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YOGI INAUGURATES AIRASIA
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CHINA SLAPS SANCTIONS AGAINST
PELOSI FOR TAIWAN VISIT

LUCKNOW, SATURDAY AUGUST 6, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3



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11 SPORT

Cong hits streets on price rise, unemployment, GST

Rahul, Priyanka
detained with
60 Cong MPs
and workersPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday staged a countrywide protest against price rise, GST and unemployment, but the party leaders were more vocal on criticising the Centre alleging that the Government unleashed the Enforcement Directorate against the Gandhis in the National Herald case.

The epicentre of the protest was Delhi where Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi led from the front, but the party also mobilised its cadre in several States to give it a shape of pan-India agitation against the policies of the Modi Government.

Congress chief Sonia Gandhi led the protest inside Parliament premises but did not attend the march due to health issues.

Wearing black outfits, Rahul, Priyanka, and nearly 60 Congress MPs from both Houses of Parliament and hundreds of Congress workers

were detained when they tried to march to Rashtrapati Bhavan from Parliament.

Ahead of the protest, Rahul addressed a Press conference during which he alleged that India is witnessing the "death of democracy" and anybody who stands against the onset of dictatorship is "viciously attacked".

He said the Gandhi family is attacked because it fights for democracy and for communal harmony.

He charged that the sole agenda of the Government is that people's issues such as price rise, unemployment and violence in society must not be raised.

"What we are witnessing is the death of democracy. That is what India is witnessing. What India has built brick by brick, starting almost a century ago, is basically being destroyed in front of your eyes," said Rahul, who was flanked by party leaders Jairam Ramesh and Ashok Gehlot.

Asked about the questioning by the Enforcement Directorate of Congress president Sonia and him in the National Herald case, Rahul said, "Question all you want, there is absolutely nothing there, everybody knows it. We are not going to be intimidated by such tactics."

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Congress leader Priyanka Gandhi during a protest in New Delhi on Friday PTI

RBI hikes repo
rate by 50 bps,
EMIs to rise

PNS ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday hiked the key lending (repo) rate by 50 basis points. This is the third increase since May to tackle rising inflation. The rate hike will mean home, auto and other loan EMIs will rise further.

The hike by 50 bps to 5.40 per cent is 25 bps higher than the pre-pandemic repo level.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das indicated that this may not be the end of the tightening regime. The RBI, however, did not revise its existing economic growth or inflation forecast despite indications of a global slowdown.

Away from Delhi stir, Mamata calls on PM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

While her party has been attacking the Modi Government over actions by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) against the TMC leaders in West Bengal, State Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the national Capital on Friday and raised a host of issues concerning her State, including GST dues and the timely release of funds by the Centre under various schemes.

Mamata's meeting with the Prime Minister and later with President Droupadi Murmu came a day ahead of the Vice President's election in which

her party has broken ranks with the Opposition and decided to abstain.

The meeting came against the backdrop of the arrest of her Minister Partha Chatterjee by the ED.

The Prime Minister's Office shared a picture of the meeting, which lasted about an hour. In a memorandum to the PM, Mamata said she had repeatedly sought his intervention for urgent release of funds due to the State on account of the implementation of MGNREGA, PM Awas Yojana and PM Gramin Sadak Yojana. The amount due under these schemes stood at ₹17,996.32 crore, she said.

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Chitrakoot airport to
be inaugurated soon

Lucknow (PNS): The first airport of Bundelkhand at Chitrakoot is all set to be inaugurated soon. It will be a table-top airport, being located on the top of a plateau or hill.

Constructed at the cost of Rs 146 crore, it will be the first operational airport in Bundelkhand and will be managed by the Airport Authority of India (AAI). A 20-seater aircraft will also start flying from there under the UDAN scheme.

According to the government spokesman, the ropeway at Chitrakoot has been the centre of attraction for tourists visiting the place since September 2019. People can now visit Chitrakoot both by air and by road via the

Continued on Page 9

Cong's stir subtle message of its appeasement politics: Shah

BJP calls Cong drama a
ploy to shield Gandhis

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

While the BJP called the Friday a ploy to shield the Gandhis from the National Herald corruption probe, Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath linked the agitation by

Congress leaders in black clothes to the "appeasement" politics alleging the protest was planned on the day Prime Minister Narendra Modi had laid the foundation of Ram Janambhoomi temple in 2020.

"The Congress chose this day for protest and wore black clothes because they want to give a subtle message to further promote their appeasement politics," said Shah.

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Only sick mind can link
protests to Ram temple
foundation day: Cong

New Delhi: The Congress hit back at the BJP saying only a sick mind can link the protests to the Ram temple foundation day. "It's only a sick mind which can produce such bogus arguments. Clearly the protests have hit home!" tweeted party leader Jairam Ramesh.

New VP today

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Members of Parliament will vote on Saturday to elect the next Vice President of India in an election where NDA candidate Jagdeep Dhankhar is pitted against Opposition pick Margaret Alva. With numbers stacked in favour of the NDA, Dhankhar, a former Governor of West Bengal, is set for an easy win.

Cracks were visible in the Opposition camp as Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool Congress decided to abstain from voting alleging lack of consultations in deciding on the name of Alva.

Continued on Page 9

Foreign powers ruled us by belittling our feats: HM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI


Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said foreign powers could keep India under their rule as they succeeded in creating an inferiority complex among Indians which should be uprooted to achieve Independence in its truest sense.

He said that the foreign rulers created a myth that Indians were illiterate, ignoring the fact that the Gita, the

Vedas, astronomy, and zero were given to this world by our country. Shah was speaking after the launch of a mega serial "Swaraj — Bharat Ke Swatantrata Sangram Ki Samagra Gatha", produced by Doordarshan to mark the 75th anniversary of Independence. The 75-episode mega show chronicles lesser-known tales about Indian history and would be telecast from August 14 on Doordarshan in Hindi and regional languages.

Continued on Page 9

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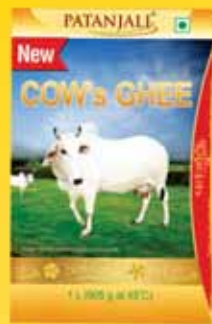

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Sanctum sanctorum of Ram temple to be opened in January 2024

PNS ■ AYODHYA

As two years have passed since construction of Sri Ram temple in Ayodhya started after the laying of the foundation stone of the temple, the committee supervising the temple construction has set a target to allow devotees to have a darshan of Ram Lalla at sanctum sanctorum on January 14, 2024.



NOTICE

Notify that I have changed my name from Ajay Kumar Awasthi to Ajay Avasthi for all purposes. Ajay Avasthi S/o Chhotelal Awasthi R/o Devpuri, Narauna, Kakori, Lucknow, U.P.

NOTICE

I have lost my original Kiraya Abhilekh Book no-5965 Dated 31/05/2011 of this address House No- 4/317/10 Avasthi yojana-3, Ambedkar Puram Kalyanpur Kanpur, Somewhere. KUREEL W/o Dinesh Kumar.

NOTICE

Before marriage my name was Pooja Mandhyan, after marriage my name has become Vandana Mandhyan, so from today I have read Vandana Mandhyan's name and write and speak Vandana Mandhyan D-1063 Indira Nagar Lucknow 226016

NOTICE

Earlier my name was Shikha Kumari, I have changed my name to Shikha Sharma. Now I should be known and recognized by this name. Shikha Sharma D/o Nirbhay Kumar R/o Mohalla-Shastri Nagar, Lakhimpur Kheri.

NOTICE

Notify that I have changed my name from Keerti Gupta to Kirti Sahu after my marriage for all purposes. Kirti Sahu W/o Mahesh Sahu R/o H.No.2 Kanha Nagar, Vrindavan Sector-C, Telibagh, P.S. P.G.I. Lucknow.

NOTICE

Notify that I have changed my name from Mahesh Kumar Sahu to Mahesh Sahu for all purposes. Mahesh Sahu S/o Kaleshwar Prasad Sahu R/o H.No. 2, Kanha Nagar Vrindavan Sector-C Telibagh, P.S. P.G.I. Lucknow

NOTICE

No.-15207888M Rank-Hav. Name Yogesh Kumar Singh of 90 Fd Regt resident of Village-Sahuwari, Post-Chakra, Teh.-Mau Sadar, Distt.-Mau (Pin No.-121705) State U.P. have changed Date of Birth My son Sreyash Singh from 21 April 2017 to 30 Oct 2019 vide affidavit No.56AE366057 Date 10 July-2022.

NOTICE

My House no.2345 Durbal Aay Varg, Awas Vikas scheme no.- 3 Panki Road Kalyanpur the original allotment letter no. 4287 dated 30/05/1989 which was issued in the name of jaisi Ram which is lost somewhere in Chakeri kanpur Nagar its use will be illegal. Mrs. Rani Gupta W/o Mr. Krishna Kumar Gupta R/o House no. 69 Mumfortganj Housing Scheme, District Allahabad.

NOTICE

My father's name is mentioned in my passport as Mohammad Ajmal Jamali which is wrong. Whereas in my other document his correct name is mentioned as Ajmal Jamali, because of this my father's correct name should be entered in my passport as per other document Mohammad Areeb son Ajmal Jamali 131 B Rajeev Nagar Indranagar Lucknow Uttar Pradesh



Construction work of Ram temple at full swing in Ayodhya

Radhey Joshi, one of the officials of the Tata Construction involved in the temple construction, said that 17,000 stones were to be installed in the floor of the temple out of which 13,000 stones had been installed so far.

"The sanctum sanctorum will be 12 metres by 12 metres. There will be two more circumambulations - first one will be 20x20 metres, and the second 60x60 metres. Thus, at one time over 1.25 lakh people will be able to go around the sanctum sanctorum.

"Over 30 per cent of the work has been completed and the construction of the sanctum sanctorum is going on at a fast pace," said Dr Anil Mishra, member of Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra trust which is looking after the construction of the temple.

He said that as per the programme, Ram Lalla would be installed at the sanctum sanctorum on Makar Sankranti on January 14, 2024 and after that devotees from all over the country and abroad would be allowed to worship Ram Lalla in the new temple.

On the second anniversary of laying of the foundation stone of the proposed temple, the trust invited journalists and apprised them of the current status of the construction.

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Invest UP takes steps to create better industrial environment

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In the series of various important measures taken by Uttar Pradesh government to create a better industrial environment in the state, a tripartite meeting was organised on Friday under the chairmanship of Chief Executive Officer of Invest UP and Secretary (Infrastructure and Industrial Development) Abhishek Prakash with the Indian Industries Association (IIA) and the departments concerned for redressal of pending issues of entrepreneurs on case-to-case basis.

It may be known that due to the COVID-19 pandemic and related circumstances, such a tripartite meeting has been organised after a few years.

On the submission of the IIA that new and pioneer industrial units are not getting timely exemption in electricity duty, it was directed that the Directorate of Electrical Safety should get the details of such cases from IIA and ensure their resolution at the earliest.

The chief executive officer directed Purvanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited, Varanasi to take appropriate action about the pending payment of supply of goods made by small entrepreneurs to dis-

coms within 15 days and inform Invest UP about it.

Regarding non-disposal of cases of delayed payment of goods purchased from micro, small and medium enterprises in Meerut division in the Divisional Facilitation Council, Additional Commissioner Industries, Chaitra V disclosed that hearing had been disposed of in 30 such cases in the Divisional Facilitation Council.

It was directed that IIA should provide details of other cases soon for proper disposal under the provisions of the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Act, 2006.

Abhishek Prakash said, "Dialogue with entrepreneurs and industries is a continuous process to create a good industrial environment in the state.

The state government is committed to removing the obstacles in the establishment or operation of industries. Tripartite meetings are a part of this process."

Prominent among those who attended the meeting included national president of Indian Industries Association, Ashok Agarwal, and officials of the Industries Department, UP Power Corporation Limited and UP Jal Nigam.

Swayamsevak Sangh. What can be expected from those who had never hoisted the Indian flag," Akhilesh Yadav said here on Friday after garlanding the statue of socialist leader Janeshwar Mishra at a park named after the leader.

"On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of independence, the BJP can engineer violence for its narrow political ends for creating divisions in society. The BJP has always betrayed the people," Akhilesh Yadav claimed.

"The BJP is projecting itself as the only nationalist party while those who don't vote for them are labelled anti-nationalists. Flag hoisting has been done for ages in India. Our Tiranga campaign is different from theirs; you will see it on August 9," the SP chief added.

"What do you expect from people who have never hoisted the Indian flag? I have heard that the national flag has

Yogi inaugurates AirAsia flights from Lucknow

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In another step towards easing air travel in the most populous state, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Friday, inaugurated AirAsia India's air services connecting state capital Lucknow with Bengaluru, New Delhi and Goa.

AirAsia's flights from Lucknow to Kolkata and Mumbai will commence in September.

Emphasising the importance of seamless air connectivity in ensuring the state's development and inclusive growth, Yogi Adityanath reiterated his resolve to present Uttar Pradesh as the best state in terms of connectivity, which would also open up new employment opportunities for the youth in the state.

On the occasion, congratulating the people of Lucknow for getting better air services, Union Minister for Civil Aviation Jyotiraditya Scindia lauded the efforts of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for improving air connectivity in the state.

"To develop UP according to its potential, as many as 63 new routes have been added recently which will also be to about 108 routes," he said.

The chief minister said that Uttar Pradesh had benefited immensely from the 'UDAN' scheme launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "The rapid expansion in air connectivity is a testament to Prime Minister Modi's commitment where he said that even those who wear 'Hawaii slippers' should be able to travel in flights," he said.

Stating that before 2017, UP had only two properly functioning airports - at Lucknow and Varanasi - while the ones in Gorakhpur and Agra remained partially functional, Yogi said that the pro-



AirAsia CEO and MD Sunil Bhaskaran presenting the modal of AirAsia plane to Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on the launch of Air Asia flights from Lucknow on Friday

Yogi: UP to become most important base for multidimensional development of India

Lucknow (PNS): Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has envisaged "UP for UP, UP for India, UP for Global" with the goal of making Uttar Pradesh a \$1 trillion economy.

"Now it is the time of Uttar Pradesh. Taking full advantage of its potential, Uttar Pradesh will become the most important base for multidimensional development of the country," Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said here on Friday.

While deciding the sector-wise short-term and long-term strategies according to the potential of UP, the chief minister has set a time limit of five years for the achievement of this big goal.

The chief minister said that by the year 2027, with an economy of \$1 trillion, Uttar Pradesh would become the

benchmark of the policy of Sabka Saath-Sabka Vikas.

The Uttar Pradesh government has entrusted a big responsibility to Deloitte India for the prosperity of the country's largest populous state.

"The consultant agency will get full cooperation from all the departments of the state government. My best wishes to Deloitte India on this historic contract signing," Yogi said. He said within the next 90 days, the Deloitte India organisation would submit a future action plan with in-depth analysis by making a sector-wise study according to the updated situation.

"The action plan will be examined by a high-level committee headed by the chief secretary. It will also be reviewed by the Group of Ministers," he

said.

Uttar Pradesh is a state with infinite possibilities. There has never been the right effort to push its potential. Everyone has seen and appreciated the capability and resolve of the state during the COVID-19 period.

"Except for the short period of lockdown, Uttar Pradesh never stopped financial development during the COVID-19 period. Our industrial units continued to operate," he said.

"It is proposed to organise 'Uttar Pradesh Global Investors' Summit' in January next year. This is part of our action plan. This time our target is to invest Rs 10 lakh crore. This Global Investors' Summit will be helpful in fulfilling the goal of making UP a \$1 trillion economy by the year 2027," the chief minister said.

state capital," he said.

Maintaining that seamless connectivity was essential for the development of any place, the chief minister said that his

government had prioritised improvement in the connectivity in the state, be it through expressways, air services or any other mode of travelling.

"Soon, air services will also be started from Aligarh, Azamgarh, Chitrakoot, Shravasti and Sonbhadra," Yogi said, while expressing gratitude to the Union civil aviation minister for the constant cooperation provided by the Centre.

Expressing gratitude to Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia, Minister of State VK Singh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, and AirAsia CEO and MD Sunil Bhaskaran termed the start of the services from Lucknow as historic.

Bhaskaran said that eight AirAsia flights would be available from Lucknow. He said as many as five flights had started on Friday, while three flights to Kolkata and Mumbai would start from September.

With the efforts of the double-engine governments, today, Uttar Pradesh is turning into one of the most convenient states in terms of travelling and transportation. The chief minister has worked on improving the ease of doing business and ease of living and has accordingly taken measures to develop road infrastructure, expressways and air services, among others, extensively.

With the inauguration of Kushinagar airport, the local economy of the region has also been strengthened along with promoting tourism. Air services from cities like Agra, Prayagraj, Bareilly, Hindon, Gorakhpur and Kanpur Nagar have aided in empowering local entrepreneurs. In addition, the Yogi government is preparing to start air service from aspirational districts like Chitrakoot, Sonbhadra and Shravasti, which will be helpful in giving growth to the potential of these far-flung areas.

Govt mulling termination of suspended IPS officer

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A senior police officer under suspension for the last three and a half years is reportedly engaged in organic farming in his native town in Punjab.

Interestingly, he neither appeared before the inquiry officer nor he ever made any request to the government to revoke his suspension. What is more surprising is that against the laid rules, he is getting half salary sitting at home. Sources said that now after this matter came to the knowledge of senior officers, they were preparing grounds to terminate the service of the officer.

Jasveer Singh, an upright officer of the 1992 batch of Indian Police Services (IPS) of UP cadre was suspended on February 14, 2019 for vio-

lation of police conduct rules. A departmental inquiry was also initiated against him. It is alleged that he is not cooperating in the investigation. The investigating officer sent notices to record his statement several times, but he did not appear.

Sources in the Home Department said that after the suspension, Jasveer did not even try to get himself reinstated. Nor did he appeal against his suspension to the chief minister or the chief secretary. Now, for not cooperating in the inquiry against him, the government is planning to terminate his services. According to the laid rules, an IPS officer can be suspended for a maximum of 60 days. After this, the chief secretary reviews to extend the suspension period.

The chief secretary can extend the suspension period up to 180 days.

After the suspension period of six months, the state government has to inform the Central government.

At the same time, the suspended officer can appeal to the Central Administrative Tribunal (CAT) to get his suspension revoked. During the period of suspension, 50 per cent of the basic pay is given to the officer for subsistence. If the officer cooperates in the investigation, then it can be increased by 25 per cent.

In case of delay caused by the investigating officer in inquiry, up to 90 per cent of the basic pay may be given to the officer concerned.

At present, five IPS officers of UP cadre are under suspension. Apart from Jasveer, DIG Anant Dev, SP Alankrita Singh, Pawan Kumar and Manilal Patidar are under suspension. Patidar is facing a case of abetment

to suicide and corruption. He is absconding. There is also a reward of one lakh rupees on his arrest. Patidar has been suspended since September 9, 2020. The process of his dismissal is underway. DIG Anant Dev was suspended on November 12, 2020 on the basis of the report of the Special Investigation Team formed in the famous Bikru case of Kanpur.

Ghaziabad SSP Pawan Kumar was suspended on March 31, 2022 for negligence while 2008 batch IPS officer Alankrita Singh was suspended in April this year for violation of police conduct rules.

Apart from these, there are two other officers who retired during the period of suspension in the last four years. The trial against DIG CB CID Arvind Sen is going on and he is still in jail.

UP govt ramping up industrial land bank inventory ahead of GIS-23

Lucknow (PNS): Uttar Pradesh, to boost the availability of the industrial land, is ramping up the inventory of an industrial land bank. The total size of the inventory of the land bank is estimated to be 1,500 acres. The task has to be accomplished ahead of the Global Investors' Summit in January 2023.

The state government has set a target of attracting private investments of Rs 10 lakh crore at the January 2023 event. The state government will showcase a proverbial 'ready to allot' menu of industrial land to woo domestic and global investors. To increase the availability of industrial grade property, the state agencies will not only acquire new land

but will also utilise the expansive plots from defunct industrial units, such as closed industrial units and defunct textile mills.

According to the Industrial Development Department, the government will utilise the swathes of defunct textile mills for fresh allotment to investors. The government has decided to settle all outstanding dues of such defunct mills before formally acquiring the land for re-allotment to fresh investors. These defunct mills are located in Meerut, Hardoi, Jhansi, Prayagraj, Banda, Ballia, Mau, Rae Bareilly, Barabanki, Amroha, Bareilly, Ghazipur, Fatehpur, Farrukhabad, Sitapur, Bijnor,

Sant Kabir Nagar, and Bulandshahr districts.

At the same time, the government is acquiring land in the vicinity of expressway projects for an array of proposed industrial corridors and parks, including toy park, medical devices park, film city, electronic city, etc. Such land acquisition is primarily undertaken by four major industrial enclaves - UP State Industrial Development Authority, Noida, Greater Noida and Yamuna Expressway Industrial Development Authority. Earlier, the state government had said it was looking to create a robust industrial land bank of almost 22,000 acres by acquiring swathes within one kilometre of the expressways.

‘Tiranga Yatra’ may lead to communal tension, says Akhilesh Yadav

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Ahead of the 75th year of independence, former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh, Akhilesh Yadav, launched a scathing attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party, alleging that the saffron party could unleash communal violence across the state in the garb of 'Tiranga Yatra'.

"I want to warn the people that the BJP, in the garb of Tiranga Yatra, can unleash communal violence. They can engineer incidents to create a social divide. In 2018, on Republic Day, the BJP had organised a similar yatra in Kasganj district where the ruling party fomented communal violence for its narrow political ends," Akhilesh Yadav said.

"The BJP has emerged from an organisation (RSS) which has never recognised the tricolour. The BJP is the political wing of the Rashtriya

Swayamsevak Sangh. What can be expected from those who had never hoisted the Indian flag," Akhilesh Yadav said here on Friday after garlanding the statue of socialist leader Janeshwar Mishra at a park named after the leader.

"On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of independence, the BJP can engineer violence for its narrow political ends for creating divisions in society. The BJP has always betrayed the people," Akhilesh Yadav claimed.

"The BJP is projecting itself as the only nationalist party while those who don't vote for them are labelled anti-nationalists. Flag hoisting has been done for ages in India. Our Tiranga campaign is different from theirs; you will see it on August 9," the SP chief added.

"What do you expect from people who have never hoisted the Indian flag? I have heard that the national flag has



Former Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav paying floral tributes to Janeshwar Mishra in Lucknow on Friday

never been hoisted at the headquarters of the RSS at Nagpur.

Can anyone tell me when the Indian national flag was hoisted at the RSS headquarters?"

Akhilesh Yadav said.

Names of MP, his MLA son found in list of PMKSNY beneficiaries

Probe ordered

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

How even influential people are receiving government benefits meant for the poor came to the fore when a parliamentarian and his legislator son were found to be enrolled to receive the benefit of Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana (PMKSNY).

However, it is not yet clear whose fault it is. After the matter came to the fore, a probe was ordered so that necessary action could be taken against the guilty.

Reports said that the names of Robertsganj MP Pakodi Lal Kol and his MLA son from Chhanabe, Rahul Prakash Kol, were found in the list of beneficiaries of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana. Nine installments of the Samman Nidhi have also gone to the

MP's account. The Kisan Nidhi installment, however, was not credited in the MLA's account due to non-verification of his Aadhaar number.

