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INTEREST SUBVENTION ON
SHORT FARM LOAN RESTORED

RAIPUR, THURSDAY AUGUST 18, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3

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INDIA TO FACE
ZIMBABWE IN
1ST ODI TODAY
12 SPORTGadkari, Chouhan out in
BJP Parl board shake-up

With eye to K'taka
polls, BSY inducted
in BJP's apex panel;
CEC too reshuffled

DEEPAK UPRETI/PNS ■
NEW DELHI

In a major reshuffle in the BJP's Parliamentary Board, the highest decision-making body of the party, former BJP president and Union Minister Nitin Gadkari and Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, the party's longest serving CM, were dropped, giving way for six new members, including 79-year-old influential "Lingayat" leader and former Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa and former IPS officer and Punjab leader Iqbal Singh Lalpura.

The exit of Gadkari and Chouhan from the Parliamentary Board is suggestive of the continuation of "generational changes" policy in the BJP before the next Lok Sabha polls in 2024 which started from 2014 onwards, but Yediyurappa's inclusion surely did not fit in this pattern and could be attributed to political expediency (Karnataka polls).

The BJP has created



"Margdarshak Mandal" to accommodate party veterans like LK Advani and Murlu Manohar Joshi after they ceased to be the members of the board.

Gadkari's recent reported comments that "sometime I think like quitting politics" and "politics is now only for satta" (power) had created ripples in the political circles giving rise to speculation about his equation with the top BJP leadership. Chouhan, the three-time Chief Minister, would be facing Assembly polls in Madhya Pradesh in 2023.

This is the first time the board has been rejigged under Nadda, who took over as the party president in 2020.

In an exercise to make the apex body regionally and socially more representative, the BJP has included tribal,



OBC, minorities members, including former Assam CM and Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal (tribal), former Lok Sabha member from Haryana Sudha Yadav (OBC) and former Union Minister Satyanarayan Jatya (SC) from Madhya Pradesh.

Lalpura, a member from the minority community, was appointed the Minorities Commission Chairman in 2021 for the second time. A decorated officer, he was one of the police officers selected to arrest Sikh extremist leader Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale and recently played a key role on behalf of the BJP to negotiate with the agitating farmers in Punjab. His appointment in the BJP's powerful body indicates the party's attempts to expand its base in the AAP-ruled-Punjab in the run-up to 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

One more key entrant to the influential BJP's panel is Dr K Laxman, who is a Rajya

Sabha member and comes from Hyderabad. Former Telangana BJP president, Laxman is currently party's OBC Morcha chairman. His inclusion is BJP's attempt to increase its political footprints in Telangana which is to go to poll before December 2023.

Yediyurappa's entry to the board is also suggestive of the party's efforts to bring unity in the faction-ridden Karnataka BJP where the "Lingayat" patriarch holds considerable clout and could become a rallying point for the party. The State is to face Assembly elections next year.

The parliamentary panel in its previous form had five vacancies caused by the passing away of senior leaders — Arun Jaitley, Sushma Swaraj and Ananth Kumar — and election of M Venkaiah Naidu as Vice-President and Thawarchand Gehlot being appointed as Karnataka Governor.

Puri announces 1,100 flats for
Rohingyas; MHA says 'no'PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

In a clear case of lack of coordination, hours after Urban Development Minister Hardeep Singh Puri announced awarding refugee status to Rohingyas and allotted them 1,100 flats in Delhi, the Union Home Ministry said no such decision was taken, and termed Rohingyas as illegal foreigners, waiting to be deported.

"India has always welcomed those who have sought refuge in the country. In a landmark decision all #Rohingya #Refugees will be shifted to EWS flats in Bakkarwala area of Delhi. They will be provided basic amenities, UNHCR IDs & round-the-clock @DelhiPolice protection.

"Those who made a career out of spreading canards on India's refugee policy deliberately linking it to #CAA will be disappointed. India respects & follows UN Refugee Convention 1951 & provides refuge to all, regardless of their race, religion or creed," tweeted Puri at 7.30 am, endorsing the UN Refugee Convention, which India has not approved.

Soon, Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and many right wing organisations started attacking Puri for his Wednesday morning tweet and asked the Centre to change the decision and deport Rohingyas.

○ Rohingya infiltrations started in India by end of 2012 when Myanmar Army started action against the Muslim population in their tussles with Buddhists. In Delhi 1,200 Rohingyas sheltered in Okhla and North West Delhi.

○ As per the Intelligence agencies, around 40,000 Rohingyas

infiltrated into India during 2012-2014, mostly in Jammu, Haryana's Mewat, UP, Telangana, Kerala, part of Bengal, Assam borders.

○ UNHCR's Report acknowledged that more than 18,000 Rohingyas have taken shelter in India, seeking refugee status



37-year-old woman poses for photographs at the Rohingya refugee settlement area in Kalindi Kunj in New Delhi on Wednesday

PTI

With criticism coming out from all quarters, by 3 pm the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) issued a statement and series of tweets rejecting Puri's claims. Interestingly MHA put out blame on "news reports in certain sections of media" for the goof up created by Urban Development Minister Puri.

"With respect to news reports in certain sections of the media regarding Rohingya illegal foreigners, it is clarified that the MHA has not given

any directions to provide EWS flats to Rohingya illegal migrants at Bakkarwala in New Delhi. The Government of Delhi proposed to shift the Rohingyas to a new location. MHA has directed the Government of Delhi to ensure Rohingya illegal foreigners will continue at the present location at Kanchan Kunj, Madanpur Khadar as MHA has already taken up the matter of deportation of illegal foreigners with the concerned country."

CAPSULE

RUSSIAN OIL: INDIA FOR
BEST DEAL, CLAIMS EAM

Bangkok: The US and some others may not appreciate India buying Russian oil, but they have accepted it as New Delhi has not been defensive about its stand but made them realise that the Government had the "moral duty" to ensure that the people got the "best deal", External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said.

INDIA, MALAYSIA REVIEW
BILATERAL DEFENCE TIES

New Delhi: India and Malaysia on Wednesday reviewed their bilateral defence ties and vowed to uphold the principle of collective responsibility for maritime security in the Indian Ocean region.

PARTIES CAN'T BE BARRED
FROM POLL VOWS: SC

New Delhi: Political parties and individuals cannot be prevented from making poll promises aimed at fulfilling the constitutional mandate and the term "freebie" should not be confused with genuine welfare measures, the Supreme Court said Wednesday.

ED names Jacqueline
Fernandez in money
laundering case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday named actor Jacqueline Fernandez as an accused in the money laundering case against conman Suresh Chandrashekar, who is facing charges in a ₹200 crore extortion case. The ED has named her as accused in a supplementary charge sheet.

After being chargesheeted, the actor shared a post on her social media page saying she will remain "strong" in these testing times. The agency filed the fresh (second supplementary) charge sheet or prosecution complaint in the case before a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court here.

L-G seeks action
against babu for
₹50 lakh bribe,
undue favours

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has recommended action against IAS officer Udit Prakash Rai for allegedly accepting ₹50 lakh bribe to grant "undue favours" to an executive engineer in two corruption cases.

Rai, a 2007 batch AGMUT (Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram and Union Territories) cadre officer, is currently posted as a special secretary in the health and family welfare department of the Delhi Government.

Sources in the Raj Niwas said the Lieutenant Governor has made this recommendation to the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) on the basis of a substantiated recommendation made by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

18 Indian cities in 20 worst
PM2.5 list, says US reportPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

India has been home to 18 of the 20 world cities with the severest increase in fine particle pollutants (PM2.5) from 2010 to 2019.

Delhi and Kolkata reported 106 and 99 deaths per one lakh population respectively in last year due to the lethal pollutant, a report published by the US-based research organisation Health Effects Institute (HEI) has said.

The analysts of the report used data from 2010 to 2019 from over 7,000 cities across the globe and focussed on two of the most harmful pollutants; fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and nitrogen dioxide (NO2).

PM2.5 refers to fine particles (measuring 2.5 µm or less in diameter) that penetrate deep into the body and fuel inflammation in the lungs and respiratory tract, leading to the risk of having cardiovas-



cular and respiratory problems, including a weak immune system. Also, said the report, overall, India and Indonesia have seen the most severe increase in PM2.5 pollution, whereas China has seen the greatest improvements.

Of the 50 cities with the increase in PM2.5, 41 are in

India and 9 are in Indonesia. On the other hand, of the 20 cities with the greatest decrease in PM2.5 pollution from 2010 to 2019, all are located in China," said the analysts.

In 2019, Delhi recorded an annual average PM2.5 concentration of 110 microgram per cubic metre, the highest

among the most-populous cities in the world, followed by Kolkata (84 microgram per cubic metre), said the report "Air Quality and Health in Cities" by the State of Global Air Initiative, a collaboration between the HEI and the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation's Global Burden of Disease project.

The comprehensive and detailed analysis of air pollution and global health effects for over 7,000 cities released on Wednesday also shows that Delhi has the highest average level of fine PM 2.5 among the world's most populated cities.

The report summarises data on air pollution exposures and associated health impacts in 7,239 cities (with minimum population of 50,000) from 2010 to 2019. It combines ground-based air quality data with satellites and models to produce air quality estimates for cities around the world.



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Sorcery killing cases highest in tribal Rayagada

People of over 800 villages still believe in witchcraft on health issues

BADAL TAH ■ RAYAGADA

Superstition killings are not new in Rayagada district. In 2015, superstition claimed two lives in the district. Lotora Pidiaka and Apadu Melaka were allegedly killed by a group of villagers at Nathma in Rayagada block on the suspicion that they practised witchcraft.

The same year, a 25-year-old youth of Kan village under Bissam Cuttack block was murdered and his body was set ablaze. The villagers suspected him of practising witchcraft. In 2016 under Puttasing police limits, on the suspicion of sorcery, a husband-wife duo along with their elder daughter was tied in a lonely place and culprits killed them by injecting pesticide into their bodies. The assailants then buried the bodies. The next day, they consigned the bodies to flames in order to destroy evidence. Last year, nine persons, who were involved in



this gruesome murder, were sentenced to a death penalty by court of law.

During the fag end of 2017, 14 persons of the district were sentenced to life imprisonment for killing a man on suspicion of sorcery. The victim, Dekhina Tadingi, of Chanchara Durgum village was killed by a group from the same village.

Recently, Kashipur was in news again, not for Cholera but for brutal killing of an old tribal person on the suspicion of witchcraft. A small group of villagers barged into the house of Dai Majhi at village Titiguda under Dudukabahal

panchayat of Kashipur block and mercilessly beat Dai to death on the charge of sorcery. They heavily thrashed Dai and his two sons when they were sleeping in their house. Somehow, Dai's sons being seriously injured escaped from the spot. Dai's wife, who was also present in the house, could not do anything to check the culprits as they were violent. Neither could the neighbours stop the vandalism perpetrated by the culprits. One of the relatives of the deceased said that Mana Majhi, Naba Majhi, Bhima Majhi and Raib Majhi of the same village were involved in the incident.

