of NPA norms, shall restore the share of productive credits from consumer loan portfolio and push GDP. MSME reforms are overdue and that will boost exports and create new jobs.

Vast potential in the export of services, processed food,

textiles and handmade goods need a separate policy paper. Preservation of inward remittances of \$80-85 billion needs immediate priority. Failing which, CAD will further expand.

As per composite plan, all such actions should have a pre-decided timeline from 3-36 months. This may be disclosed in public for infusing confidence among the global investors, capital market, producers and exporters of goods and services, etc.

Such a composite plan shall not only mitigate the probability of external risk but this will convert the global turmoil into an opportunity for radical reforms. India must act swiftly and emerge as a strong economy with a stable Rupee and comfortable forex reserves.

(The author has written Turn Around India-2020.)

CITIES NEAR UKRAINIAN NUCLEAR PLANT SHELLED

AP ■ KYIV

Russian rocket and artillery strikes hit areas across the Dnieper River from Europe's largest nuclear power plant, Ukrainian officials said on Sunday, as fears persisted that fighting in the vicinity could damage the plant and cause a radiation leak.

Russian forces took control of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant soon after the war began and hold adjacent territory along the left bank of the wide river.

Ukraine controls the right bank, including the cities of Nikopol and Marhanets, each of them about 10 kilometres from the plant.

Heavy firing during the night left parts of Nikopol without electricity, said Valentyn Reznichenko, governor of the Dnipropetrovsk region.

Rocket strikes damaged about a dozen residences in Marhanets, according to Yevhen Yevtushenko, the administration head for the district that includes the city of about 45,000.

The city of Zaporizhzhia, about 40 kilometres upriver from the nuclear plant, also



came under fire during the night, wounding two people, city council member Anatoliy Kurtev said.

In eastern Ukraine, where Russian and separatist forces are trying to take control, shelling hit the large and strategically significant cities of Kramatorsk

and Sloviansk, but no casualties were reported, said Pavlo Kyrylenko, governor of the Donetsk region.

Much of the Donetsk region is held by Russian and separatist forces. It is one of two Ukrainian regions that Russia has recognised as sovereign

states.

Authorities last week began distributing iodine tablets to residents who live near the Zaporizhzhia plant in case of radiation exposure, which can cause health problems.

Much of the concern centres on the cooling systems for

the plant's nuclear reactors. The systems require power to run, and the plant was temporarily knocked offline on Thursday because of what officials said was fire damage to a transmission line. A cooling system failure could cause a nuclear meltdown.

Russian forces occupied the nuclear plant complex early in the six-month-old war, but local Ukrainian workers have kept it running.

The Ukrainian and Russian governments have repeatedly accused the other of shelling the complex and nearby areas, raising fears of a possible catastrophe.

Periodic shelling has damaged the power station's infrastructure, Ukraine's nuclear power operator, Energoatom, said on Saturday.

"There are risks of hydrogen leakage and sputtering of radioactive substances, and the fire hazard is high," it said.

The UN's atomic energy agency has tried to work out an agreement to send a team in to inspect and help secure the plant. Officials said preparations for the visit were underway, but it remained unclear when it might take place.

Medic who cared for Mariupol wounded heads for Ukraine front

AP ■ KHARKIV (UKRAINE)

For 22 days, Serhiy Chornobryvets barely slept and rarely took off his red paramedic uniform. Day and night, he raced around his hometown of Mariupol, rescuing those wounded by the Russian bombs and shells that pummelled the southern Ukrainian city.

When he finally escaped Mariupol — whose residents endured some of the worst suffering of the war during a nearly three-month siege — he still did not rest.

Instead, he joined an organisation that sends medics to the front lines in eastern Ukraine, where the fighting is currently concentrated.

"Me before Mariupol and me after what happened: It's two different people," the skinny, fresh-faced 24-year-old said during a recent interview with The Associated Press in Kharkiv, another city that has endured intense bombardment.

"If I had not survived Mariupol, I would not have gone to work as a paramedic now. I wouldn't have had enough courage," explained Chornobryvets, who is simply called "Mariupol" on the battlefield and now wears a patch that bears the symbol of the port city, a yellow anchor, on his camouflage uniform.

In fact, he could see no other way of making sense of the horrors he witnessed in a place that became a worldwide symbol of Ukrainian resistance to Russia's invasion.

Residents suffered relentless bombardment, many trapped without food, water, heat or electricity.

"It was like going back to the Stone Age," Chornobryvets said. "There was looting, constant shelling, planes, aerial bombardment. People around us were losing their minds, but we got on with our work."

While many hid in basements or bomb shelters, Chornobryvets said he never

did. He stayed above ground to tend to the wounded — all while risking his own life. He finally fled on March 18 — his birthday — still in his red paramedic's overalls.

His tireless efforts were publicly praised by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, when the leader accepted an award in May from the Atlantic Council, the Washington-based think tank, on behalf of the Ukrainian people.

Chornobryvets said that his new work on the front and what he did in Mariupol were almost indistinguishable: "Same wounds, only I'm wearing a different uniform."

In footage from July, he and his fellow medics can be seen rushing toward a soldier hit by Russian fire.

They tightened a tourniquet around the man's right thigh, and then carefully tended to a gaping wound in an arm and a leg, where the bone was exposed.



Strike deadlock shuts Nigerian universities for months

AP ■ ABUJA (NIGERIA)

Adenekan Ayomide had been attending the University of Abuja for two years when the lecturers went on strike in February. The 27-year-old undergraduate student hoped he would return to school quickly but immediately took a job as a taxi driver to pay bills.

Unfortunately for him, the strike by the Academic Staff Union of Universities has now clocked six months and Ayomide's hopes of returning to classes anytime soon grow thin.

"Nobody is talking about school again," said Ayomide, who said he is working more than one job and the budget he had for getting through university now looks unrealistic.

University strikes are common in Nigeria, which has more than 100 public universities and an estimated 2.5 million students, according to Nigeria's National Universities Commission.

The universities here have recorded at least 15 strikes covering a cumulative period of four years since 2000.

The latest strike, however, is biting harder on an education sector that is struggling to recover from a COVID-19 lockdown and an earlier strike that lasted for most of 2020.

No alternative means of learning is provided for students because "more than 90 per cent" of lecturers in Nigerian universities are members of the academic staff union, according to Haruna Lawal Ajo, director of public affairs at Nigeria's universities commission.

The striking lecturers are demanding a review of their conditions of service including the platform the government uses to pay their earnings, improved funding for the universities and the payment of their salaries withheld since the strike started.

Talks between the lecturers and the government ended in deadlock this month, dashing hopes of a compromise agreement.

Lecturers have faulted the government's position, arguing that the government has still not provided higher pay for lecturers and more funds for the education sector which it agreed to in 2009.

If the government has not fulfilled a promise made in 2009 by 2022, how can it be trusted? asked Femi Atteh, a lecturer at the University of Ilorin in northcentral Kwara state who now works with his wife to run a food retail business.

"I just see ASUU (the union) trying to fight for the rights of its people. ... Nigerian lecturers are far behind in terms of welfare when compared to others," said Atteh.

Turkey says Greek missiles locked on its fighters over Med

AP ■ ISTANBUL

Greek surface-to-air missiles locked on to Turkish F-16 fighter jets carrying out a reconnaissance mission in international airspace, Turkey's state-run Anadolu news agency said Sunday.

The allegation is the latest claim from Turkey that its neighbour and fellow NATO member Greece has been targeting its aircraft above the eastern Mediterranean and Aegean Seas.

The radar of a Greek S-300 missile system based on the island of Crete locked on to the Turkish jets on Aug. 23, Anadolu reported, citing Defense Ministry sources.

The F-16s were at an altitude of 10,000 feet to the west of Greece's Rhodes island when the Russian-made S-300's target tracking radar locked on, the report added. The Turkish planes completed their mission and returned to their bases "despite the hostile environment."

It added that radar lock-ons are considered an act of hostility under NATO rules of engagement.

Calls to the Greek Embassy in Ankara went unanswered Sunday.

Last week, Turkey summoned the Greek military attaché and filed a complaint with NATO after Greek F-16s allegedly harassed Turkish F-16s that were conducting a mission for the alliance.

Anadolu said the Greek pilots put Turkey's aircraft under a radar lock over the eastern Mediterranean. Turkey "gave



the necessary response" and forced the planes to leave the area, Anadolu said, without elaborating.

Greece rejected the Turkish version of events. The Defense Ministry said five Turkish jets appeared without prior notification to accompany a flight of U.S. B-52 bombers — which hadn't been due to have a fighter escort — through an area subject to Greek flight control.

It said four Greek fighters were scrambled and chased off the Turkish planes, adding that Athens informed NATO and US authorities of the incident.

Although both NATO members, Turkey and Greece have decades-old disputes over an array of issues, including ter-

ritorial claims in the Aegean Sea and disputes over the airspace there. The disputes have brought them to the brink of war three times in the past half-century.

Tensions flared in 2020 over exploratory drilling rights in areas of the Mediterranean Sea where Greece and Cyprus claim exclusive economic zones, leading to a naval standoff.

Turkey has accused Greece of violating international agreements by militarizing islands in the Aegean Sea. Athens says it needs to defend the islands — many of which lie close to Turkey's coast — against a potential attack from Turkey's large fleet of military landing craft.