After this matter came to the fore, the deputy director, agriculture, said that the issue would be investigated. This matter came to light while verifying the list sent by the Agriculture Department. Tehsil officials believe that this is wrong and will be canceled after investigation. They now claim that the amount will be recovered after finding the truth.

The family members of the MP say that they have an account in Punjab and Sind Bank branch located in Kubari Patehara, but they are not aware of the head under which the money has come.

Pakodi Lal is a resident of Patehra Kala village of Madihan tehsil. In the list of Patehra area, at serial number 672 is the name of Panna

Devi, wife of MP Pakodi Kol. The ID number is UP 252991098. Robertsganj MP Pakodi Lal's name is at serial number 674 with ID number UP 2530003972. The name of MLA Rahul Prakash (ID UP 253023259) is written at serial number 675. Not a single installment of the scheme reached the account of the MLA due to non-uploading of his Aadhaar number.

In this regard, Tehsildar Phoolchand Yadav said that recovery would be made after investigation.

Pakodi Lal Kol said that he did not have any information about this and neither he himself nor his family was eligible for the Kisan Samman Nidhi.

"It is likely that the revenue employees sent my name as a farmer during verification and the Samman Nidhi was approved. The name can also be misused by someone else. Whatever happens, we will get it investigated," the parliamentarian said.

Deputy Agriculture Director Ashok Upadhyay admitted that the names of the parliamentarian, his wife and son were in the list of beneficiaries. "Whether it was due to departmental error or whether the name was included by giving wrong information, will be clear after investigation. However, not a single installment was sent in the MLA's account due to non-availability of Aadhaar verification. Whether the installment of the scheme has gone to the account of the MP or not, it will be clear after investigation," he said.

A letter has been written to the sub-divisional magistrate and departmental officers of Madihan tehsil to check the names of beneficiaries of the entire village so that any irregularities could be corrected and money could be recovered from beneficiaries not eligible for Kisan Samman Nidhi.

Hundreds of Congressmen held for demonstration against inflation

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

On the call for a nationwide demonstration against ever-increasing inflation and unemployment in the country, hundreds of Congress leaders and workers were arrested after they took to the streets in several parts of the state, including Lucknow. In Lucknow, Congressmen including former MLC Deepak Singh and other senior leaders marched to gherao the Raj Bhawan and on being stopped near secretariat, they staged a huge demonstration, raising slogans against the prime minister and other Bharatiya Janata Party leaders, accusing them of forcing the nation into inflation and unemployment.

As the Congress leaders tried to break the police barriers and march towards Raj Bhawan, police lathi-charged them and arrested hundreds of leaders and workers and sent them to Eco Garden. The

Protest by Congress an insult to Ram devotees, says Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has taken strong exception to the protest by the Congress party with its leaders wearing black dress on Friday, saying August 5 is a day of pride for every Indian because on this day the worship of Lord Shri Ram started at Ram Janmabhoomi in Ayodhya for the construction of Ram temple.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also sought an apology from Congress for the conduct shown by it on an occasion that represents national pride.

Yogi called the protest a deliberate insult to all the devotees of Lord Ram, who made sacrifices in the movement for the construction of Ram temple in Ayodhya. The chief minister also called it an insult to the Supreme Court which announced the verdict

in favour of Ram temple.

"It is an insult to the democracy of India and an insult to the honour of the judiciary of India. We condemn this act of the Congress. And the kind of conduct the Congress party is demonstrating, I feel that no believer of India can support this. It is an insult to the devotees of Lord Ram and Congress party must apologise to the people of the country for this act," he said.

protest here was made in absence of any state president while the general secretary, incharge UPCC Priyanka Gandhi Vadra sat on a dharana outside the Congress headquarters in New Delhi.

Deepak Singh, while in police custody at Eco Garden,

said that the arrogant government of BJP should remember that the Congress could not be stopped from raising public issues by using power of law enforcing agencies.

In Mathura, Congressmen staged a demonstration against inflation and over 50

Congressmen including former MLA and Congress Legislature Party leader Pradeep Mathur were also arrested at Holy Gate intersection. Similar demonstrations were held in Firozabad, Rae Bareilly and other districts of Uttar Pradesh.

Woman, two sons die after jumping in front of train

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A woman, along with her two minor sons, jumped in front of a train around 8:30 am on Friday. The woman was identified as Madhu Gupta (36) while her sons as Aany Gupta (8 years) and Amit Bhushan (2.5 years).

Loco-pilot Anandi Kumar informed railway authorities about the incident which occurred near Fatima Hospital crossing between Daliganj and Badshahnagar stations. Later, police were informed.

A joint team of railways and police reached the spot around 9 am and found the woman and her younger were dead. The elder son was rushed to KGMU Trauma Centre where he succumbed to

injuries. The police said the woman managed to enter the prohibited zone and reached the track as the crossing gate was locked. However, her husband Shashi Bhushan Gupta, who is a resident of Balda Colony in Nishatganj area, was not in the condition to speak to police he was in shock. He identified the bodies of his wife and sons. Investigating officer Ramesh Kumar Patel said the police would quiz Gupta to know why his wife ended her life along with her sons.

Meanwhile, 52-year-old Rajneesh Goel, who was a resident of Prem Nagar (Ashok Marg) in Hazratganj, shot himself with his licenced revolver. A suicide was recovered in which he had purportedly written that he was ending his life

on his own and no one should be held response for his death. He was home alone when he took the extreme step as his wife and children were out of station. Rajneesh, who was into the real estate business, lived on the first floor of the house while his parents and younger brother on the ground floor. Around 7 am, a domestic help told other members of the family that Rajneesh was not opening the door of his room. His younger brother and others reached the first floor and repeatedly knocked the door, but there was no response from inside.

On being informed, police reached the scene and broke open the door, only to find Rajneesh lying in a pool of blood.

BJP leader arrested for killing colleague

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a sensational killing in Agra, the district president of the Bharatiya Janata Party Scheduled Caste cell shot dead his political colleague and later beheaded him.

However, while making efforts to conceal the crime by dumping the body in the jungles in the wee hours of Friday, the accused fell into the police net, and the cops arrested the leader after spotting him in the middle of jungles in suspicious circumstances.

The cops recovered the head and the body of the deceased from the car of the accused and alerted the senior officers. A case was registered in this regard and the accused were taken into custody.

Reports said that the victim, Naveen Verma, was a resident of Tarkari Wali Gali at Lohamandi in Agra, and vice-president of BJP Gopeshwar

mandal and also a leading silver merchant of the district. His political colleague, Tinku Bhargava, the district president of the BJP Scheduled Caste Morcha, reportedly called him on Thursday evening and later offered him liquor. After Naveen Verma got drunk, Tinku Bhargava took him to Arsena village in Sikandra and shot him dead. Later Tinku kept the body in his car and along with his aide identified as Anil went to jungles adjacent to Arsena village to dump the body. To conceal the identity of Verma, both chopped off the head and kept it in the boot of the car. Not only this, the accused also removed the clothes of the deceased after killing him so that relatives or anyone else could not identify him from the clothes. They later parked the car in the middle of the jungle to dump the body and later throw the head at some other secluded place.

However their plan failed as

a police team patrolling in the jungle in the wee hours of Friday became suspicious on seeing a car parked at the roadside in the forest adjoining Arsena village. Seeing the police stopping near their car, both the accused tried to escape but the cops chased them and nabbed both. The cops later also found a headless body lying near the car so they grilled them but both feigned ignorance.

The BJP leader also tried to take advantage of being senior leader of the ruling party but the cops asked him to show his car. When the car was checked, a severed head was found lying in the boot and the seats were found to be soaked with blood. The police team immediately alerted their seniors who rushed to the spot and after the accused were grilled, they revealed the identity of the victim as Naveen Verma and their identities as Tinku Bhargava of Belanganj and Anil.

When the police informed the relative of the silver trader about the murder, they reached the spot. Victim's brother Praveen Verma informed the police that Naveen Verma was a silver trader and he had a shop outside of his house. Naveen had left the house on Thursday afternoon and when he did not return home in the evening, his wife Preeti called him at eight o'clock. Naveen informed her that he was with Tinku and would be back home in 15 minutes. When he did not come even after an hour, the children called him again but Naveen's mobile was switched off. They then called Tinku but his phone was also switched off.

According to Inspector of Sikandra, Anand Kumar Shahi, the motive for the murder was being investigated. He said the car in which the BJP leader had brought the silver trader's body was owned by a friend and its number plate was changed.

48-hour free bus ride for women on Rakhi



Lucknow (PNS): As a special gift to women in Uttar Pradesh, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has announced that the UP State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) will offer free service to women in its buses of all categories on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan.

The free bus travel will be available to women across the state for a period of 48 hours from August 10 midnight till August 12 midnight.

Two youths injured in shooting incident

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Two youths were injured in a shooting incident in Hanumanpuri area under Sarojinagar police station around 12:30 pm on Friday. The injured were not in a condition to share with police what led to the incident. Identified as Shivanshu and Hitesh, they were admitted to Lok Bandhu Hospital. Doctors attending to them said their condition was stable and they would be discharged from the hospital in a day or two.

The police said two motorcycle-borne youths screamed to a halt where Shivanshu and Hitesh were standing and having some political discussions. The pillion-rider whipped out a gun and opened fire. Shivanshu sustained bullet injuries in the leg while Hitesh in the hand. The accused sped off in no time. The parents of the victims lodged a complaint with the Sarojinagar police in the evening. The police said action would be taken against the accused.

‘Forgetting partition tragedy would be a betrayal to ourselves’

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Forgetting the partition tragedy would be a betrayal to ourselves. The concept of nation as illustrated in European writings is biased towards the Asian perspectives. The partition of India was not only a geographical division but a painful incident which involved migration and massacre of lakhs of people.

These views were expressed by former UP Assembly Speaker Hriday Narain Dikshit at a national seminar organised by Lucknow University to commemorate 'Partition Horrors

Remembrance Day' which is observed on the eve of Independence Day.

LU's department of Political Science, in collaboration with Indira Gandhi Centre for The Arts (IGNCA), Ministry of Culture, organised the seminar. The chief guest on the occasion was Dikshit. Chairperson of Special Centre for the Study of North East India, JNU (New Delhi) Prof Vinay Kumar Rao, Prof Aroop Chakravarty from the department of Modern and Medieval Indian History (LU), and Prof RK Mishra from the department of Political Science were the other eminent speakers

for the programme.

In the beginning, a two-minute silence was observed for all those who sacrificed their lives during the partition.

Dikshit hailed the initiative of IGNCA organising academic and cultural programmes on partition. He said while the capacities of modern India have expanded, value systems are also transforming and there are positive initiatives and new beginnings.

LU Vice-Chancellor Prof AK Rai, while congratulating the department on such an important academic initiative, stressed on the need to promote new academic research

Former UP Assembly Speaker Hriday Narain Dikshit hailed the initiative of IGNCA organising academic and cultural programmes on partition

and discourse on topics of national importance.

He stressed on the need to generate awareness amongst

the students and promote unity, social integrity, humanity, and religious harmony through several literary and cultural endeavours. The inaugural session concluded with an award distribution ceremony.

The winners of the essay competition were awarded cash prizes and certificates. The competition was organised a day before on August 3 on the theme 'Learnings from the Partition of India'.

The first prize was bagged by Arindam Chaturvedi of the university while the second prize went to Garima Singh from National PG College and

consolation prizes went to Aditya, Satyam Singh, Kumud Mishra and Divya Verma.

It was followed by certifications for 14 students who participated in a collaborative online international learning project on contemporary global issues between India and the USA between the department of Political Science and Florida International University.

Dean, Faculty of Arts, Prof. Arvind Avasthi delivered the vote of thanks. The second session commenced with Prof Vinay Kumar Rao who shared his findings from the historical studies of the north-eastern region.

CITYBRIEFS



Baby show at KGMU

BABY SHOW

Under the ongoing activities in the Obstetrics and Gynaecology department celebrating World Breastfeeding Week (August 1 to 7), a baby show was organised in the Postnatal Care Ward of Queen Mary's Hospital, KGMU, for the recently delivered babies. Around 50 babies were assessed by Dr Arpita Srivastava from the Faculty of Paediatrics department and her team taking into consideration their birth weight, weight gain, length, immunisation and proper breastfeeding pattern besides awareness of mothers about good breastfeeding practices.

PLANTATION

Saplings were planted by residents of Unitech Apartment, South City on Thursday. The

plantation drive was supported by the Forest department. As many as 100 saplings of kachnar, amla, pakar, etc were planted. DFO, Lucknow, Ravi Kumar Singh said indigenous varieties should be promoted because they help in improvement of ecosystem and biodiversity.

GOLD MEDALS

Two talented students of City Montessori School, Aliganj Campus II — Aryama Shukla and Arnab Pandey — won gold medals in the International Smart Kid GK Olympiad, organised under the aegis of Silver Zone Foundation, New Delhi. CMS founder Jagdish Gandhi wished both these students a bright future. Students from India and abroad participated in the olympiad in which the CMS stu-

dents showcased their problem-solving abilities, logical and analytical thinking skills, knowledge and general awareness. They were given away gold medals and certificates.

ABACUS COMPETITION

Vishesh Kesarwani, a class VII student of City Montessori School, Rajendra Nagar Campus I,



won the champions trophy in the abacus competition held at zonal level. The competition was held under the Brainobrain Fest-2022 organised by educational organisation Brainobrain. CMS founder Jagdish Gandhi wished him success in his future endeavours.

SEMINAR

Mission Shakti committee and NSS-NKMV organised an online seminar on the occasion of World Breastfeeding Week under Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The chief guest was Anjoo Agarwal, who emphasised on the importance of breastfeeding for the development of babies and to improve their immunity. She explained the importance of nutrition for the first 1,000 days of a child's life starting from conceiving by mother up to 24 months of age. She also talked about the importance of mother's milk donation. Navyuga Kanya Mahavidyalaya principal Manjula Upadhyay highlighted the various schemes being run by the government for the welfare of working mothers and to nurture their babies.

PLAY STAGED

Bimb Sanskritik Sansthan staged a play titled 'Bagiya Bancha Ram Ki' at Sangeet Natak Akademi. The narrative was about a man whose land was eyed by land sharks and how he was able to save it. The play was directed by Maharishi Kapoor.

CALLIGRAPHY CONTEST

To improve presentation skills and to inculcate the habit of good handwriting among students, a calligraphy competition was conducted at The Lucknow Public Collegiate on Thursday. Students from Nursery to class V participated in the competition and showed creativity through their writing skills. The joint director and the principal awarded certificates to the winners.

यूको बैंक

सम्मान आपके विश्वास का

UCO BANK

Honours your trust

Zonal Office : 75/4, Siddhi Sadan, Halsey Road
Near Badshahi Naka Police Station, Kanpur - 208001
E-mail : zokanpur.rec@ucobank.co.in

SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES [See proviso to Rule – 8(6)]

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property(ies) mortgaged/charged to **UCO Bank** Secured Creditor, the possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of **UCO Bank** Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is Where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis on **29-08-2022**, for recovery of Bank's Dues from Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) to **UCO Bank** Secured Creditor. The details are described as below:

Sr. No.	Name & Address of Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date Possession Notice Date	Description of Immovable Property(ies) with known encumbrances, if any	Bank's Dues	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit
Branch:- Rawatpura, District -Agra; Contact Number(s):- +91-9756662842; Email Id:- rawatp@ucobank.co.in, zokanpur.rec@ucobank.co.in					
1.	Borrower(s): Mrs Urmila W/o Mr Rajendra Singh and Mr Krishan Veer Singh S/o Mr Rajendra Singh Guarantor: Mr Rajendra Singh S/o Mr. Ramabharosi, Mr. Krishan Veer Singh S/o Mr Rajendra, Mrs. Urmila W/o Mr Rajendra Singh, Mr. Hemant Singh S/o Mr Rajendra Singh	16-07-2021	All that part and parcel of the property consists of Land & Building measuring 167.22 Sq. Mtr. as per Bahi No. 1, Zild No.3848, Page No. 325 to 340, SI. No. 4688 registered on 29.08.2003 at Sub- Registrar II Agra situated at Plot no 50/18, Khasara no 104 Village Albatiya ,Tehsil & District Agra standing in the name of Mrs Urmila W/O Mr Rajendra Singh resident of Albatiya ,Tehsil & District Agra Details of Boundaries (As per Deed) East: Property of Seller, West: Property of Seller, North: Property of Rajendra Singh, South: Road & Exit 30 ft. Wide Known Encumbrances, if any - Nil	Rs. 33,45,611.22 (Rupees Thirty Three Lakh forty five thousand six hundred eleven and paise twenty two Only) as on 15.07.2021 (inclusive of interest upto 30.11.2020) plus further interest thereon at the contractual rate, costs, charges and expenses etc. till date of payment.	Rs. 60,60,000/- Rs. 6,06,000/-
		16-11-2021 (Symbolic Possession)			
2.	Borrower(s): Mr. Prabhashish Chakraborty S/o Late Shri Pramod kumar Chakraborty and Mr. Devashish Chakraborty S/o Late Shri Pramod Kumar Chakraborty, Guarantor: Mrs. Krishna Chakraborty S/o Mr Prabhashish Chakraborty and Mrs. Rakhi Chakraborty W/o Mr. Devashish Chakraborty	12-07-2021	All that part and parcel of the property consists of Land & Building measuring 100.33 Sq. Mtr. as per Bahi No. 1, Zild No. 8027, Page No. 211 to 254, SI. No. 7981 registered on 30.09.2016 at Sub- Registrar-III Sadar Agra situated at R/o Part of Survey No 259,263, Ramji Vihar, Mauja Ukharra Tehsil & District Agra standing in the name of Mr Prabhashish Chakraborty S/o Late Shri Pramod kumar Chakraborty and Mr Devashish Chakraborty S/o Late Shri Pramod Kumar Chakraborty resident of 31/35/7 MP -12, Kedar Nagar Ukharra Road Rajpur Chungi, Agra Details of Boundaries (As per Deed) East: Plot No A-2, West: Plot no A-4, North: 20 feet Road and Exit, South: Other's land Known Encumbrances, if any - Nil	Rs. 19,68,142.72 (Rupees Nineteen Lakh Sixty Eight Thousand One Hundred Forty Two and Paise Seventy Two Only) as on 11.07.2021 (inclusive of interest upto 31.08.2020) plus further interest thereon at the contractual rate, costs, charges and expenses etc. till date of payment.	Rs. 18,67,000/- Rs. 1,86,700/-
		23-11-2021 (Symbolic Possession)			

Last Date for submission of Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) for Bid : 26.08.2022 upto 5:00 PM as per (IST)

Date & Time of E-auction :- 29.08.2022 from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM as per (IST) with unlimited extension of 10 minutes each with Bid Incremental Amount of Rs. 10,000/-

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit the websites <https://www.mstccommerce.com/auctionhome/ibapi/index.jsp> & <https://www.ibapi.in>
The Borrower's and/or Guarantor's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section 8 of section 13 of the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 in respect of time available to redeem the secured assets.
Note:- Hindi & English versions of this Notice are being published in Hindi & English Newspapers respectively. It is clarified that in case of any contradiction in Hindi and English version of the Notice, the English version of the Notice will prevail.

Date :- 06.08.2022

Place :- Agra

Authorized Officer (UCO Bank)

Congmen protest against inflation, unemployment

PNS ■ KANPUR

Hundreds of Congressmen sat on a dharna at Rajiv Vatika on Friday to protest against inflation, unemployment and 'autocratic' attitude of Modi Government. The members holding placards and posters raised slogans and threatened to intensify their agitation in case Modi government failed adopt remedial measures to tackle these problems.

Ex-president Har Prakash Agnihotri addressing the gathering in the absence of the city president, Amit Pandey, who had been picked up by the police late in the night, said such browbeating cannot deter the Congressmen to stop raising issues of public interest. He said it had been decided that despite police 'atrocities' and its working in a 'biased manner' the partymen will continue to raise issues regularly so as to build pressure on BJP government. He said the 'double engine' was making 'double efforts' to silence the voice of common man and to deprive them of their democratic rights. State secretary Vikas Awasthi said 'misusing' government agencies was an effort to terrorise the people to refrain from raising issues of public importance and



Congressmen staging a demonstration at Rajiv Vatika on Friday against inflation and unemployment.

interest. State secretary Ankit Dhanvik said Modi government's 'autocracy' was clearly evident and this can be substantiated by the fact the BJP government 'misused' ED and police against Sonia Gandhi and was also targeting Rahul Gandhi as well. He

said it was in fact a false belief that they can suppress the voice of Rahul Gandhi. He said the voices were being suppressed by 'arm-twisting' tactics and this cannot continue for very long as patience of the common man was on the verge of collapse.

Prominent among those who sat on the dharna were Kripesh Tripathi, Iqbal Ahmed, JP Pal, Naresh Tripathi, Mamta Tiwari, Usha Rani Kori, Rama Dubey, Tufail Ahmed, Madan Gopal Rakhra and Dr Rakesh Singh.

Strike continues at Prayagraj district court

PNS ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The strike launched by the advocate in Prayagraj District Court continued for the second consecutive day on Friday. The advocates imposed a lock down and even stopped the judge's vehicles from entering the premises. Then after talks with the District Judge, the advocates only opened the lock for the judges to enter with the vehicles. The staff sitting in these vehicles were alighted and stopped outside.

The angry lawyers announced to continue the strike till the jurisdiction order is withdrawn. They also closed the stamp vendors shops along with the registry office. Their advocates also held a meeting and discussed the further strategy.

The issue of setting up of Munsif Court in Meja has gained momentum. Angry lawyers had locked all the gates of

the court on Thursday. Due to this, with the hearing of the case in the district court, all the work came to a complete standstill. The office bearers of the District Advocates Association have announced to continue the strike till the jurisdiction order is withdrawn. In such a situation, work was not done on Friday also.

Advocates of the District Court said that till now the Munsif Court was in the District Court premises. Recently, the government established a Gram Nyayalaya in Meja and appointed a Munsif Magistrate. His jurisdiction was separated, thereby weakening the unity of the advocates. Angered by this, the lawyers were protesting for the last few days. When this was not resolved, the team of lawyers reached the court on Thursday morning and then locked the seven gates one by one.

Even on Friday, the lawyers did not allow even the employees of the court to enter. The closure of the registry office and the shop of stamp vendors caused panic. The litigants who came to the court have also started returning disappointed. On the apprehension of turmoil, the traffic was diverted by putting barricading on the Kutchery road. It has been decided to send letters to the presidents of all the bars across the state seeking their cooperation.

It said the lockdown strike would continue till the order was withdrawn. District Advocate Association President Girish Tiwari, Secretary Vidya Varidhi Mishra, Vice President Awadhesh Kumar Mishra, Devkant Shukla and former president Umashankar Tiwari, Krishna Bihari Tiwari, Rakesh Tiwari, Sheetla Prasad Mishra and others expressed their displeasure and insisted on withdrawing the order.

'Most concepts in physics involve critical thinking'

Kanpur (PNS): Like other branches of science, learning physics was a highly complicated subject and most of its concepts were quite complex that was why students find it boring to learn and understand. It would be no exaggeration to state that it was a real challenge for the teachers to gain the attention of their students on this subject and at the same time ensure that they were able to learn and understand it.