Despite the implementation of the Odisha Prevention of Witch Hunting, Act, 2013, that entails penalty and punishment for practising and abetting sorcery, the cases are growing. Rayagada tops the list of districts in the State in sorcery-related violence. Neither the witchcraft prevention law nor fear of police action has been a deterrent in stopping the social evil. In most of the cases, the victims are either hacked to death or burnt alive. There are many more such cases which go unreported as the incidents are suppressed at the village level, sources said.

Usually, when a person is ailing for a long time or succumbs to any disease, villagers suspect it to be a case of sorcery. Instead of doctors, villagers resort to witch doctors, who name a particular person and accuse him of practising sorcery. There are many more such cases which go unreported as the incidents are suppressed at the village level, sources said.

Rayagada tops the list of districts in the State in this kind of violence. Sorcery-related incidents have claimed more lives in remote villages of Rayagada district than any epidemic in the last few years.

There is no road to more than 800 villages in Rayagada district. Prolonged ill health in interior pockets of the districts gives rise to blind beliefs and believing in their providence.

"We have earlier mapped the areas of occurrence and taken action including an awareness campaign. This is a continuous process. We are again accelerating a massive awareness drive against superstitious beliefs among some communities. We will request the villagers not to turn violent in false cases of witchcraft," said a senior bureaucrat of the district.

PPBS, EIORWU celebrate I-Day



PNS ■ PARADIP

The 76th Independence Day was celebrated at the office premises of Paradip Port Banik Sangha (PPBS). PPBS president and prominent labour leader Santosh Kumar Patnaik participated as chief guest and hoisted the National Flag.

PPBS secretary Debabrat Sahu and senior members Kshirod Kumar Swain, Prashod Kumar Das, Bibhuti Bhushan Mohanty, Anadi Parida, Ayas Kant Samal and Chandra Shekhar Mohapatra were present.

In his speech, president Patnaik paid rich tributes to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives in the freedom struggle and called upon every citizen of the country to be inspired by their ideals.

The Independence Day was also celebrated in front of the office at Zero Point by the East India Oil Refinery Workers' Union. Paradip Port Land Losers Farmers' Union (EIORWU) president Chinmay Das hoisted the National Flag. Union members including Trinath Biswal, Jagabandhu Biswal and Sushant Mohapatra were present.

CUO observes Independence Day

PNS ■ KORAPUT

The Central University of Odisha (CUO), Koraput celebrated the 76th Independence Day in a dignified manner at its Sunabeda campus. On the occasion, VC in charge Prof Sharat Kumar Palita hoisted the National Flag and addressed the august gathering of students, faculty and staff of the university.

He highlighted the patriotic feeling and fervour created all

over the country during "Har Ghar Tiranga" campaign. He highlighted various developmental activities of the university such as the ongoing construction of permanent academic block, staff quarters, extension of library and e-learning centre, participation in CUET and research development by signing MoU with various institutions. He urged all the stakeholders to contribute their efforts to make the university as one of the best in the country.

Pallibikash: 40 Nuapada farmers felicitated

AJIT PANDA ■ NUAPADA

The 21st foundation day of Pallibikash was held at the Khadiyal Patna Kshatriya Samaj Bhavan at Khariar.

Khariar BDO Narayan Sahu was the chief guest and former Principal of Khariar Autonomous College Dr Fanidam Deo was the chief speaker on the occasion. Other speakers were scribe Ajit Panda, Block Agriculture Officer Sanjay Patra, AFO Bhavani Shankar Panda, ADHO Aradhana Shabar, Engineer, MI Division Neetu Pan, SDO, Lower Indra Project Sourabh Dash and



Branch Manager, Union Bank of India, Abhilash Guru.

Secretary of Pallibikash Suresh Kumar Raut presided while Sahadev Raut moderated.

Over 200 progressive farmers, members of Farmer

Producer Groups, Self Help Groups, Pani Panchayats, Sulpani Kala Parishad, Ma Samaleswari Truck Drivers Association and social workers from five blocks of Nuapada district participated.

40 successful progressive

farmers were felicitated in various fields such as mandia farming, vegetable, fish, poultry, goat and mixed farming etc. The guests encouraged Pallivikash to work on strengthening of processing and farmer producer companies. They appreciated the efforts of Pallivikash on convergence for successful implementation of Government schemes of various departments. There was a special discussion on how the company of Dwarsani Millet Producers Company can improve and provide better quality agricultural products and services to the farmers.

'Do away with taboos on menstruation'

GMU observes Int'l Youth Day

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

The School of Political Science and Education Department, GM University, observed the International Youth Day on August 12, jointly with NGO Patang.

The volunteers of Patang performed a short play on the occasion on taboos around menstruation and shared message on why it is necessary to break the taboos and the need to create a healthy supportive relationship between boys and girls.

Vice-Chancellor Prof N Nagaraju and other university officials were present. Associate Professor Dr Sikta Panda enlightened the participants about menstruation matters and appealed before them to normalise talking about menstruation.

Pritam, a participant in the public speaking activity sharing the UNICEF Report 2015, said that 86% of girls face problems due to lack of awareness and space to discuss menstrual hygiene.

Among others, Senior Programme Manager, Patang, Bhumisuta Sahu spoke.

B'pur admn holds I-Day with fervour

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

The Brahmapur Sub Divisional Administration celebrated the 76th Independence Day and Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav with full patriotic fervour. Chief guest of the occasion was RDC (SD) T Ao, who hoisted the National Flag and took the guard of honour.

Brahmapur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) Commissioner J Sonal, Sub-Collector V Kristi Vasan and Brahmapur SP Dr Sarabana Vivek M among others were present.



Addressing the gathering at the Khallikote Cluster University stadium, RDCT Ao paid tribute to the great freedom fighters who made sacrifices for the country and recalled their glorious contributions during the freedom struggle. School students who excelled in various competitions were awarded prizes. Besides, Corona Warriors were also felicitated.

Garment trader's daughter gets Microsoft job

Ganjam girl to receive Rs 52L per annum
HRUSIKESH MOHANTY ■ BRAHMAPUR

The daughter of a garment trader in Sikiri village in Ganjam district's Hinjili block has joined the Microsoft with an attractive package.

Bharati Padhy (27), who completed her MTech in Computer Science from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Jammu in June, joined the company's office at Hyderabad this month with a salary of Rs 52 lakh per annum.

In fact, Bharati cracked the first round tests in as many as five renowned companies, including Microsoft, during on and off campus selections and finally decided to go with the Microsoft offer. "It's a dream come true for me to get an offer from such a big company," said she.



Her father Gourgopal Padhy, who was working as a teacher in the Saraswati Sishu Vidya Mandir, Kumudakhandi, has shifted to Mumbai to do garment business while her mother

Adhir Padhy is a homemaker. After completing her BE degree in the Mumbai University in 2016, Bharati worked as an assistant system engineer in a private company for two years before

opting to do her MTech.

Besides her parents, she complimented Prof Rajesh Singh Vats of a private institute in Mumbai and other professors and friends from IIT, Jammu, who constantly guided her till appear at the interviews

"We had faced a lot of challenges during the two years of Covid-19 pandemic when my business was severely hit due to the lockdown. Despite the difficulties, I did not neglect the teachings of my children," said Gouragopal. His son Sridhar is a chartered accountant student.

The Rastriya Odia Yuba Pratishthan of Mumbai felicitated Bharati for her achievement. "Her achievement has set an example for others that hard work and strong determination do not go waste," said founder-president of the organisation Srikant Padhy.

After 4 days Man, son stranded in hillock rescued



PNS ■ CUTTACK

After four days of being stranded following floods in the Mahanadi system, a man and his son were rescued from a hillock at Amangeikuda near Kandarpur under Athagarh block in Cuttack district on Wednesday.

Minister Ranendra Pratap Swain took to twitter and informed about the two being rescued by ODRAF personnel.

Dhajiadhar Dalei and his son Bhajaman had gone to a hillock at Amangeikuda to

graze a herd of over 50 goats four days ago. Carrying food and clothes, the two had gone there by a country-boat. But due to a sudden rise in floodwater level of the river, they could not return. On receiving information from locals, the district administration launched a rescue operation on Wednesday morning.

Minister Swain and Athagarh Sub-Collector Hemant Kumar Swain also visited the spot to take stock of the rescue drive.

INBRIEF

LAMPCS MD HELD TAKING RS 35K BRIBE

Cuttack: The Vigilance police on Wednesday caught R Rama Krishna, Managing Director (MD), LAMPCS, Almonda in Bandhugaon block of Koraput district, red-handed while accepting a bribe of Rs 35,000. Krishna had demanded the bribe from a paddy farmer in lieu of paddy procured in last season, threatening not to register him for paddy sale in the coming season, otherwise. Following the trap, simultaneous searches were carried out on the residential house and office room of Krishna at Almonda. Later, he was arrested and forwarded to court.

ISC ODA WING GETS CERT OF APPRECIATION IN OMAN

Bhubaneswar: The Indian Social Club (ISC) Odia wing recently received a certificate of appreciation from the Indian Embassy of Muscat in Oman. The Odia wing of Oman was lauded by Ambassador of India Amit Narang for its services to the community during the Covid-19 pandemic. The certificate of recognition is the symbol of the efforts of all team members of Odias in Oman in various capacities.



SCHOOLS IN PURI DIST SHUT FOR 2 DAYS

Puri: The Puri administration on Wednesday directed all schools, Government and private, to remain closed in the district for two days in view of the flood situation. The order stated that the schools shall remain shut on August 17 and 18.

KISS CELEBRATES INDEPENDENCE DAY

Bhubaneswar: The KISS campus was draped in Tricolour on the 76th Independence Day as the entire strength of 30,000 students celebrated the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav with gusto and participated in traditional dances and other cultural activities. KISS founder Dr Achyuta Samanta unfurled the National Flag and called upon the children to study hard and contribute to the nation's growth. Chief guest was Fédération Internationale de Volleyball (FIVB) General Director Fabio Azevedo. Students sang the national anthem while the student band performed the popular tune Sare Jahan Se Acha. Renowned neurosurgeon Dr (Col) VS Madan joined as guest.



GANGA NAGAR RESIDENTS CELEBRATE I-DAY (Pix)

Bhubaneswar: Members of the Ganga Nagar Sweetie Housing Complex Society celebrated the 76th Independence Day in the society house yard. Society president Siva Nanda Mohapatra hoisted the National Flag and spoke about the sacrifice of freedom fighters. Society secretary CMA Niranjan Mishra, Colonel SP Pattanaik, Akhyaya Kumar Jena, Basanta Senapati, Kalpataru Swain, Gadadhar Das and Rajeswar Hota also participated in the celebration.