War monitor: Israeli strike targeted missile depot in Syria

AP ■ BEIRUT

Satellite imagery showed widespread destruction at a giant military facility in western Syria targeted in a recent Israeli airstrike, and the head of a Syrian opposition war monitor said Sunday the strike targeted a depot housing hundreds of middle-range missiles for Iran-backed fighters.

Syrian state media reported after the Thursday night attack near the cities of Tartus and Hama that two people were wounded and fires were sparked in nearby forests.

It added that the missiles were fired

from over the Mediterranean and most of them were shot down.

Syrian opposition activists at the time said the strike targeted an arms depot and a scientific research centre near the central town of Masyaf, a government stronghold.

Masyaf is almost half way between the coastal city of Tartus and the central city of Hama.

The Times of Israel on Sunday published images taken by Planet Labs PBC and provided by Aurora Intel, a network that provides news and updates based on open-source intelligence.

Aurora Intel tweeted that initial



analysis of satellite imagery showed that some buildings and areas sustained heavy damage from the reported airstrikes.

It added that areas around the Scientific Studies and Research Centre sustained "heavy fire damage due to the secondary explosions."

The imagery showed that part of the green areas surrounding the facility had been burned.

Rami Abdurrahman, who heads the Britain-based opposition war monitor known as the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, said the Israelis struck several positions but the main

target hit was a giant arms depot housing about 1,000 precision-guided middle-range missiles.

He said the explosions at the facility lasted for more than five hours after the strike.

Abdurrahman added that an underground facility to develop missiles in the area under the supervision of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard was not affected by the strikes, probably because it was dug deep in the mountains.

He said the strike left one Syrian army captain dead and 14 other Syrians wounded.

Outspoken lawmaker picked to lead South Korean Opposition

AP ■ SEOUL

Firebrand lawmaker Lee Jae-myung was elected to lead South Korea's main opposition party on Sunday, months after his narrow presidential defeat to conservative opponent Yoon Suk Yeol left the liberals in disarray.

Lee's dominant win in the Democratic Party chairperson's race ends a monthslong leadership void for the liberals, who still control a majority in the Parliament. It revives his rivalry with Yoon, a relative political novice who has seen his popularity decline since taking office in May amid a worsening economy, policy mishaps on education and other domestic issues, and mishandled Cabinet appointments.

Lee, who won nearly 78% of the votes from party members, was announced as the Democrats' new chairperson in a convention held at a gymnastics stadium in the capital, Seoul. In his acceptance speech, Lee criticized the Yoon administration over what he



described as failures to address the country's stark economic inequalities, but also said he was willing to cooperate with Yoon and the ruling conservative party if "they take the right path for the people and country."

He stressed that his key mission is to bring the Democrats back to power.

"Today's convention is the start of our victorious march, including in the parliamentary elections two years later, the mayoral and gubernatorial elections four years later and the presidential election five years later," Lee said, as his supporters cheered and chanted his name.



6 Indian fishermen held by Sri Lanka Navy

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The Sri Lankan Navy has arrested six Indian fishermen and seized their trawlers for allegedly poaching in the country's territorial waters, an official statement said on Sunday on the second such incident in a month.

The fishermen were arrested on Saturday off Talaimannar, a settlement located on the northwestern coast of Mannar Island, the Navy said in the statement.

The fishermen, who remain in naval custody in Talaimannar, will be handed over to the fisheries inspector in Mannar, it said.

The latest arrest came after 10 Indian fishermen were arrested for allegedly poaching in Sri Lanka's waters on August 22.

The fishermen issue is a contentious one in the ties between India and Sri Lanka, with the Lankan Navy personnel even firing at Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait and seizing their boats in several alleged incidents of illegally entering Sri Lanka's territorial waters.

The Palk Strait, which is a narrow strip of water separating Tamil Nadu from Sri Lanka, is a rich fishing ground for fishermen from both countries.

There have been periodic instances of Indian fishermen being apprehended by Sri Lankan authorities for allegedly crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line and fishing in Sri Lankan waters.

Judge plans to appoint special master in Trump records case

AP ■ WASHINGTON

A federal judge in Florida told the Justice Department on Saturday to provide her with more specific information about the classified records removed from former President Donald Trump's Florida estate and said it was her "preliminary intent" to appoint a special master in the case.

The two-page order from U.S. District Judge Aileen Cannon signals that she's inclined to grant a request from Trump's lawyers, who this week asked for the appointment of an independent special master to oversee the review the records taken from Mar-a-Lago and identify any that may be protected by executive privilege, and to ensure the return of any documents outside the scope of the search warrant.

The judge scheduled a Thursday hearing to discuss the matter further, suggesting the Justice Department will have a chance to raise objections to



the judge's intentions. In other recent high-profile cases in which a special master has been appointed, the person has been a former judge.

Cannon also directed the Justice Department to file under seal with her more detailed descriptions of the material taken from Trump's estate "specifying all property seized." The former president's lawyers have complained that investigators did not disclose

enough information to them about what specific documents were removed when agents executed a search warrant on Aug. 8 to look for classified documents.

The special master appointment, if it happens, is unlikely to significantly affect the direction of the Justice Department investigation, though it's possible an outside review of the documents could slow the probe down.

'Tape or chewing gum': Twitter's lapses echo around the world

AP ■ SAN FRANCISCO

From fire departments to governments, from school districts to corporations, from local utilities to grassroots organizers around the world, Twitter at its best is a tool to get a message out quickly, efficiently, directly.

It's also a constant risk-and-reward calculation.

A recent bombshell whistleblower report from Twitter's former head of security alleges that the social media company has been negligently lax on cybersecurity and privacy protections for its users for years. While worrisome for anyone on Twitter, the revelations could be especially concerning for those who use it to reach constituencies, get news out about emergencies and for political dissidents and activists in the crosshairs of hackers or their own governments.

"We tend to look at these companies as large, well-resourced entities who know what they're doing — but you realize that a lot of their actions are ad hoc and reactive, driven by crises," said Prateek Waghre, policy director at the Internet Freedom Foundation, a digital rights nonprofit in India. "Essentially, they're often held together by



cello tape or chewing gum."

Peiter "Mudge" Zatkoff, who served as Twitter's security chief until he was fired early this year, filed the complaints last month with federal U.S. authorities, alleging that the company misled regulators about its poor cybersecurity defenses and its negligence in attempting to root out fake accounts that spread disinformation. Among Zatkoff's most serious accusations is that Twitter violated the terms of a 2011 FTC settlement by falsely claiming that it had put stronger measures in place to protect the security and privacy of its users.

Waghre said the allegations in the complaint about India — that Twitter knowingly allowed the Indian government to place its agents on the company payroll where they had "direct unsupervised access to the company's systems and user data" — were particularly worrisome. He also pointed to an incident earlier this month where a former Twitter employee was found guilty of passing along sensitive user data to royal family members in Saudi Arabia in exchange for bribes.

The consequences of privacy and security lapses can range from inconvenience and embarrassment — such as when an Indiana State Police account was hacked and tweeted "poo-poo head" earlier this year — to much worse. In October 2021, a Saudi humanitarian aid worker was sentenced to 20 years in prison because of an anonymous, satirical Twitter account that the kingdom says he ran. It's possible that the case is linked with the men accused of spying on behalf of the kingdom while working at Twitter.

As an advocate for dissidents and others detained in Saudi Arabia, Bethany Al-Haidari has been concerned for years about Twitter's user privacy safeguards. The new whistleblower allegations make her all the more worried.

China keeps wary watch as US warships sail through Taiwan Strait

PTI ■ BEIJING

The Chinese navy on Sunday kept a close watch as two American warships sailed through the Taiwan Strait, separating China and Taiwan, the first such operation since US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taipei early this month, sparking a new round of tensions between the two countries.

The US warships sailed through the Taiwan Strait where the Chinese military has carried out its biggest exercises for several days in August, often crossing the median line that separated the Chinese mainland and Taiwan, which Beijing viciously claims as part of it.

"The USS Antietam and the USS Chancellorsville, two US guided-missile cruisers, sailed through the Taiwan Strait on August 28 and hyped it up publicly," the Eastern Theatre Command (ETC) of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) said on Sunday.

The ETC conducted security tracking and monitoring of the US warships' passage in the whole course and had all movements of the two US warships under control, Senior Colonel Shi Yi, spokesperson for the ETC, said in a statement.

The troops of the PLA Eastern Theatre Command always stay on high alert and get ready to thwart any provocation, he added.

Criticising the American naval ships transit through the island, a write-up in the state-run Global Times said the "US is trying to appease the Taiwan authorities and regional allies, conveying to them that Washington will not back



down under military pressure from the Chinese mainland".

This is the first time the US warships sailed through the Taiwan Strait, a busy and strategic waterway separating China and Taiwan, after Pelosi's visit though according to the official media accounts here over 100 American warships transited through the water since 2012, challenging China's claims over the area.

The US has been conducting similar naval and aerial expeditions in the disputed South China Sea to assert freedom of navigation, countering Beijing's claims over most of the area.

The Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan have counterclaims over the South China Sea.

Pelosi's visit, the first by a top US official in 25 years, set off a series of US lawmakers visits to Taipei.