This was stated by physics teacher, Fareeda Naaz while addressing a workshop on 'Teaching Physics' at Dolphins Public School on Friday. She said there was no doubt that demonstration was the best teaching method in physics. She said teaching process led to significantly better results when it followed scientific stages, hypothesis making and discussion, experiment and conclusion. She said physics was one of the subjects that every student found very hard to deal with. She said one of the reasons was the usual strategy and technique most of the teachers were using in teaching this subject. She said the main step was to accept that change needed to be done and the ability to embrace these new perspectives in order to execute these new ways.

Naaz said prior to proceeding to other enjoyable ways it was important to first create an impression on the learner that physics was an interesting subject. She said one of the strategies was to connect its concepts and theories to daily living.

She said most of the concepts in physics involved critical thinking and decision-making skills of students so to be able to make the most of the learning in the subject.

Naaz said another boring thing in studying physics was the book and other study materials usually used that alter the usual study materials, making use of technologies like multimedia presentations and informational materials can surely bring more interest to students. She said with these new ideas aiming to inform students about physics, teachers must not forget to recognise how these strategies helped them learn more while enjoying this subject. The vote of thanks was proposed by Dr Vasundhara Garg, headmistress of the school.

Divisional Commissioner inspects primary school



Divisional Commissioner Dr Raj Shekhar gifts saplings to students of primary school in Kalyanpur block

PNS ■ KANPUR

Divisional Commissioner Dr Raj Shekhar while carrying out a sudden inspection of the Government Model Primary School in Kalyanpur Block on Friday found that the school books for the current session had been issued four months late and directed the Assistant Director, Basic, to find the reason for the inordinate delay. He also directed him to submit the report not only of the school but also of all basic schools in the districts in the next 24 hours.

He expressed concern over the hardly 15 per cent presence of guardians in Parent-Teacher Meeting and directed the school authorities to ensure that they convinced the parents to attend the PTM and also directed them to reach out to the parents and

convince them to ensure they attended all PTMs in future. He said PTM must be held every month and teachers need to ensure the presence of all parents as well.

It was quite shocking for the DC to know that there was no electricity in the school for the past over 15 days and the teachers and students had to sweat it out all day in this humid weather. The DC inquired about the reason for no electricity and found that the cable supplying electricity to the school was badly damaged which needed replacement and due to paucity of funds they had not got it repaired. He strictly directed the ABA to ensure that the electricity cable was replaced and power supply is resumed within 24 hours and the Commissionerate is informed.

The school was an English medium one catering to the needs of students from classes I to V and had a strength of 148 students and only 110 were present on the day. The school had only three teachers and one headmaster although there are five classes. The DC later interacted with students and teachers and came to know about the school. He also talked to the parents of the children to find out the reason why they were absent.

Dr Shekhar checked the register of Parent-Teacher meeting and came to know that the last PTM was held in March this year. He interacted with students and motivated them to plant saplings and provided them one sapling each. The students assured the DC to plant sapling and take care of it too so that it grew into a big tree.

Workshop on post pregnancy organised

PNS ■ KANPUR

The Indian Academy of Pediatrics, Kanpur Chapter in association with the Ladies Linen Comforts League organised a workshop on 'Post Pregnancy' as part of the ongoing World Breastfeeding Week at AHM Dufferin Hospital on Friday. A large number of pregnant women and many gynaecologists and paediatricians were present on the occasion.

The key speaker on the occasion was senior paediatrician and ex-secretary of IAP, Dr Savita Rastogi who informed that when a woman became pregnant she added around 11 kg of weight to her body. She said out of the total weight gained she lost seven kg during confinement period but the

remaining four kg was stored for the breast milk formation for feeding the baby. She said it was a misnomer that pregnancy led to weight gain in women but the fact was that all those who did not breastfeed their baby remained overweight.

She said much of the extra weight was due to baby growing but the body will also be storing fat, ready to make breast milk after the baby was born. She said putting on too much or too little weight can lead to health problems for both. She said pregnancy can lead to changes in many of ones daily routines and habits, including what one ate and how much exercise one did. She added that women's bodies change during pregnancy to ensure that their unborn children got enough food and

other things that they needed. She said these changes already start happening in early pregnancy and become more and more noticeable as time went on.

Dr Rastogi said women gain more weight in the final months of pregnancy than in the first few months and this was not only due to the weight of the growing baby but much of the weight gained was extra fluid (water) in the body which was needed for things like the baby's circulation, placenta and the amniotic fluid. She said protein supplements had been found to help some underweight women increase their weight which lowered the risk of their child being born underweight as well as reducing the risk of having a miscarriage. Dr Kamal Dhawan also addressed the workshop.

Raja Bhaiya's father placed under house arrest

PNS ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Bhadari Naresh Raja Uday Pratap Singh has been placed under house arrest in Kunda Pratapgarh. As a protest against the house arrest of Raja Uday Pratap Singh, father of Raghuraj Pratap Singh alias Raja Bhaiya, markets in Kunda and surrounding places remained closed on Friday, and an agitated crowd gathered at Kunda Tehsil where Raja Uday Pratap Singh had been sitting on Dharna for two days demanding immediate removal of the mosque shaped gate created in Shekhpur village in the name of Moharram. Raja Uday Pratap Singh had been to his palace in the morning to answer the call of nature when heavy police force reached there and did not allow him to come out.

It is expected that this house arrest will continue upto 10th of Moharram to maintain order, the mosque shaped gate will be removed after Moharram

It is expected that this house arrest will continue upto 10th of Moharram to maintain order. The mosque shaped gate will be removed after Moharram.

DM and SP Pratapgarh had visited the dharna spot on Wednesday evening, but Raja had refused to yield, and continued his dharna.

Onus on schools to identify latent talent of students

PNS ■ KANPUR

Chief guest Arvind Singh Vice-Chairman KDA while inaugurating the 'Musical Sojourn' a grand musical event at Sir Padampat Singhania Education Centre (SPSEC) praised the Prime Minister and Chief Minister for their vision for the uplift of the country. He said children had immense talent and thus the onus rested on schools to ensure they identified the latent talents in their children and also promoted their talent.

The resource person and mentors were internationally acclaimed sitar maestro, Mohsin Ali Khan and tabla player Adnan Khan. Their gracious presence added colour to the event.

The musical event started by seeking blessings of Dwarkadheesh Ji followed by lighting of the lamp by distinguished guests. The welcome song delivered by the school choir enraptured the audience and created a positive ambience.

In her address principal of

the school Bhawna Gupta said SPSEC was a blend of tradition and modernity, supported by its glorious history of 40 years. She said, 'Shri Govind Hari Singhania Centre for Advanced Learning' will be a driving force where new-age technologies will intersect science, fine arts and performing arts for holistic development to empower the denizens of Kanpur in their soft skills along with technical skills. She said the centre housed an Indian Classical Dance Lab (Bharatnatyam & Kathak), a Hindustani Classical & Western Classical Music Lab (Sitar, Sarod & Piano) and Art and Craft Lab (Painting & Sculpture) in addition to Robotics Lab (in collaboration with Science and Technology Council Students' Gymkhana, IIT, Kanpur), Additive Manufacturing Lab (in collaboration with Additive Minds Academy of Germany, Eco-system partners were EOS of Germany, (Additive3D and Neumesh), the Augmented Reality Lab and Virtual Reality Lab, Mathematics and Data



Sciences Lab.

She added the Centre endeavoured to provide enriching learning experiences open to all age groups that will fill the learner's minds with curiosity, creativity and design thinking under the guidance of internationally acclaimed mentors. She announced that the school was the best in the

town in terms of digital learning and added that evidence of this was school's Robotics Lab which will create a revolution in the times to come.

She introduced two maestros and said Ustad Mohsin Ali Khan was born in the Bhindi Bazar, Muradabad Gharana, a famous traditional music school of India. This

Gharana was renowned for Hindustani vocal music. Khan was an 'A' grade artiste of All India Radio (AIR) and had performed in various prestigious music conferences in India as well as in the United States, Mexico, Germany, England, Canada, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Cuba, Russia and several other countries and

mesmerised the audience.

Chairperson, Manorama Govind Hari Singhania, Vice-Chairman, Abhishek Singhania, Vice-Chairperson, Varsha Singhania and Vice-Chairman and Director Partho P Kar congratulated and wished great success to the school in all future endeavours. The event was also graced by Manager (Administration) Surendra Yadav, Vice-Principal, Kavita Chadha and Headmistress Vandana Trivedi. The vote of thanks was proposed by Kavita Chadha.

On the occasion the magnificent inauguration of the Music Lab under the aegis of Govind Hari Singhania Centre for Advanced Learning was done by Mohsin Ali Khan. He then had an interactive session with students where he enlightened them on the importance of learning music. He said learning to play a musical instrument can be a wonderful skill. He said one of the best reasons to learn to play music was to increase one's cognitive ability.

IIT-A working on robot for warehouse

PNS ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A team at the Centre of Intelligent Robotics at Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Allahabad is developing a robot that will be able to pick up the ordered items and carry the same within a warehouse environment.

A software developed by the group enables a robot to pick the object from the rack and place it into the desired location in the warehouse. The group has also developed a software to make the robot reach the desired location in the warehouse while avoiding obstacles on the way.

The human will be able to monitor the robot, if and when needed, as the robot will be capable of understanding the

vocal commands of the human. The team is also making a software to autonomously manage the operations for increased efficiency with such future-ready robotic systems.

The project is led by Prof GC Nandi, alongside his team consisting of Prof Vrijendra Singh, Dr Rahul Kala, Vandana Khushwaha, Haider Jafri, Priya Shukla, and several other students at the institute.

Prof Nandi said that through excessive research as a part of the project, the group has developed a lot of expertise in the area. The group is also well-connected by other institutes in the same areas of work. To disseminate the same, the Centre of Intelligent Robotics at IIIT Allahabad is conducting

a two-day workshop of Human Robot Interaction on August 6 and 7, 2022.

"This will give a unique opportunity for the students to come to the institute and interact with an elite list of professors working in the area. They will also be able to see the robots and learn about the technology.

The workshop will be inaugurated on August 6, by Prof RS Verma, officiating Director of IIIT Allahabad in the presence of Prof Subir Kumar Saha, Director of Innovation Hub Foundation for collaborative Robots and professor of IIT Delhi; Prof GC Nandi, Chairperson of CIR, IIITA; Ashutosh Sharma, CEO, IHFC; and Prof Vijaishri Tiwari,

Registrar, IIITA.

The workshop features expert talks on robotics from renowned renounce personals throughout India. The workshop will also have a hands-on session on the humanoid robots NAO and Anukul/Baxter. The hands-on session will also cover Robotics Operating System to control the navigation of a mobile robot in the warehouse environment.

This will give a unique opportunity for the students to come to the institute and interact with an elite list of professors working in the area. They will also be able to see the robots and learn about the technology. Notably, the Center of Intelligent Robotics is one of

the leading robotics research centres in India, housed at IIIT Allahabad. Inaugurated on January 1, 2020, within a short span of time of two years the centre has already achieved significant breakthroughs including conduct of projects in state-of-the-art technologies and getting funded through different bodies. The centre received a funded grand project from the I-Hub Foundation for Robotics at IIT Delhi. I-Hub Foundation for Robotics is a Technology Innovation Hub of IIT Delhi established by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. The Centre of Intelligent Robotics at IIIT Allahabad is one of the only such six grand projects in the country.

Free road trips for fairer sex on Rakshabandhan

PNS ■ PRAYAGRAJ

On the occasion of Raksha Bandhan, Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation will give free travel to women and sisters in all classes of buses. It is being prepared in the Prayagraj regional office also.

From Prayagraj to Lucknow, Kanpur, Azamgarh and Ayodhya route, a maximum number of additional buses will run. All buses will also make additional trips. On the day of Rakshabandhan, both the general passenger and the female passenger will travel in the bus. However, if tickets are not given through Electronic Ticketing Machine (ETM), manual tick-

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ets will be generated for free travel and its entry will be mentioned in the route sheet.

Women who have made advance booking of tickets online to travel on the day of Rakshabandhan, the roadways administration will send the ticket money to their bank account within the next three days i.e. 72 hours. MK Trivedi, Prayagraj Regional Manager of Roadways said that the circular is awaited from the government. He said that we have completed our preparations. Free facilities will be provided to women passengers by 650 buses in Prayagraj region.

CM asks officers to give priority to public issues

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath met the public representatives at Circuit House before leaving the city for the state capital after his two-day visit here on Friday. He asked the officers present there to listen to the matters raised by public representatives and give priority to public issues by hearing their grievances in their offices for two hours in the morning.

Yogi also directed the Divisional Commissioner (DC) Deepak Agrawal and other senior officers to do regular monitoring of the under-construction projects, especially scheduled to be completed by December this year, to ensure their completion on time and if they find any laxity action should be taken against the construction agencies concerned. Local ministers of his government Anil Rajbhar, Ravindra Jaiswal, MLAs Neelkanth Tiwari, Avadhesh Singh, Sunil Patel, district Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) chief Hansraj Vishwakarma and city president Vidyasagar Rai, among others were present on the occasion. Later the CM reached Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Babatpur, and left for Lucknow by state plane.

Earlier, while reviewing progress of development works and law and order situation in Varanasi division in a meeting, Yogi gave strict guidelines to the officers. While directing them he said under-construction projects should be completed on priority by launching a campaign on a war footing. "Any laxity in this will not be tolerated," he said, directing the public representatives and officials of all four districts of the division to ensure giving 100 per cent booster doses of Covid-19 vaccination to the beneficiaries as per the instructions of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the drive should be launched in a mission mode by giving it a wide publicity. The CM instructed all district magistrates



CM Yogi Adityanath inspecting Kashi Vishwanath Corridor in Varanasi on Thursday night.

(DMs) to make proper preparations in view of possible floods or droughts and ensure regular monitoring of under construction projects costing more than and less than ₹10 crore. "Special attention should be paid to quality and timeliness in works and prompt action should be ensured against the responsible organisations in case of failure or negligence at any level," he said. Besides, he said that 100 per cent biometric action should be ensured under MGNREGA and quality work be done under Jal Jeevan Mission. During the review of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban), the CM gave strict instructions to the officials saying that selection of beneficiaries should be ensured with complete transparency and honesty. "If any discrepancy is found in this, then strict action should be ensured against the concerned in every case," he warned.

Later, the CM inspected the progress

of construction work of Phulwaria four lane, one of the important projects of the city. During the inspection of the flyover being built near Lahartara under the scheme, the officials of Public Works Department (PWD) and Bridge Corporation present on the spot, were directed to expedite the work and complete it on time by launching a campaign on a war footing. He also laid special emphasis on high quality as per the standard.

Thereafter, Yogi reached Kashi Vishwanath and Kal Bhairav temples, offering 'dugdhabhishek' and 'aarti' there respectively. During his stay at Shri Vishwanath Dham (corridor), he also inspected the arrangements made for the devotees coming in the auspicious month of Shravan. He instructed the officers concerned that visitors coming to the temple should not face any kind of problem.-

NER GM conducts window-trailing inspection

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

General Manager (GM) of North Eastern Railway (NER) Ashok Kumar Mishra conducted a window-trailing inspection on Gorakhpur Cantt-Kaptanganj-Thawe Junction railway section of Varanasi division on Friday. During his day-long inspection programme, the GM departed from Gorakhpur station by special train to conduct the inspection and he did deep screening of railway track and monitoring of overhead traction apart from taking cognisance of permanent and temporary vigilance orders of this section. After this the GM in the course of inspection left for a window-trailing inspection of Thawe-Chhapra Kacheri-Chhapra-Siwan railway section. Mishra inspected the passenger amenities, reserved and



GM NER AK Mishra inspecting a station in Varanasi division during his inspection on Friday.

unreserved ticket counters, PP shelters, RCC benches, food and book stalls, waiting rooms, circulating areas, station buildings, foot over bridges, platforms, general passenger lounge, approach road, station master panel etc at Thawe Junction station where he reached via Gorakhpur Cantt

and Kaptanganj. The GM gave various instructions to do extensive cleaning at Thawe railway station, remove encroachments and useless items from station premises and upgrade the facilities for the passengers coming to the station to visit Thawe Bhavani temple, a famous Shaktipeeth.

During his inspection, the GM was accompanied by Divisional Railway Manager (DRM)/Varanasi Ramashray Pandey, ADRM (Admm) Rahul Srivastava, Senior Divisional Engineer (SDE)-I Rishi Shrivastava, SDE-II Satyam Singh, Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer (C&W) Satyaprakash Srivastava, Senior Divisional Commercial Manager (SDCM) Sanjeev Sharma, Senior Divisional Operational Manager (SDOM) AP Singh, Senior Divisional Safety Officer (SDSO) Ashutosh Shukla, Senior Divisional Signal and Telecommunication Engineer (SDSTE) Rajat Priya, Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (SDEE)/Traction Pankaj Kesharwani, Divisional Electrical Engineer (DEE)/General RN Singh and many others.

Nine pairs of trains get ISO certification

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Nine pairs of trains running from Varanasi division of North Eastern Railway (NER) have been awarded ISO 9001:2015 certificate for quality management system, ISO 14001:2015 for environment management system and ISO 15045001:2015 for occupational health and safety management system. Apart from this two pairs of trains running from Izzatnagar division of NER have also received ISO 9001:2015 certificates for quality management systems. After receiving these ISO certificates from different organisations, Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Ramashrey Pandey handed over the same to the incharge of Banaras Coaching Depot. For the convenience of passengers, advanced technology is being used continuous-



ly in the field of maintenance, cleanliness, safety, safe operation, environment and passenger convenience of trains in the entire NER. The 12559/12560 Banaras-New Delhi-Banaras Shiv Ganga Express and 15103/15104 Gorakhpur-Banaras-Gorakhpur Intercity Express running from Varanasi Division received ISO 9001:2015 for quality management system, ISO 14001:2015 for Environment Management System and ISO

45001:2018 for Health and Safety Management System. The 12581/12582 Banaras-New Delhi-Banaras Superfast Express has received ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015 certificates while 15125/15126 Banaras-Patna-Banaras-Janshabadi Express ISO 9001:2015; ISO 14001:2015 and ISO 45001:2018 certificates. Besides, the 15127/15128 Banaras-New Delhi-Banaras Kashi Vishwanath Express has received ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015

certificates while the 22535/22536 Rameshwaram-Banaras-Rameswaram Superfast Express ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015 certificates; the 12537/12538 Muzaffarpur-Motihari-Muzaffarpur-Bapudham Express ISO 14001:2015 and ISO 45001:2018 certificates; the 01747/01748 Bhatni-Varanasi City/Banaras-Bhatni Unreserved special train ISO 9001:2015; ISO 14001:2015 and ISO 45001:2018 certificates and 05173/05174 Banaras-Prayagraj Rambagh-Banaras Unreserved special train ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015 certificates. Apart from this, the 15013/15014 Jaisalmer-Kathgodam-Jaisalmer Ranikhet Express and the 15035/15036 Delhi-Kathgodam-Delhi Uttaranchal Sampark Kranti Express, both running from Izzatnagar division have received ISO 9001:2015 certificate.

‘Lot of care should be taken before getting tattoo’

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Senior doctor of Anti-Retroviral Treatment (ART) Centre at Deen Dayal Upadhyay (DDU) Hospital Dr Preeti Agrawal said a lot of care should be taken before getting a tattoo. "In order to save money, getting a tattoo done at a fair or from a hawkler can be dangerous," she said, suggesting to the tattoo crazy youths that before getting tattoos, they must check whether a new needle in the machine is used or not. Citing recent examples, Dr Preeti said that a 20-year-old youth of Baraogan area got his hand tattooed very fondly in a fair held in the village.

After a few months his health started deteriorating and after treatment when he did not get relief he was advised for an HIV test. "After investigation, when the youth was detected HIV positive he was not convinced because he was neither married nor had any physical relationship with anyone or had received blood transfusion," the expert said, adding but when the doctors explained to the patient that it was all due to tattooing. Something similar happened with a young woman from Nagwan. She got the tattoo done from the hawkler. After a few days her condition started deteriorating. On examination it was found that she

was HIV positive, Dr Preeti said. "Not only these two but other similar cases of HIV positive were seen who suffered from the infection after getting tattoos," said Dr Preeti, adding that many people have no idea about the main causes of HIV infection. "For example, neither they had unprotected sex nor were they transfused with infected blood but when they were examined at the ART centre, it was found that they were infected with HIV positive due to tattoos with infected needles," she said, adding that actually the needle with which the tattoo is made is very expensive. Normally, after making a tattoo of any one, that need-

le should be destroyed, but in order to earn more, tattoo makers use the same needle to make tattoos of many people. On the other hand, people getting tattoos are unaware of this danger. They do not even see whether the tattoo maker has put a new needle in the machine. In such a situation, if any HIV infected person has tattooed with that needle then there is every possibility of other people being at risk of HIV, she said. Those who have recently got tattoos should get their HIV tested so that they can start treatment immediately if they have got the infection due to any negligence as delay in treatment can be fatal.

Cong protests against inflation, unemployment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Congress workers in large numbers took to the road of Prayagraj in protest against the issues of unemployment and inflation here on Friday. Congressmen demonstrated against the policies of the Central and State Governments. The police urged the leaders to end the protest and clear the road, but they were adamant. On this the police started forcibly lifting everyone. More than two dozen leaders were detained and the road was cleared. The Prayagraj district administration did not allow the Congressmen to protest. Despite this, hundreds of Congress workers gathered at Maharshi Bhardwaj Crossing in Prayagraj city on Friday afternoon. Sitting on the road, they started raising slogans against the policies of the cen-

tral and state government. State General Secretary Mukund Tiwari, City President Pradeep Mishra and all the office-bearers were involved in the demonstration. Traffic came to a halt as a crowd gathered on the road. The police took everyone into custody. They were taken to the police lines by vehicles. Congress State General Secretary Mukund Tiwari said that the central and state governments are suppressing the rights of the poor, backward and farmers by adopting a dictatorial attitude. The interest of the general public is being ignored to give benefits to the capitalists. When the Congress raised the voice of the general public, repressive action was started, but we are not afraid of it. Further demonstrations will be held to counter sticks and batten. Prayagraj City President Pradeep Mishra said that the Modi gov-

ernment wants to scare the Congress through ED and CBI, so that the voice of the poor and downtrodden should stop. That is why our leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi are being harassed. But the Congressmen will neither be afraid nor will they bow down, but will face the government firmly. Congressmen also demonstrated in Pratapgarh against inflation and unemployment. Congress workers reached the district office at Ambedkar Square and raised slogans against the central government. After this, they took out a procession to demonstrate across the city. The CO City, standing with the force at the Police Line Gate, detained the Congress workers and took them to the Teen Shed of Police Lines. There the Congressmen sat on a dharna and took out fierce anger against the central government.

Congress workers stage dharna

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In response to the nationwide call given by the Congress, local party workers under the joint banner of district and city units of Congress staged a dharna at district headquarters here on Friday in protest against inflation and unemployment in which former UP Minister Ajay Rai and ex-MP Dr Rajesh Mishra, along with district and city presidents Rajeshwar Patel and Raghavendra Choubey respec-

tively were present. Making a satirical attack on the Central government, Ajay Rai said 'New India' of Modi government is extinguishing the 'chirag' (lamps) and 'chulha' (ovens) of houses due to growing unemployment and inflation and even at this difficult time, the Congress is standing against the 'dictatorial' attitude of BJP government. "The country is going through a recession and life has become difficult these days in the country as BJP has no plan in public interest,"

he said, adding that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are adopting the politics of vendetta. Dr Rajesh Mishra said the country is fighting against the 'epidemic' of unemployment as millions of families are left with no means of stable income. "The BJP government has not taken a single step in the direction of development as it refrains from discussing such issues due to increasing inflation, unemployment, corruption, injustice and the anger

among the youth," he said. Rajeshwar Patel and Raghavendra Choubey said Congress is fighting against the 'anti-people' and 'anti-democratic' policies of the central government. Former city chief Prajanath Sharma, corporator Sitaram Keshari, Durga Prasad Gupta, Mahila Congress district president Anuradha Yadav, Dilip Choubey, Fasahat Hussain Babu, Devendra Singh, Dr Rajesh Gupta, Rajesh Tripathi, Chanchal Sharma and many others were also present.