KHORDHA SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES' ASSN HOLDS I-DAY

Bhubaneswar: The Khordha District Small Scale Industries' Association, Odisha Nagarika Suraksha Mahamanch and the Maha Siva Shakti organisation jointly celebrated the 76th Independence Day at the Chandaka Industrial Estate. Corporator Priti Routray hosted the National Flag. Ex-Press Council Member and Nagarika Mahamanch secretary general Sarat Behera said India is yet yet



100-per cent freedom. Senior journalist Sunil Mishra also said the country needs another freedom movement as corruption has become deep-rooted in its system. Nagarika Mahamanch president Batakrushna Rout and District Small Scale Industries' Association president Batakrushna Ojha gave suggestions for nation building. Social activists, workers and intellectuals attended the meeting. Tributes were paid to freedom fighters.

FARMERS HOLD RAIL ROKO AT BARGARH

Bargarh: Protesting against delay in payment of their insurance money for crop loss, hundreds of farmers held a railroko at Bargarh Road railway station. They sat on the track as a result of which railway traffic was disrupted. The farmers alleged that many affected



farmers of the district are yet to get insurance compensation for 2021 kharif crop loss under the Prime Minister Fasal Bima Yojana. Despite repeated appeals by the farmers to the insurance companies and the administration, nothing came of it, they told, and warned to intensify their stir ahead.

DEMO BY EX-SERVICE MAN BEFORE K'MAL DM

Phulbani: Pradip Pattnaik, an ex-military man sat on a dharna on August 15 in front of the Collector office, Phulbani, to get justice. He complained that he was debarred from the property of his family and despite repeated pleas with the authorities, no action was taken. He said he was holding the strike as the last resort. SDPO, Phulbani, Mahendranath Murmu and IIC Town PS Susant Sathy rushed to the place and held talks with Pattnaik. They assured to sort out his problem shortly by taking his family members on board. Later, Pattnaik withdrew his strike.

HEAD CLERK HELD TAKING BRIBE IN DEOGARH

Cuttack: The Vigilance police on Tuesday caught Raj Kishore Kalo, Head Clerk, Barkote Tehsil office in Deogarh district, red-handed while accepting a bribe of Rs 5, 000. Kalo had demanded the bribe to facilitate issuance of Record of Rights (Patta) in favour of the complainant. Following the trap, simultaneous searches were carried out on the rented residential house of Kalo at Bonai Chhak in Barkote of Deogarh district and his office room. Later, he was arrested and forwarded to court.

Narayan Chandel is new LOP

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Janjigir-Champa BJP MLA Narayan Chandel was on Wednesday elected the Leader of Opposition in the Chhattisgarh Assembly unanimously by the BJP Legislature Party which met here.

At present, Chandel is the BJP state General Secretary. He will be the sixth Leader of the Opposition in the House.

BJP General Secretary and Chhattisgarh-in-charge D. Purandeswari was present.

Interacting with the media, Chandel said: "The top priority is to overthrow the Congress government in the state which has lost the confidence of the people."

He said that though the Congress had got a massive mandate of the people, it had



failed to fulfil their aspirations. Instead, it has generated public anger.

Born on April 19, 1965, Chandel is a third-time MLA

from Janjigir-Champa. He was the Deputy Speaker of the Chhattisgarh Assembly from 2010 to 2011.

It is the second major

change in the Chhattisgarh BJP. Earlier, Vishnudeo Sai, the state President, was replaced by Bilaspur MP Arun Sao.

Electrical equipment testing lab to come up in Nava Raipur

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh government will establish a Regional Laboratory and Training Centre in Nava Raipur to test electrical equipment.

In presence of Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Wednesday, a MoU was signed between the government and the Central Power Research Institute (CPRI), Bengaluru.

Ankit Anand, Secretary in the Department of Energy, Chhattisgarh, and the B.A. Sawale, Additional Director of CPRI, signed the documents.

CPRI will establish the institute, which will be one of the biggest in Central India.

The government has



allocated 10 acres of land in Layer-2 Tendua village, Sector 30, through the Atal Nagar Nava Raipur Development Authority. The laboratory will be ready in 36 months at a cost of Rs. 20.70 crores.

It will result in saving time and revenue as earlier the equipment was being sent to Bhopal for testing, an official communication said.

The laboratory will offer a concession of 20 percent to electrical companies for

testing.

The institute will provide consultation services for ensuring the quality of utility, encouraging applied research in the power sector and improving the reliability in the field of engineering.

Chhattisgarh's Ankita climbs Mount Elbrus

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh's Ankita Gupta hoisted the Indian flag by climbing Europe's highest peak, Mount Elbrus, on Independence Day (August 15).

Mountaineer Ankita Gupta, a resident of Kawardha, is a Constable in Kabirdham district. She was extended Rs 5 lakh as financial assistance by the Chhattisgarh government for the expedition.

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on August 3 handed over the national flag to her before she left for the expedition. She hoisted the flag on the mountain top.

Baghel and Forest Minister Mohammed Akbar



"Mountaineer Ankita Gupta, a resident of Kawardha, is a Constable in Kabirdham district"

congratulated Ankita on her achievement.

According to Ankita, Mount Elbrus (West) is the highest mountain in the European continent located 5,642 metres or 18,510 feet above sea level. She said the Indian flag was hoisted at 5:43 am on August 15.

On August 16, a second national flag was hoisted on the 5,621 meters high Mount Elbrus (East) peak of the mountain at 4:23 am, she said.

Public awareness drive on health, nutrition

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh government and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) will jointly run a public awareness campaign on health, education, nutrition and social security in the state.

As part of the campaign, UNICEF on Wednesday handed over more than 1,100 communication devices including mini projectors, juke boxes and megaphones to Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel at an event held at his official residence here.

The aim of the campaign



is to reach the maximum number of people through audio-visual medium in local language at Gram Sabhas, Haat Bazaars and

Anganbadi and health centres, an official communication said.

The information about government welfare schemes

will also be provided. The first phase will target 50 lakh people living in inaccessible areas of 80 development blocks.

Thanking UNICEF, the Chief Minister said that better communication facilities were important for any effective campaign.

Baghel handed over the communication devices to the volunteers of the 'Roko Au Toko' campaign and officials of the Public Relations Department.

He also released several table books of the 'Roko Au Toko' campaign. The campaign was conducted to promote Covid-19 vaccination.

The chief of UNICEF in Chhattisgarh, Job Zachariah, the Secretary to the Chief Minister, Ankit Anand, and Public Relations Director Saumil Ranjan were present.

Woman Naxalite with Rs 8 lakh bounty arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■
NARAYANPUR

A Naxalite carrying a reward of Rs 8 lakh on her head was arrested on Wednesday by security forces in Narayanpur district in Chhattisgarh.

Sukhmata Kumeti alias Reema was held near the jungles of Kawanar village when the District Reserve Guard, Chhattisgarh Armed Force, Indo-Tibetan Border Police and local police were on a search operation, Inspector General of Police (Bastar Range) Sundarraj P said.

She joined the outlawed Maoist outfit in 2018, served in various capacities in the West division of the Maoists and was a member of the West Bastar Division Company Number 6, the officer said.

She was involved in several Naxalite incidents between 2020 and 2021 including killing of an ITBP trooper in a gun battle.

Two nabbed with cannabis



STAFF REPORTER ■
DURG

Chhattisgarh Police on Wednesday seized 38 kg of cannabis valued at Rs 10.60 lakh and arrested two persons here while transporting it from Odisha to

Maharashtra. Durg Superintendent of

Police Abhishek Pallava said that Suraj Marotrao and Vinod Dongre, both 29, have been taken into custody.

Marotrao hails from Maharashtra while Dongre is from Madhya Pradesh.

Acting on a tip, the police nabbed them near a toll plaza while they were in a car.

Bank of Maharashtra tops in Q1 loan, deposit growth



STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) recorded a 27.10 per cent increase in gross advances to Rs 1,40,561 crore at the end of June 2022, according to published quarterly numbers of the public sector banks (PSBs).

Bank of Maharashtra has emerged as the top performer among the public sector lenders in terms of the loan and deposit growth in percentage terms during the first quarter of 2022-23, an official communication said.

The Indian Overseas

Bank and Bank of Baroda followed with 16.43 per cent and 15.73 per cent rise in advances growth respectively. The country's largest lender, State Bank of India (SBI), stood at the fourth spot with 13.66 per cent growth.

With regard to deposit growth, BoM witnessed a 12.35 per cent growth and mobilized Rs 1,95,909 crore at the end of June 2022.

Union Bank of India was at the second spot with a 9.42 per cent growth in deposits (Rs 9,92,517 crore) followed by Bank of Baroda — 8.51 per cent rise at Rs 9,09,095 crore, according to the data.

Elephant kills man



STAFF REPORTER ■
KORBA

A 50-year-old man was trampled to death by an elephant in a village in Chhattisgarh's Korba district on Wednesday, an official said.

The incident occurred in Chandrauti village in the Pasan forest range when an elephant separated from its herd charged towards the house of Shamal Singh,

Katghora Divisional Forest Officer Premalata Yadav said.

Singh and other villagers tried to chase the elephant but it suddenly charged

towards them. Singh fell while trying to escape and the elephant trampled him to death, the officer said. The animal is part of a herd of 23 elephants roaming in the area, Yadav said, adding that residents have been alerted and advised not to venture into the forest. The kin of the deceased were given an immediate aid of Rs 25,000 while the remaining compensation of Rs 5.75 lakh will be given after certain formalities.

Pro-farmer policies favour farmers: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Wednesday said that pro-farmer policies and a friendly government had helped to further strengthen the economic condition of the farmers.

He tweeted that the farmers were happy as they are getting higher prices for Rabi (summer) paddy.

The government procures paddy produced by farmers during Kharif season at a minimum support price. The summer paddy is sold by farmers



through Mandis where traders procure the paddy. Last year, the paddy was

"He tweeted that the farmers were happy as they are getting higher prices for Rabi (summer) paddy"

sold at a range of Rs 1,600-1,650 per quintal, an official communication issued by the Chhattisgarh State Agriculture Marketing

(Mandi) Board in Raipur said.

The government on July 12 announced the waiver of 'Mandi Fees' and Farmers 'Welfare Fees' to promote procurement in Mandis.

In the current fiscal year, the paddy was procured from farmers at Rs 1,800-1,950 a quintal. From July 22 to August 15, the farmers had sold 18,53,000 quintals of paddy.

Compared to last year, this year farmers earned a profit of around Rs 300 per quintal from the sale. A total of 92,650 farmers benefited from the sale.

न्यायालय जिला दण्डाधिकारी रायपुर (छ.ग.)