US Senator Marsha Blackburn became the fourth lawmaker to visit Taiwan when she travelled to Taipei last week.

"I will not be bullied by Communist China into turning my back on the island," she was quoted as saying by CNN.

"Taiwan is our strongest partner in the Indo-Pacific Region. Regular high-

level visits to Taipei are long-standing US policy," said Blackburn, a Tennessee Republican who sits on the Senate Armed Services Committee.

Blackburn met Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen and other senior officials during her three-day stay, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported.

After Pelosi's visit, China went ballistic conducting massive military exercises for several days including firing missiles over the Taiwan island, sparking concerns that Beijing may be contemplating a military offensive.

Libya Capital remains tense a day after clashes kill over 30

AP ■ CAIRO

Militias patrolled nearly deserted streets in Libya's capital Sunday, a day after clashes killed over 30 people and ended Tripoli's months-long stretch of relative calm.

The fighting broke out early Saturday and pitted militias loyal to the Tripoli-based government against other armed groups allied with a rival administration that has for months sought to be seated in the capital.

Residents fear the fighting that capped a months-long political deadlock could explode into a wider war and a return to the peaks of Libya's long-running conflict.

Libya has plunged into chaos since a NATO-backed uprising toppled and killed longtime dictator Moammar Gadhafi in 2011.

The oil-rich county has for years been split between rival administrations, each backed by rogue militias and foreign governments.

The current stalemate grew out of the failure to hold elections in December and Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah's refusal to step down.

In response, the country's east-based parliament appointed a rival prime minister, Fathy Bashagha, who has for months sought to install his govern-



ment in Tripoli.

Saturday's fighting centered in the densely populated city center and involved heavy artillery. Hundreds were trapped and hospitals, government and residential buildings were damaged.

The Health Ministry said at least 32 people were killed and 159 wounded in the clashes.

Among the dead was Mustafa Baraka, a comedian known for his social media videos mocking militias and corruption.

He was shot reportedly while live-streaming on social media. It was not clear whether he was targeted.

The Associated Press spoke to dozens of residents and witnesses.

They recounted horrific scenes of people, including women and children, trapped in their homes, government

buildings and hospitals.

They also spoke of at least three motionless bodies that remained for hours in the street before an ambulance was able to reach the area.

They asked not to be identified for fear of reprisal from the militias.

"We see death before our eyes and in the eyes of our children," said a woman who was trapped along with many families in a residential apartment. "The world should protect those innocent children like they did at the time of Gadhafi."

Militias allied with Tripoli-based Dbeibah were seen roaming the streets in the capital early Sunday.

Their rivals were stationed at their positions in the outskirts of the city, according to local media. Much of the city has suffered nightly power outages.

Sunak's California references may have impacted chances

PTI ■ LONDON

Former UK Chancellor and prime ministerial hopeful Rishi Sunak's team feels his references to the Silicon Valley in California early on in the campaign to succeed Boris Johnson as British Prime Minister may have impacted his chances in the Conservative Party leadership contest.

"The Daily Telegraph" quotes sources within Sunak's Ready4Rishi campaign team to claim that it was when he mentioned California for the third time in less than 10 minutes that they felt things were not going the right way.

On stage at one of the early hustings at Eastbourne on August 5 to lure Tory members voting between Sunak and

Foreign Secretary Liz Truss, the British Indian former minister answered a question about the career he would choose as a young graduate by reflecting on the "culture" of enterprise he saw while living on the West Coast of the US between 2004 and 2006.

"I think it's incredibly inspiring and empowering. If I was a young person, I'd want to go and do something like that," he replied.

Staff back at his campaign headquarters in central London felt his focus on California showed he was out of touch and summed up his failure to win over grassroots Tory members as polls showed members backing Truss by more than two to one.

"People started to say that it



wasn't going to happen now and he wasn't connecting with voters in the room," a source on the campaign told the newspaper.

"He kept talking about California and tech. It became an open secret within the campaign that he wasn't going to win. That hustings was the point things really took a turn as everyone started to realise that," the source said.

Sunak's perceived "block-buster effect" at the early stages of his leadership run when he was the frontrunner among his fellow members of Parliament began to wear off as the campaign progressed to the wider Tory base and now he stands more than 30 points behind in the polls and is widely expected to lose.

MPs who spoke to "The

Telegraph" point to his decision to pledge a cut to VAT on energy bills on July 27 — just weeks after ruling that out as Chancellor — as an example what could be seen as a failure to set a clear narrative to Tory members at the start of the campaign.

The move was interpreted as a U-turn that showed Sunak was not serious about his pledge to remain fiscally hawkish, even in the face of the cost-of-living crisis.

"His whole campaign was built on not cutting taxes until the time is right, and now he was saying: 'Lo and behold, I have declared the moment right. It's like, God, what are you thinking? You can't have your cake and eat it,'" one MP told the newspaper.

Dutch police: 6 dead after truck hit community barbecue

AP ■ THE HAGUE

The death toll from an accident when a truck drove off a dike and slammed into a community barbecue in a village south of Rotterdam rose to six on Sunday and police said a further seven people are in hospital, including one in critical condition.

Three men and three women were killed, ranging in age from 28 to 75, police said.

Police spokeswoman Mirjam Boers said the truck driver, a 46-year-old Spanish man, is suspected of causing the accident that happened early Saturday evening in the village of Nieuw-Beijerland. His identity was not released, in line with Dutch privacy laws.

The large truck the man was driving left a small rural road and careered down the bank of the dike and plowed into the village gathering. Boers said the driver was not under the influence of alcohol at the time of the crash.

"We are investigating what



could have happened," Boers said.

Dutch King Willem-Alexander and Queen Maxima said in a tweet that they were shocked by the accident that they said caused "an unimaginable sadness in this close-knit community."

The affected families are in our thoughts and we wish the injured strength on their way to as good a recovery as possible."

Forensic investigators worked into the night Saturday around the truck where it stopped at the bottom of the dike. Later, a crane and a tow truck hauled it back onto the

road. Photos of the scene showed bunting hanging between trees and chairs scattered around trestle tables with plates still on them.

Prime Minister Mark Rutte also expressed sorrow in a tweet, saying, "My thoughts go out to the victims and next of kin of this terrible drama. I wish them much strength."

Local Mayor Charlie Aptroot visited the scene Saturday night.

"My condolences go out to the victims, their families, eyewitnesses and first responders," he said in a statement.

Five-member Islamabad High Court Bench to try Imran for contempt proceedings: Report

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

A five-judge bench of the Islamabad High Court will hear the contempt case against Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan for his controversial remarks threatening a female judge during a rally here, a media report said on Sunday.

The bench - headed by Islamabad High Court Chief Justice Athar Minallah - comprises Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani, Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb, Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, and Justice Babar Sattar, the Dawn newspaper reported.

Initially, the case was heard by a three-member bench.

The court, however, forwarded the matter to the IHC Chief Justice seeking the inclusion of more judges on the bench, the report said.

The IHC on Tuesday issued a show-cause notice to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Khan and summoned him in his personal capacity on August 31 in contempt proceedings for threatening the district and sessions court judge Zeba Chaudhry.

At a rally here in F-9 Park on August 20, Khan threatened to file cases against Islamabad's inspector general of police and deputy inspector general of police and declared: "We won't spare you."

He then warned the judiciary for its "biased" attitude towards his party, saying that it should brace itself for the consequences.

The PTI chairman also warned additional



district and sessions judge Chaudhry, who had approved the two-day physical remand of Khan's aide Shahbaz Gill on the request of the Islamabad Police, that she would also face dire consequences.

Gill was arrested a fortnight ago on charges of sedition.

The show-cause notice to Khan mentioned that the statement was made in a sub judice matter to get 'favourable' verdict and prima facie, this act was tantamount to obstructing the course of justice and due process and undermining public confidence in the court of law.

According to the newspaper, prima facie Khan committed "criminal as well as judicial contempt, punishable under section 5 of the Contempt of Court Ordinance, 2003".

"These remarks have been made with the motive of bringing the administration of law into disrepute and eroding the integrity and credibility of the judicial system," it added.