BHU, IIT (BHU) join hands to facilitate IPR filing

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Banaras Hindu University (BHU) and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Varanasi have joined hands to facilitate Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) filing on collaborative research in science, technology, and humanities. The two institutions have inked a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for the purpose. BHU Registrar Prof Arun Kumar Singh and Dean (Research and Development), IIT (BHU) Prof Vikash Kumar Dubey recently signed the five-year MoU. The MoU will encourage researchers from both

institutes to come together and explore intellectual properties of joint research and development. It will also give a fillip to IPR and patent covering multi-disciplinary/trans-disciplinary research. BHU has a very strong ecosystem for studies and research in social sciences, humanities and sciences. IIT (BHU) has been doing exemplary work in the area of science and technology. The coming together of the two leading institutions will open and offer multiple avenues for researchers who are keen to explore new products and IPR. As per the MoU, the two institutions will file joint IPR/ patent applications. This

understanding will also facilitate the researchers to share the complexities and difficulties of getting IPR or patents. Vice-Chancellor (V-C) Prof Sudhir Kumar Jain has been laying great focus on BHU getting into collaborations with other institutions in order to create new opportunities for students and faculty members and working towards cutting-edge research. Director, IIT (BHU) Prof Pramod Kumar Jain added, "It is a new era of collaboration of mutual interest between both institutes. The MoU between BHU and IIT (BHU) is a result of this commitment to the overall development of both institutions."

Prabhat pheri taken out

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In order to make people aware about the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign on 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', the Department of Posts launched a public awareness campaign through 'prabhat pheri' in the city here on Friday. Postmaster General (PMG), Varanasi Region, Krishna Kumar Yadav flagged it off from the Head Post Office at Visheshwarganj. The procession was culminated at Namohat (Khidkiya Ghat) in which more than 200 postal officials, including Senior Superintendent of Post Offices Rajan Rao, Superintendent of Posts PC Tiwari, Assistant Director Brijesh Sharma, Senior Postmaster CS Barua, IPPB Manager Subhesh Singh participated. Through the programme, the people were motivated to put up national flags in their homes and buy the tricolour from the post offices. Raising slogans like 'Bharat Mata ki jai', 'Vande Mataram', 'India Post ne thaana hai-har ghar tiranga pahuchana hai', 'Har ghar tiranga, har man tiranga', 'Aapka Dost, India Post', 'Vijayee viswa tiranga pyar-jhanda uncha rahe hamaara' etc, the procession reached Namohat passing through Visheshwarganj, Machaudari Park, Birla Hospital, Swami Narayan Mandir, Gaighat, Kashi railway station, Prahlad Ghat and Rajghat. At the flagging off function the PMG said that the Department of Posts is playing a vital role in the 'Har Ghar Tiranga' campaign. The tricolour is being sold through post offices in cities as well as in remote rural areas for only ₹25 (including GST). This tricolour of 20 inch x 30 inch made of polyester can also be purchased online through e-Post Office portal www.epostoffice.gov.in and can be obtained at doorstep without any home delivery charges. For wide publicity, postmen are motivating people to hoist the tricolour at their homes from August 13 to 15. The primary target is to sell 1.25 lakh tricolours from the post offices of Varanasi Region, out of which about 47,000 flags have been made available at the post offices counters.

Several programmes organised in BLW

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A locally was taken out in the premises of Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) under the ongoing fortnight long campaign being organised under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav on Thursday. Besides, a cleanliness drive, plantation and special seminar on children's health were also organised. The rally was taken out from Basketball Ground and culminated at the same place after passing through Central Hospital, Bhullanpur railway station, Jalalipatti, BLW Inter College, Surya Sarovar and Kundan crossing. Chief Electrical Engineer (Loco) MK Gupta, Chief Design Engineer (Electric Loco) PP Raju, Deputy Chief Mechanical Engineer (Planning) Anupam Choudhary and many others were present. In a series of programmes a cleanliness drive was carried out by the St John's Ambulance Brigade at Cinema Hall premises. Divisional Commander and Assistant Personnel Officer Piyush Meijn and Public Relations Officer Rajesh Kumar were present. A seminar on children's health was organised at Central Hospital under the leadership of Principal Chief Medical Officer Dr Devesh Kumar. In the evening a plantation programme was held in the dump yard. Deputy Chief Electrical Engineer (Maintenance) KM Singh, Deputy Chief Engineer Gulab Chandra Gupta and many others were present. Earlier, a patriotic song competition was organised among the students at BLW Inter College. It was inaugurated by Principal Rajesh Kumar Saini and PRO Rajesh Kumar in which 17 students participated. Srishti Mishra of class XII-D stood first while Shambhavi of class XII-C and Vaishnavi Sharma of class IX-B secured second and third places respectively.

Increase night patrolling: SP

CORRESPONDENT ■ GONDA

If grievances of complainants are not resolved at police stations and complainant reaches the Superintendent of Police (SP) with his or her complaint, then considering the negligence of the SHO concerned departmental action will definitely be taken. SP Akash Tomar said this to police officers during the hearing of complaints of the complainants



Superintendent of Police Akash Tomar

in his office. Giving instructions, the SP said after registering any complaint in the register of the police station, the problem should be resolved by informing the beat incharge or beat constable.

He said that in serious cases the SHO should personally visit the spot and ensure that the problem is resolved. In view of festivals he directed the police station heads to increase night

patrolling by intensifying surveillance in their respective areas and conduct surprise vehicle checking campaigns to nab the criminals. In order to create awareness among people about cyber crimes, make people aware about it by organising police chaupals in major crossings school/colleges and crowded localities of the area. The SP also said that every minor problem should be taken seriously.

CDO conducts inspection

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Chief Development Officer (CDO) Srilaxmi VS inspected the sites of pond being constructed under Amrit Sarovar scheme along with school and panchayat bhawan on Thursday. The CDO started her inspection from Vijaipur under Chhanbey block and found 60 labourers at the site. She was apprised that ₹24.90 lakh were sanctioned in which amount of ₹ 8,15,790 had been spent. She found that the work repair of bank, construction of inlet and outlet, place to hoist the flag, barricading etc were on progress. At Kamapur under Chhanbey block the work at Amrit Sarovar was in progress and she was apprised that

₹24.83 lakh were sanctioned for the project. The CDO also visited the Amrit Sarovar site in Raipur village and directed the BDO Chhanbey as well as working agencies to complete the works within stipulated time by following the norms. She said no compromise on quality will be accepted at all. In Vijaipur village CDO inspected the panchayat bhawan and primary school and issued necessary directions to officials concerned. Under Kon block the CDO inspected the site of Amrit Sarovar in Mahangipur village and directed the working agency to expedite the work for timely completion.s

OBSERVED: The birth anniversary of the author of

'Ramcharit Manas' was observed at zila panchayat under the aegis of 'Ayodhya Shodh Sansthan Sanskriti Vibhag Uttar Pradesh and was convened by Prabhashri Gramoday Seva Ashram Sonbhadra on Thursday. The seminar on the topic, 'Tulsi Ke Ram' was presided over by Dr Bhavdev Pandey and conducted by Jitendra Singh 'Sanjai'. Dr Anuj Pratap Singh was the keynote speaker and Sudhakar Sharma the chief guest. The speakers praised the culture of Mirzapur from where manuscript of 'Ramcharit Manas' was found in complete shape while at other places it was found in parts. They remembered late Ram Gulam Dwivedi who got

full support from the district and worked a lot to spread 'Ramcharit Manas' among the common people through poetic discourses. The programme started with the 'bhajan' presented by Padma recipient Ajita Srivastava. Uday Shankar Dubey was honoured for his outstanding works. The second session of the day-long programme concluded with 'kavi goshti' in which Ganesh Gambhir, Laloo Tiwari, Rama Shankar Pandey, Shubham Srivastava, Intiyaj Ahmad 'Gumnam' and others recited poems. The vote of thanks was proposed by Jitendra Kumar Singh 'Sanjai'. Dr Sheela Singh, Rajendra Tiwari, Padmini Shweta Singh, Amaresh Mishra, Sameer Verma and others were present.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

On expected lines

RBI hikes repo rate by 50 basis points, taking it to 5.4 per cent, which is higher than pre-COVID level

The Reserve Bank of India's repo rate increase on Friday by 50 basis points (bps) to 5.4 per cent was not surprising, given the persistence of inflation—remaining above 7 per cent in the last three months. The stock market had already factored in the rise, so the Sensex ended at 58,388, 89 points or 0.15 per cent higher. Throughout the day, it moved in a range of 405 points. The third rate hike in a row this fiscal suggests that the central bank will remain hawkish for some time. In fact, the recent hike is more than what the market had expected. In all the three revisions, the RBI's monetary policy committee has increased the repo rate by 140 basis points, which is above the pre-pandemic rate of 5.15 per cent. The central bank expects the retail inflation to slide downward as 2022-23 progresses. It estimates inflation for the entire fiscal at 6.7 per cent—7.1 per cent in Q2, 6.4 per cent in Q3, and 5.8 per cent in the last quarter. The RBI's tolerance brand for inflation is 4-6 per cent. Even as the RBI revised the repo rate upwards, it has retained GDP growth projection at 7.2 per cent; it is lower than the International Monetary Fund's 7.4 per cent though. RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das blamed the global economic situation for the downturn in the Indian economy.



He went on to highlight the robustness of the Indian economy, calling it "an island of macro-economic and financial stability" in "an ocean of high turbulence and uncertainty." It has withstood two black swan events and multiple shocks, he added. A black swan event is an absolutely unpredictable incident. Apparently, he was referring to

Covid-19, which killed millions and badly damaged the global economy, and the Russian-Ukrainian war; while wars are not unprecedented, few expected one Eastern Europe. In his interaction with the media, Das tended to paint a rosy picture about the economy: inflation has peaked and will go down even though it is very high at this moment; the current account deficit (CAD) can be managed; and the forex reserves are adequate. A few good things did happen. The fiscal situation is improving—the fiscal deficit is estimated to be 6.5 per cent in 2022-23, against 6.7 per cent in 2021-22—despite the shocks of the coronavirus and the ensuing lockdowns. Gross non-performing assets or GNPA of scheduled commercial banks have come down a six-year low of 5.9 per cent, and are estimated to decline further. Evidently, the economic situation in the country is not as bad as it is made out to be by some people; we surely are not a Sri Lanka in the making. But there is still a lot that needs to be done at the monetary and policy levels. The RBI has to ensure that inflation is reined in soon and GNPA continue to move southwards. And the government must expedite economic reforms to maintain the momentum.

PICTALK



Followers of Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr attend open-air Friday prayers at Grand Festivities Square, in Baghdad, Iraq

AP

God's country faces His wrath

Kerala is facing monsoon fury like never before, and only human intervention is to blame

Monsoon fury has peaked in Kerala claiming at least ten lives across the State. The impact of the Monsoon was not unexpected as the situation in Kerala is conducive to flash floods, landslides, and heavy downpours. Though politicians describe it as the consequences of global warming, many local factors have contributed to the transformation in the pattern of the Monsoon. The unique weather pattern enters the subcontinent through Kerala which has become the Gateway of Monsoon. Gone are the rain forests in the Western Ghats passing through the western border of the State. Uncontrolled exploitation of the pristine forests in the Ghats for mining and cutting down of trees has played havoc with the fragile weather system. The switching



over to cash crops which command a premium in the global market led to the clearing of forest lands that were notified as no-go areas by environmentalists and ecologists. Vast stretches of paddy fields that were home to three crops every year have disappeared altogether. The land sharks enjoying political patronage have usurped the farmlands to build concrete jungles, jungles of five-star grade apartments, and shopping complexes.

Since the malls and residential apartments are owned by the financiers of political parties, persons in power find some easy excuses for nature's fury. A note by the Government says that in the

1970s farming was done on 9 lakh hectares of land and this has come down to less than 2 lakh hectares by 2021. What has happened is that many tributaries that brought water to the main rivers have disappeared. The Flat mafias' decision to construct penthouse apartments along the river banks and build roads along the river stretch has swallowed rivers. The rainwater received by the State does not have an exit route. This year is not an exception and the years to come would see the same phenomenon. Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan blames the weather forecasting system in the country for not correctly predicting the pattern of rain. Those who follow the advisories of INCOIS, the Indian Meteorological Department, and the Department of Atmospheric Studies of Cochin University know well that the weathermen's forecasts are sharp and to the dot. The fact is that the State Government has failed to evolve a mechanism to mitigate floods and natural disasters. Kerala has not conceived a plan to counter floods. The nature's fury is here to stay.

Reboot bureaucracy to make it effectual

The mantra to make bureaucracy pro-people and proactive is, 'Refurbish, reform and restructure'



SANGRAM MISHRA

The dilemma perpetual has of late affected the mandarins critically, posing the conundrum worst confounded. Being targeted from most corners as inefficient, corrupt, and negative-minded; Indian bureaucracy has exhibited signs of wilting under the pressure of diatribes and vitriolic sophistry. More so it has prompted both insiders and outsiders to question what ails the bureaucracy.

The incisive comments may not be fair for all the officers, as still, some officers maintain the cardinal virtues of administration like sincerity, honesty, integrity, and alacrity but it can't wipe off the smeared image that has engulfed the mandarins labeling that they are seldom pro-people, pro-poor and proactive and as such are a bunch self-centered officers more interested in in-service (plum postings and sundry benefits) and post-retirement benefits rather than growth of the nation or people.

A little in-depth study would discern that the imbroglia as to responsiveness to people's cause vis a vis personal materialistic aspirations has left the civil service at the crossroads. Needless to say that a significant number of bureaucrats are still industrious and sincere but it is revealed that the steel frame has begun wilting under the pressure of unscrupulous aspirations. If merit is relegated to the background and excellence is rendered unexpected or unwanted by the own senior tribesmen i.e. the senior officers, then the young lots lose the direction and succumb to bureaucracy's first ever malady which is corruption. As an insider, I have felt that the concept of camaraderie has vanished. No support is forthcoming for the honest officers when needed as unethical ones marvel at others' sufferings!

Not surprised when John Kerry states that Indian bureaucracy lacks internal cohesion. The formation of small power groups at the highest level has left the young ones in quandary.

With fast changing societal



values, and intrusion of materialistic aspirations-driven visions, the standard (especially moral) of administration has seen many a subversion (paradigm shift from value-based administration to vice-imbued governance). The result is that the cardinal principles of administration like honesty, integrity, sincerity, etc have started taking the backseats. It is astonishing that even some young bureaucrats are falling prey to the lures of material comforts and lucrative postings.

The intricate social calculus and material morbidity have also come to affect young mandarin minds. The most deplorable aspect is that some young officers are starting their careers with a touch of corruption, whether in form of malfeasance misfeasance, or nonfeasance. Then who is responsible for this unhealthy and insalubrious trend?

A tryst with the prevailing conditions would reveal that the bureaucracy has to squarely take the blame for losing its sheen. Some of the senior mandarins have forgotten the golden commandments of ethics of civil services and at the same time have ceased to be the philosopher, guides, and pathfinders for

BEND IT TO CHANGE AND CHANGE IT TO PERFECTION. BUREAUCRACY TODAY SHOULD LEAD AGAIN WITH SERVICE TO PEOPLE KEEPING SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL ASPECTS IN MIND

young entrants. The Achilles heel is exposed. Multiple factors like lack of appropriate and relevant training so as to adapt to changing circumstances, lack of proper posting policy, absence of the concept of reward and punishment, the role of political dynamics and power, and materialistic aspirations are responsible for its denigration.

Attitudinal /emotional ramifications and skewed cognitive perception held by some of the senior bureaucrats have resulted in its distorted image projection on the silhouette of societal expectation. The paradigm shift (negative) ushering in the attitudinal crisis and perceptual blunder associated with aspiration for material comfort of bureaucracy have already witnessed the rust and wilt in the steel frame.

Though easier to tell than to give effect to it, it is time for the bureaucracy to mend itself to return to the golden era and rewrite the saga of its own glory. A little change in mindset can usher in a plethora of positivity for the civil services. Other factors would fall in line as nothing deters or hinders a positive mind to initiate a change. The bureaucracy should never forget to understand that they all are

functioning in a democracy, where people are the masters however illiterate or simple they might be. Public servants are servants to serve the cause of people (taking salary money) and never their masters. The sooner mandarins become pro-people, proactive, and pro-poor the better.

The civil servants are appointed to implement laws not hinder them. Yes, when there are illegalities they can raise voices. Sans ego, sans lure for plum postings (and post-retirement benefits) they should work with dedication to salvage the lost glory.

All the sermons or solutions can't be delineated in a short space but as an insider, I want to profess that it is time for the bureaucracy to mold itself for the new role to gain the confidence of the system and of the people. The saying 'bend it like Beckham' from the soccer world may be applied to administration as it may have relevance. It can be said, to bend it to change and change it to perfection. Bureaucracy today should lead again with service to people (sans ego) keeping spatial and temporal aspects in mind.

(The author is a superannuated senior IAS officer. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CHINESE BUILD-UP IN SRI LANKA

Sir —As per the report, the Chinese research and survey ship has left and is expected to reach the China-run Hambantota Port in southern Sri Lanka on August 11, which is a very serious and dangerous issue and India must closely monitor the situation and must be on alert. The report quoted Sri Lanka's Defence Ministry media spokesman Colonel Nalin Herath have confirmed that it is the cause for concern for India as the ship is capable of monitoring military installations. Naval ships from India, China Russia, Japan, and Malaysia from time to time have requested Sir Lanka but they have granted permission to China. With this China is trying to enter Sri Lanka like Pakistan, Nepal, Taiwan, and Indian territories in eastern India to corner it from all sides. It is high time the Indian leadership seriously concentrate on these issues for the safety of the country.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

NIRMALA SITHARAMAN IN DENIAL MODE

Sir — It is quite surprising to see that everything appears quite well for our finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman. The common man is most worried about the rise of prices and GST on food items, the common man facing the brunt of inflation but still, our finance minister is not accepting that the prices of food items have increased.

It is ridiculous that she is comparing current prices of tomatoes, onion, potatoes, etc with the rates in 2013, but she has forgotten that the rates of other commodities have raised ten times more than in 2013. Boasting that Centre has collected more than 1.49 crores in July on GST proves that how common man has been forced to pay this amount on GST. We are having an ignorant finance minister. When the price of onions rose, she said that she doesn't eat onions. Unemployment, joblessness, and frustration among our youth are increasing, and food inflation is hurting the poor

STOP BRIBING PEOPLE WITH FREEBIES

Thanks to the Supreme Court's earnest intervention in recent days, the topic of political parties offering 'freebies' to voters has been gaining significance and weight. The culture of freebies practiced and perfected by various political parties in India, feigning as 'populist schemes', has largely indoctrinated the rural voters and has affected a well-rounded welfare ideology. ('Freebies lead to eco-disaster, Centre tells SC', Aug. 4). Dole-outs are nothing short of bribes, and a government has no imperium to create private assets out of public funds. Free distribution of goods is not a substitute for a truer welfare model that seeks to achieve growth through enhancing productive resources in the economy. Conventional wisdom dictates that unbridled populism and widespread corruption are not only endemic to politics but are antithetical to economic growth and human development. States in India



need higher per capita income, not higher per capita usage of free goods and services. And, we need politicians and political parties to view us as 'citizens' and not just as 'voters' willing to reward those who offer maximum 'mufft' schemes. The Election Commission of India must prohibit political parties from announcing freebies in their election manifestos and treat them as a violation of the model code of conduct.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

with the rise of prices but our Finance minister and Government is least bothered. The Opposition parties are protesting and saying that Government is helping Ambanis and Adanis and the common man is suffering. The opposition leaders are getting suspended from both houses still all is well for our finance minister and the Government.

Zeeshan | Kazipet

CJI RAMANA IS A BOON FOR INDIA

Sir — Progressive CJI Ramana and team are a boon to India. His forward steps include speedier justice to people, friendly courts, modern solutions suitable to modern needs, etc. Now CJI is right in saying 'setting of the expert body' for regulation of freebies.

Our first request to CJI is that many nations of Europe have free education for the poor ... provide various scholarships to poor and middle-class students. Also, they provide many comforts and care to citizens. In many European nations, rich people voluntarily do not accept freebies

of education. Please study those models too.

Second, define what are freebies because Indian vast majority of the poor live a hand-to-mouth sustenance life.

Third, let only the expert body make a list of freebies to the poor and have the freedom for updating the list (free education, subsidized essential commodities, etc.) list. Only that list should be adhered to by all state governments and the Centre. So no scope for promises during election times. However, anyone, any party can make suggestions to the 'experts body'.

Fourth, please have many virtual courts (online, video conferences type) for giving speedier justice, preferably with happy development and joyful success solutions, (not blame game or mistakes finding... in this modern scientifically advanced era.

Sahasra N Vislesha | Secunderabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

They can't silence our voice by pressuring us. Whatever Modi and Amit Shahji are doing is against democracy.



Congress leader —Rahul Gandhi



It's become clear to all of us that we're at a critical inflection point, dictating the need for additional solutions to address the rise in (Monkeypox) infection.

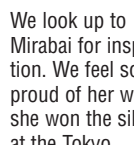
US Food & Drug Commissioner

—Dr Robert Califf

I think all the negativity around Laal Singh Chaddha is skillfully curated by mastermind Aamir Khan Ji himself. This year, no Hindi films have worked.



Actor —Kangana Ranaut



Pakistani Weightlifter

—Nooh-Dastagir Butt

My entire family was heartbroken. It was a 'Biswasgathi' to the Bengali people. Why can a Bengali not be a Cabinet Minister in Delhi? I don't need any acknowledgment. I have been elected from Asansol twice.

TMC Minister —Babul Supriyo

FIRST COLUMN

INFLATION-LED STRONG DOLLAR WILL SOON SLIDE

Once global turmoil subsides, the dollar will cool off fast



ASHWANI MAHAJAN

The Indian rupee has depreciated, as it went from the level of Rs 74.5 per dollar in February 2022 to almost Rs 80, before appreciating again to Rs 78.69 on August 2, 2022. Due to this weakness, there is a natural concern among the policy makers.

If we calculate from 1991 till now, the rupee has been depreciating against the dollar at an average rate of 3.03 percent annually. Significantly, the rupee has depreciated by 7.28 per cent in the last 5 months. In the past, the rupee had been weakening not only against the dollar, but also against many important currencies, including the euro, pound, yen, yuan.

Since 1991, the rupee has depreciated 137 per cent against the pound sterling, 489 per cent against the euro, and 241 per cent against the yen, while the depreciation against the dollar has been 252 per cent. This means that in the long run, the rupee has weakened against all the important currencies.

But there has been a change in the depreciation trend of the rupee in the last five months till July 2022. While the rupee has weakened by 7.28 per cent against the dollar, it has gained 6.31 per cent against the pound sterling, 10.77 per cent against the yen and 4.72 per cent against the euro.