नोटिस

रायपुर, दिनांक 08 अगस्त, 2022

क्रमांक / 66 / ब-121 / 2021-22 / 1095

प्रति,

1. श्री संजय कुमार चौबे व. जगदीश प्रसाद, 2. श्री जगदीश प्रसाद चौबे व. जमना प्रसाद, 3. श्रीमती मंजू चौबे (जमानतदार), निवासी 11/568 जमुना तिवारी का मकान, नया तालाब, गुडियारी, रायपुर

आवेदक प्राधिकृत अधिकारी विजया बैंक अब बैंक ऑफ बड़ौदा फाकाडीह शाखा रायपुर की ओर से आर. आर. प्रधान अधिवक्ता ने आवेदन पत्र / शायद पत्र मय दस्तावेज प्रस्तुत कर, आवेदन पत्र से आपको बैंक ने 35.00 लाख रुपये का ऋण दिया था, और संजय कुमार चौबे के स्वामित्व की अचल संपत्ति बैंक के पक्ष में बंधक रखी गयी थी। आपके द्वारा ऋण की अदायगी नहीं की जा रही है। जिसके कारण बैंक ने आप को अधिनियम की धारा 13 के तहत नोटिस जारी किया गया कि आप ऋण की अदायगी मय व्याज एवं अन्य शुल्क रुपये 26,63,778.25 अदा करें, अन्यथा बंधक रखी गई संपत्ति बैंक अपने हक में प्राप्त कर लेगी कि जानकारी दी जाकर, बैंक के पक्ष में आपके द्वारा लिये गये ऋण के एवज में बंधक रखी संपत्ति का कब्जा दिलाये जाने का निवेदन किया है।

2/ आपने प्राधिकृत अधिकारी विजया बैंक अब बैंक ऑफ बड़ौदा, फाकाडीह शाखा रायपुर से 35.00 लाख रुपये का ऋण प्राप्त कर मौजा गुडियारी प.ह.नं. 107 / 49 जिला रायपुर स्थित ख. नं. 1370, 1458 / 1 का भाग रुकवा 2000 वर्गफुट बैंक के पक्ष में बंधक रखा है।

3/ अतः आपके द्वारा लिये गये ऋण के एवज में उक्त बंधक रखी गई अचल संपत्ति को वित्तीय आस्तरियों का प्रतिभूतिकरण और पुनर्वहन और प्रतिभूति हित प्रवर्तन अधिनियम 2002 की धारा 14 में प्रदत्त शक्तियों का प्रयोग करते हुये क्यों न अधिनियम में लेंगे की कार्यवाही की जाये। आप स्वयं अथवा अपने नियुक्त अभिभाषक के माध्यम से ऋण से संबंधित एवं बंधक रखी गई संपत्ति से संबंधित दस्तावेज लेकर पक्ष प्रस्तुत करने हेतु इस न्यायालय में पेशी दिनांक 03.10.2022 को ठीक 3.00 बजे उपस्थित होना सुनिश्चित करें। निम्न लिखित में उपस्थित नहीं होने की दशा में आपके विरुद्ध एक पक्षीय कार्यवाही की जाकर, प्रकरण में निर्णय ले लिया जायेगा।

आज दिनांक 08 अगस्त, 2022 को मेरे हस्ताक्षर एवं न्यायालय की मुहर से जारी किया गया।

मुहर

जिला दण्डाधिकारी, रायपुर (छ.ग.)

NSA DOVAL'S SECURITY BREACH

3 CISF men axed, 2 officers moved

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) has dismissed three commandos from service and transferred two senior officers of its VIP security unit over a security breach at the residence of National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval earlier this year.

Doval is a 'Z plus' category protectee under the Central VIP security list and the security cover is provided by the Special Security Group (SSG) of the CISF.

The punitive actions have been taken after a court of enquiry established by the CISF to probe the February 16 incident held the five personnel guilty on various counts and recommended actions against

them, officials said.

While the three SSG commandos have been dismissed from service, the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) heading this VVIP security unit and his second-in-command, a senior commandant-rank officer, have been transferred, they said.

The security breach occurred at about 7:30 AM on February 16 when a man from Bengaluru attempted to drive his car into the high-security residence of Doval in central Delhi.

The three commandos, who have been dismissed, were present at the NSA's residence on the day of the incident as part of the security detail. The man was intercepted outside the residence and was handed over to the Delhi Police.

5 Kedarnath chopper operators fined ₹5L each

Irregularities in flying records came to light in June audit, says DGCA

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Five helicopter operators carrying passengers in the Kedarnath Dham have been fined Rs 5 lakh each. The fine, imposed by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), has been imposed for anomalies in their flying records.

The DGCA also suspended officials from two other operators for three months on account of breaking safety rules. These irregularities came to light when it was decided to conduct an audit in June. In fact, on May 31, a helicopter carrying pilgrims to a high altitude had a hard landing fol-

lowing which, the regulators formed a team and an audit took place.

The DGCA formed a team for spot check of the choppers involved in shuttle operations in Kedarnath, according to a representative of the Uttarakhand Civil Aviation Development Authority (UCADA). "On June 7 and 8, the team conducted a spot check in which serious violations came to light, prompting it to hold a detailed audit of all operators undertaking the shuttle operations," the official added.

The audit was conducted by the audit team from 13 to 16 Jun 2022. The report said that five operators were found not maintaining correct flying records in their respective helicopter Technical Log Books.

In addition to the 05 operators mentioned above, another two operators i.e. total 07 operators, were found to have violated the provisions of the Joint SOP promulgated by



DGCA. After that, Show Cause Notices (SCNs) were issued to all these seven operators involved in the violations.

The operations at Kedarnath are suspended during the monsoon months due to the inclement weather, and are thereafter recommenced by the operators in end-August / early September, although the quantum of flying in this second part reduces due to the reduced number of pilgrims. The operations are finally concluded in late October / early

November, depending on the auspicious date decided by the Shrine Board for closure of shrine.

Against the backdrop of various incidents involving SpiceJet and other carriers in recent times, the civil aviation minister also said the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has set a target of carrying out 3,709 checks this year as part of its annual surveillance plan. Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, the target was around 2,775 checks.

DGCA makes it mandatory for passengers to follow Covid SOPs

New Delhi: In view of the rising number of Covid-19 cases in several parts of the country, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Wednesday made it mandatory for air passengers to follow protocols and asked all Indian airlines to strictly enforce them. It also asked the airlines to take action against those who fail to comply with the rules.

In a statement, the DGCA said it will be conducting "random checks" in aircraft across the country to see if the COVID-19 protocol is being enforced or not. "Airlines have to ensure that passengers are wearing face masks properly throughout journey and there is proper sensitisation of passengers through various platforms, it mentioned. In case a passenger does not comply with the directions, strict action

will be taken by airlines against the passenger," it added. "Surprise inspections and checks will also be carried out at airports and inside aircrafts. The airlines would also have to ensure there is proper sensitisation of passengers through various platforms and ensure COVID-19 protocol inside the aircraft," it said.

India reported 9,062 coronavirus infections and 36 related deaths in the last 24 hours, according to the daily bulletin by the Union health ministry of health and family welfare (MoHFW).

The country's active case-load currently stands at 1,05,058, constituting 0.24 per cent of the cumulative tally, according to the ministry data. The overall death toll has reached 527,134, as per ministry data.

Parties cannot be prevented from making poll promises: SC

PNS/PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday said political parties and individuals cannot be prevented from making poll promises aimed at fulfilling the constitutional mandate and the term "freebie" should not be confused with genuine welfare measures.

Observing that the voters are not looking for freebies, the apex court referred to the Mahatma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme and said, "Given an opportunity, they will look for dignified earning". "We all must remember the good old saying: 'There is no free lunch', " the apex court said, adding the "concern is about the right way of spending public money". "There has to be a distinction between the offer of ornaments, television sets, consumer electronics free of cost and real welfareist offers.

The promise of free coaching for professional courses cannot be compared with the promise of free white goods," a bench headed by Chief Justice N V Ramana said.

The bench, also including justices J K Maheshwari and Hima Kohli is mulling and setting up an expert panel to brainstorm the issue of freebies announced during elections. It said that the issue of regulating



freebies is "getting increasingly complicated" and asked all the stakeholders to give their suggestions on the proposed panel while fixing the PIL for hearing on August 22.

The bench said the expression 'freebie' should not be confused with genuine welfare measures" and gave illustrations to distinguish between freebies and "real welfareist offer".

"You cannot prevent a political party or individual from making promises that are aimed at fulfilling this constitutional mandate if elected to power. The question is what exactly qualifies as a valid promise," the CJI observed.

The bench deferred the hearing to August 22 after Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, said that senior advocate Kapil Sibal wanted to submit his suggestions.

SC restrains J'khand HC from hearing PIL for probe against CM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday restrained the Jharkhand High Court from proceeding with PILs seeking a probe against Chief Minister Hemant Soren who has been accused of granting himself a mining lease as the State's Mining Minister.

A bench of Justices UU Lalit, SR Bhat, and Sudhanshu Dhulia reserved its judgement on separate pleas of the Jharkhand government and Soren against an order of the high court that accepted the maintainability of the PIL.

"Heard counsel for the parties. Order reserved. Since this court is now seized of the matter, the high court shall not proceed with the pending petitions," the bench said. Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for the State Government, submitted that the high court had decided on maintainability

even before all the documents were placed before it. "I have to say this in open court, milords, I am sorry. Where is the occasion in the matter that you are holding the court outside the state and hearing the matter? What is the urgency? Sibal stated. Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for Soren, questioned the credentials of the PIL petitioner.

Additional Solicitor General SV Raju, appearing for the Enforcement Directorate, said criminal petitions should not be thrown out on technical grounds.

BJP national vice president and former Jharkhand Chief Minister Raghubar Das had in February this year claimed Soren abused his position and granted himself the favour of a mining lease, an issue involving both the conflict of interest and corruption. He also alleged violations of provisions of the Representation of People Act.

Play proactive role in FIFA, AIFF issue, SC tells Centre

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday asked the Centre to take a "proactive role" in the All India Football Federation (AIFF) matter for facilitating the holding of the Under-17 Women's World Cup in India and the lifting of the suspension of the country's apex football body by FIFA.

The top court deferred till the August 22 hearing on the AIFF matter after the Centre said it is in discussion with the International Football Federation (FIFA) over the holding of the U-17 Women's world cup in India.

A bench of Justices DY Chandrachud, AS Bopanna, and JB Paridwala said, "We would impress upon the Union of India to take a proactive role in the matter so that the holding of the Under-17 World Cup and the lifting of the suspension of AIFF, in order to achieve that object, is duly facilitated".

At the outset, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, informed the bench that two meetings have been

held by the government and Committee of Administrators (CoA) with FIFA authorities Tuesday and discussions are going on with a meeting scheduled for Wednesday.