PUBLIC NOTICE	PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform all concerned that my DDA Property Documents i.e. Original Allotment cum Demand Letter and Original Mutation Letter issued by Delhi Development Authority of Plot No. W-16, Rewari Lane, Industrial Area, Phase-II, Mayapuri, Delhi has been lost. If anybody finds the same, he/she may return the same to me. The public are hereby cautioned in dealing with the above and if they do so, they will be doing so at their own risk and responsibility. By Smt. Ramesh Rani W/o Shri Trilochan Lal, R/o 9/6, Ground Floor, Gali No. 9, Subhash Nagar, New Delhi-110027 Mob.: 9811640051	NOTICE, is hereby given that the Original Conveyance Deed No. 4892 dt.18.09.2017 in the name of Smt. Sangeeta Kulshreshtha W/o Sh. Anil Kulshreshtha in respect of property bearing no B-812, 8th floor, B block in Piyush Heights, Sector 89, Faridabad 121005 have lost in transit in Faridabad. Finder may please return back or call back the same to Smt. Sangeeta Kulshreshtha on the above address or SBI RACPC SCO 98, Sector 16, Huda Market, Faridabad. Mr.: 9910843071, 9545446461

GOLDEDGE ESTATE AND INVESTMENTS LIMITED
Regd. Office: C-115, Mansarovar Garden Ground Floor New Delhi-110015
Ph. No.-011-25192268 | e-mail: goldgedgestate2016@gmail.com
CIN: U70101DL1992PLC047541 | www.goldgedgestate.in

NOTICE TO MEMBERS
The Notice is hereby given that:-
1. The **30th Annual General Meeting (AGM)** of the Company will be held on Tuesday, 27th September, 2022 at 11:00 a.m. in Virtual Mode ("VC"/"VCM") facility in compliance with MCA General Circular No.14/2020, 17/2020, 20/2020, 02/2021, 02/2022 and all other applicable laws and circulars issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA), Government of India and Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), to transact the business as set forth in the Notice of the AGM dated August 20, 2022.
2. In compliance with the above circulars, electronic copies of the Notice of the AGM and the Annual Report for financial year 2021-22 have been sent to all the shareholders, on or before August 26, 2022, whose email addresses are registered with the Company/ Depository Participant(s).
3. The Company has provided electronic voting facility for transacting all the business(es) items as mentioned in Notice of 30th Annual General Meeting through e-voting facility on the platform of Central Depository Services (India) Limited (CDSL). The members may cast their votes using an electronic voting system from a place other than the place of meeting ("remote e-voting"). The remote e-voting facility shall commence on Saturday, 24th September, 2022 at 9:00 A.M. and will end on Monday, 26th September, 2022 at 5:00 P.M. No e-voting shall be allowed beyond the said date and time.
4. Any person who has acquired shares and become members of the Company after dispatch of notice may obtain the user id and password for remote e-voting from the Company's Registrar & Transfer agents, M/s. Skyline Financial Services Private Limited. The detailed procedure for obtaining User ID and password is also provided in the Notice of the AGM which is available on Company's website www.goldgedgestate.in and the website of the stock exchange, i.e. MSEI Limited at <https://www.msei.in/>.
5. Members may please note that:
(a) The e-voting shall not be allowed beyond Monday, 26th September, 2022 at 5:00 P.M. and once the vote on a resolution is cast by a member, the member shall not be allowed to change it subsequently.
(b) A member may participate in the General Meeting even after exercising his right to vote through e-voting but shall not be entitled to vote again.
(c) The member who has not availed remote e-voting shall vote at the Annual General meeting(AGM) through e-voting.
(d) A member whose name appears in the register of Members/Beneficial owners as on the cut-off date i.e. 20th September, 2022 only shall be entitled to avail the facility of remote e-voting/e-voting at the AGM.
(e) Pursuant to aforesaid SEBI Circular, Login method for e-Voting and joining virtual meetings for individual shareholders holding securities in Demat mode CDSL/ NSDL are given in Notice of AGM.
6. The result of e-voting shall be announced on or after the Annual General Meeting of the Company. The result declared alongwith the Scrutinizer's Report shall be placed on the Company's website for information of the members, besides being communicated to the Stock Exchange(s).
7. The Notice and Annual Report of the Company is posted on the website of the Company i.e. www.goldgedgestate.in and also the website of the stock exchange, i.e. MSEI Limited at <https://www.msei.in/> in case you have queries or issues regarding attending AGM and e-voting, you may refer the Frequently Asked Questions ("FAQs") and e-voting manual available at www.evotingindia.com under help section or write an email to helpdesk.evoting@cdslindia.com or contact 022- 23058738, 23058542/43 and Toll Free no. 1800 22 55 33. In case of any grievances connected with the facility for voting by electronic means, please contact Mr. Rakesh Dalvi, Manager, CDSL, A Wing, 25th Floor, Marathon Futrex, Mafatlal Mill Compounds, N M Joshi Marg, Lower Parel (East), Mumbai - 400013.
8. Further Notice is hereby given that pursuant to Section 91 of the Companies Act, 2013 and Regulation 42 of the SEBI (LODR) Regulations, 2015, the Register of Members and Share Transfer Books of the Company will remain closed from Wednesday, September 21, 2022 to Tuesday, September 27, 2022 (both days inclusive) for the purpose of Annual General Meeting.

For Goldedge Estate and Investments Limited
Sd/-
Place: New Delhi
Date: 27.08.2022
Jagdish Chand Agarwal
Chairman

Death toll from Pak flood crosses 1K mark

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The death toll from the devastating floods in Pakistan has crossed the 1,000-mark after another 119 people died due to deluge-related incidents across the country in the last 24 hours, according to the official data on Sunday.

Floods triggered by the torrential rain since June 14 have wreaked havoc, inundating a vast swathe of flat land in the south and southwest of the country.

The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) said on Sunday that 119 people had died in the previous 24 hours as heavy rains continued to lash parts of the country.

"So far, 1,033 people have



died and 1,527 persons injured across Pakistan," the NDMA, the main body tasked to deal with calamities, said.

The majority of deaths of 76 persons were reported in Sindh province in the last 24 hours, it said.

As many as 71 persons were injured across the country, it said.

At least 347 people died in Sindh, 238 in Balochistan, 226 in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, 168 in Punjab, 38 in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir, 15 in Gilgit-Baltistan,

and one person was killed in Islamabad.

Floods have destroyed 3,451.5 kilometres of road, swept away 147 bridges, destroyed 170 shops, and partially or fully damaged about 9,49,858 houses. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said authorities have been assessing loss to the economy, which could run into billions of rupees.

Pakistan is ill-prepared to deal with such a huge crisis and has sought international help.

The United Nations is expected to issue a flash appeal of over USD 160 million on August 30 to support Pakistan.

Friendly countries have begun to step in to offer support, days after Pakistan briefed foreign diplomats about the national emergency.

Diana's car auctioned as 25th anniversary of her death nears



AP ■ LONDON

A car driven by Princess Diana in the 1980s was sold for 650,000 pounds (\$764,000) at an auction Saturday, just days before the 25th anniversary of her death. Silverstone Auctions said there was a "fierce bidding" for the black Ford Escort RS Turob before the sale closed.

The U.K. Buyer, whose name was not disclosed, paid a 12.5% buyer's premium on top of the selling price, according to the classic car auction house.

Britain and Diana's admirers worldwide are preparing to mark a quarter century since her death. She died in a high-speed car crash in Paris on Aug. 31, 1997. Diana drove the Escort from 1985 to 1988. She was photographed with it outside boutique shops in Chelsea and restaurants in Kensington. She preferred to drive her own car, with a member of her security team in the passenger seat. The RS Turbo Series 1 was typically manufactured in white, but she got it in black.

Global market trends, macro data to guide domestic stocks

In holiday shortened week

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Trading in the domestic stock market would be influenced by trends in the global equities, macroeconomic data and foreign fund movement in a holiday-shortened week, analysts said.

Markets may face volatile trends on Monday after Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell's speech at the Fed's annual economic symposium in Jackson Hole on Friday.

"Powell sounded ultra hawkish in his brief speech at Jackson Hole. Markets will be concerned about the tight monetary conditions persisting longer than expected. The near-term impact on equity markets will be negative," V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services, said.

Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell delivered a stark message on Friday: The Fed will likely impose more large interest rate hikes in the coming months and is resolutely focused on taming the highest inflation in four decades.

"US Fed statement post the Jackson Hole symposium indicated the central bank's strong commitment towards controlling inflation over growth," Siddhartha Khemka,



Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

He further said that the US markets fell more than 3 per cent. Indian markets are also likely to react negatively on Monday with increasing volatility over the next few days.

Wall Street had ended significantly lower on Friday.

Meanwhile, the markets would be closed on Wednesday for Ganesh Chaturthi.

"The direction of global markets will be the dominant factor for this week while on

the domestic front, India's GDP number and August auto sales numbers will be important factors. Apart from this, the market will also have an eye on the movement of crude oil prices, the dollar index, and the US bond yields," Santosh Meena, Head of Research, Swastika Investmart Ltd, said.

The Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) data for the manufacturing sector, scheduled to be announced on Thursday, would also influence trading, analysts said.

"This week is a holiday-shortened one and it marks the

beginning of the new month also so, participants will be eyeing important data like auto sales numbers. Amid all, the performance of the global indices especially the US would remain on the radar for cues," Ajit Mishra, VP - Research, Religare Broking Ltd, said.

The investment pattern of Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) and the rupee-dollar trends would also continue to drive markets.

Last week, the Sensex tumbled 812.28 points or 1.36 per cent, while the Nifty lost 199.55 points or 1.12 per cent.

386 infra projects show cost overruns of ₹4.7 L cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 386 infrastructure projects, each entailing an investment of Rs 150 crore or more, have been hit by cost overruns of more than Rs 4.7 lakh crore, as per a report.

According to the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, which monitors infrastructure projects of Rs 150 crore and above, out of 1,505 projects, 386 reported cost overruns and as many as 661 projects were delayed.

"Total original cost of implementation of the 1505 projects was Rs 21,21,793.23 crore and their anticipated completion cost is likely to be Rs 25,92,537.79 crore, which reflects overall cost overruns of Rs 4,70,744.56 crore (22.19% of original cost)," the ministry's latest report for July 2022 said.

According to the report, the expenditure incurred on these projects till July 2022 was Rs 13,50,275.69 crore, or 52.08 per cent of the anticipated cost of the projects.