When the dollar is getting stronger against all the major currencies of the world, the question arises whether the winning streak of the dollar will continue in future also? The US economy is the most indebted in the world. Today, the US has an external debt of \$30.4 trillion, China and the UK hold \$13 trillion and \$9.02 trillion, respectively.

External debt on India is only \$614.9 billion, which is hardly 20 per cent of our GDP. America's foreign debt is 102 per cent of its GDP, while that of England is 345 per cent.

History is witness that whenever there is turmoil in the world, the dollar gets stronger. This is because investors around the world believe that the US is the safest destination for them. This process is called 'run for safe haven' in business parlance. It is being said by market experts that since inflation is on rise across the world, worries about growth have increased and interest rates are also rising, hence the dollar is strengthening.

Dollar has risen by 10 per cent in the past one year and has reached an all-time high in 20 years. Countries, especially smaller ones, who have borrowed heavily, are finding it difficult to repay interest and principal. But countries producing oil and exporting countries or which are suppliers of agricultural commodities have more stable currencies. Russia's ruble continues to get strengthened. The reason for this is the increasing export of oil and gas by Russia and the control on capital flows imposed by the Russian government.

The USD is strengthening due to global turmoil and rising interest rates in the US, but it may not last long. Such situations in the world are considered to be short-lived. In such a situation, when there will be an uptick in other currencies of the world and the investors who have deserted India in search of safe havens will again come back in search of markets, then a downfall of the dollar would be inevitable.

All the global institutions are expecting India to be the fastest growing economy in the world. Global investors will be compelled to turn to India. The ever-increasing foreign direct investment and strong fundamentals have the potential to propel the rupee towards strength.

(The author is a professor at DAV College, Delhi University)

Peace in Palestine still remains an elusive dream

The Western world continues to aid and abet Israel making it aggressive, which undermines lasting peace in Palestine



KC TYAGI

Israel is all set to go for the unprecedented fifth election in three years as the ruling coalition is no more ready to run the joint government. The Arab League, which was a part of the current government, withdrew its support citing Israeli aggressive settlements over the Palestinians land. This is not the only reason but one important among others.

Naftali Bennett had ousted Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu last year, ending his 12 years in power. The right-wing leader and former Netanyahu ally's eight-party coalition consisted of his own nationalist party, as well as right-wing, centrist and leftist parties and of course an Arab-Israeli party for the first time.

The Bennett government before taking over Israel had been showcasing itself as a government for change but its stand on many fronts remained the same as that of Netanyahu; be it the issue of expansion of West Bank settlements or the opposition to Palestinian State, the new government walked the Benjamin's way. There were hopes that the new governments in the USA and Israel will seriously think over the crisis in West Asia but nothing changed.

In a report released last week, the UN Commission set up for the Israel-Palestine conflict reiterated that Israel wants 'complete control' of the land owned by Palestinians. Israel has been occupying Palestine in bits and pieces after its initial occupation in 1967. The Commission also highlighted that Israel has been "acting to alter the demography through the maintenance of a repressive environment for Palestinians and a favourable environment for Israeli settlers".

This is certainly not the first report by an intentional human rights entity or watchdog underlining the Israeli zeal to occupy areas inhabited by Palestinians. Any individual with an elementary school learning of geopolitics understands that it is not Israel that itself is the central power working behind the redundant mission to occupy Palestine, rather the source of power lies in the West, especially in the USA. The world knows that the policies of Washington DC are largely made on the streets of Tel Aviv - this is how mighty the Jewish lobby in the USA is! From corporate to politics and from academia to cinema, the Jewish lobby dominates almost every field in the USA.

If truth be told, the USA was one of the very first countries to publicly express its sympathy and tacit support for the Jewish state when it began to be created in 1948. By being the first country to officially recognise Israel, it played cunningly to further its interests in the MENA region. Additionally, it has also provided a few hundred billion dollars as aid to the rogue nation and has provided the very base of its economy by roughly accounting for almost one-fourth of imports and half of its exports.



THE UN COMMISSION SET UP FOR THE ISRAEL-PALESTINE CONFLICT IN ITS REPORT REITERATED THAT ISRAEL WANTS 'COMPLETE CONTROL' OF THE LAND OWNED BY PALESTINIANS. ISRAEL HAS BEEN OCCUPYING PALESTINE IN BITS AND PIECES AFTER ITS INITIAL OCCUPATION IN 1967

(The author is a senior JD(U) leader and former Rajya Sabha MP)



Another reason behind the failure of back-to-back optics is the acts of the international community, masquerading as efforts to secure the human rights of Palestinians, while most of the European Union nations have strong ties with Israel, mentored by the USA. After all, who can forget that these were the first few nations to recognise the Jewish State within a few months after its creation?

The nation which suffers from 'Big Brother' syndrome and is super quick to impose unilateral sanctions on nations itself grossly violates the United Nations Charter and customary international law principle of the inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force by supporting Israel and poking nose into affairs of Palestine by use of force.

The Israeli aggression has become graver with the increasing rift between the OIC countries, especially the Gulf nations. The tussle between the Saudi-led block and the Qatar-led group has pushed the Saudi and the UAE closer toward Israel, and the UAE along with a few other nations of the same block even went to the extent of establishing diplomatic ties with the Jewish nations just a few months ago.

The desperation to prevent Iran's nuclear program and bulwark its dominance in the region has also compelled Saudi Arabia to play hands in gloves with its one-time foe, Israel. Besides, the entire world is aware of the rift between Turkey and Saudi Arabia, preventing the Muslim world to collectively call out Israeli aggression.

Given its geographic position, military might, and intelligence capabilities, Israel has become an irresistible ally for the Saudi-led alliance now. To secure their interests through a common minimum agenda, the nations led by Saudi Arabia have now turned their eyes away from the Palestinian massacre and have buried their heads in the sand like an ostrich to unsee the truth.

Nevertheless, the Israeli aggression of 2021 after which the said UN Commission was constituted has reflected the delay and collective failure of the global community to solve the conflict. Out of many possible ways, the first prerogative for striking a solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict is an outlook entirely based on human rights and not on interests. Through my personal observations and decades-long political career, I could confidently say that interest-based solutions are never sustainable, but human-centric ones certainly are.

Further, the global community should urgently restrict the US from becoming a stakeholder or a party to the conflict, as it has always ignited it and added fuel to the fire without contributing even two cents. The USA should remember the quote by one of its brightest minds Wayne Dyer, who said, "conflicts cannot survive without your participation".

Most importantly, the world will have to recognise and realise the fact that what has been done cannot be undone in a nuclear-weaponized world. The world should try to establish an environment of tranquility by striking

ing a seemingly perfect equilibrium between the Jewish and the Palestinian people and ensure that Israel keeps guns down, practices a ceasefire, and pledges not to further invade the remaining territory. Peace negotiations can then take place between the two nations, by involving deserving nations as parties to those negotiations.

However, the most immediate requirement is to compel Israel to follow the 'Fourth Geneva Convention' by securing the human rights of the Palestinians, especially those trapped in the Gaza strip. Along with the Conventions, it should also abide by the 2004 ruling of the International Court of Justice that asked it to protect the rights of the citizens of Palestine under its occupation as per humanitarian and human rights law.

Conclusively, the global North should come out of hypocrisy and stop defending Israel and refrain from giving it shelter and refuge to keep abusing the human rights of Palestinians under the Sun and ensure deniability at the same time. The North needs to own accountability as well as make the Jewish nation a state accountable for its actions.

It is high time for the world to ask itself: has it done enough for the human rights of Palestinians? Has it handled the situation efficiently and with integrity? It is indeed a time to introspect and ponder over what Ronald Reagan had once said: "Peace is not the absence of conflict; it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means".

POINT COUNTERPOINT

I MADE NO PERSONAL ATTACK AGAINST ANYONE. I DID NOT KNOW THAT KHARGEJI WILL START MAKING PERSONAL ATTACKS.
— UNION MINISTER PIYUSH GOYAL



YOU (GOYAL) HAVE NOT WON A LOCAL ELECTION BUT WERE BROUGHT TO THE RAJYA SABHA AND MADE THE FINANCE MINISTER.
— CONGRESS LEADER MALLIKARJUN KHARGE

Defence 'Atmanirbharta' key to robust Indian economy

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call for stepping up indigenous defence goods production is timely

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 25 July, while addressing a naval seminar Swavlamban, said that the national defence is no longer limited to borders, but has a broader ambit, and the armed forces and other stakeholders must work together to bolster the country's military capabilities. Attempts from within the country or abroad to harm India's interests must be thwarted effectively, cautioned Modi, asking the armed forces to be alert against new challenges, including disinformation campaigns.

He batted for combatting a myriad of security challenges, saying they are no longer limited to land, sea and sky, and asserted that the armed forces must work together to bolster the country's military capabilities.



PK VASUDEVA

(The author is a retired professor of international trade)

The seminar was organised by the Naval Innovation and Indigenisation Organisation (NIIO) and the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM).

The NSA Ajit Doval, Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari, Navy Chief Admiral R Hari Kumar and Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar attended the seminar among others. The concern of the prime minister is very genuine but unfortunately he is not getting the support from the opposition parties even on national security and defence matters. A disintegrated opposition with poor leadership is a disaster for the nation.

The Opposition's right and duty, if it believes the public interest is at stake, is to oppose the government's policies and actions by every legitimate parliamentary means. In doing so,

the Opposition tries to convince the electorate that they should change places with the government, which is impossible unless it changes its attitude on issues of national interest.

Highlighting the importance of self-reliance in the defence sector, the prime minister said dependence on imports for small requirements of the armed forces could pose serious strategic challenges. Cautioning the armed forces against new threats, Modi said contours of national security have become widespread and the challenges are moving towards space, cyberspace, social space and the economic sphere.

We also have to intensify our war against forces challenging India's self-confidence, self-reliance, said Modi, adding as India is establishing itself on

the global stage, there are constant attacks through misinformation, disinformation and false publicity. Keeping faith, the forces harming India's interests, whether in the country or abroad, have to be thwarted in their every effort, he added.

Defence is a principal component of national power. Defence policy is an integral part of national security policies. The role of the armed forces is to preserve the core values of survival and political independence against any external or internal threats by deterrence or by waging a war. In his address, the prime minister said his government has developed a new defence ecosystem in the country to boost domestic manufacturing. In the last 4-5 years, Modi said, the defence imports have come down by about 21

per cent and the country is moving fast from being the biggest defence importer to becoming a big exporter.

The prime minister said Rs 13,000 crore worth of defence export was achieved last year and more than 70 per cent of it was from the private sector.

Talking about long delays in defence acquisition, Modi said most of the procurement programmes kept facing questions and abusing politicians became very easy. Recalling the glorious maritime tradition of the country, Modi said that the defence sector of India used to be very strong even before independence. At the time of independence, there were 18 ordnance factories in the country, where many types of military equipment, including artillery guns, were made. He said India was an

important supplier of defence equipment in World War II.

Referring to the importance of oceans and coasts in India's economy, Prime Minister Modi said that the role of the Indian Navy is continuously increasing and therefore self-reliance of the force is of critical importance.

Today, a large part of the budget earmarked for the purchase of defence equipment is being spent on procurement from Indian companies, said Modi, while complementing the defence forces for preparing a list of 300 items that will not be imported.

Modi's mission is to make the country Atmanirbhar so that the defence budget is further reduced and the benefits go to domestic industry. In the era of economic globalization with more interdependence among

the countries and the facilities of digital marketing and communication available, it is difficult to think that any country can survive in isolation.

A country is said to be Atmanirbhar (self-reliant), if it produces sufficient amounts of goods and services for its domestic needs along with surplus for export to earn foreign exchange. An Atmanirbhar country need not necessarily manufacture each and every product required by it. Rather, it will prefer manufacturing and processing more such products which it can do with expertise at low cost and the demand of which is globally more. At the same time, it cannot indefinitely depend on such countries that are dumping their low quality goods and are destroying the industrial growth of the importing country.

India warns China against violating airspace near LAC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India has asked China to refrain from violating airspace close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh to avoid escalation of tension in the region. This issue was flagged during a meeting between military delegations of the two sides at the border earlier this week.

The Indian team comprising Army and IAF officers expressed concern over recent flying activities by Chinese air force near the LAC on its side in late June and early July, sources said here on Friday adding the parleys took place on Tuesday.

The need for raising this matter by New Delhi came after one Chinese jet reportedly came very close to the LAC and the IAF had to scramble its jets to thwart any possible threat.

These violations took place during the annual Chinese military exercise in the Tibetan plateau region in the last two months.

Sources said India and China discussed ways to better establish understanding to manage air space and avoid air space violations along the Line of Actual Control (LAC). This was discussed during the routine Confidence Building Measures (CBM) talks on the ground held on Tuesday. The Indian delegation was led by a Major General.

The two sides also promised to adhere to the pacts between the two countries as part of confidence building measures to avoid any escalation at the LAC.

As per existing agreements between India and China, operation of fighter aircraft and armed heli-



The Indian team comprising Army and IAF officers expressed concern over recent flying activities by Chinese air force near the LAC on its side in late June and early July, sources said here on Friday, adding the parleys took place on Tuesday

copters is restricted to a distance of ten kms on each side of the LAC.

According to the 'Agreement on Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the LAC in India-China Border Area' of 1996, "combat aircraft (to include fighter, bomber, reconnaissance, military trainer, armed helicopter and other armed aircraft) shall not fly within 10 km of the LAC."

The LAC is not fully demarcated and there are differences of perception on the alignment due to which such incidents keep happening, they said.

Given the continuing face-offs at some friction points at the LAC in Eastern Ladakh for the past two years and violent incidents in May 2020, the IAF has activated nearly all its forward bases facing China. Moreover, it has deployed most of its front line jets including SU-30,Mirage and even the recently inducted Rafales to meet any challenge.

Incidentally, the latest talks termed as confidence building measure efforts came nearly a month after the Corps Commanders of the two armies held the 16th round of talks in Ladakh. The issue of airspace violations by China was raised even then.

CBI raids 30 places, books 33 in J&K SI recruitment scam

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/JAMMU

The CBI has registered a case against 33 accused including then Medical Officer of BSF and Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board officials besides an owner of a coaching centre and conducted searches at 30 locations in connection with alleged irregularities in the recruitment of Sub-Inspector in J&K police. Searches were conducted today at 30 locations, including at Jammu, Srinagar and Bengaluru at the premises of the accused persons and entities, the CBI said.

The accused persons and entities are Dr Karnail Singh, Medical Officer, BSF Frontier Headquarters, Paloura, Ashok Kumar, ASI, Jammu and Kashmir Police and Ashwani Kumar, former CRPF official.

Avinash Gupta, owner of 'EDUMAX Classes, Akhnoor, Akshay Kumar, Manager of 'EDUMAX Classes, Roshan Bral, teacher, Narayan Dutt, then member Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Service (JKKAS), Bishan Dass, then Under Secretary, JKSSB, Anju Raina, then Section Officer, JKSSB and MeritTrac Services Private Limited, Bengaluru have also been named as accused in the

case. The case was registered on the request of Jammu and Kashmir government against the 33 accused on the allegations of irregularities in written examination for the posts of Sub-Inspectors in the Jammu and Kashmir police on March 27, conducted by J&K Services Selection Board (JKSSB), it said. The results were declared on June 4. There were allegations regarding malpractices in the examination. The J&K government had constituted an Inquiry Committee to look into the same.

"It was alleged that the accused entered into conspiracy amongst officials of JKSSB, Bengaluru-based private company, beneficiary candidates and others, and caused gross irregularities in conduct of written examination for the posts of Sis," the agency said in a statement. It was further alleged that there was an abnormally high percentage of selected candidates from Jammu, Rajouri and Samba districts. Violation of rules by JKSSB was allegedly found in assigning the task of setting the question paper to Bengaluru-based private company MeritTrac Services Private Limited, it added.

Crypto exchange WazirX director raided in PMLA probe

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has conducted searches against one of the directors of Zanmai Lab Pvt Ltd which owns the popular crypto-currency exchange WazirX and issued an order to freeze their bank balances to the tune of Rs 64.67 crore on money laundering charges.

The ED is conducting money laundering investigation against a number of Indian NBFCs and their fintech partners for predatory lending practices in violation of the RBI guidelines by using telecallers who misuse personal data and use abusive language to extort high interest rates from the loan takers.

Various fintech companies backed by Chinese funds could not get NBFC license from RBI for carrying out lending business. So they devised the MoU route with defunct NBFCs to piggyback on their license. After the criminal investigation against such entities, many of these fintech APPs have shut shop and diverted away the huge profits earned using this modus operandi.

The fund trail investigation by the ED found that large amount of funds were diverted by the fintech companies to purchase Crypto assets and then launder them abroad, the agency said in a statement. These companies and the virtual assets are untraceable at the moment. Summonses were issued to the Crypto-

exchanges. It is seen that the maximum amount of funds were diverted to WazirX exchange and the crypto-assets so purchased have been diverted to unknown foreign wallets.

The ED probe revealed that Zanmai Labs Pvt Ltd., the company owning WazirX Crypto Exchange, has created a web of agreements with -- Crowdfire Inc. USA, Binance (Cayman Islands), ZettaiPte Ltd Singapore -- to obscure the ownership of the crypto exchange.

Earlier, their Managing Director Nischal Shetty had claimed that WazirX is an Indian Exchange which controls all the crypto-crypto and INR-crypto transactions and only has an IP and preferential agreement with Binance.

ED raids six places in TN in Chinese visa scam case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Friday conducted searches at half-a-dozen locations in Tamil Nadu in connection with its money laundering probe connected to alleged irregularities in the issuance of visas to 263 Chinese nationals in 2011, in which Congress MP Karti Chidambaram is also an

accused. Officials said the premises of some companies and their promoters are being searched in Chennai and nearby areas. The ED had initiated a probe in May and filed a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after taking cognisance of a CBI FIR in the same case.

The case relates to allegations of Rs 50 lakh being paid as kickbacks to Karti and his close associate S Bhaskararaman by a top executive of Vedanta group company 'Talwandi Sabo Power Ltd. (TSPL), which was setting up a power plant in Punjab, according to the CBI FIR, he CBI had then searched the premises of the

Chidamabram family and arrested Bhaskararaman even as Karti Chidambaram was questioned by it. Karti Chidambaram, 50, a Congress MP from the Sivaganga constituency in Tamil Nadu, has denied the allegations and said in a statement that "if this is not harassment, not a witch hunt, then what is."

RBI hikes interest rate by 50 bps to pre-pandemic level

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Friday raised the key interest rate by 50 basis points, the third straight increase since May in an effort to cool stubbornly high inflation and defend the rupee.

The repurchase rate was raised by 50 basis points to lift the interest rate to the pre-pandemic level. The 5.40 per cent repo rate was last seen in August 2019.

Announcing the rate hike, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das did not offer any indication of a change in the stance or a possible pause in the next policy due in late September.

The Reserve Bank of India's six-member rate-setting panel voted unanimously on the rate hike decision while sticking to its resolve to withdraw the accommodative stance.

It, however, retained GDP growth projection at 7.2 per cent for the current fiscal ending March 31, 2023, and kept the inflation outlook for the year unchanged at 6.7 per

cent.

"Inflationary pressures are broad-based and core inflation remains elevated. Inflation is projected to remain above the upper tolerance level of 6 per cent through the first three quarters of 2022-23, entailing the risk of destabilising inflation expectations and triggering second-round effects," he said. The RBI targets inflation at 2-6 per cent.

June was the sixth consecutive month when headline CPI inflation remained at or above the upper tolerance level of 6 per cent.

Stating that there has been some let-up in global commodity prices, particularly in prices of industrial metals, and some softening in global food prices, the governor said domestic edible oil prices are expected to soften further on the back of improving supplies from key producing countries.

Further, the advance of the southwest monsoon is by and large on track and kharif sowing has picked up in the recent weeks.

"The shortfall in kharif

sowing of paddy, however, needs to be watched closely, although buffer stocks are quite large. Household inflation expectations have eased but they still remain elevated," he said.

The central bank surprised markets with a 40 bps hike at an unscheduled meeting in May, followed by a 50 bps increase in June, but prices have shown little sign of cooling off yet.

The latest increase mirrors the US Federal Reserve-led global tightening of interest rates to rein in spiraling prices, caused by supply snarls and energy price shocks following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The MPC believes "calibrated withdrawal of monetary policy accommodation is warranted to keep inflation expectations anchored and contain the second round effects," Das said. On the rupee depreciating against the US dollar, he said at a 4.7 per cent decline, the rupee fared much better than several reserve currencies as well as many of its EME and Asian peers.

Designated smoking areas, ads tacit approval to smoke: Experts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Health experts and activists on Friday here called for strengthening the tobacco control law, saying that the continuation of designated smoking areas (DSAs) and ads of tobacco products at Point of Sale (PoS) in the country were like "a tacit approval from the authorities stating that it is ok for the tobacco users and youth to consume the deadly product which every year claim over 13 lakhs lives."

The stringent COTPA

(Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act) Amendment Bill will not only help save several lives but also reduce burden on the healthcare system, said the experts including Dr Shalini Singh, a cancer specialist and Director, ICMR-National Institute of Cancer Prevention and Research, Shweta Shalini, activist and BJP spokesperson from Maharashtra and Dr Archana Dhawan Bajaj, a fertility expert.

At a webinar held by the Tobacco-Free India, a citizens group, Dr Shalini

Singh focused on the need to spread awareness about tobacco related cancers and plethora of other diseases while Shweta Shalini, youth BJP leader elaborated on the urgency and the immediate need for action to fight against the lobby engaged in trashing out the tobacco products health, India can never become World Guru," she said.

During the discussion, Dr Singh also revealed that the tobacco industry is now trying to trap youth through 'synthetic nicotine' which is as harmful

and addictive as the nicotine but does not come under the legal purview.

Dr Archana Dhawan Bajaj, a well-known gynaecologist focused on tobacco-induced infertility among couples, which, she said, is rising at a disturbing rate in the country. "Smoking and tobacco use can have a serious impact on the fertility of both men and women, and consequently the quality of life in pregnancy as well as negative health on the unborn and borne child, miscarriage, and death," she added.

'Developed nations no match to India in fulfilling green pledges'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Developed countries are no match to India in the speed at achieving their pledges for clean energy as it has concern for the environment and is working towards becoming self-reliant in the energy sector, Minister of Power and New and Renewable Energy R K Singh said in the Lok Sabha on Friday.

He made the remarks after moving the Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill in the House for consideration. The Bill seeks to make it mandatory for buildings with a minimum connected load of 100 kW to meet their energy requirements from renewable sources. Singh said every country wants to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases to deal with climate change and

global warming, which has led to a campaign towards adopting renewable or clean energy. At the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 21, India had pledged that by 2030, 40 per cent of its energy generation capacity would be met from non-fossil fuel sources such as renewable energy, Singh said, adding that this was achieved in November 2021 itself.

Cabinet Secy Gauba gets 1-year extension

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba was on Friday given an extension of one more year in service by the Government. This is his second extension on the post.

Gauba, a former Union Home Secretary, was appointed to the country's top bureaucratic post for two years in 2019. He was given a one-year extension in August last year.

The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet has approved extension in service to Gauba, a 1982-batch IAS officer of Jharkhand cadre, as Cabinet Secretary for a further period of one-year beyond August 30, 2022, said the Friday's order.