Mehta said that all efforts are being made to "break some ice" on the holding of the U-17 Women's World Cup in India in October 2022. He requested that the matter be deferred till August 22 so that a consensus could be arrived at between the active stakeholders of the AIFF.

Mehta said that all through the process CoA has played a very constructive role and urged that a few words from the court to all stakeholders to sort out the situation will help them in their endeavour.

"Yesterday, after the development, which the judges may also be in the know-how, we took up the matter with the FIFA. We had two meetings with FIFA and we can say that we have reached a stage, where we can say that efforts are being made to break some ice. Therefore, I request that the matter be deferred for further hearing till next Monday", Mehta said.

FIR against 6 jail officers in Thrissur for undertrial's death

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has filed an FIR against six Thrissur jail officials for the alleged murder of an undertrial lodged in the prison two years back. The undertrial Shameer was arrested in a drug trafficking case in 2020.

The CBI, which took up the matter on the reference from the Kerala government last year, has re-registered the case in accordance with the procedures.

The crime branch of the State police had arrested Deputy Prison Officers Arun MS and Subash, Assistant Prison Officers Viveek TV and Pradeesh, Assistant Jail Superintendent Athul, all of Thrissur prison, and Assistant Prison Officer of sub jail Irinjalakuda Ramesh MR.

The Thrissur Police had apprehended Shameer, a daily wage labourer, along with his wife and two friends from a car on the allegations of possessing marijuana on September 29, 2020, officials said.

They were kept in a quarantine facility due to the Covid-19 restrictions in vogue then.



Shameer was subsequently taken to the Government Hospital, Thrissur by jail officials where he was declared dead on October 1, 2020. His death was shown as suicide in the FIR registered by the local police.

In its report filed before the court, the crime branch had recommended adding sections of murder and destruction of evidence against the six officials among other charges under the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The victim's family had alleged that Shameer's body had a lot of injury marks.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi, BJP national president JP Nadda and Union Ministers attend the screening of Doordarshan's serial 'Swaraj: Bharat Ke Swatantrata Sangram ki Samagra Gatha', at the Balayogi Auditorium, Parliament Library Building in New Delhi on Wednesday

PNS

India, Malaysia review Defence ties

Vow to uphold principle of collective responsibility for maritime security in Indian Ocean Region

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Malaysia on Wednesday reviewed their bilateral Defence ties and vowed to uphold the principle of collective responsibility for maritime security in the Indian Ocean region.

This was reaffirmed during talks between Navy chief Admiral R Hari Kumar and his visiting Malaysian counterpart Admiral Tan Sri Mohd Reza Bin Mohd Sany in the backdrop of growing Chinese presence in the strategically important region. In their wide-ranging par-

leys, Admiral Kumar and Admiral Reza also identified several new areas to further strengthen bilateral naval cooperation between the two sides. The Malaysian Navy chief is on a four-day visit to India.

The Navy said Admiral Kumar apprised the Malaysian Navy chief of a broad range of foreign cooperation activities pursued by the Indian Navy.

The two chiefs identified several new avenues for further strengthening bilateral naval cooperation and also expressed commitment to their support to uphold the principle of collective responsibility for maritime security in the Indian Ocean region, the Navy said in a statement.

Admiral Reza will also be interacting with high ranking officials from the Ministry of External Affairs and the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS).

He is an alumnus of the Indian Navy's Dronacharya Gunnery Training



Establishment at Kochi, from where he graduated as a Gunnery Specialist back in 1990. He is also scheduled to visit his alma mater.

Elaborating upon ties between the two navies, officials said bilateral cooperation between the Indian Navy and Royal Malaysian Navy spans across a wide canvas ranging from training to operations. Both navies carried out the

bilateral exercise Samudra Laksamana in May.

The official visit of the Chief of Royal Malaysian Navy signifies yet another expression of growing collaboration between the two navies and commitment to sustaining the positive trajectory of bilateral relations, the Navy said. The Malaysian chief was accorded a ceremonial guard of honour at the South Block lawns.

Min of Electronics and IT collaborates with Tourism Min for delivery of services

CSCs will become one-stop-shop for all services related to NIDHI portal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Common Services Centers, under the Ministry of Electronics & IT, has joined hands with the Ministry of Tourism for delivery of services of National Integrated Database of Hospitality Industry

(NIDHI) portal through CSCs in rural areas. NIDHI is a digital platform where all accommodation units can register themselves to become part of the hospitality industry. Registration with NIDHI will ensure electronic delivery of various services and benefits to the hospitality units.

As per MoU, CSCs will be set up at tourist locations to maintain and deliver all other services. Apart from this, a centralized platform will be designed and developed to provide online services to NIDHI registered users. NIDHI users will register on

this portal to offer hotel booking, guide services and all. Further, bookings for all the tourist points will be integrated with this portal. It will be known as NIDHI SETU.

CSC will design and develop a common platform for the Ministry of Tourism covering services like booking for heritage site visit at nearby CSCs, booking for national park visit at nearby CSCs, booking for monuments visit at nearby CSCs, temple visit reservations, Online pooja bookings, Prasad delivery, Hotel bookings and other facilities from hospitality and tourism related

booking service, which may be decided between the parties

Elaborating on the partnership, Dr. Dinesh Tyagi, Managing Director, CSC SPV said, "This initiative will transform the ecosystem of tourism sector in rural areas.

Through this partnership, CSC entrepreneurs can help citizens in rural areas access various tourism and hospitality related services. CSCs will now become a one stop shop for all the services related to hospitality and tourism sector and thereby help promote tourism and culture of the country."

Army dog killed by ultras in J&K honoured

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Army dog 'Axel', which was killed by terrorists in Baramullah, has now been mentioned by the Army in a citation. The two-year-old canine soldier had rushed towards the building where the terrorists were hiding and they shot him.

The Army said the exemplary "performance, fearless conduct and life-sacrificing acts" of Number 74B7 Army dog Axel in an active anti-terrorist operation are acknowledged under the orders of President Droupadi Murmu and mention of his name in a dispatch by Chief of the Army Staff General Manoj Pande.

Two-year-old Axel's name figured in the list of the 'Mention-in-Despatches' that the government came out along with the gallantry awards ahead of Independence Day on Monday.

Two-year-old Axel's name figured in the list of Mention-in-Despatches that the Government came out along with Gallantry Awards for I-Day



20-22 L J&K voters may be included in list post revision of rolls

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

An estimated number of 20-22 lakh voters are expected to be enrolled in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir as the special summary revision of electoral rolls is being held for the first time in the last four years after abrogation of Article 370 in 2019.

Labelling it as a "challenging task" Chief Electoral Officer, J&K Hirdesh Kumar Singh Wednesday said that for the first time any Citizen of India Ordinarily residing in J&K for business, job or education can also register as Voter and exercise his/her right to franchise.

Interestingly, the announcement made by the Chief Electoral Officer during a press briefing in Jammu created flutter in the corridors of power especially in the Kashmir valley.

Reacting sharply to this announcement, two former Chief Ministers accused the ruling Bharatiya Janta Party of importing 'temporary votes' to win seats.

Vice President of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference Omar Abdullah tweeted first in response to the media reports. He wrote, "Is the BJP so insecure about support from genuine voters of J&K that it needs to import temporary voters to win seats? None of these things will help the BJP when the people of J&K are given a chance to exercise their franchise".

On the other hand PDP Chief Mehbooba Mufti said the main aim is to rule J&K with an iron fist and to dis-empower locals.

"GOIs decision to defer polls in J&K preceded by egregious gerrymandering tilting the balance in BJP's favour & now allowing non

locals to vote is obviously to influence election results. Real aim is to continue ruling J&K with an iron fist to disempower locals", tweeted Mehbooba Mufti.

Referring to the marathon exercise of the special summary revision, Hirdesh Kumar Singh said around 600 new polling stations are coming up across Jammu Kashmir and the number of polling stations has been finalized at 11,370.

"The massive exercise to complete the process in time is going on to ensure that all the eligible voters including those who have attained the age of 18 years on October 1, 2022 or earlier are enrolled to provide an "error-free" final list, Kumar said briefing media persons in Jammu.

The Election Commissioner clarified that there was no bar for voting for non-locals. "It does not matter how long one has been

staying in Jammu Kashmir. The ERO will take the final call on whether the non local has been residing in Jammu Kashmir or not. Those living here on rent can also vote," the election Commissioner said.

He said that the only condition to get included in the voters list is that the person should have cancelled his/her voter registration from his/her native state.

Elaborating further about the entire exercise CEO said as part of the pre-revision activities, the process of rationalisation/ re-arrangement of polling stations, removal of discrepancies of demographically similar entries/ similar photo entries, duplicate EPICS, preparation of supplements and integrated draft roll is also going on at present.

He said the projected population of J&K who are 18 plus are around 98 lakhs, while the number of enlisted voters are

76 lakh according to the last voter list.

"We are expecting an addition of 20 to 25 lakh new voters in the final list," Kumar said, adding the Booth Level Officers, Electoral Registration Officers, Assistant Electoral Registration officers and District Election Officers have been sensitized to ensure that the final list will be "error free" and will also cover all the eligible voters.

Kumar said there is no need for a person to have a domicile certificate of J&K to become a voter. "An employee, a student, a labourer or anyone from outside who is living ordinarily in J&K, can enlist his or her name in the voting list. The documents will be scrutinized by the government officials concerned who will take a decision after being satisfied about the claim." He said like in the

past, many residents of J&K who are working in armed forces and paramilitary forces and are posted outside the Union Territory have an option to get themselves registered as service voters and can avail the facility of postal ballot to register their choice at the time of the elections.

"Likewise those from different parts of the country who are posted here have the option that if they are posted in a peace station they can enlist themselves as voters. Jammu is a peace station and anyone from outside posted in armed forces in the city can avail the option to enlist as a voter," he said.

Referring to the schedule notified by the ECI, Singh said, the Integrated Draft Roll, with reference to October 1, 2022 as the qualifying date, would be published by all EROs of the UT on September 15, 2022, marking the formal



beginning of the revision activities.

He said the Commission has extended the period for filing of claims and objections from 30 days to 40 days: from September 15, 2022 to October 25, 2022. During this period Special camps would also be organised by CEO Jammu and Kashmir on weekends for which the date will be publicised separately.

Objections could be filed through multiple platforms-

offline by submitting a hard copy in prescribed format before ERO/ AERO or concerned BLO and online objections and claims could be filled by logging into <https://www.nvsp.in> portal or by downloading Voter Helpline App (VHA).

The final electoral roll after due disposal of all claims and objections filed within the stipulated time period would be published on November 25, 2022.

Post killings, Kashmiri migrant employees hold protest in Jammu

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Angry Kashmiri migrant employees appointed under the Prime Minister's package in Kashmir valley Wednesday staged protest demonstrations in Jammu against the targeted killing of another Kashmiri pandit in Shopian.