However, the number of delayed projects decreases to 511 if delay is calculated on the basis of the latest schedule of completion.

Further, it showed that for 581 projects neither the year of commissioning nor the tentative gestation period has been reported.

Out of the 661 delayed projects, 134 have overall delays in the range of 1-12 months, 114 have been delayed for 13-24 months, 289 projects for 25-60 months and 124 projects have been delayed for 61 months and above.

The average time overrun in these 661 delayed projects is 41.83 months.

Reasons for time overruns as reported by various project implementing agencies include delay in land acquisition, delay



in obtaining forest and environment clearances, and lack of infrastructure support and linkages.

Delay in tie-up for project financing, finalisation of detailed engineering, change in scope, tendering, ordering and equipment supply, and law and order problems are among the other reasons.

The report also cited state-wise lock-

downs due to COVID-19 as a reason for the delay in implementation of these projects.

It has also been observed that project agencies are not reporting revised cost estimates and commissioning schedules for many projects, which suggests that time/cost overrun figures are under-reported, it stated.

'US firms geared up to be part of India's vision to become \$30 trillion economy'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

India is embarked on a journey to restore itself to the top of the global leadership tables in terms of economy and prosperity, the head of an India-centric American business group has said, underlining that US companies are geared up to be part of the country's ambitious vision to become a USD 30 trillion economy.

"I think it's clear that India is going to grow in every decade of the 21st century. It's gonna rise to be one of the biggest economies in the world, if not the biggest economy in the world," Atul Keshap, the president of the US India Business Council (USIBC) told PTI.

"I've heard Indian officials talk about India potentially becoming a USD30 trillion economy," he said.

A lot of American companies and members of the USIBC understand and appreciate that vision, Keshap said.

"India is embarked upon a journey to restore itself to the top of the global leadership

tables in terms of economy and prosperity. India used to occupy as much as 25 per cent of the global GDP. I think that potential is there," he said.

Keshap said that American companies are excited and geared up to be part of India's ambitious journey.

"And I think that Americans want to see democracies succeed and they want to see democracies thrive," he said.

Ahead of the India Ideas Summit in New Delhi on September 6 and 7, Keshap, who is headed to India along with top board members of the USIBC and leadership of the US Chambers of Commerce, said that he sees a very bright future for the US-India ties.

"Our engineers work together across time zones, they overcome geography to design the products and the services and the instruments that humanity is going to use to live a better and happier and healthier and more fulfilling life. So what's happening in American and Indian companies are increasingly part of a



shared high trust ecosystem," he said.

It is important that America and India work well together to not only capture the full potential of India's rise but to show the value of democracy to the entire world, he said. "So building that high trust

ecosystem is really important," he said.

"Business community wants to show its support for that vision, and wants to show its support for the idea of India as a developed country in 2047, as the Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) said, in the

Independence Day speech the other day at Red Force," he said.

India is already becoming a services superpower. There's a huge digital economy trade between the United States and India. It's over USD 100 billion a year but total trade between America and India is only

about USD 150 billion a year, Keshap said.

"I have said repeatedly in public that we ought to hit USD 500 billion a year, India ought to be one of America's top trading partners and we ought to be India's top trading partner," he said.

"How do we go about doing that?" he asked.

"Number one, we set really good standards, high-quality standards for the digital economy, which is going to grow and grow and grow. Number two, we work on things like life sciences and the well-being of an ageing world and also a young world," Keshap said.

"India is frankly going to have both having that life sciences component where our companies working together in collaboration for research and innovation is going to be really vital," he said.

Manufacturing, supply chain, and e-commerce are the areas where India is already growing and becoming very strong, Keshap said.

"Given geostrategic neces-

sities and concerns, I think India has a huge opportunity if it plays its cards right to attract a lot of manufacturing," he said.

"This is why I've talked about the ease of doing business, level playing field, very clear regulatory structures, tax regimes, etc, and speedy arbitration of any disputes that may come up," he said.

"If India can work to create that software of investment, I think you'll see a lot of investments flow into India. It will create a lot of high-quality jobs, benefit the entire world and help India achieve its goals. It is a very ambitious goal," Keshap said.

India, he said, could be a real agricultural superpower if it works on instituting the right conditions for its producers and farmers.

"As we look at the USD 500 billion target, services are going to play a really important role. Manufacturing, supply chain, e-commerce is gonna have to play a big role in pharma and life sciences, defence and aerospace," he said.

"From my perspective, as

the president of a trade association, hundreds of executives across our 200 member companies see the potential value of India," Keshap said.

"This is where I think, India has a shining moment to take advantage of global trends in the most beneficial way and what we're offering is constructive feedback about the regulations and the ways that India can posture and position itself to capture the maximum advantage," Keshap said.

Keeping this in mind, the focus for this year's India Ideas Summit is on "Maximising the Next 75 Years of US-India Prosperity" – reflecting the milestone of 75 years of diplomatic relations between the US and India and the continued growth of bilateral partnership for global good.

During the two-day conference, the participants will discuss the US-India partnership in the context of the Indo-Pacific and an increasingly dynamic and competitive strategic landscape.

CyberX9 says call data of 20 mn postpaid customers of Vodafone Idea exposed; telco denies claim

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Multiple vulnerabilities in the system of telecom operator Vodafone Idea has exposed the call data records of around 20 million postpaid customers, cyber security research firm CyberX9 said in a report.

Vodafone Idea (Vi), however, said there was no data breach and potential vulnerability in its billing communication was immediately fixed after it learned about it.

According to the CyberX9 report, the vulnerability exposed postpaid customers' call data records, comprising the time when a call was made, duration of call, location from which the call was made, customer's full name and address, SMS details comprising contact number to which it was sent, among others.

CyberX9 founder and Managing Director Himanshu Pathak told PTI that the firm had shared entire findings with Vodafone Idea through email and a company official had acknowledged the vulnerability on August 24.

Pathak said CyberX9 reported details to Vi on August 22.

"Later on August 22, 2022,



Vi confirmed the receipt of our report. Vodafone Idea acknowledged the vulnerabilities discovered and reported by us on August 24, 2022," Pathak said.

When contacted, Vodafone Idea said, "There is no data breach as alleged in the report. The report is false and malicious. Vi has a robust IT security framework to keep our customer data safe."

"We regularly conduct checks and audits to further strengthen our security framework. We learnt about a potential vulnerability in billing communication. This was immediately fixed and a thorough forensic analysis was conducted to ascertain no data breach," it said.

The company further said that it has notified about the potential vulnerability to appropriate agencies and made

due disclosures, adding, "Vi customer data remains fully safe and secure."

The company has also made disclosure of the vulnerability on its website.

However, CyberX9 has contested the claim.

"Vi was exposing millions of customers call logs and other sensitive data for at least last about two years. In that massive time period, multiple criminal hackers might have stolen this data.

"It is absurd and baseless claim of Vi that they've done a forensic audit and no breach was found. Such a detailed forensic audit would at least take couple of months to be done," CyberX9 said.

The CyberX9 report claimed that data of around 301 million people was exposed due to this vulnerability.

CyberX9 found that call data records of 20.6 million Vi postpaid customers was exposed. This comprised personal data, call records, SMS records, internet usage records and roaming details.

The cyber security firm claimed that personal data of 55 million people, including those who have left Vi and those who only showed interest in getting a Vi connection, was at risk.

RailRestro plans to invest \$30mn by FY23 to boost logistics infra

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Leading food tech company RailRestro said it will be investing USD 20-30 million for building a robust logistics infrastructure and will undertake rapid expansion in coverage with a focus on the east, an official said on Sunday.

The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) authorised catering partner is engaged in the delivery of restaurant food to passengers directly into trains at railway stations of choice.

The infrastructure exercise primarily focuses on a company-owned delivery fleet to service all the railway stations that it covers across the nation.

"The process has begun and currently 100 plus stations are covered under direct delivery in all top performing stations. By the end of this financial year, our delivery fleet will be available at all the serviceable stations," RailRestro co-founder and director Manish Chandra told PTI.

He said the company will be investing heavily into the



model and USD 20-30 million is expected to be invested in building its own fleet at a majority of the serviceable stations.

The company claimed that currently it is offering food delivery service at about 450 stations as an aggregator and by the end of this year, it was plan-

ning to double the number of serviceable stations.

The official said the impetus for the company-owned delivery fleet has reduced delivery failures sharply and boosted its brand trust.

Right now some top 300 stations contribute 70-80 per cent of the orders of an average of Rs 350. RailRestro said it has delivered 10 million meals to date.

Speaking about the eastern region, Chandra said the east zone currently lags a bit as of now compared to other regions.

Mcap of seven of top-10 valued firms tumbles over ₹1.54 lakh cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Seven of the top-10 valued firms suffered a combined erosion of Rs 1,54,477.38 crore in market valuation last week, with IT majors Tata Consultancy Services and Infosys emerging as the biggest losers.

Last week, the BSE benchmark index tanked 812.28 points or 1.36 per cent.

Reliance Industries Limited, ICICI Bank and State Bank of

India were the only gainers in the top-10 pack. The market valuation of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) plunged Rs 59,862.08 crore to Rs 11,78,818.29 crore.

The valuation of Infosys tanked Rs 31,789.31 crore to Rs 6,40,351.57 crore.