Gauba played a key role in drafting the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, under which the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir was divided into two Union territories following the abrogation of the special status given to it under Article 370 of the Constitution.



IN SHORT

MODI, PHILIPPINES PREZ MARCOS DISCUSS BILATERAL COOPERATION

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday spoke with Ferdinand Marcos Jr., President of the Philippines and discussed bilateral cooperation, the PMO said. Modi congratulated Marcos on his election as the 17th President of the Philippines.

MAHA GOVT SEEKS RECALL OF SC ORDER ON CIVIC BODIES POLL

New Delhi: The Maharashtra Government has moved the Supreme Court seeking recall of its order by which it had directed the State Election Commission (SEC) not to re-notify the poll process to 367 local bodies, where it has already commenced, in order to provide reservation to OBCs.

HOPE APPOINTMENT OF NEXT CJI GOES SMOOTHLY: RIJJU

New Delhi: Law Minister Kiren Rijju on Friday said formalities are being carried out ahead of the appointment of the next chief justice of India and hoped that everything will go smoothly because the government is "always particular" about rules and conventions.

RLYS HAS GIVEN EMPLOYMENT TO 3.5 LAKH BETWEEN 2014 AND 2022

New Delhi: The Indian Railways has provided employment to 3,50,204 people so far between 2014 and 2022 and the process of recruiting 1.4 lakh more people is currently underway, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told Rajya Sabha.

SC RESTRAINS STATES FROM COERCIVE ACTIONS AGAINST TV NEWS EDITOR

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday protected TV News editor Rajnish Ahuja and restrained authorities in various States from taking any coercive actions against him in connection with multiple FIRs for playing a doctored clip of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during the telecast of a programme on July 1.

SC SEEKS CENTRE'S REPLY ON RISING ATTACKS ON CHRISTIAN INSTITUTIONS

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Friday allowed the Centre to file a preliminary response to a plea alleging the rising number of attacks on Christian institutions and priests across the country and seeking implementation of its guidelines to curb hate crimes.

'NOT HAPPY WITH CENTRE'S REPLY ON PLEA SEEKING GUIDELINES TO AGENCIES'

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday said it is not satisfied with the Centre's affidavit filed on a plea seeking suitable guidelines for the investigative agencies with respect to seizure, examination and preservation of personal digital and electronic devices and their content.

'STATUS QUO EXISTS ON AAREY COLONY SITE OF MUMBAI METRO'

New Delhi: The status quo against felling of trees at Mumbai's Aarey Colony, the site for a contentious metro car shed project, exists and no trees have been cut since October 2019, the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Ltd (MMRCL) told the Supreme Court on Friday.

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The "unacceptably high" inflation trending around 7 per cent mark led the Reserve Bank of India to hike rates by an aggressive 0.50 per cent on Friday, according to Governor Shaktikanta Das.

Stating that there are signs that headline inflation, which has breached the 6 per cent upper threshold set for the RBI for six consecutive months, has peaked, Das on Friday said policy moves from here on will be "calibrated, measured and nimble" and will depend on unfolding dynamics.

The governor refused to spell out any guidance on the way forward, pointing out that we live in a dynamic world where things are changing very fast. He also noted that generally, guidance in a rate hiking cycle is difficult as compared to that in a rate cut cycle.

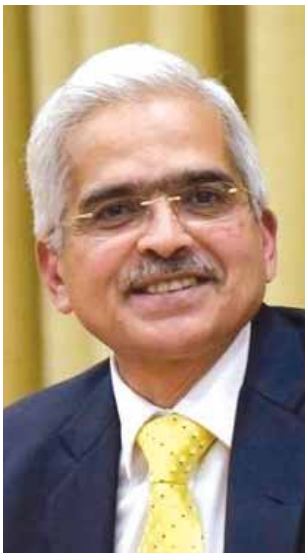
"... Inflation still remains at

uncomfortably or unacceptably high levels and therefore, monetary policy has to act," he told reporters after the central bank's six-member rate setting panel decided to hike the repo rate at which it lends to the system by 0.50 per cent.

It can be noted that ahead of the policy announcement, many analysts had been of the view that the hike would be a calibrated 0.35 per cent while a few expected the RBI to frontload by being aggressive with a 0.50 per cent increase.

"Monetary policy will be calibrated, measured and nimble depending on the unfolding dynamics of inflation and economic activity. The focus will remain on ensuring safe and soft landing for the economy," he added. He said steps have to be taken to contain inflation and inflation expectations in the economy.

The Monetary Policy



Committee (MPC) also took the growth aspect into consideration while taking its call, he added. The governor also mentioned that as per the RBI's

7 die in Bihar hooch tragedy

PTI ■ CHHAPRA (BIHAR)

At least seven people died and 15 others fell ill with some of them even losing their eyesight in a suspected hooch tragedy in Saran district of dry Bihar, officials said on Friday.

It is, however, not known when the spurious liquor was consumed as the family members of victims are not ready to share information.

Saran District Magistrate Rajesh Meena said all the cases were reported from villages falling under Maker police station area and more than 10 people among the seriously ill have suffered loss of vision. "Prima facie it appears that the villagers had consumed spurious liquor.

Five people died here while two deaths occurred at Patna Medical College and Hospital (PMCH) where those who have fallen seriously ill were referred on Thursday," he said.



Jan Adhikar Party president Pappu Yadav meets family members of victims, after several people died after allegedly consuming spurious liquor in Saran district of Bihar, in Patna on Friday PTI Photo

Saran Superintendent of Police Santosh Kumar said "We are conducting raids in Maker, Marhaura and Bheldi police station areas to nab the suspected bootleggers. We will be able to state the number of arrests after the operation is over." Asked when the deceased

and the ill had consumed the liquor, the SP said that it will be known after investigation. "Family members are not forthcoming with the information," he said. To another query, Kumar said that two victims died at PMCH on Thursday. "We are not sure of the other

deaths as the bodies were cremated without informing the police or a post mortem". Local residents said on condition of anonymity that the drunken revelry began on Tuesday night and continued through the early hours of Wednesday. They said consumption of intoxicants like cannabis has been a custom during Nag Panchami festival, which fell on August 2 this year, and some took alcohol for intoxication.

State minister Ashok Choudhary, a key aide of Nitish Kumar, told reporters in Patna that all the accused will be apprehended and brought to justice. "Action will also be taken against those police personnel whose laxity, or even complicity, may have led to the incident".

Asked about questions being raised over feasibility of prohibition law in the light of hooch cases being reported regularly, Choudhary shot back

"Dowry deaths have not stopped, nor have rapes. But that does not mean we scrap laws against these crimes".

More than 50 people have died in hooch tragedies in the state, declared a dry state over six years ago, since November 2021. Saran itself had reported five hooch deaths in January this year. In July two persons had died after consuming spurious liquor in Patna.

Sale and consumption of liquor were completely banned in Bihar by the Nitish Kumar government in April, 2016, following an electoral promise the chief minister had made to the women of Bihar ahead of state polls held in the previous year.

However, implementation of the stringent prohibition law has often been criticised by the opposition parties, the courts and also ruling alliance partners like former chief minister Jitan Ram Manjhi.

14 days' judicial custody for aide, Partha; ED fears for Arpita's life

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Former Bengal Minister and Trinamool Congress secretary general Partha Chatterjee and his close aide Arpita Mukherjee arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with school level recruitment scam and money were on Friday remanded in 14 days' judicial custody by a special PMLA court.

While Chatterjee was sent to high security Presidency Jail, Mukherjee was taken to women's prison amid fears of threat to Arpita's life expressed by the ED.

Subsequently the jail authorities have been directed to arrange special security for Arpita, sources said adding even food and water for the accused would have to be pre-tasted. Contesting Chatterjee's bail plea the ED told the court that whatever had been recov-

ered from the accused persons' houses were just tip of the iceberg and hence they would be required to be grilled again.

The court subsequently allowed the ED to interrogate the duo in jail. Chatterjee and Mukherjee have been in ED remand since July 23 when they were arrested after Rs 22 crores, jewellery and documents were recovered from her apartment.

Chatterjee is also facing charges of illegal appointments — for cash — of teaching and non-teaching staff in Bengal schools. Chatterjee a former number two in Mamata Banerjee Cabinet handling a number of important ministries was subsequently relieved of his ministerial duties by the Chief Minister.

Meanwhile, even as Chatterjee denied any connection with the money and property documents recovered from



Arpita's house the ED on Friday told the court that Arpita had told the investigators that the mountain of cash recovered from her house belonged to Chatterjee.

Rs 50 crore and jewellery and property deeds worth tens of crores were recovered from Arpita's two apartments.

The ED also told the court that during a face-to-face grilling Chatterjee denied close acquaintance with Arpita. When the ED asked as to how his name figured as a nominee in as many as 31 LIC policies of Arpita the former minister kept quiet.

Maha protest: Police detain Cong leaders

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Hundreds of Congress leaders — including State party president Nana Patole, leaders Prithiviraj Chavan Ashok Chavan, Balasaheb Thorat Varsha Gaikwad and Chandrakant Handore — were detained by police on Friday, ahead of their scheduled demonstration in front of Raj Bhavan in south Mumbai in protest against price hike, GST on essential commodities, unemployment and also manner in which their leaders Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi were treated in Delhi.

While Patole, Ashok Chavan, Thorat, Handore, Varsha Gaikwad were picked up from Vidhan Bhavan area,

Prithviraj Chavan, Manikrao Thakre, Nitin Raut, Aslam Sheikh, Mumbai Congress President Bhaji Jagtap and others were detained at Malbar Hills in neighbourhood of Raj Bhavan. In a statement issued

later in the evening, the Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) claimed that more than 10,000 party activists were detained from various parts of the metropolis and surrounding areas.



Centre warns Chhattisgarh over poor PMAY-G execution

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Expressing its displeasure at the poor implementation of the rural housing scheme in Chhattisgarh, the Centre has warned the Congress-led State Government that "it will have to reconsider its support to its other core schemes" if it fails to duly implement the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G).

The central rural housing flagship has been implemented from April 1, 2016, with an objective of providing "Housing for All" by March 2024. In a letter to Chhattisgarh Chief Secretary Amitabh Jain, Rural

Development Secretary Nagendra Nath Sinha has mentioned that state government has not shown satisfactory progress despite several letters and meetings in this connection. "If the state is unable to implement PMAY-G..., the ministry shall be compelled to reconsider its support to other core Rural Development (Ministry) schemes/programmes," Sinha said in letter.

He said despite several rounds of communication from "various levels of Union Ministry to Chhattisgarh Government, it has neither shown satisfactory progress nor released due state share of ₹562 crore, as a result of which

the work of PMAY-G has come to a standstill in the state, a situation, which you are well aware of".

Underlining that scheme is implemented on the ground level by state governments, Sinha said Chhattisgarh in 2020-21 withdrew the majority of the 6.48 lakh houses allocated to it "due to difficulty in releasing corresponding state share."

In 2021-22, the Rural Development Ministry was compelled to withdraw allocated target of nearly 7.82 lakh houses, again due to the state's inability in releasing its share, amounting to ₹562 crore, Sinha added.

Raut thanks Opp parties for supporting him

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Shiv Sena leader and a Rajya Sabha member Sanjay Raut, currently in the Enforcement Directorate's (ED) custody in an alleged money laundering case, has thanked Opposition parties for supporting him. His party colleague and MP in Rajya Sabha Priyanka Chaturvedi on Friday released a letter signed by Raut.

In the letter addressed to Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, the Shiv Sena spokesman thanked leaders of all Opposition parties including the Congress, NCP, TMC, DMK, AAP, CPI and CPI (M) for expressing solidarity with him. The Shiv Sena's Rajya Sabha member was arrested on

August 1 by the ED in a case related to alleged irregularities in the redevelopment of Patra Chawl, a row tenement in suburban Goregaon. On Thursday, a court extended his ED custody till August 8. "The toughest times show you who your reliable allies are," the letter said. "I am thankful for the overwhelming support given to me during the political witch-hunt and motivated attack directed against me by the central government through central agencies.

My fight will continue for what is right. Neither will I bow down to pressure nor will it break my resolve to see this fight through," Raut wrote recalling ferocious Balasaheb Thackeray.

Infighting causes leaders of Kerala BJP to quit; Chand joins CPM

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Thanks to infighting in the Kerala BJP and the craving for positions in Central Government, party workers as well as hardcore Sangh Parivar activists are leaving the organisation in search of greener pastures. On Wednesday, Subhas Chand, the standing counsel of the Central Government ended his association with the Sangh Parivar and joined the CPI(M) to work for "socialism, secularism and communal amity" which he says has been jeopardized by the RSS and the BJP.

Speaking to *The Pioneer*, Subash Chand who was the president of the Ernakulam

district unit of Viswa Hindu Parishat till Wednesday said that the CPI(M) was the only political entity in the country which could preserve socialism and secularism in India. "I had a meeting with the State leaders of the CPI(M) and they wholeheartedly welcomed me," he said.

It is expected that Subash Chand's entry to the CPI(M) would strengthen the public image of the party as the present leadership in Ernakulam district has not succeeded in mobilising support. This was discernible in the recent assembly by-poll held at Thrikkakkara where the party candidate was trounced by

Uma Thomas of the Congress. The BJP candidate lost the security deposit. Many close followers of Chand too would join the Marxists and this is certainly a setback for the Sangh Parivar, according to K Jayashankar, political critic.

"It is surprising to note that it took Chand eight years to understand that secularism was facing a threat from the BJP Government at the Centre," said Jayashankar. He said the Sangh Parivar leader got a much needed enlightenment after eight years. "It is like a homecoming for Subash Chand. He was a leader of the CPI(M) before he fell out with the then leadership.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with West Bengal CM Mamata Banerjee during a meeting in New Delhi on Friday PTI

Thousands celebrate 3rd anniv of Abrogation of Article 370

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ SRINAGAR

Thousands of youth, including sportsmen from different parts of the Kashmir valley on Friday converged at the newly renovated Bakshi Stadium to celebrate the third anniversary of Abrogation of Article 370 and 35-A.

The atmosphere inside stadium was electrifying. Players representing different games participated in march past amidst thunderous applause from audience. Earlier, the Bakshi stadium, refurbished at a cost of over 50 crore, was thrown open by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha. After its formal inauguration world class sports facility would be thrown

open to sportsmen to take advantage of best training facilities. Outside stadium, normal life remained peaceful throughout day even as elaborate security arrangements were made to prevent any untoward incident. The main city centre of Lal Chowk also witnessed hectic activity despite 'hartal call'.

On the other hand, regional political parties in Kashmir valley including Peoples Democratic Party and National Conference registered their token protest. Former J&K CM and National Conference vice-president Omar Abdullah reiterated the party's resolve to continue the struggle to challenge the abrogation of Article 370 and Article 35A.

FROM PAGE 1

CONG HITS STREETS ON PRICE RISE, UNEMPLOYMENT, GST

The MPs and others who were detained by the police during the protest were released after about six hours. Rahul, Priyanka, K C Venugopal, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and Gaurav Gogoi were among the MPs detained. In a statement, the Delhi Police said a total 335 protesters, including 65 MPs, had been detained under the Delhi Police Act in order to "maintain law and order" in the area.

The protesting MPs raised slogans against the Government demanding that the GST hike on essential items be withdrawn, with party chief Sonia protesting with the women MPs holding a banner outside gate number 1 of Parliament.

Priyanka and several other women party leaders were dragged into police vehicles from outside the party headquarters. She had climbed over barricades to reach the spot where she held a brief sit-in before being taken away by police which had denied permission for the protest, citing law and order. While the male Congress MPs were seen sporting black kurtas, shirts, scarves, and headgears, the women leaders also wore black with elan led by party chief Sonia who wore a printed crisp saree with a black border and a black blouse. Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge wore a black kurta, a black turban and a white dhoti . Former Union Minister P Chidambaram and his son and MP Karti Chidambaram sported black shirts with white 'veshtis' (type of dhoti), while Shashi Tharoor was seen in all blacks — kurta, trouser and 'Sadri'.

"During the debate on price rise in Parliament, BJP members said they can't see inflation. So today by wearing black we are expressing the anger our people are feeling, we are expressing that they (Government) open their eyes to the reality of India today. Even the RBI Governor has conceded that there is high

inflation but the BJP MPs and the Finance Minister have lied to people of India on the floor of the House that there is no inflation," said party MP from Assam Gaurav Gogoi.

FOREIGN POWERS RULED US BY BELITTLING OUR FEATS: HM

"Those who ruled us destroyed our best systems. They knew that they could rule us only if they succeeded in creating an inferiority complex within us, because we were ahead of them in every aspect. These people created a myth that we were illiterate. The country that gave Geeta and the Vedas to the world, the country that gave the world zero, the country that gave the world astronomy, how can it be illiterate," Shah said.

Shah wondered if India could claim to have achieved the true ideals of Swaraj if it failed to protect its languages, culture, and history as it marched towards the centenary of Independence. "The real meaning of Swaraj means to run India the way Indians want it to be run. It includes our own languages, our religion, our culture and also our arts," Shah said at the function attended by Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur, Minister of State L Murugan, I&B Secretary Apoorva Chandra, CEO of PrasarBharati, Mayank Kumar Agrawal, Members of Parliament among others.

Shah said India has been administered well since Independence and has had several achievements to its credit. "Whoever came (to power) has taken the country forward. We respect everyone. But, if we cannot protect our languages in the centenary year, then would we have achieved the real aim of Swaraj," Shah asked. He said the Indian civilisation had progressed for several thousand years and there was no need for any NGO to educate the country about its culture.

Shah expressed the hope that the television serial "Swaraj" will help the coun-

try get rid of its inferiority complex and make the youth take pride in the country's history.

CONG'S STIR SUBTLE MESSAGE OF ITS APPEASEMENT POLITICS: SHAH

"It is because on this day itself the PM laid the foundation of Ram Janambhoomi... Such acts of the Congress party have insulted the faith of India," Shah said. Everybody saw protests from Congress leaders of late in regular clothes but they especially chose black clothes for Friday agitation as Modi peacefully resolved an over 550-year-old dispute which was associated with the faith of crores of people, Shah told reporters.

The Congress is conveying its Opposition to the temple construction and the issues of ED action and price rise are only excuses, he claimed and added that as the Opposition party could not have openly expressed its opposition to the temple, it has tried to give a hidden message. Yogi too termed the Congress protests as an "insult to Ram Bhakts".

"Till now, the Congress was protesting in normal attire but today they protested wearing black clothes. It's an insult to Ram Bhakts. They chose this day as today's Ayodhya Diwas which marks the beginning of construction of Ram Janambhoomi," he said.

"Such acts of the Congress party have insulted the faith of India. The Congress' attitude has insulted Ayodhya Diwas along with insulting India's democracy and judiciary. We condemn such acts of the party," said the Chief Minister of UP.

Earlier, the BJP slammed the protest staged by the Congress leadership, saying the issues of price rise, GST and unemployment were just a pretence and the real reason behind the stir was to save the Gandhi family from the corruption charges in the National Herald case. Getting back

at the Congress after Rahul Gandhi attacked the Modi Government saying India is witnessing "death of democracy", BJP leader Ravi Shankar Prasad reminded the Opposition party of its history.

"Rahul's grandmother imposed an Emergency in the country. During the Emergency, big journalists were sent to jail. She spoke of a committed judiciary. Do you remember anything? You give us the advice of democracy. Is there democracy in your party?" the BJP MP said, dismissing Rahul's charge that "India is witnessing the death of democracy". Prasad also alleged that during the takeover of the National Herald newspaper, assets worth Rs 5,000 crore were claimed for Rs 5 lakh with Sonia and Rahul having 76 per cent majority share in Young India which acquired it. The National Herald case is being investigated by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and both Sonia and Rahul have been interrogated by the Central investigating agency.

Prasad said the price rise protest is essentially aimed at "saving" the Gandhi family from corruption charges and asked Rahul not to blame Indian democracy for his party's repeated poll defeats under him. "Why do you blame democracy when the people of India reject you with repeated regularity and you go on losing one election after another," he said and asked Rahul if there is democracy within his party which has some "good leaders" but it is all about the Gandhi family. "Stop demeaning the institutions of India to safeguard your corruption and misdeeds... If people don't listen to you, why are you blaming us," he said. "If India saw dictatorship, it was during the Emergency when people, including opposition leaders and editors, were jailed, judges superseded and censorship imposed. Indira Gandhi had then spoken about having "committed judiciary," the former Law Minister said.

In the National Herald case, Prasad said the judiciary refused to quash charges against the Gandhis and Rahul had the temerity of blaming the institutions, the BJP leader said. Rahul will have to face

consequences for what he has done, Prasad said, adding, "You will have to face trial and answer the ED's questions."

Union Minister Anurag Thakur also said the protests by the Congress from Parliament to the streets cannot turn the "truth" of corruption charges against its leaders into a lie. "They are trying to apply pressure on the Government and probe agencies after doing corruption. The BJP came to power in 2014 and had promised to give corruption-free governance. This is what Modi has delivered in eight years. Probe agencies are now working against corruption done earlier," he said. Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra should not obstruct the ED's work, Thakur said, claiming the agency works under no political pressure and functions independently.

CHITRAKOOT AIRPORT TO BE INAUGURATED SOON

Bundelkhand Expressway.

Chitrakoot, a pilgrimage centre where Lord Shri Ram spent most of his exile, is situated on the Vindhya hills.

Chitrakoot has several tourist spots, such as Gupt Godavari, Kamadgiri Parvat, Bharatkup, Ganeshbagh, Sati Anusuiya Ashram, Rajapur, Dharkudi, Jankikund, Ramghat, and Bharat Milap temple and Chitrakoot waterfall, Hanuman stream, and Sphatik Shila, which are reminiscent of Lord Ram's visit along with his brother Lakshman and consort Sita.

The Shri Chitrakoot Dham Teerth Development Council, which is looking after the maintenance of Chitrakoot, has been entrusted with the responsibility to ensure holistic development, including enriching the natural surroundings further, while conserving the rich heritage of the pilgrimage destination.

On International Tiger Day-2022, held on July 29, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had announced that Ranipur would soon be developed as the fourth tiger reserve of the state. Ranipur is locat-

ed in an area where once the guns of dacoits used to be heard.

AWAY FROM DELHI STIR, MAMATA CALLS ON PM

In her memorandum, Mamata has tabulated the total amount due to the State under different schemes and benefits. The amount that is due to the State from the Centre as on July 31 has been estimated to be around ₹1,00,968.44 crore.

Mamata has often accused the BJP-led Central Government of delaying the payment of Goods and Services Tax (GST) dues to States, especially the ones ruled by Opposition parties. Mamata, who arrived here on a four-day visit on Thursday, is likely to attend a Niti Aayog governing council meeting on August 7 to be chaired by Prime Minister Modi. Incidentally, Mamata skipped Niiti Ayog's meetings in the past, calling them as a "fruitless" exercise.

NEW VP TODAY

The 80-year-old Alva is a Congress veteran and has served as the Governor of Rajasthan, while the 71-year-old Dhankhar is a Jat leader from Rajasthan with social-ist background. The term of incumbent M Venkaiah Naidu ends on August 10. The Vice President is also the chairperson of the Rajya Sabha. While polling will be held from 10 am to 5 pm on Saturday, the ballots will be counted immediately after that. By late Saturday evening, the returning officer will announce the name of the next Vice President. Members of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, including nominated members, are eligible to vote in the Vice Presidential poll. The electoral college in the Vice Presidential election comprises a total of 788 members of both Houses of Parliament. Since all the electors are members of both Houses of Parliament, the value of vote of each MP would be the same — one, the Election Commission has said.