Shouting anti government slogans, a large number of these employees also took out a protest march from the office of Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner to Dogra chowk. The employees also blocked the traffic on the busy Tawi bridge. These employees have been sitting on a dharna since May 10 in support of their single point demand of relocation

to safer places outside the Kashmir valley.

During the massive protest demonstration several migrant employees blamed the union territory administration for not providing adequate security cover to the members of the minority community.

During their protest march in Jammu Kashmiri migrant employees were seen holding posters and banners that read "Save Us" and "Minorities Unsafe in Kashmir". Tires were also set ablaze as part of the demonstrations.

Meanwhile, Jammu and Kashmir Police Chief, Dilbag Singh Wednesday said that two persons involved in the killing of a Kashmiri Pandit in Shopian have been identified and that



strict action will be taken against them.

Talking to reporters on the side-lines of the wreath laying ceremony of ITBP men, who died in Pahalgam accident yes-

terday, DGP said so far two persons who were involved in the targeted killing have been identified, while further process has been initiated and strict action will be taken.

Breakthrough in Delhi-Doon E-way project: Gadkari

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Wednesday said there is a breakthrough in the Delhi-Dehradun Expressway project as the last 20-km stretch that passes through the eco-sensitive zone of Raja Ji National Park is being constructed. In a series of tweets, the road transport and highways minister said the tunnel intends to protect the surrounding wildlife.

"Breakthrough achieved on Delhi-Dehradun Expressway project. The last 20km stretch passes through eco-sensitive zone of Raja Ji National Park where Asia's longest elevated wildlife corridor (12km) is being constructed that includes 340 m Daat Kali tunnel," Gadkari said.

Once completed, the expressway would reduce travel time between Dehradun-Delhi from 6 hrs to 2.30 hours and Delhi-Haridwar from 5 hours to 2 hours, he added.

"The tunnel intends to protect the surrounding wildlife. Once completed, the expressway would reduce travel time between Dehradun-Delhi from 6 hrs to 2.30 hrs & Delhi-Haridwar from 5 hrs to 2 hrs," said the minister on Twitter.

The Expressway is a part of Delhi Dehradun economic corridor, which is expected to be completed by March 2024. The final stretch of the Delhi-Dehradun Expressway will link Dehradun via the new Daat Kali Devi Tunnel. The phase IV route will go through a vast forest area (surrounding the tunnel), comprising Shivalik Hills and Rajaji Tiger Reserve.



As per the Ministry, before 2024, as many as 26 green express highways will be constructed which will bring down travel time considerably. Once the highways are in place, travel time from Delhi to Dehradun, Delhi to Haridwar, Delhi to Jaipur would only take around two hours. While Delhi to Chandigarh will take 2.30 hours, Delhi to Amritsar will

be done in 4 hours and Delhi to Mumbai in 12 hours.

As many as 7,747 trees were cut and 3,258 saplings were felled for the Delhi-Dehradun expressway project but around 1.76 lakh trees will be planted as per the Compensatory Afforestation scheme prepared by Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand Forest Departments.

HC summons Mondal's daughter who got teacher's job after failing TET test

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

After Ankita Adhikari, the dismissed teacher and daughter of former Bengal Education Minister Paresw Adhikari it could be the turn of Sukanya Mondal the daughter of heavy-duty Trinamool Congress leader Anubrata Mondal currently in CBI custody for his alleged involvement in cattle smuggling.

In further setback for the Mamata Banerjee Government, the Calcutta High Court — while hearing a matter on irregularities in appointment of primary teachers — on Wednesday directed Sukanya and five other relatives of Anubrata Mondal to appear before it by Thursday

noon with all their testimonials. Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay passed the order following an affidavit filed by advocate Firdaus Shamim who claimed that Sukanya, her cousin Satyaki Mondal, Arka Dutta a personal assistant of Anubrata Mondal and his brother had secured teacher's job in primary school without clearing the Teachers' Eligibility Test (TET) exams

Not only Sukanya had obtained her job even after failing in the TET exams but also she had never visited her place of work from where she drew regular salary.

"Without clearing the TET exams she got appointment in school of her choice situated

near her house ... She also would not attend her duty and we have evidence to show how the attendance register was brought to her house for her signature," advocate Shamim told the High Court.

Earlier Ankita Adhikari lost her job and had to return the entire salary — she earned on account of her illegal appointment — following a High Court order.

In a similar matter jailed former Education Minister Partha Chatterjee's security guard Biswambhar Mondal and his ten relatives secured Teachers' jobs through backdoor the advocate told the Court.

Chatterjee was last month

arrested by the Enforcement Directorate investigating school level recruitment scam and money laundering. Mondal was arrested last week for his alleged involvement in cattle smuggling.

The Wednesday order comes as a double whammy for Sukanya currently under CBI scanner in cattle smuggling case. She reportedly owns a number of prime properties including lands, business interests in partnership with her father. A group of CBI officials on Wednesday reached Anubrata Mondal's Bolpur house to interrogate Sukanya but she refused to oblige. The CBI was considering legal actions against her sources said.

CBI freezes ₹17 cr fixed deposits of Mondal, kin

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

This monsoon it seems to be raining crores from the possession of Trinamool Congress leaders.

In a major development that could further hurt the TMC's image the Central Bureau of Investigation probing cattle smuggling case on Wednesday froze Fixed Deposits worth Rs 17 crore "related to" arrested TMC strongman and party national executive member Anubrata Mondal and his relatives.

The recovery came hours after the CBI officials interrogated his chartered accountant, sources said adding the Fixed Deposits could be linked to cattle smuggling.

The exact Fixed Deposits amount frozen is Rs 16.96 crore sources said.

"These Fixed Deposits could be a part of the black money earned from cattle smuggling and legalised through various means... This also means that the good bird part of the ill-gotten amount has been kept in hiding or

converted into immovable property," a former TMC leader from Bolpur said adding it is difficult to imagine that a small time trader (fish seller) before TMC came to power could have made so much money legally.

The development comes days after Enforcement Directorate arrested former Bengal minister and TMC secretary general Partha Chatterjee and recovered Rs 50 crore from his close associate Arpita Mukherjee.

The development also

comes days after Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee openly stood by Mondal after his arrest and attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Amit Shah for their vindictive approach.

Apart from cattle smuggling, Mondal's name has also bobbed up in other illegal trades like coal, sand and stone quarrying, sources said.

According to sources the CBI is likely to summon the relatives and close aides of Mondal in connection with the Wednesday's development.

Cong's PM face for 2024 will be Rahul or person he picks: Party

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With the JD(U) apparently keen on the projection of Nitish Kumar as the Opposition's prime ministerial face in the 2024 parliamentary election, Bihar Congress president Madan Mohan Jha on Wednesday said Rahul Gandhi or whoever he picks will be the party's prime ministerial candidate.

Jha's assertion came days after JD(U) chief Nitish Kumar snapped ties with the BJP and joined hands with the RJD and the Congress to form the Government in Bihar. Asked if Nitish would be acceptable to the Congress as the Opposition's face, he told reporters, "Neither Nitish Kumar ji has said that he is the prime ministerial candidate, nor have we said that he will be our PM candidate."

"Our candidate is our leader Rahul Gandhi ji or whoever he nominates for the post our entire party will stand behind that person," he said at the AICC Press conference. The Bihar Congress chief, however, said the issue was not at hand and would be discussed later as two years were left for the Lok Sabha election. Jha was joined by AICC Bihar incharge Bhakta Charan Das and party leader Kanhaiya Kumar.



Das said what happened in Bihar has brought a new change and shown the way to the country that not only has the government changed but a ray of hope has also emerged.

At a time when senior Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad has expressed his resentment by declining to be part of the newly formed Political Affairs Committee in Jammu Kashmir, he raised questions over the distribution of ministerial berths in Bihar saying

while the government formation was a welcome step, his party has got a raw deal. "Every constituent in the coalition had walked away with a good share of ministerial berths except for the Congress," he said.

Azad, part of the G23 grouping, said the distribution of portfolios has been done without any logic and "it is really surprising that none from the party pressed for an equal share of berths".

"You see RJD has 79 MLAs and has secured 17 berths, JDU has 46 MLAs (including Independent Sumit Kumar Singh) and has 13 ministers, including the chief minister, and Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM) has four MLAs and one minister. Congress with 19 MLAs has only two ministers," Azad told a news agency.

Nitish lying about BJP trying to break JD(U), says Shah at Bihar BJP meeting

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

At the Bihar BJP Core Committee meeting conducted at party headquarters here on Tuesday, Union Home Minister Amit Shah reportedly told the party leaders that Nitish Kumar has been repeatedly lying about facts and accusing the BJP of trying to break the Janata Dal-United.

The core committee meeting was attended besides Shah by BJP national president J P Nadda, Bihar BJP state president Sanjay Jaiswal, General Secretary (Organisation) BL Santosh, Ravi Shankar Prasad, Sahnawaz Hussain, Mangal Pandey, Janak Ram, Nand Kishore Yadav and several other leaders from Bihar BJP.

During the meeting, the BJP discussed a detailed strategy for the expansion of the organisation in the whole of the state. The party has also prepared a strategy to win more than 35 of the 40 Lok Sabha seats in the state in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

After the meeting, Jaiswal said, "The Mahagathbandhan in Bihar is an alliance of deceiving the people. BJP will fight against it from the street to the state Assembly. The part has set the target of winning 35 seats in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections."

"There has been a very thorough and detailed discussion on all the issues. It is well



known that this coalition betrays the people and this is a backdoor alliance which is trying to re-establish Lalu Raj," he added.

Jaiswal said the BJP will set the record by winning more than 35 seats in Bihar in the 2024 general elections. There are 40 Lok Sabha seats in Bihar out of which 17 are presently held by the BJP while JD(U) has 16 seats. Further, Lok Janshakti Party has six seats and Congress has one seat.

In the meeting Shah reportedly said Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar had endorsed now estranged aide RCP Singh as the Janata Dal United face in Union cabinet.

According to sources, responding to Nitish Kumar's charge that he did not approve Singh's selection as JD(U)'s representative in the Union cabinet, Shah said, "Galat bola", meaning, "he's lying".

The Home Minister said Kumar wanted two cabinet berths, but when he was told that the BJP could only offer one, he had endorsed Singh's name. Shah had then assured the Bihar Chief Minister of a rethink on his demand later, sources said.