HDFC Bank's valuation declined by Rs 16,090.67 crore to Rs 8,13,952.05 crore and that of Hindustan Unilever fell by Rs 14,814.18 crore to Rs 6,04,079.91 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of Bajaj Finance declined by Rs 14,430.4 crore to Rs 4,27,605.59 crore and HDFC by Rs 13,031.62 crore to Rs 4,34,644.36 crore.

The valuation of Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) dipped Rs 4,459.12 crore to Rs 4,29,309.22 crore.

On the other hand, Reliance Industries added Rs 3,500.56 crore taking its valuation to Rs 17,71,645.33 crore.

Auto components maker Uno Minda aims 25% growth in revenue from after market biz

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Auto components maker Uno Minda is aiming an over 25 per cent growth in its aftermarket business in the next 4-5 years as it looks to aggressively tap the segment, a top company official said.

In the quarter ended June 2022, its aftermarket business, also called the B2C segment, accounted for 9 per cent at Rs 223 crore in the overall con-

solidated revenue of Rs 2,555 crore.

Last week, Uno Minda announced its plans to invest Rs 300-crore in expanding its manufacturing capacity of four-wheeler alloy wheels and 4W automotive switches, to cater to the rising demand, along with setting up a wholly-owned subsidiary and an office in Dubai to enhance its aftermarket business in the Middle-East and Africa region.

Serena prepares for final curtain call

AP ■ NEW YORK

After a glittering 27-year professional career in which she became one of the greatest players of all time, Serena Williams is preparing to bid farewell to tennis at the major where it all began.

The 40-year-old sporting icon ended the guessing game surrounding her future earlier this month by revealing that the "countdown" to her retirement had started, with her final Grand Slam appearance expected at the US Open in New York starting on Monday.

The announcement sets the stage for what will be an emotional farewell for Williams, who faces unheralded world number 80 Danka Kovinic in Monday's first round at the Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Williams won the first of her 23 Grand Slam singles titles as a 17-year-old at the 1999 US Open, beating Martina Hingis in the final.

That breakthrough victory confirmed what had become apparent ever since her professional debut four years earlier: that Williams, alongside sister Venus, was a rising force in women's tennis.

While 1999 marked her first singles Slam, by then Williams had already won mixed doubles titles at Wimbledon and the US Open in 1998.

Her win in the 1999 singles final would light the touchpaper for the most dominant career of any female player in the Open era, her 23 Grand Slam titles second only to Margaret Court's 24.

While a record-equalling 24th Grand Slam singles title is likely to remain beyond her next week, Williams has nevertheless produced a collection of records that in all probability will never be broken.

RECORD COLLECTION

With seven Australian Open singles titles, seven Wimbledon titles and six US Open titles, Williams is the only player, male or female to win three different Grand Slams six times or more.

In total, she has won 39 Grand Slam titles — with 14 women's doubles crowns and two mixed



doubles titles to go alongside her 23 singles victories.

Her longevity is also unmatched. She was first ranked world number

one in 2002, and last held the position in 2017 — an interval of just under 15 years.

Williams also holds the record

for the longest gap between her first and last Grand Slam wins: 17 years and 139 days between her 1999 US



Venus & Serena handed US Open doubles wild card

AP ■ NEW YORK

Serena and Venus Williams will be reunited on court for the first time in four years after being handed a wild card into the doubles at the US Open, organisers confirmed on Saturday.

Serena Williams has not partnered elder sister Venus in a doubles event since the duo lost in the last 16 at the 2018 French Open.

They have not played doubles at the US Open since 2014.

Playing together, the Williams sisters were a dominant force in Grand Slam doubles tennis, winning 14 titles as well as three Olympic Gold medals.

The last of their 14 Grand Slam doubles wins came at Wimbledon in 2016, 17 years after their first title together at the 1999 French Open.

Open in Melbourne, when she was pregnant with daughter Olympia.

Williams has also collected four Olympic Gold medals — three as a doubles partner with sister Venus in 2000, 2008 and 2012, and one singles Gold at the 2012 London Games, staged at Wimbledon.

Only three other players — Steffi Graf, Andre Agassi and Rafael Nadal — have completed the career "Golden Slam" of all four major championships with an Olympic

Nadal eyes 23rd major

AP ■ NEW YORK

Rafael Nadal targets a fifth US Open and 23rd Grand Slam title in New York from next week with his path to the title no longer blocked by Novak Djokovic, whose refusal to get vaccinated has ruled him out of a second major this year.

Nineteen years after making his debut, the 36-year-old Nadal drags his injury-prone body into a tournament he won in 2010, 2013, 2017 and 2019, the year of his last appearance.

The Spaniard has had to sit out the US Open four times in his career and there are once again fresh doubts over his physical ability to survive a gruelling two weeks at Flushing Meadows.

Since an abdomen injury forced him to hand Nick Kyrgios a walkover into the Wimbledon final, Nadal has played just once -- a first-up loss to Borna Coric in Cincinnati.

Nadal has become accustomed to overcoming setbacks, winning a 14th French Open in June despite playing the whole tournament with pain-killing injections in his foot.

An added incentive for Nadal is the opportunity to reclaim the world number one spot from defending champion Daniil Medvedev, the man he defeated in the 2019 final.



With Roger Federer still absent from the tour and with question marks over Nadal's fitness and Djokovic's absence, the race for the men's title is likely to be as open as recent years.

Marin Cilic, Stan Wawrinka, Dominic Thiem and Medvedev have all broken the New York stranglehold of the "Big Three" since 2014.

Medvedev will be especially fired up having been banned from Wimbledon along with all other Russian players following the invasion of Ukraine.

On his reappearance on the tour following the All England Club cold shoulder, the 26-year-old claimed the hardcourt title in Los Cabos.



West Ham win puts pressure on Gerrard

AP ■ LONDON

West Ham won for the first time in the Premier League this season as their 1-0 victory piled fresh pressure on Aston Villa boss Steven Gerrard, while Newcastle's Allan Saint-Maximin rescued a 1-1 draw at Wolves on Sunday.

David Moyes' side arrived at Villa Park sitting bottom of the table after losing their first three games without scoring a single goal.

Pablo Fornals' goal late in the second half ended West Ham's wait to get off the mark as they climbed out of the relegation zone.

Fornals' shot deflected off Villa defender Ezri Konsa and looped over keeper Emiliano Martinez to break the deadlock with 15 minutes left.

The Hammers, beaten by

Manchester City, Nottingham Forest and Brighton, are now level on points with Villa, who have lost three of their first four matches.

Villa's latest setback will only add to the scrutiny on Gerrard amid talk of dressing room unrest with the former Liverpool and England midfielder. A midweek League Cup second round win at third-tier Bolton had given Gerrard a little breathing space.

But Villa fans are growing increasingly restless with Gerrard, who has struggled to make a sustained impact since leaving Rangers to head Dean Smith last season.

With matches against Premier League leaders Arsenal and champions Manchester City looming in their next two fixtures, Villa could be deeper in trouble by early September.

Kasatkina defeats Saville to seal Granby title

AP ■ MONTREAL

World number 10 Daria Kasatkina beat Australia's Daria Saville 6-4, 6-4 on Saturday to win a WTA title at Granby, Canada, in a US Open tuneup tournament.

Kasatkina captured her sixth career WTA crown after claiming another hardcourt title earlier this month at San Jose.

World number 73 Saville was in her first WTA final since Hong Kong in October 2017 and her fifth in all. Saville's only WTA title came at another event the week before the US Open, in 2017 at New Haven.

Kasatkina, 25, is from Russia but cannot represent her homeland under rules imposed by the tour following the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

The 28-year-old Russian-born Saville is having a comeback season following Achilles tendon surgery. She fell to 0-3 against Kasatkina in their first meeting since 2017.

Kasatkina, the US Open 10th seed, will face Britain's 98th-ranked Harriet Dart in her first match on the New York hardcourts.

MANNARINO WINS WINSTON-SALEM TITLE

Winston-Salem: France's Adrian Mannarino won his second career ATP title and first since 2019 on Saturday, defeat-



ing Serbia's Laslo Djere 7-6 (7/1), 6-4 to capture the Winston-Salem Open.

The 34-year-old lefthander had lost nine of his 10 prior

ATP finals, dropping three in a row since capturing his first tour title in 2019 on Rosmalen grass.

World number 65

KASATKINA CAPTURED HER SIXTH CAREER WTA CROWN AFTER CLAIMING ANOTHER HARD COURT TITLE EARLIER THIS MONTH AT SAN JOSE

Mannarino, who saved four match points in a first-round triumph, won 83% of his first-serve points to hoist the trophy in his first ATP final since losing the Astana Open final to Australian John Millman in November 2020.

SAMSONOVA BEATS SASNOVICH

Washington: Liudmila Samsonova stretched her WTA win streak to 10 matches on Saturday by defeating Aliaksandra Sasnovich to capture the Tennis in the Land title ahead of next week's US Open.

World number 45 Samsonova downed 36th-ranked Sasnovich 6-1, 6-3 in 72 minutes to make the Cleveland crown her third in as many WTA finals appearances.

"I was feeling so good here," said Samsonova after succeeding her career-best win streak.