China slaps sanctions against Pelosi, family for Taiwan visit

White House summons Chinese envoy

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Friday announced sanctions on US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and her immediate family in retaliation to her high-profile visit to Taiwan this week and cancelled talks with Washington on defence, climate change and a range of other issues.

Meanwhile, White House summoned Chinese envoy over Taiwan provocations.

Pelosi, 82, the highest-ranking US official to visit Taiwan in 25 years, visited the island on Tuesday, which Beijing claims as part of it and vows to integrate with the Chinese mainland.

The Chinese Foreign Ministry, which stridently criticised her visit and lodged stern protests against the US by summoning its Ambassador to China Chris Burns and announced four-day high-intensity military drills in Taiwan Strait, issued a statement on Friday imposing sanctions against Pelosi and her family. "In disregard of China's grave concerns and firm opposition, Speaker of the US House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi insisted on visiting China's Taiwan region," the statement said. "This constitutes gross interference in China's internal affairs. It gravely undermines China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, seriously tramples on the one-China principle and severely threatens peace and stability across the Taiwan



Strait," it said.

"In response to Pelosi's egregious provocation, China decides to adopt sanctions on Pelosi and her immediate family members in accordance with relevant laws of the People's Republic of China," it said. The sanctions against Pelosi were regarded as symbolic and it bans her and her family members from travelling to China. Earlier, China had imposed sanctions against 28 former Trump administration officials, including the then US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

In another statement, the Chinese Foreign Ministry announced countermeasures against the US, which included cancellation of the China-US Theatre Commanders Talk, China-US Defence Policy Coordination Talks (DPCT), and the China-US Military Maritime Consultative Agreement (MMCA) meetings.

The ministry also announced the suspension of the China-US cooperation on the repatriation of illegal immi-

grants, the China-US cooperation on legal assistance in criminal matters, China-US cooperation against transnational crimes, China-US counter-narcotics cooperation, and China-US talks on climate change.

The cancellation of the defence dialogue between the two countries was regarded significant here as the major powers currently involved in intense strategic rivalry held periodic consultations, which observers say helped in avoiding accidental conflicts in hotspot areas like the disputed South China Sea, where the US has stepped up naval and aerial expeditions to assert freedom of navigation.

China's claims to most of the South China Sea are closely contested by the Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan.

China's sanctions against Pelosi and the other countermeasures came amid rare vocal criticism by the Chinese, especially in the local media, on Beijing's failure to stop Pelosi's visit to Taiwan.

China summons European diplomats over statement on Taiwan

AP ■ BEIJING

China says it summoned European diplomats in the country to protest statements issued by the Group of Seven nations and the European Union criticising threatening Chinese military exercises surrounding Taiwan.

The Foreign Ministry on Friday said Vice Minister Deng Li made "solemn representations" over what he called "wanton interference in China's internal affairs".

Pelosi's visit was regarded as a setback for the image of Chinese President Xi Jinping, who is widely expected to get an unprecedented third-five-year term, unlike his predecessors.

He is expected to be endorsed in the once-in-a-five-year Congress of the ruling Communist Party of China in the next few months.

Besides the diplomatic offensive against Pelosi, China has announced four-day military drills since Thursday in which the Chinese military fired ballistic missiles and flew fighter aircraft into the Taiwan Strait in a major show of strength. Beijing also pressed its aircraft carrier group which included a nuclear submarine into the drills.

UK PM race: Sunak wins over voters in TV debate

PTI ■ LONDON

Former Chancellor Rishi Sunak convincingly won over an audience of Conservative Party members in a head-to-head television debate with rival Foreign Secretary Liz Truss in the leadership contest to elect a new Tory party leader and British Prime Minister.

The 'Battle for Number 10' on 'Sky News' on Thursday night brought the finalists face to face with Conservative members who are entitled to vote in the election but are mostly undecided on their choice. After the two contenders put forward their arguments for why they should replace Boris Johnson at 10 Downing Street, the audience members were asked who they thought had won the argument and they picked Sunak in a show of hands.

It will come as a boost for the British Indian ex-minister who has been trailing Truss in most recent opinion polls, with the last survey putting her around 32 percentage points ahead of Sunak among Tory members. He was asked by an audience member and potential voter if he planned to step aside in the race at any point, given the polling figures.

"The quick answer is no, and that's



because I'm fighting for something I really believe in and I'm taking my ideas around the country," Sunak replied.

"I'm going to fight incredibly hard until the last day of this campaign for each and every one of your votes. The stakes are really high," he declared. He was also asked why so many senior Tory ministers and figures were endorsing Liz Truss. "Every stage of the parliamentary process, I had the broadest and biggest support," Sunak pointed out. "We're all one team, we're all one family, we're going to come together

after this and we're going to take it to [Opposition Labour Leader] Keir Starmer and win the next election, because that's the real prize. Plenty of people sat around the Cabinet table also support me. I've been really humbled actually," he said.

The former finance minister stuck to his central plank and focussed his message on the need to get a grip on soaring inflation before cutting taxes. "But it all starts with not making the situation worse. Because if we just put fuel on the fire of this inflation spiral, all of us, all of you, are just going to end up with higher mortgage rates, savings and pensions that are eaten away, and misery for millions," he said.

It came just hours after the Bank of England warned of a looming recession as it hiked interest rates. Truss insisted a recession is "not inevitable" and promised "bold" action compared with her rival's caution. However, Sunak dismissed accusations that it is the tax burden which is causing the recession, saying: "That's simply wrong. What's causing the recession is inflation." Both candidates received a heavy grilling on their various policy planks, including Brexit, immigration and support for the state-funded National Health Service (NHS).

Cheney calls Trump 'coward' in ad for daughter Liz

AP ■ WYOMING

Former Vice President Dick Cheney excoriated Donald Trump in a new campaign video for his daughter Rep. Liz Cheney, calling the former president a "coward" and saying there has never been anyone who is a "greater threat to our republic."

The video was released on Thursday by Rep. Cheney's re-



election campaign, two weeks before a Republican primary election in Wyoming that the three-term congresswoman is bracing to lose.

Blinken: China drills 'significant escalation'

AP ■ PHNOM PENH

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said Friday that China's military exercises aimed at Taiwan, including missiles fired into Japan's exclusive economic zone, represent a "significant escalation" and that he has urged Beijing to back down. China launched the drills following a visit by US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to Taiwan that infuriated Beijing, which claims the self-governed island as its own territory.

Blinken told reporters on the sidelines of a meeting with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Cambodia, however, that Pelosi's visit was peaceful and did not represent a change in American policy toward Taiwan, accusing China of using it as a "pretext to increase provocative military activity in and around the Taiwan Strait."

He said the situation had led to a "vigorous communication" during East Asia Summit meetings in Phnom Penh in which both he and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi took part along with the ASEAN nations, Russia and others.

"I reiterated the points that we made publicly as well as directly to Chinese counterparts in recent days, again, about the fact that they should not use the visit as a pretext for war, escalation, for



'China cannot stop US officials from visiting Taiwan'

AP ■ TOKYO

US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Friday that China will not isolate Taiwan by preventing US officials from travelling there. She made the remarks in Tokyo on the final leg of an Asia tour highlighted by a visit to Taiwan that infuriated China.

The Chinese have tried to isolate Taiwan, Pelosi said, including most recently by preventing the self-governing island from joining the World Health Organization.

provocative actions, that there is no possible justification for what they've done and urge them to cease these actions," he said.

UN experts: North Korea paving way for new nuke tests

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

UN experts say North Korea is paving the way for additional nuclear tests with new preparations at its northeastern test site and continues to develop its capability to produce a key ingredient for nuclear weapons.

The experts also said in key excerpts from their latest report obtained late Thursday by The Associated Press that North Korea conducted two major hacks this year, resulting in the theft of cryptocurrency assets worth "hundreds of millions of dollars."

They said Pyongyang also continues illicitly importing oil and exporting coal in violation of UN sanctions, using the same companies, networks and vessels.

South Korean and US intelligence officials have said they detected North Korean efforts to prepare its northeastern Punggye-ri testing ground for another nuclear test. It would be



the North's seventh since 2006 and the first since September 2017, when it claimed to have detonated a thermonuclear bomb to fit on its intercontinental ballistic missiles.

The panel of experts' report to the UN Security Council provides some details of the work being carried out at the site by the Democratic People's

Republic of Korea, the country's official name.

The experts said they observed that the DPRK started re-excavation work in March at the entrance to Tunnel 3 at Punggye-ri "and reconstructed support buildings originally dismantled in May 2018".

"Satellite imagery showed increased numbers of vehicle

tracks around this secondary entrance from mid-February 2022, followed by construction of a new building adjacent to the entrance at the beginning of March," the panel said. "A pile of lumber, for possible use in the construction of the tunnel structure, was also detected around the same time."

It added that, "Piles of soil from the tunnel excavation around the entrance were observed during this period."

"Work at the Punggye-ri nuclear test site paves the way for additional nuclear tests for the development of nuclear weapons," the experts said, adding that this is an objective stated at the Eighth Congress of the country's ruling Workers' Party of Korea in January 2021.

In another aspect of the DPRK's nuclear program, analysts said satellite images last September showed that North Korea was expanding a uranium enrichment plant at its main

Yongbyon nuclear complex, a sign that it wanted to boost production of the key bomb material.

The UN experts said in the new report: "DPRK continued to develop its capability for the production of nuclear fissile materials at the Yongbyon site."

Nuclear negotiations between the United States and North Korea have stalled since 2019 over disagreements over the DPRK demand to lift crippling US-led sanctions and Washington's demand for significant steps by Pyongyang toward nuclear disarmament.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has expanded his ballistic missile programme amid the diplomatic pause, and analysts say another nuclear test would escalate his brinkmanship aimed at cementing the North's status as a nuclear power, and negotiating economic and security concessions from a position of strength.

Hundreds of thousands gather for mass prayer in Baghdad

AP ■ BAGHDAD

Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis heeded the call of an influential Shiite cleric to gather in a show of strength for a mass prayer in the heart of Baghdad's government zone on Friday.

The gathering took place amid an escalating political crisis that has put the country's capital on edge.

The powerful cleric, Muqtada al-Sadr, had called on his followers from across Iraq to come to pray inside Baghdad's Green Zone — a heavily fortified area in the heart of the city that houses government buildings and foreign embassies.

They arrived and stood outside in the scorching summer heat, with temperatures reaching 48 degrees Celsius.

Meanwhile, in the holy southern city of Najaf, the head of Iraq's U.N. Mission, Jeannine Hennis-Plasschaert, met with al-Sadr Friday.

She told reporters afterward that they discussed the importance of finding a solution to the political crisis.

Friday's mass prayer was the latest display of strength by the cleric, whose political power derives from his strong grassroots support base.



The crowds stretched for miles, spilling into the streets outside the square.

Several people fainted after waiting for hours for the prayer to start and were taken to hospital in ambulances.

Al-Sadr has used his large grassroots following as a pressure tactic against his rivals after his party was unable to form a government despite having won the largest number of seats in federal elections last October.

He abandoned efforts to form the next government in June.

His followers gathered facing the Victory Arch, a monument erected during Saddam Hussein's regime to commemorate the Iran-Iraq war and for holding military parades.

Farid Jaafar, 16, arrived from southern Babylon

province to show his support for al-Sadr. His transport was paid by al-Sadr's party.

"I love Muqtada," he said. Holding the prayer within the highly restrictive zone closed off to most Iraqis points to the cleric's power and influence.

Last Saturday, thousands of his followers stormed parliament in a bid to derail attempts by al-Sadr's Shiite rivals to form a government.

Around 125 people were injured in the violence, most of them protesters and 25 members of the security forces.

Al-Sadr's followers camped out inside the parliament until he ordered them, after four days, to withdraw from the assembly building but maintain a sit-in outside. He's calling for the dissolution of parliament and early elections.

Unique 'Buddha pendant' discovered at Mohenjo-daro after heavy downpour



PTI ■ KARACHI

A unique antique object, termed "Buddha pendant", has been found very close to the archaeological site of Mohenjo-daro in Pakistan's Sindh province after the area was lashed by heavy rains, according to a media report on Friday.

Believed to be of archaeological importance, the object was found in the Dikshit South area of Mohenjo-daro after a downpour on August 3, the Dawn newspaper reported.

Irshad Ahmed Solangi, a private tour guide and a resident of Dhand village located very close to the archaeological

site, said on Thursday that he had found the object in a ditch that was developed during the recent rainfall on Wednesday.

After he discovered the object, he immediately reported it to site officer and conservator Naveed Sangah, the report said.

Ali Haider Gadhi, a senior conservationist at the archaeology department, reaffirmed that heavy rainfall led to the surfacing of the antique object. After examining the object, Mohan Lal, a former chief engineer of the department of archaeology and museums and currently working as project director of the Endowment

Fund Trust (EFT) identified it as "Buddha pendant" and suggested it to be a "unique antiquity."

"This rare discovery demands further studies to find out the missing history links," the report quoted him as saying.

An unnamed senior official at the culture department while describing the object said that it appeared like a pendant often worn around the neck by people.

He said further examination of the discovery will reveal more insights into the make and age of the object, and will help in knowing its historic and prehistoric value.

We have approached an expert working in the culture department to know about the object's make and age," he said.

Mohenjo-daro is an archaeological heritage site discovered by Indian archaeologist R D Banerji in 1922. It is located on the east of the Indus River in the semi-arid region of Sindh province. Extending over 618 acres, it is the largest and best-preserved urban centre of the Indus Civilisation (2600-1900 BC).

France going through its most severe drought ever, says PM



AP ■ PARIS

French Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne warned that France is facing the "most severe drought" ever recorded in the country and announced the activation of a government crisis unit.

Borne said in a written statement on Friday that many areas in France are going through a "historic situation" as the country endures its third heatwave this summer.

"The exceptional drought we are currently experiencing is depriving many municipalities of water and is a tragedy for our farmers, our ecosystems and biodiversity," the statement said.

Weather forecasts suggest that the heat, which increases evaporation and water needs, could continue for the next 15 days, possibly making the situation even more worrying, the

statement stressed.

The government's crisis unit will be in charge of monitoring the situation in the hardest-hit areas and coordinate measures like bringing drinking water to some places.

It will also monitor the impact of the drought on France's energy production, transport infrastructure and agriculture.

The drought may force French energy giant EDF to cut power production at nuclear plants which use river water to cool reactors.

France now has 62 regions with restrictions on water usage due to the lack of rain.

The minister for ecological transition, Christophe Béchu, said during a visit to southeastern France that more than 100 municipalities are not able to provide drinking water to the tap anymore and need to get supplied by truck.

Men in Blue aim to seal T20I series

PTI ■ FORT LAUDERHILL

Shreyas Iyer's performance will be under intense scrutiny as India gear up for the back-to-back T20I games against West Indies, starting here on Saturday, with the twin objective of winning the series and also firming up squad for T20 World Cup.

India are currently leading the five-match series 2-1 and nothing would be more satisfying than a couple of thumping wins in front of the USA's Indian diaspora, which is anticipating an enjoyable weekend cricket carnival.

However in this current India set-up, if there is one man whose performance will be monitored more than anyone else, it has got to be Iyer.

Deepak Hooda, who has used most of the opportunities handed to him, looks good to outwit Iyer at the moment as far as the big ticket T20 World Cup berth is concerned.

With KL Rahul and Virat Kohli all set to be back in the playing eleven for the Asia Cup, time is certainly running out for the 27-year-old Mumbaier, who has had scores of 0, 10 (11 balls) and 24 (27 balls) in the three games so far in the ongoing series.

He looked distinctly uncomfortable against the fast and rising deliveries.

While the short ball is his main problem, watching Iyer gives a feeling that he is unable to decide at what pace and which gear would he bat in a T20 game, something that's not the case when he is taking strike in 50-over format.

In head coach Rahul Dravid's regime so far, no player has got a raw deal in terms of chances and are given long enough rope to succeed.

However in case of Iyer, his T20I game hasn't exactly yielded the results that one has seen him deliver in the ODI cricket.

Even then, Dravid has given Iyer nine T20I games in last two and half months, out of which, one in Bengaluru was a wash-out and there hasn't been a single fifty-plus score even when he got chance to come out within first 10 overs.

If Iyer gets a go in the last two games, he has no option but to put his best foot forward as the Asia Cup team, in all probability, will also be the likely team for the T20 World Cup.



West Indies vs India
Live from 8:00pm IST
DD SPORTS & FANCODE

Even if Iyer makes the cut for Asia Cup or T20 World Cup, there is a minuscule chance of him getting a first XI look-in in a jam-packed top-order.

ROHIT LIKELY TO BE AVAILABLE

While Suryakumar Yadav's awe-inspiring shots left all and sundry wide-eyed, he is expected to have his skipper Rohit Sharma for company at the top of the order.

In the third game in Basseterre, Rohit was forced to retire hurt with a back spasm when he was batting on 11 and it was more like a precautionary measure with a three-day gap in between games.

The Indian captain would like to continue his recent good form and positive intent in the two remaining games but at the same time would have the best seat to judge the form of some of his batters.

Rishabh Pant has looked good in all his short stints at the crease and wouldn't mind having a big one in front of a packed audience at Central Broward Park Stadium.

PLAYING AVESH A COMPULSION

Avesh Khan has been taken to cleaners in the last two games but Dravid-Rohit pair has no other option but to continue with the profligate MP speedster as Harshal Patel hasn't fully recovered from his rib-cage injury.

Avesh throughout his career has been a bit one-dimensional with either bowling too short or too full giving batters ample time to work on the pace or play the full-blooded drive.

It will be interesting to see if Kuldeep Yadav gets a game in the series and India play an extra spinner in case Harshal doesn't get fit in time.

TEAMS

India: Rohit Sharma (C), Suryakumar Yadav, Shreyas Iyer, Deepak Hooda, Hardik Pandya, Rishabh Pant, Ishan Kishan, Dinesh Karthik, Sanju Samson, Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Parel, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravi Bishnoi, Kuldeep Yadav, Arshdeep Singh, Avesh Khan, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Harshal Patel

West Indies: Nicholas Pooran (C), Rovman Powell, Shamarh Brooks, Dominic Drakes, Shimron Hetmyer, Jason Holder, Akeal Hosein, Alzarri Joseph, Brandon King, Kyle Mayers, Obed McCoy, Keemo Paul, Romario Shepherd, Odean Smith, Devon Thomas, Hayden Walsh.

Guardiola will not stop Bernardo joining Barca

AP ■ BARCELONA

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola will not stand in Bernardo Silva's way should he wish to join Barcelona before the end of the transfer window.

Guardiola said there has been no bid from his former club for the Portuguese midfielder, but would not keep Silva in Manchester against his will.

Despite debts of 1.3 billion euros (\$1.3 billion) Barcelona have embarked on a spending spree this summer and will reportedly turn their attentions to Silva should Frenkie de Jong depart the Camp Nou.

City have already let Gabriel Jesus and Oleksandr Zinchenko join Arsenal and sold Raheem Sterling to Chelsea this summer as all three sought more regular game time.

By contrast, Silva has been a vital player in City winning four Premier League titles in the past five seasons and would be difficult to replace in the final weeks of the transfer window.

"I was comfortable working with Oleks, Raheem, Gabriel, incredible characters that helped us achieve what we achieved," Guardiola said at his pre-match press conference ahead of the start of City's Premier League defence at West Ham on Sunday.

"Sometimes for the club, sometimes for the players, sometimes for the agent, sometimes you have to divide our path.



"Especially the desire of the player is the most important thing. Of course I would love Bernardo to continue here, he is a special player for us. But I don't know what is going to happen.

"What happens will happen and if he stays it is perfect and in the end if he has to leave it is because football is like this, the player has a desire. I will not be a person to stop a desire for the people."

Klopp wary of short-term solutions to injury problems

AP ■ LONDON

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp on Friday said he was reluctant to dip into the transfer market in order to solve "four-week" injury problems.

Reds centre-back Ibrahima Konate suffered a knee injury in the friendly against Strasbourg on Sunday which Klopp said will see the defender out "for a while".

Konate has joined a list of sidelined Liverpool players that already includes Kostas Tsimikas, Alex Oxlade-Chamberlain, Diogo Jota, Curtis Jones and reserve goalkeeper Caoimhin Kelleher, with Naby Keita set to resume training on Friday after nearly a week out with illness.

None of the absentees are understood to be suffering with long-term injuries, however.

"We have too many injuries, that's true," said Klopp. "But in the moment nothing has changed (in terms of new signings). A lot of unlucky situations. Started with Caoimh and Diogo, pretty much one was injured and one had a re-injury.

"In a few weeks' time they will be back, but they've missed pre-season and that's not cool.

15 Aussie players offered AUD 700,000 to play in UAE League

PTI ■ SYDNEY

The International League (ILT20) in UAE has reportedly offered 15 top Australian players a whopping AUD 700,000 deals to ditch the Big Bash League (BBL), dates of which are overlapping, causing considerable tension in Cricket Australia (CA)'s ranks.

The Big Bash League will be played between December 13 to February 4 while the inaugural edition of ILT20 is scheduled from January 6 to February 12, making it virtually impossible for Australian players to take part in both the tournaments.

According to a report in Sydney Morning Herald, "As many as 15 Australian players have been offered contracts worth up to AUD 700,000 a year to abandon the Big Bash League and play in the UAE T20 tournament in January."

Most of the top Australian players have no obligation to play BBL under their existing central contract, with Warner not having played a single edition since 2014.

The BBL's highest payment till date from the draft has been D'arcy Short's \$258,000 (AUD 370,000) and the money com-

pared to what has been paid to marquee Australian players in IPL, has been significantly lesser.

But with Indian IPL owners investing in UAE and CSA T20 leagues, the BBL will need to revamp its pay structure to keep the best in the business interested.

According to Australian newspapers 'The Age' and 'The Sydney Morning Herald' by senior cricket sources, "the scale of the attempted raid on Australian players goes far beyond the threat of losing one player - David Warner - to the UAE because he does not have a BBL deal."

The paper also revealed: "UAE contract sizes so far above and beyond what has been on offer in the BBL have placed Cricket Australia and the Australian Cricketers Association under pressure to reassure players that they are not being left behind the rest of the world by remaining loyal to the game in this country."

However it is learnt CA in its bid to retain the sheen and quality of BBL, is keen on signing a lucrative one-off deal with Warner, which will prevent him from taking up the ILT20 offer.



Raza, Kaia centuries help Zimbabwe beat B'desh

AP ■ HARARE

Sikandar Raza and Innocent Kaia struck centuries as Zimbabwe recovered from a disastrous start to stun Bangladesh by five wickets on Friday in the first match of a three-game ODI series.

The home team lost openers Regis Chakabva and Tarisai Musakanda with just six runs on the scoreboard as they chased a formidable Bangladesh total of 303-2 that included four half centuries.

A third Zimbabwe wicket fell after they lifted the score to 62 and then Raza and Kaia came together to put on 192 runs for the fourth wicket and set up a brilliant victory as Zimbabwe reached 307-5 with 10 balls to spare. Raza was unbeaten on 135, including six sixes and eight fours, while Kaia struck two sixes and 11 fours in his 110 before being caught by Shoriful Islam at short fine leg.