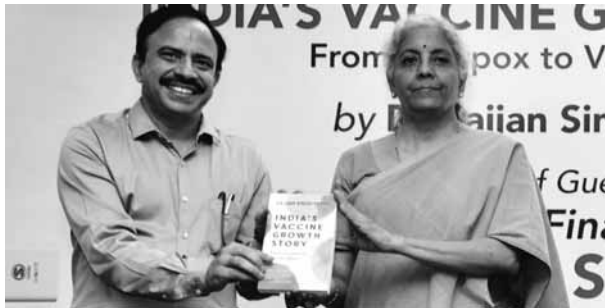
60% of all vaccines used in world produced in India: Sitharaman

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Wednesday said nearly 60 per cent of all the vaccines used in the world are produced in India and over the decades, the country has made remarkable contribution to vaccinating the world.

India today is double dosing every citizen and produced COVID-19 vaccines even during the lockdown period, she added.

Launching the book 'India's Vaccine Growth Story' by Dr. Sajjan Singh Yadav, Additional Secretary, Expenditure Department, Sitharaman said it is in the country's DNA to be able to contribute to world vaccination. "Over the decades India



has made remarkable contribution. Nearly 60 per cent of all the vaccines which are used in the world are produced in India. India has singular contribution to make to the world in terms of vaccination and that which is being produced and supplied to the entire world," Sitharaman said.

Today, the country is dou-

ble dosing every citizen, she said, adding it is not easy to produce and execute COVID vaccination at that scale.

India crossed the target of 200 crore COVID vaccinations in a time-bound manner. So far, 208.57 crore doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered under the nationwide inoculation drive.

Slugfest continues between BJP, Congress in poll-bound Rajasthan

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The slugfest between the BJP and the Congress is continuing in the election-bound Rajasthan with the former on Wednesday again lashing out at Congress saying its government in Rajasthan was setting "new records" in crimes against all sections of society including women and Dalits.

The BJP said while the atrocities are continuing in the state the top Congress leadership is maintaining its silence.

Addressing a press conference here, Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, cit-

ing the National Crime Records Bureau data, said, "Today Rajasthan is at number one in the cases of rape in the country, second in terms of trafficking of minor girls."

Shekhawat said Congress' top leaders such as Priyanka Gandhi Vadra come to the state for vacation but never say anything about the deteriorating law and order situation there.

"On August 15, when the country was celebrating Independence Day, a young man named Chiranjilal, who earned his livelihood by selling vegetables in a village in Rajasthan's Alwar district, was beaten to death by the members of Muslim community," Shekhawat said.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

‘Nari Shakti’ goes for a toss!

Just a day after PM called for need to respect women his own party led govt in Gujarat released 11 rape convicts

Just after the day, the prime minister called for the need to respect women his own party-led government in Gujarat released 11 rape convicts, defying logic. On the occasion of 76th Independence Day, the prime minister unfurled the national flag at the Red Fort and made a clarion call to honour ‘Nari Shakti Shakti.’ He made an emotional appeal to shun misogyny and take a pledge to respect women. As if to mock him, the BJP government in Gujarat released all the eleven rape convicts the very next day. They all were convicted in 2008, by a special court in Mumbai which was later upheld by the Bombay High Court. The gory incident took place in 2002 during the Gujarat riots. Five-month pregnant Bano was gang raped and her toddler daughter was killed along with six others from the family on March 3, 2002. The family was hiding in fields to survive the mayhem when they were spotted by the perpetrators. Only a day before Prime Minister Narendra Modi, gave a clarion call to respect women. The Gujarat government chose to free all 11 convicts giving them amnesty as per its policy, allegedly. The release however is sound technically. One of the convicts approached the court for his early release under the Code of Criminal Procedure, as he had served about 15 years. In line with the Supreme Court decision which maintained that the Gujarat government could decide as per its 1992 policy, which was in place at the time of the conviction. The apex court neither stopped nor allowed the release of the convicts.



Ironically the state government chose to ignore the central government’s guidelines for prisoner release. The central government had recently made a special release policy for convicted prisoners to mark ‘Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav’ and the Rape convicts were categorically listed as not eligible for such release. This is a curious case as there is a so-called double engine government in Gujarat and it is very unlikely that the state government took this decision on its own. There are only two possibilities. Either the government of Gujarat doesn’t take the prime minister very seriously (which is very unlikely) or second, it knows what the prime minister says is for mass consumption and so it doesn’t need to bother about it. The decision is bizarre as elections are round the corner in Gujarat and the opposition is going to make it an issue and give the BJP bad publicity, especially among the women voters. The BJP has recently suffered due to the Tyagi controversy and it would not like to be called gender insensitive during elections. But it might be thinking of polarizing votes as Bilkis Bano happens to be a Muslim woman. Meanwhile, as the perpetrators of the Bano case walk free another lady Teesta Setalvad struggles to get bail. She was the one who fought for Bilkis Bano!

PICTALK



Priests participate in a traditional procession on the occasion of Chingam 1 or Malayalam New Year, in Kochi

PTI

The murder most foul

If the death of innocent Dalit boy due to beating by his upper caste teacher can’t stir our conscience, what will?

In yet another shocking incident Indra Meghwal, , nine-year-old Dalit boy in Rajasthan was beaten to death by his upper caste teacher for drinking from matkameant for upper castes. The boy died after three weeks battling for life at hospital in Ahmadabad. The boy was allegedly hit by teacher Chail Singh, on eyes and ears. The boy was also abused by the teacher with cattiest slur. The boy from the SC community studied at third standard at Saraswati Vidya Mandir, a private school, in Jalore. When the matter was widely reported the police swung into action and arrested the teacher on charges of murder and sections of the Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot tweeted lamenting the death of the Dalit boy and ensured that justice would be delivered fast. The state government also announced an ex gratia of Rs 5 lakh to the family from the CM Relief Fund. But unfortunately all this is nothing more than routine set up to cool the tempers and let the incident bury in the past. Life would then go on as before and the Dalit boys would get a lesson in drinking water. Forget the teacher the society and the administration would remain as insensitive as ever. The body of the boy was buried at night. The family was lathi-charged and asked not to make fuss about it. The congress party must walk the talk as Rahul Gandhi has often maintained that his party stands with the marginalized people.

One MLA and 12 councilors have stepped down owing to the incident. Pana Chand Meghwal resigned saying he doesn’t have the right to remain a legislator if he can’t protect his community. That gives some hope that one day change would come as somebody would have the courage to stand up against the abhorable practice of caste sacrificing his position. The incident is condemnable on many counts. The perpetrator is a teacher who was supposed to be a mentor or ‘guru’ and taking lives of students in certainly not ‘guru dharma’ The boy was just nine years old and he just wanted to quench his thirst, did not meant to hurt anybody or abused anyone. Gehlout government, if it is really disturbed about it, must set an example and ensure that a clear instruction is issued to all the schools in Rajasthan that no discrimination against any student on any ground would be tolerated and harshest possible action would be taken against the person indulging in castists behavior. Set an example now!

Think of ‘Sermon on the Mount’

The PM rightly asked the nation to shed its colonial mindset. It is our biggest mental block on the way to becoming superpower

Prime Minister’s Independence Day speech reminded one of “Sermon on the Mount” presumably delivered to Prophet Moses and his Judaic followers on their deliverance to Israel. The contents were not necessarily similar but their import was comparably classical. In 25 years, the PM wants India to be a developed country. Until the last century, we used to go deaf hearing that India was a developing economy, belonging to the Third World. From today the open objective is to be a part of the First World by the year 2047. In Hindi, this means India must be Viksit Bharat.

This is a sharp and clear objective for the citizens to pursue especially its leaders. Presently, many of them are obsessed with distributing freebies to win elections. This is a waste of wealth that should be deployed for economic growth. To elucidate this point, take demonetization followed by the introduction of Goods & Services Tax. The first was a loud and clear message to people to keep away from hoarding tax-evaded wealth because it cannot be productively deployed for developmental activities. The GST was a very constructive, ongoing follow-up on retaining surplus wealth and deploying it for growth. Many citizens, habituated to hoarding their surpluses, still cannot see these two measures in this light.

This obstinate mentality which afflicts not only the wayward but also some academics and intellectuals would be one of the enduring roadblocks to the Prime Minister’s march towards First World Status. Apart from distancing our people from mental roadblocks, it is necessary for the people, especially the rulers, to undergo an intellectual revolution whereby unethical and stubborn old ideas are rejected spontaneously and not merely by the fear of the Enforcement Directorate, Income Tax Inspectors, Central Bureau of Investigation and other agencies.

The other psychological change required is to acquire equality confidence and over-



come anything like an inferiority complex. To give a recent example, I have a friend residing in Chittaranjan Park who was delighted that I may visit Dhaka to attend a wedding. His advice to me to go, to go and see how a poorer neighbour has overtaken the Indian economy comprehensively. A couple of decades ago, there were Indians who believed that Pakistan has overtaken us in terms of economic points. The PM, therefore, asked us in his speech not to be affected by anything like a slavery complex which we could have been contracted by any of us over the last millennium.

The PM asked the people to shed any vestige of a slavery complex that might have been acquired inadvertently over the last many centuries. Indians of older generations did betray a readiness to concede the superiority of a foreigner, say a white person. At the same time, they were equally ready to come in the way of their friends and colleagues getting ahead by competition.

Being aware of one’s legacy or virasat is often the best



THE PM ASKED THE PEOPLE TO SHED ANY VESTIGE OF A SLAVERY COMPLEX THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN ACQUIRED INADVERTENTLY OVER THE LAST MANY CENTURIES

way to feel self-confident. Other than political performance in the centuries past, Indians have a great deal to be proud of. Had we not been a great civilization we could not have survived the blows of so many foreign invasions. A great deal of our legacy is on display in buildings, temples, literature, epics, and whatnot. Treat our united diversity as a source of strength and how the variety adds power to team India - such a team would be a winning team especially if we keep our motherland as our first love and our priority. And of course, we must resolve to be always free and always free. And not go under a conqueror’s boots as we often in the past.

There is nothing that Indians cannot achieve if they collectively make up their mind. Until 2014, for example, we had not paid much attention to cleanliness. But once we decided on Swatch Bharat we have come a long way, the same with the electrification of our villages and several other things. How quickly do we succeed? So with manufacturing our toys and importing as few of them as possible. We

resolved and we achieved.

Look at our frontiers today and contrast them with how weakly defended they were in the past. The secret to success was our willpower and sincere application. Now if we encourage our women-folk to come more and more forward, India would progress must faster. They comprise a huge reservoir of India’s strength which is lying untapped and, in effect, wasted. Turning to digital technology, luckily we caught its bus in time. See how soon we will derive what great advantage in this competing world. All in all, India is strong, resourceful, and will do well. Remember our single-minded aim to become a Developed country by 2047.