Samsonova, who didn't drop a set in her championship row, also captured last year's German Open title and three weeks ago took the Washington Open trophy.



SOMMER HOLDS BAYERN FOR DRAW

AP ■ MUNICH

Borussia Moenchengladbach maintained their strong recent record against Bayern Munich as a record-breaking performance from 'keeper Yann Sommer helped secure a 1-1 away draw on Saturday.

Sommer's 19 saves in one game is the most in the Bundesliga since record-keeping started in 1993-94, easily eclipsing the previous record of 14.

Gladbach coach Daniel Farke lauded Sommer's "world-class performance" and his side's "show of will".

"Normally you are disappointed when you get a late equaliser. It's different today." Bayern began in dominant fashion, pinning Gladbach in their own penalty area.

Former Liverpool striker Sadio Mane had the ball in the net twice in two minutes in the

first half, but both efforts were pulled back for offside.

With Bayern launching wave after wave of relentless pressure, a goal seemed a mere formality, but it was the visitors who took the lead when French striker Marcus Thuram took advantage of an error from countryman Dayot Upamecano to put his side up 1-0 in the shadows of halftime.

Bayern continued to dominate and almost equalised in the 61st minute through Mane, but Sommer somehow stopped the Senegalese twice in quick succession from close range, before pulling off a one-on-one stop against Leroy Sane.

Jamal Musiala, brought on by Nagelsmann with 67 minutes gone, set up the equaliser in the 82nd minute, sliding a pass through for Sane to curl the ball past Sommer into the net.

Ten Hag hopes unsettled Ronaldo stays at Man Utd

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag insists he wants Cristiano Ronaldo to stay at Old Trafford despite leaving out the unsettled star for a second successive Premier League game.

The Portugal striker has been pushing for a transfer since the end of last term after United's failure to qualify for this season's Champions League.

With Thursday's transfer deadline looming, United remain adamant the five-time Ballon d'Or winner is not for sale in the second season of his second spell with the club.

But the sight of Ronaldo



stopping to salute the United fans after the final whistle at St Mary's convinced some observers that the 37-year-old was preparing to say farewell.

The former Real Madrid and Juventus star finished as United's top scorer last season, but Ten Hag's team have looked more threatening with him, beating both Liverpool and Southampton since he was dropped after starting in the humiliating 4-0 loss at Brentford.

Publicly at least, Ten Hag is sticking by Ronaldo, saying: "We played with him. So we want him to stay. That is what we want. I hope so."

United have been linked with several forwards who could potentially replace Ronaldo, including Ajax star Anthony, who played under Ten Hag during his reign at the Dutch club.

Tammy snatches point for Roma against Juve

AP ■ MILAN

A Milan maintain unbeaten start to their Serie A title defence with a 2-0 win over Bologna on Saturday as Tammy Abraham earned Roma a 1-1 draw at Juventus on Paulo Dybala's return to his old stomping ground.

Champions Milan eased to a routine win at the San Siro with goals either side of half-time from Rafael Leao and Olivier Giroud to go top on goal difference.

Stefano Pioli's side took full advantage of Inter Milan's loss at Lazio on Friday night to move a point above their local rivals.

Milan are one of four teams locked on seven points, with Roma, Lazio and Torino

-- 2-1 winners over promoted Cremonese.

Napoli will reclaim the summit should they win at Fiorentina on Sunday night, Luciano Spalletti's flamboyant side on a perfect six points after two stunning displays in their opening fixtures.

Leao gave the hosts the lead in front of over 60,000 fans with his first goal of the season, and then set up Giroud's opening strike of the campaign in the 58th minute with a perfectly clipped pass which the France international guided home with a beautifully-placed volleyed finish.

Mourinho blasts Roma Jose Mourinho said he was "ashamed" of his Roma



players' performances before they fought back to draw through Abraham's first goal

of the season.

England international Abraham headed home from

Dybala's knock-down in the 69th minute at the Allianz Stadium to maintain Roma's unbeaten record.

Mourinho used the vulgar Italian expression "culo" to describe their good fortune at being only a goal down at the break after being given a lesson by Juve.

Roma escaped Turin with a point despite being second best for long periods. Dusan Vlahovic put Juve ahead with a stunning free-kick after barely a minute.

"I told my players at half-time that I was ashamed of them... We can't come here and play like this," he said.

"We did absolutely nothing, it was pure luck. It was a very different team in the second half."

INDIA BEAT PAK IN ASIA CUP MATCH

PTI ■ DUBAI

Hardik Pandya produced a special all-round effort as India held nerves to pull off an exciting five-wicket win over arch-rivals Pakistan in their Asia Cup opener here on Sunday.

Hardik (3/25 in 4 overs) showed his high value under extreme pressure as his well-directed short balls helped India bowl out Pakistan for 147.

It should have been straight forward chase but India's experienced top-three faltered, putting extra pressure on the middle order.

Hardik (33 not out off 17) and Ravindra Jadeja (35 off 29) then shared a 52-run stand to take India on the cusp of a famous win. The star all-rounder's three fours off Haris Rauf off the 19th over effectively sealed the game for India.

With the team needing 6 off three balls, Hardik finished the game with a six off left-arm spinner Mohammad Nawaz.

The focus was on India's top three going into the tournament and all three - K L Rahul (0), Rohit Sharma (12 off 18) and Virat Kohli (35 off 34) -- did not have the best of times in the middle.

Rahul was out first ball with a tentative away from the body stroke off Naseem Shah that saw him playing on to his stumps.

Virat, who did hit a couple of confident pull shots in his innings, was dropped in the first over. He also played and missed a few times and also got lucky when a mistimed pull went all the way for six.

With luck going his way, it seemed Kohli will finally get a much awaited big score but he was caught at long off off Nawaz. In his previous over, Rohit was too dismissed in a similar fashion as he attempted to clear the long off fielder.

With Pakistani pacers led by debutant Naseem troubling the Indian batters with extra pace and spinners keeping it tidy, 86 runs off the last 10 overs seemed a tough task.

When Shah returned to rattle Suryakumar Yadav's stumps, India were reduced to 89 for four with a lot riding on incoming batter Hardik and Jadeja.

The equation was brought down to 32 off 18 balls with Pakistan forced to bring one extra fielder inside the circle due to an over rate penalty. Pakistan pacers especially Shah struggling with cramps made the Indians task a tad easier.

Earlier, Rohit Sharma decided to chase after winning the toss and the bowlers, led



by Hardik, set up the game nicely for India.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar (4/26) was at his skilful best and his four wicket haul included the prized scalp of Babar Azam (10). However, Hardik's envious figures of 3 for 25 in four overs, during the middle phase, triggered a Pakistani batting collapse.

Young seamer Arshdeep Singh also returned decent figures of 2 to 33 in his first ever appearance in an Indo-Pak clash as all 10 wickets were snapped by speed merchants, a first for India in shortest version.

The first over of the game bowled by Bhuvneshwar was a rather eventful one as it included two DRS calls going in favour

of Mohammad Rizwan (43 off 42) and a straight drive from Babar.

There was not much movement around for both Bhuvneshwar and Arshdeep Singh as they managed to keep things tight in their two over opening spell.

Babar straight drove Arshdeep in the second over, showing the sublime touch he has been in over the past 12 months.

Bhuvneshwar, however, surprised the Pakistan skipper with a bouncer in his second over and he went for the pull only to top edge to Arshdeep at short fine leg.

India went in with Avesh Khan as the third pace option and he struck in his

opening over after Rizwan smashed him for a six and four towards the midwicket region.

His fifth ball of the over was faced by left-handed Fakhar Zaman who decided to walk after edging a short and wide ball to wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik who was picked ahead of Rishabh Pant for the big game.

With the crowd making a lot of noise, the Indians did not hear the edge but Zaman decided to walk, leaving Pakistan at 43 for two in six overs.

Rizwan then shared a 45-run stand for the third wicket with Iftikhar Ahmed (28

off 22) to give the innings some momentum.

However, Hardik changed the course of the game removing the well set Iftikhar and Rizwan with well directed short balls -- the former edged it to Karthik and latter, not sure of what he was doing, ended up giving a regulation catch to third man.

Soon after, Hardik removed Khushdil Shah with another short ball to leave Pakistan at 97 for five in the 15th over.

Number 11 Shahnawaz Dahani hammered two big sixes in the death overs to take Pakistan closer to 150.

PCB to donate part of gate money from Eng T20 series

PTI ■ KARACHI

The Pakistan Cricket Board on Sunday said it will donate a substantial part of its gate money earnings from the T20 series against England towards the Prime Minister's Relief Fund for the country's flood affected victims.

A PCB official said the board will calculate the expected earnings from gate money in the series and then donate a substantial amount by next week, which will later be reconciled when the series is held.

The relief fund has been set up to help thousands of people who are rendered homeless due to destruction and deaths caused by heavy monsoon rains and flash floods in Pakistan.

The PCB, in an official statement, said that the gate earnings from the first T20I against England will be donated to the fund.

Pakistan is due to play a seven-match T20 series against England with the first game scheduled to be held at the National Stadium here.

Around 1000 people have been killed in rain related incidents in Pakistan since June with thousands left homeless.

The PCB urged cricket fans and followers to purchase tickets in big numbers once they are made available online for sale next week to show solidarity with all those affected by the calamity.