Bangladesh, seventh in the ODI rankings and eight places above Zimbabwe, took advantage of being put in to bat by building what appeared to be a winning score.

Opener Liton Das led the way with an unbeaten 81 before being forced to retire hurt with a suspected hamstring injury.

He faced 89 balls and scored one six and nine fours.

Anamul Haque (73), captain Tamim Iqbal (62) and

Mushfique Rahim (52) were the other scorers of half centuries for a team fresh from a 3-0 ODI hammering of the West Indies.

But while the visiting batsmen scored freely, their bowlers had no answers to Pakistan-born Raza and Kaia at Harare sports Club.

The pair reached centuries within two balls of each other during the 39th over with Kaia scoring his maiden ton through a single while two runs from Raza gave him his fourth 100 in the 50-over format.

Victory continued a remarkable transformation of Zimbabwe since former batting star Dave Houghton began a second stint as coach after 3-0 ODI and T20 whitewashes by Afghanistan in June.

They hosted a T20 World Cup qualifying tournament last month and won all five matches to clinch a place at the main event in Australia from October.

Then, earlier this week, they edged Bangladesh by 10 runs in a thriller to snatch a 2-1 victory in a T20 series.

BCB TO INVESTIGATE SHAKIB'S POST

Bangladesh's biggest cricketer star Shakib Al Hasan has once again courted controversy as country's cricket board is set to investigate an alleged social media post from him endorsing a sports betting company.

Gauff beats Osaka to enter San Jose last 8



AP ■ SAN JOSE

American teenager Coco Gauff built a big lead early then had to dig deep late for a 6-4, 6-4 victory over four-time Grand Slam champion Naomi Osaka on Thursday (Friday IST) at the WTA hardcourt tournament in San Jose, California.

The 18-year-old, who reached her first Grand Slam final at the French Open in June, needed just one break of serve to seize the first set 6-4 in the blockbuster encounter.

With booming serves and matching ground strokes, she then roared to a 5-1 lead in the second set.

But the Japanese superstar, unseeded in her first tournament since an opening-round exit at Roland Garros, didn't go down without a fight.

She saved match points —

all on her own serve, before Gauff was finally able to serve it out. "Even though I was up 5-1 and 40-0 I knew I didn't have the match in the bag yet and obviously she proved that," Gauff said.

"Whenever you play Naomi she can play lights-out tennis. I feel like maybe two of the match points I had an actual shot on.

It was, and sixth-seeded Gauff advanced to a quarter-final clash with second-seed Paula Badosa of Spain.

In other second-round action, unseeded American Shelby Rogers toppled top-seed Maria Sakkari 6-1, 6-3.

Fourth-seeded Aryna Sabalenka and ninth-seed Veronika Kudermetova made it through to the quarters. Sabalenka beat American Caroline Dolehide 4-7, 6-1, 7-5 and Kudermetova topped American Claire Liu 6-2, 7-5.

Unvaccinated Djokovic officially out of Montreal ATP event

AP ■ MONTREAL

Wimbledon champion Novak Djokovic, whose refusal to be vaccinated against Covid makes him unable to enter Canada, has officially withdrawn from the ATP hardcourt tournament in Montreal, organizers said on Thursday.

The Serb star's unvaccinated status made it unlikely he would play in the prestigious ATP Masters tournament, just as it means he will probably miss the US Open starting later in August as the United States also requires visitors to the country to show proof of vaccination.



Germany's Oscar Otte has also withdrawn from the tournament which starts Monday with Benjamin Bonzi of France and Australia's Wimbledon runner-up

Nick Kyrgios moving into the main draw, Tennis Canada said.

In addition, three-time Grand Slam champion Andy Murray was handed a wild card on Thursday, along with Belgian David Goffin and Canadians Vasek Pospisil and Alexis Galarneau.

Britain's Murray, a former world number one who won the Canadian title in 2009, 2010 and 2015, has been rising in the rankings this season from 134th to 50th.

He reached finals in Sydney in January and Stuttgart in June, but fell in the first round in Washington earlier this week to Sweden's Mikael Ymer.

Medvedev races into Los Cabos semi-finals

AP ■ LOS CABOS

World number one Daniil Medvedev powered into the semi-finals of the ATP hardcourt tournament in Los Cabos, Mexico, on Thursday (Friday IST) with a 6-2, 6-2 victory over Ricardas Berankis.

Medvedev, playing his first tournament since bowing out of the quarter-finals at Mallorca in June, had launched his return with his 250th career match win over Australian qualifier Rinky Hijikata on Wednesday.

He said the victory over Lithuania's Berankis felt "very different" but the outcome was the same and never looked in doubt as Medvedev reeled off eight straight games to go from 2-2 in the opening set to 6-2, 4-0 and fully in control.

"My opponent played very different, much more aggressive," Medvedev said, adding that

it actually worked to his advantage.

Medvedev will face fourth-seeded serb Miomir Kecmanovic for a place in the final. Kecmanovic beat Brandon Nakashima 6-2, 6-4.

If he reaches the final here, Medvedev will be assured of taking the world number one ranking into his defense of the US Open title at Flushing Meadows later this month.

RADUCANU IN QFS

Washington: Reigning US Open champion Emma Raducanu of Britain advanced to the quarter-finals of the ATP and WTA Washington Open, refusing to wilt Thursday after a marathon match in sweltering heat.

The English 19-year-old outlasted Colombia's Camila Osorio 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/4) after two hours and 50 minutes for a gritty victory in the WTA's longest two-set main draw



match of the year.

She advanced to a Friday quarter-final against Liudmila Samsonova, who rallied past Australian Ajla Tomljanovic 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 at the US Open tuneup.

It will be only Raducanu's third quarter-final since her amazing Grand Slam title run last year at New York, having reached the last eight at Cluj-Napoca last October and Stuttgart in April.

She has yet to reach a semi-final since taking the trophy last September at Flushing Meadows.

On the men's side, British 16th seed Daniel Evans advanced to the last eight when US third seed Taylor Fritz retired with the Englishman leading 3-6, 7-6 (8/6), 4-1.

Next up for Evans is world number 96 Yoshihito Nishioka of Japan, who edged seventh seed Karen Khachanov 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (7/1).

SREESHANKAR LONG JUMPS TO WIN SILVER

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Murali Sreeshankar clinched a silver in men's long jump event to give India a second medal in athletics at the Commonwealth Games here on Thursday.

The 23-year-old national record holder soared to 8.08m in his fifth attempt to finish second behind Laquan Nairn of Bahamas in a nerve-wrecking men's long jump final.

Nairn also had a best jump of 8.08m but his second best of 7.98m was better than 7.84m of Sreeshankar.

Under rules, if two jumpers are tied on same distance, the one who has a better second best effort will be ranked ahead.

Jovan van Vuuren (8.06m) of South Africa took the Bronze.

The other Indian in the fray, Muhammed Anees Yahiya ended at fifth with a best jump of 7.97m.

Sreeshankar's became the first Indian male long jumper to win a Silver at the CWG. Suresh Babu had won a Bronze in the 1978 edition.

Among women, Prajusha Maliakkal won a Silver in the 2010 edition in Delhi, while legendary Anju Bobby George bagged a Bronze in 2002.

Sreeshankar had gone into CWG as Gold medal favourite on the basis of his season's and personal best of 8.36m, which had put him in joint second ranking in the world this season.

But he struggled in his first four jumps regarding his landing on the foot board. He began with a 7.64m before jumping identical 7.84m in his second and third attempts. His fourth jump was a foul.

He was outside the medal contention at the end of the fourth round as he was at sixth place at that stage but his fifth attempt of 8.08m took him to the second place.

In a dramatic final round jump, he seemed to have crossed the 8m mark -- which would have given him a gold -- but to his and the Indian contingent's disappointment, his foot landed 2cm ahead of the line on the foot board.

The final attempt was thus ruled as a foul and Sreeshankar had to settle for a Silver.



Indian men's 4x400m relay team qualifies for final, Jyothi exits in 100m hurdles

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

The Indian men's 4x400m relay team qualified for the final at the Commonwealth Games after finishing second in its heat race here on Friday.

The Indian quartet of Muhammed Anas Yahiya, Noah Nirmal Tom, Mohammed Ajmal and Amoj Jacob took the automatic qualification route, clocking 3:06.97s to finish second behind Kenya in heat 2.

India were fourth before the last leg bend but Amoj overtook two runners at the final stretch to finish second. He had suffered a hamstring injury while running

4x400m relay as part of the Indian quartet during the National Inter-State Championships in Chennai last month.

India finished sixth overall across the two heats with Botswana 3:05.11s being the quickest.

The final will be held on Sunday.

In women's 100m hurdles, national record holder Jyothi Yarraji crashed out in the first round heats with a below-par show. She clocked 13.18m to finish fourth in heat 2 and 10th overall. She holds the national record of 13.04s.

The heat races were held under windy conditions and Yarraji ran with a tailwind of 2m/s. All the competitors ran with tailwind of 2m/s or above.

The 22-year-old Yarraji had bettered her national record thrice this season.

Ancy Sojan also failed to qualify for the women's long jump final. She was ranked 13th overall in the qualifying round with a best jump of 6.25m, which was wind-assisted (tailwind of 2.3m/s).

Those who touched 6.75m or at least 12 best performers across the two groups advance to the final.

The 21-year-old Sojan, who has a season and personal best of 6.55m, was seventh in Group A qualifying round.

On Wednesday, Tejaswin Shankar had won a Bronze in men's high jump to open India's medal account in athletics in this CWG.

It was Sreeshankar's first medal in a major international competition and a multi-sport event. Before this, he had won a Bronze in the 2018 Asian U-20 Championships in Gifu, Japan.

The medal will give him some sort of relief after his disappointing performance in the World Athletics Championships in Eugene, USA, where he had finished seventh in the final last month.

He had gone into the World Championships as a dark horse for a medal with a season's and personal best of 8.36m.

RUES MISSING GOLD

Commonwealth Games Silver medalist long jumper Murali Sreeshankar rued missing out on a Gold, saying his fourth jump, which was ruled a foul under laser-based new technology, would have been legal in earlier system and big enough to finish on top of the podium.

The 23-year-old Sreeshankar said he initially thought he had a big valid jump in his fourth attempt which would have given him a Gold. However, his jump was adjudged a foul under the new system.

"I was very surprised, you can't call it (fourth jump) a foul because I never overstepped the foul board but she (pit-side official) explained to me the exact jumping position, movement of my foot which was crossing the perpendicular plate," Sreeshankar said in a virtual interaction.

"If it was the previous system which we had in past years, it would not have been called a foul," said the national record holder (8.36m).

He said the conditions during the CWG long jump final was not ideal as it was a bit cold and windy.

"Performance on the particular day matters. In major championships, winning a medal is the priority.

"I completely messed up the first three jumps, trying to have safe jumps (by leaving good gap). My focus after that was to be on podium with good jumps in final three attempts."

Sindhu, Srikanth sail into quarterfinals



PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Star Indian shuttlers P V Sindhu and Kidambi Srikanth had another easy outing as they stormed into the quarterfinals of the women's and men's singles events respectively with comfortable wins at the Commonwealth Games here on Friday.

Sindhu, a Silver medalist at the 2018 edition, expectedly faced no resistance from Uganda's Husina Kobugabe, winning 21-10, 21-9 in her pre-quarterfinal match.

Srikanth, who had also finished second best at Gold Coast, too didn't break any sweat on his way to a 21-9, 21-12 win over Sri Lanka's Dumindu Abeywickrama in the men's singles.

Earlier, Indian women's

pairing of Gayatri Gopichand and Treasa Jolly had entered the last eight with a 21-2, 21-4 win over Mauritius' Jemimah Leung For Sang and Ganesha Mungrah.

Double Olympic medalist Sindhu will face Malaysia's Goh Jin Wei in the next round for a place in the semifinals.

Sindhu had defeated Goh in two tight games in the final of the mixed team final and can ill-afford to lower her guard against the 22-year-old Malaysian, a winner of the World Junior Championships gold in 2015 and 2018.

Former world number one Srikanth will be up against England's Toby Pent, who is ranked 54th in the world.

Gayatri and Treasa will meet Jamaica's Tahlia Richardson and Katherine Wynter next.

Sudhir wins Gold in para powerlifting men's heavyweight event at CWG

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

India's Sudhir claimed the Gold medal in men's heavyweight para powerlifting event at the Commonwealth Games here on Thursday.

Sudhir, an Asian Para Games Bronze medalist, lifted 208kg in his first attempt before increasing it to 212kg in his second effort to gather 134.5 points and break the Games record.

The 27-year-old Sudhir, who has an impairment due to the effects of polio, thus opened India's para sports medal account in the ongoing CWG.

Ikechukwu Christian Obichukwu won the Silver with 133.6 points, while Micky Yule bagged the Bronze with 130.9 points.

Sudhir had won a Bronze in men's upto 88kg with a best lift of 214kg at the



World Para Powerlifting Asia-Oceania Open Championship in South Korea in June.

Sudhir, who had started powerlifting in 2013 in Sonipat, has also qualified for Hangzhou 2022 Asian Para Games, which was postponed to next year.

At 75, Scotland's George Miller becomes oldest Commonwealth Games medalist

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

George Miller, 75 years and eight months old, on Friday became the oldest player to win a medal at the Commonwealth Games when he bagged the mixed pairs Gold in lawn bowls for Scotland.

The team, lead Melanie Innes, her director Miller and skip director Sarah Jane, scripted Scotland's 16-9 victory over Wales to win Gold in the para mixed pairs B2/B3 at Victoria Park



here.

"I think Rosemary is quite pleased," said Miller, while replacing teammate Rosemary Lenton as the oldest Gold medal winner in Commonwealth Games history:

On his message to older people who might want to get involved in the sport:

"Bowls is quite easy for older people but any sport, walking, football, rugby, you name it, get out there, exercise, play games. Competing is brilliant whatever age you are," he said.

Lovlina targets bigger goals, says CWG 'not important'

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Star Indian boxer Lovlina Borgohain is not losing sleep over her shock quarterfinal exit and says a Commonwealth Games success would not have helped her much in her quest for a second successive Olympic medal in 2024 as she was competing in a non-Olympic category in Birmingham CWG.

Lovlina, who became the only second Indian woman boxer to win an Olympic medal in Tokyo last year, competed in the light middleweight category, which does not figure in the 2024 Paris Games roster.

"That's why CWG was not that important to me as my main target is Paris and this was not an Olympic weight category. It would not have helped me much in the larger scheme of things," Lovlina said.

"Yes, Commonwealth Games have a big stature no doubt about that. But my target is Paris and to get myself prepared is the main objective."

At her maiden CWG appearance in Gold Coast in 2018, Lovlina had also met a similar fate, bowing out in the quarterfinals.

"Every loss or win is an experience



And I'm taking this loss in a positive way. I've to work on myself.

"Ultimate goal is Paris, whatever the difficulties maybe, I've to overcome them. Life has many ups and downs but 'haara nahin maan na hai' (it's not about giving up)." She made headlines for wrong reasons in the build-up to the CWG as she alleged "mental harassment" after her personal coach Sandhya Gurung was denied entry into the Games Village.

Sandhya was added to the contingent days before her bout.

"Yes, I was a bit distracted in the build-up to the Games. But thankfully everything was sorted before the competition. I got my coaches.

"But I feel it did not affect me. There was a lot of publicity but I was away from social media. I wasn't aware of what's going on around me. Even now, I've kept it off to keep myself away from it."

India beat England to enter final of men's fours

BIRMINGHAM: India are assured of a second medal from lawn bowl competition after the men's fours team made its way into the final of the Commonwealth Games here on Friday.

After the quartet of Lovely Choubey (lead), Pinki (second), Nayanmoni Saikia (third) and Rupa Rani Tirkey (slip) beat South Africa 17-10 in the women's fours final to hand India a historic gold on Tuesday, it was the turn of men's team to follow their women counterparts. The men's quartet of Sunil Bahadur (lead), Navneet Singh (second), Chandan Kumar Singh (third) and Dinesh Kumar (skip) defeated hosts England by a close 13-12 margin in the semifinal to assure India of at least a silver medal.

Earlier in the day, the women's pair of Lovely Choubey and Nayanmoni Saikia were knocked out of the Games after they went down in the quarterfinals. The Indian duo lost to England's Sophie Tolchard and Amy Pharoah 18-14.

Bajrang, Deepak, Sakshi win Golds

SILVER FOR ANSHU, UP GIRL DIVYA TAKES BRONZE

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Bajrang Punia was a class apart while defending his title before Sakshi Malik produced a sensational gold medal winning effort as Indian wrestlers grabbed five medals, including three gold, at the Commonwealth Games here on Friday.

Deepak Punia (86kg) also contributed in swelling India's medal tally by winning the men's free style gold but birthday girl Anshu Malik (57kg) had to be content with a silver medal in her maiden CWG appearance.

Divya Kakran clinched a bronze in 68kg, winning the medal play-off in just 26 seconds against Tonga's Tiger Lily.

Courtesy three golds, India moved to fifth position in the medal tally ahead of Scotland.

Such was Tokyo Olympics bronze medalist Bajrang's dominance in the 65kg competition that he won three of his four bouts inside first rounds.

The 28-year-old defending champion beat Naurau's Lowe Bingham and Mauritius' Jean Guylane Joris Bandou by fall before winning by technical superiority against England's Geroge Ramm.

Canada's Lachlan Maurice McNeil fought well against Bajrang but the Indian was far superior in technique and stamina as he won the bout 9-2.

Bajrang has been struggling to play freely since last year and his over defensive tactics put a question-mark over his ability to extend his dominance in international arena but on Friday he made his moves without inhibition.

However, the CWG is not the best platform to judge if Bajrang has got his mojo back because of the inferior field quality.

For Sakshi, who has been battling for relevance for long, it was an ideal opportunity to get some confidence back and she used it to optimum level in the 62kg contest by winning her maiden CWG gold.

She began by pinning home team wrestler Kelsey Barnes and followed that with a technical superiority win against Cameroon's Berthe Emilienne.

In the final against Ana Paula Godinez Gonzalez, Sakshi trailed 0-4 after the

Canadian scored on counter-attack. Sakshi's right leg attack got wrong as she lost position, allowing her rival to complete a take down move.

The U-23 World champion effected another take down to go into the break with a 4-0 lead.

Sakshi, who of late, has been seen succumbing to pressure reversed the trend this time as she initiated a right leg attack to throw the Canadian on the mat.

From there she used power to pin Gonzalez, turning the table on her rival in a sensational manner.

She had won a bronze in 2018 in Gold Coast and a silver in 2014 Glasgow Games.

Deepak Punia (86kg) was calculative in his bouts and finished on top of the podium without losing a single point.

The wrestler from Chhara village began with technical superiority win over Matthew Clay Oxenham from New Zealand and beat Canada's Alexander Moore 3-1, setting up the gold medal bout against Pakistan's Muhammad Inam.

The 23-year-old Indian had better stamina and outlasted Inam 3-0. His first point was from a push out while the second came on passivity of the Pakistani.

There were no big moves in the bout as Inam had lost steam by the second round. Deepak completed his win with another push out point.

Anshu, who has taken rapid strides in her career, reached the women's 57kg final with similar dominance but ended up second-best with a silver medal.

Divya had got a tough 68kg draw as she found Tokyo Olympic silver medalist and 11-time African champion Blessing Oborududu from Nigeria in her campaign-opener.

The first round was worth a final though but Divya was outplayed by the formidable Nigerian. The Asian Games bronze medalist won her repechage round against Blandine Nyeh Ngiri by fall.

Also fighting for bronze will be Mohit Grewal (125kg), who won against Cyprus' Alexios Kaouslidis 10-1 but lost in the semifinal to Canada's Amarveer Dhesi by technical superiority.

He is up against Jamaica's Aaron Anthony Johnson.

Paddlers Manika, Sreeja storm into women singles quarters

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Indian paddlers Manika Batra and Sreeja Akula entered the women's singles quarterfinals in the table tennis event of the Commonwealth Games here on Friday.

Batra steamrolled Australian Jee Minhyung 11-4, 11-8, 11-6, 12-10 to book her place in the quarterfinal.

The 27-year-old star paddler will now take on Singapore's Jian Zeng in the last eight-clash later tonight.

Sreeja, on the other hand, played out a nerve-wracking encounter against Charlotte Carey from Wales to secure herself a last eight berth.

The 24-year-old toiled hard but held her nerves to beat Carey 8-11, 11-7, 12-14, 9-11, 11-4, 15-13, 12-10.

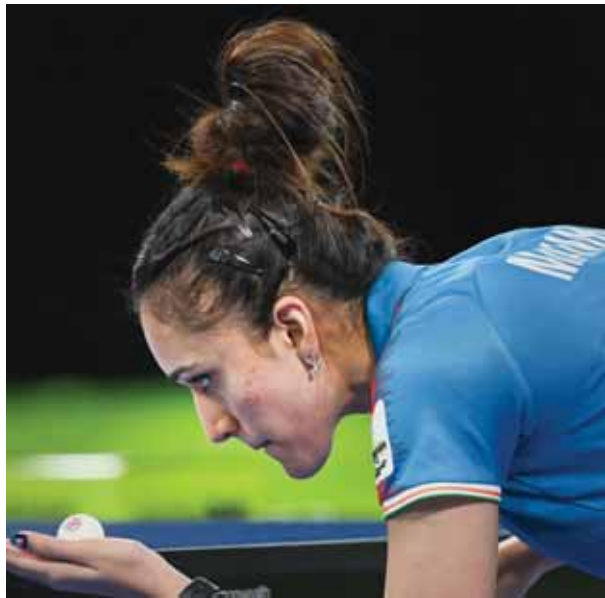
Sreeja will lock horns with Canada's Mo Zhang in the quarterfinal which is also slated to be held later tonight.

Earlier in the day, both Manika and Sreeja also reached the mixed doubles quarterfinal events.

Batra and mixed doubles partner Sathiyan Gnanasekaran humbled Nigerians Olajide Omutayo and Ajoke Ojomu 11-7, 11-6, 11-7.

The two will face Malaysia's Javen Choong and Karen Lyne in the first quarter-final event on Friday.

Sreeja and her partner Achanta Sharath Kamal, on the other hand, came from behind to beat Malaysia's



Leond Chee Fang and Ho Ying 5-11, 11-2, 11-6, 11-5.

They will square up against home favourites Liam Pitchford and Tin-Tin Ho in the second quarterfinal clash on the same day.

Meanwhile, Reeth Tennon, bowed out in the women's singles event after she went down to Singapore's Feng Tianwei in a round of 16 game.

The Singaporean Tianwei proved too strong for Tennon and the latter was beaten 11-2, 11-4, 9-11, 11-3, 11-4.

Meanwhile, Kamal and Gnanasekaran stormed into the quarterfinals of the men's doubles event after easing past Bangladesh's Bawm

Ramhimlian and Ridoy Mohutasin Ahmed.

The Indian pair won 11-6, 11-1, 11-4 in three straight games in their round of 16 clash.

Kamal and Gnanasekaran will now take on English pair of Tom Jarvis and Sam Walker later tonight.

The pair of Harmeet Desai and Sanil Shetty also was through to the last-eight stage after they defeated Australian pair of Chambers Dillon and Yan Xin 3-1.

Desai and Shetty, who won 11-3, 9-11, 9-11, 7-11, will now lock horns with Singapore's Clérance Chew and Shao Feng Ethan Poh in the last eight round match, later in the day.