"We at the PCB express our grief and sorrow for all those affected by the extreme monsoon rainfall and floods, which has resulted in havoc and devastation beyond imagination, killing over 1,000 and leaving around a million homeless. As cricket unites our proud nation, we stand firmly with the victims and all those involved in the flood relief and rescue operations," PCB chairman Ramiz Raja said.

England will play seven T20Is on their first tour of Pakistan in 17 years.

ABD congratulates Kohli for playing 100th T20I match

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a special message, South African batting great AB de Villiers has congratulated Virat Kohli ahead of his 100th T20I, which will also make him the first Indian to complete a century of matches in all three formats.

Kohli has represented India in 102 Tests and 262 ODIs so far, and the team's Asia Cup opener against Pakistan in Dubai on Sunday was his 100th T20 International.

"I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate my very good friend Virat Kohli on becoming the first Indian cricket player to play 100 matches across all three formats," de Villiers said in a video posted by Star Sports on Twitter.

"What an amazing achievement, Virat. We're all very proud of you and all the very best in your 100th T20 international game. We will be watching you."



Head coach Dravid recovers from Covid, joins Indian team

PTI ■ DUBAI

Head coach Rahul Dravid has tested negative for COVID-19 and has joined the Indian team ahead of its much-awaited Asia Cup opener against Pakistan here on Sunday. Batting great Dravid, who had tested positive for the virus ahead of the team's departure for the continental tournament in a routine test,

has fully recovered from the condition.

"Team India Head Coach Rahul Dravid has tested negative for COVID-19 and has joined the team in Dubai. Interim coach, Mr VVS Laxman who was present with the team in Mr. Dravid's absence, has returned to Bengaluru to oversee the India A programme," the BCCI said in a statement.

Afif appointed as B'desh vice-captain

AP ■ DUBAI

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Saturday announced that batting-all-rounder Afif Hossain has been appointed vice-captain of the Tigers in the Asia Cup.

The 22-year-old left-hander has played 47 T20 internationals for Bangladesh since making his debut in February 2018. Earlier, Bangladesh have suffered another setback to their Asia Cup chances with two key players ruled out of the tournament due to injury.

The Tigers were dealt a blow last month when experienced batter Litton Das was left out of their squad with a hamstring injury and pacer Hasan Mahmud and wicketkeeper Nurul Hasan Sohan have joined the veteran on the sidelines.

Hasan is set to be unavailable for up to a month after he hurt his ankle at training last week, while Nurul recently underwent surgery on an injured finger and needs time to rest the affected area.

Shakib Al Hasan will lead Bangladesh at the Asia Cup after he was re-instated as T20I captain earlier this month.

Verstappen extends world c'ship lead

AP ■ SPA-FRANCORCHAMPS

Red Bull's Max Verstappen extended his lead in the Formula One world championship with a crushing victory in the Belgian Grand Prix on Sunday.

Verstappen started 14th on the grid but scorched through the field to cruise to victory ahead of team-mate Sergio Perez with Ferrari's Carlos Sainz, who started on pole, in third.

Charles Leclerc, Verstappen's nearest challenger in the title race, struggled in the other Ferrari to find his groove after starting 15th.

A late battle with Alpine's Fernando Alonso saw Leclerc overtake the two-time world champion to snatch fifth, behind the Mercedes of George Russell.

Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton retired on the opening lap after his Mercedes collided with Alonso's car.

Verstappen has now won nine of this season's 14 races and sits 92 points ahead of Perez who has taken over second spot from Leclerc, who is a fur-



ther three points behind.

The Dutch flyer, who is already in sight of a second successive world title, was one of eight drivers to be relegated down the grid after implementing a power unit change.

In spite of being quickest in qualifying he started 14th but quickly carved his way through the field to install himself in the easy chair up front.

Perez proved a useful buffer in second place although he also had a comfortable afternoon as all the other cars struggled against the Red Bull pace.

Russell's fourth was small compensation for Mercedes after Hamilton's first lap exit.

Alonso called Hamilton an "idiot" over the radio and the Briton later took full responsibility for the collision which occurred when he cut in front of the Spaniard, after both had slipped past Perez on the opening turn.

"Looking back he was in my blind spot, I didn't give him enough space. It is my fault," Hamilton told Sky.

"I could not see him. I am sorry to the team and I need to

recuperate and get back on the treadmill."

BELGIAN GP KEEPS ITS PLACE FOR 2023

Formula One has kept the Belgian Grand Prix on the calendar for next year.

F1 said in a statement shortly before Sunday's race that "the Belgian Grand Prix will be on the 2023 calendar following an agreement to extend our partnership together."

The Spa-Francorchamps track is one of the most iconic in F1 and one of the seven circuits from the inaugural world championship in 1950. The 7-kilometer (4.3-mile) circuit nestled in the Ardennes forest is also F1's longest.

But with promoters lining up to benefit from F1's surge in popularity, Spa's future was in doubt, especially after the French GP was dropped for next year.

It remains a firm favorite with drivers, with world champion Max Verstappen calling it his favorite track in F1. He and other drivers insisted it should not be axed because of its historic value along with the long-standing Monaco GP.

Yamaguchi retains women's world title

AP ■ TOKYO

Japan's Akane Yamaguchi retained her badminton women's world title in front of her home crowd in Tokyo on Sunday, beating China's Chen Yufei 21-12, 10-21, 21-14.

The top-seeded Yamaguchi, who won her first world title last year in the Spanish city of Huelva, had to dig deep to see off the challenge of Olympic champion Chen.

Chen was bidding to become the first player from badminton powerhouse China to win a women's singles world title since 2011.

China has won a total of 15 women's singles world titles -- five times more than any other country -- but number four seed Chen was the nation's first women's world finalist since 2014.

The 25-year-old Yamaguchi cruised through to the final without dropping a game this week in Tokyo.

She steadily turned the

screw on Chen in the first game before sealing the deal with a no-nonsense smash.

Chen came roaring back in the second game and levelled the match when Yamaguchi swatted a return into the net.

Yamaguchi regained the upper hand with a big early lead in the third game and she made it stick, closing out the match when Chen hit a return into the net.

The win gave Yamaguchi her second title of the year, after lifting the trophy at the All England Open in March.

The women's singles competition at this year's worlds was hit by injury, with 2019 champion PV Sindhu of India and Japan's 2017 winner Nozomi Okuhara both pulling out on the eve of the tournament.

In the men's final earlier in the day, Denmark's Viktor Axelsen claimed his second world title with a 21-5, 21-16 win over Thailand's Kunlavut Vitidsarn.

Oz beat Zimbabwe by 5 wickets in 1st ODI

AP ■ TOWNSVILLE

Cameron Green claimed his maiden five-wicket haul before David Warner and Steve Smith made light work of the run chase to set up a five-wicket victory for Australia over Zimbabwe in the first ODI of the three-match series, the African nation's first ODI series in the country since 2004. After Zimbabwe were sent in by Australian skipper Aaron Finch on Sunday, Green, took 5-33 as the tourists lost its last six wickets for 15 runs and was bowled out for 200 in the tropical north Queensland city of Townsville.

Australia then made light work of the run chase, as Warner scored 57 off 66 balls and Steve Smith played the anchor role of the innings to make an unbeaten 48 off 80 balls to set up the victory. Glenn Maxwell finished the match with consecutive sixes off Richard Ngarava in the 34th over. Green, who had only one ODI wicket prior to Sunday's match, removed Sikander Raza and stand-in skipper Regis Chakabva cheaply and then returned to clean up the tail



as Zimbabwe's hopes of posting a defendable total fell away in the final overs. "(We) just had a really clear gameplan, got a bit lucky at the end there, was just the right place at the right time trying to bowl back of a length on a wicket that was kind of going up and down," Green said. "I was luckily the one who got the

rewards, but I think the rest of the team bowled really well and basically gave me the opportunity to be in that position."

Wessly Madhevere scored a career-high 72 runs and opener Tadiwanashe Marumani added 45 as Zimbabwe started watchfully against Australia's bowlers.

STOKES HAILS POM'S 'BENCHMARK' WIN

AP ■ MANCHESTER

England captain Ben Stokes said his team had produced a "benchmark" win after overwhelming South Africa by an innings and 85 runs in the second Test at Old Trafford on Saturday.

Victory, with more than two days to spare, brought England level in this three-match series at 1-1 following South Africa almost as dominant innings and 12-run triumph at Lord's last week.

England have won five of their six matches since Stokes succeeded Joe Root as skipper but this one was built on Test-match fundamentals rather than setting up a crowd-pleasing run-chase in the fourth innings.

England have made much of their desire to play "positively" but in Manchester they also demonstrated plenty of cricket intelligence as well as attacking intent.

"Cricket is about how you bat, bowl and field and I think that the way we batted, bowled and fielded this whole game is the benchmark of the standards we've set," Stokes told reporters.

"It didn't feel like a wicket where you could stand there and hit through the line because of the variable bounce that it was



offering."

Bowling as a fourth seamer, which Stokes was at Old Trafford, can be something of a supporting role, but not in his eyes.

"When you are bowling with the older ball, when nothing is really happening, you have to create your own energies and own theatre around that," he said.

Stokes also signalled his admiration for Anderson who, at the age of 40, when most fast bowlers are long since retired.