We have not had the benefit of such a visionary leader in memory. Now that we have his commandments, we should get down to work. I believe one of the great secrets of American success has been the lack of dynastic inheritance.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

RESPECT THE INSTITUTIONS

Sir — Mr Naidu the ex-vice president showed anger at his farewell party due to denigrating remarks by opposition members of the house. Such unbearable finger pointing toward going dignitary is unhealthy anyway and it is against the very spirit of farewell. If one has the courage to pass the negative remarks, better it would have done during the tenure. Everyone whether the members of the opposition or the then-present prime minister should pay respect to the retiring office bearer. Disciplinary action should be taken against those who indulge in such indecent behaviour. Democracy functions properly only when the institutions are respected and there is respect for the adversaries. **SM Arif Hussain | Hyderabad**

COSTS TO CUT FRIVOLOUS LITIGATION

Sir — The Chief Justice of India-designate Uday Umesh Lalit wants the costs imposed to cut frivolous litigation. On many occasions in the past cost has been imposed for taking not-so-important issues to courts. There are provisions in the law to impose costs when frivolous litigations are brought to court. Imposition of costs should be in the rarest of the rare cases. It should be more an exception than a norm. Just as it is necessary to block frivolous litigations entering the court, it is also necessary that the litigant public is not instilled with fear to take even serious matters to courts fearing that the case they take may be viewed as frivolous followed by the imposition of heavy costs.

The litigant public should take the call given by Justice Lalit as a wake-up call. The court’s time is precious. The litigants who take the cases to court generally believe that they are seeking justice in serious matters. It is for the courts to decide what are frivolous cases and what are cases that merit the attention of courts. The courts should dismiss the cases considered to be frivolous and reprimand the petitioners rather than imposing hefty costs. Just as the pop-

Let us build the India of our dreams!



The diamond jubilee of India’s Independence had already been marked with a lot of glittering celebrations all over India. We are blessed to have evolved in the past 75 years. When every Indian enthusiastically participates in the national festival, one can only feel optimistic and hope for a better future for the country.

Now that we have completed 75 years of

Independence celebration, our eyes are on the vision 100 for India. We had so many recommendations of What India should be when it completes 100 years of Independence in 2047. The vision is to holistically change what we are today. Let us dream of India as a technology giant, Tech savvy, economically stronger, and resilient where every citizen can live a life of dignity.

We need to build India which cherishes unity in diversity, and is confident enough to admit its mistakes and make a course correction if required; so let us all work towards making India of the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi and BR Ambedkar where justice prevails and freedom is the way of life. Of course, wishes come true when we work for them we need to start today on our lacuna and only then our future turns better..

Kirti Wadhawan | Kanpur

ulation is rising, the number of litigants is also on the rise. To overcome this situation, the strength of the judges has also been steadily raised and more courts have come up. Tribunals and Lok Adalats are working in tandem with courts. Appellate authorities are in place in departmental matters. Tribunals, Lok Adalats, and Appellate authorities in government departments have been established to ease the burden on civil, sessions, High Courts, and also Supreme Court. Costs should be imposed in cases, not to the extent that the litigant public becomes afraid of approaching the courts for justice. Frivolous cases should be dismissed at the earliest possible time and the petitioners responsible for bringing such cases should be so admonished that it should be a lesson to others.

KV Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

A VICIOUS ATTACK ON RUSHDIE

Sir — The vicious stabbing of the Indian-origin British author Salman Rushdie is horrifying. It is an unpardon-

able blow on freedom of expression too. Rushdie has faced several death threats since his novel The Satanic Verses was published in 1988, as many Muslims consider it to be sacrilegious. (editorial, "A cowardly attack", Aug. 15).

Rushdie has written 14 books, including the 1981 Booker Prize-winning book, Midnight’s Children. But, it is The Satanic Verses that made him the target of a fatwa in Iran, forcing him to go into hiding. Fatwas were revoked and even the Iran government had macerated its stance on the issue, and yet the heightened hate towards a book and its author remained alive. After more than 33 years now, the savaging attack on Rushdie has stunned the entire literary world. Taking revenge through knives for words is certainly a spineless act. Said Mahatma Gandhi, ‘A coward is incapable of exhibiting love, it is the prerogative of the brave.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

TRS is running a government of corruption-dictatorship for 8 yrs. CM doesn’t meet people. The People don’t want such a CM. Such a CM won’t remain in Telangana. Lotus will bloom here,



Union Minister
—G Kishan Reddy



To be clear, I support the left half of the Republican Party and the right half of the Democratic Party. Also, I’m buying Manchester United you are welcome.

Testa CEO

—Elon Musk

We are boycotting the very people who have given the best of business in the industry. All the Khans in the industry are legends.



Film producer
—Ekta Kapoor



He (Ravi Shastri) had a very low tolerance for somebody who wouldn’t bat at a certain pace he did not like. He would not be very appreciative of that.

Cricketer

—Dinesh Karthik

It’s not just people who will join the cabinet, every worker & MLA of RJD is a part of it, there will be everyone’s participation. The entire cabinet reflects Bihar’s interest.



RJD MP
—Manoj Jha

FIRST COLUMN

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RADHANATH **SWAMI MAHARAJ**

Vedic scriptures explain that Krishna is the Supreme Lord. Vedic scriptures explain that Krishna is the Supreme Lord. Brahma Samhitasays, Isvarah paramah Krishna/ saccidananda vigraha, which means 'Krishna who is known as Govinda is the Supreme Godhead. He has an eternal blissful spiritual body.' So, now the question is, if Krishna is God and is eternal then why he has to appear or take birth? We can understand this by the analogy of the sun. When early in the morning we see sun in the eastern horizon we say that sun has appeared (or is born) and when it sets in the evening, we say the sun has disappeared. But the sun is always there in the sky. Based on our seeing it or not seeing it, we say, it appeared or disappeared. Similarly, Krishna is eternal. When we see him on earth, we say that he has appeared and when he finishes his pastimes and returns to the spiritual world, we say he has disappeared because we cannot see him.

Janmashtami is the day when Krishna appeared in this world. He appeared on the eighth day of dark fortnight (Krishna Paksha) in the month of Bhadrapada (August–September). But why does God, Krishna, take birth in this world? What is the need? Krishna answers this in Bhagavad Gita 4.7. He says that he comes here to establish religious principles and to teach people like you and me how to live righteously. He comes to lead us from darkness to light - tamaso ma jyotirgamaya. Krishna appeared in a pitched dark prison cell in the middle of the night to Devaki and Vasudeva who were bound by iron shackles and were living in constant fear of Kamsa. As soon as Krishna appeared, the dark prison cell got illuminated. Not just that, Krishna's appearance dispelled fear from the heart of Devaki and Vasudeva. Before Krishna appeared, Kamsa had killed six sons of Devaki immediately after they were born. When Devaki and Vasudeva had just got married, a celestial voice had predicted that the eighth child of Devaki will be the cause of Kamsa's death. Upon hearing this ominous voice, Kamsa wanted to kill Devaki, his own sister. To save his wife's life, Vasudeva promised Kamsa that he will deliver all the child of Devaki to him, and Kamsa can do whatever he wants to do with the child. So, one after another Kamsa mercilessly killed the six children. The seventh child was mysteriously transferred to the womb of Rohini, Vasudeva's other wife who was living in Vraj, from the womb of Devaki. That child was Balarama. Krishna appeared as the eighth child and as predicted, he killed the atrocious demon, Kamsa.

The six sons of Devakiwho were killed by Kamsa represent six rebellious proclivities of the mind – kama (lust), krodha (anger), lobha (greed), moha (envy), mada (pride), matsara (illusion).As long as we allow these six enemies to reside in our heart, Krishna will not appear in our heart. If we analyse our life, we will find that we suffer in this world because of these six vices which are called anarthas. In Bhagavad Gita 16.21, Krishna says, lust, greed and anger are gateway to hell so every sane man should give these up, for they lead to the degradation of the soul. As soon as we succumb to these lower nature troubles begin in our life. Our mind remains out of our control because of these impurities. It is important that we cleanse our heart of these six enemies which bring inauspiciousness in our life and seek Krishna's shelter? This has been beautifully explained by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the founder of Gaudiya Vaisnavism and the pioneer of Bhakti Movement. He says that the best way to take Krishna's shelter is by chanting his holy names like the Hare Krishna Mahamantra which cleanses our hearts. Once our heart is cleansed our mind will come into our control. And when the mind is under our control then we can always live in peace and bliss. So, this Janmashtami let us try to alleviate our life by inviting Krishna to reside in our heart.

(The author is the Spiritual Guru of International Society for Krishna Consciousness)

Selling public sector banks is no solution

Public sector banks still have enormous relevance which is not matched by their private counterparts

For some time now, the talk of privatization of public sector banks has been gaining momentum in the policy circles. Significantly, under the banking reforms, the Central government has reduced 27 public sector banks to just 12 in just three years after a merger exercise. However, the government has also said that banking will continue to be recognized as a strategic sector.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget speech this year said that two public sector banks and a public sector insurance company would be privatized. It is noteworthy that according to the current laws 51 per cent participation of the Central government in public sector banks is mandatory. But as per the current announced policy, the government intends to reduce its participation to zero.

The Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill was listed in the Winter session of Parliament last year, but for some reasons it was not presented. It was being said that now this Bill will be presented in the Monsoon session, which also didn't take place.

However, debate on privatisation of public sector banks has intensified recently after Poonam Gupta, director general of the National Council of Applied Economic Research, and Arvind Panagariya of Columbia University, former vice chairman of NITI Aayog, published an academic paper. This article recommends that all public sector banks should be privatised, keeping only the State Bank of India in government's hands. Both the authors are not saying anything new, as their views about privatisation are well known. They consider privatisation to be the solution to all problems in all sectors, including banks.

FINANCIAL INCLUSION

The arguments of proponents of privatization of public sector banks cannot be justified for several reasons. When 14 private banks were nationalised for the first time in 1969 and six more in 1980, the government's main objective was to promote inclusive growth. Considering that agriculture, small scale industries, education, export promotion, etc., are of primary importance, the availability of credit was ensured for them through public sector banks, as priority sectors.

Availability of micro loans to extremely small borrowers at very low interest rates was also ensured by public sector banks. However, the situation has changed significantly since then. According to the directions of the Reserve Bank, efforts were made to link private banks also with national objectives, but it is equally true that despite all the rules, bye-laws and instructions, private sector banks are no match to the way the task of financial inclusion is being performed by public sector banks.

After the Narendra Modi Government



GOVERNMENT BANKS ARE BOUND TO IMPLEMENT ALL GOVERNMENT SCHEMES. IF FINANCIAL INCLUSION AND SOCIAL BANKING ARE REMOVED FROM THE FUNCTIONING OF PUBLIC SECTOR BANKS, THEIR PROFITS CAN ALSO INCREASE IN LEAPS AND BOUNDS.

(The author is Professor, PGDAV College, University of Delhi.)



came to power, Jan Dhan accounts with zero balance were opened under Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), ensuring financial inclusion. So far, 46 crore such Jan Dhan accounts have been opened, through which not only the poor and common people have access to banks and with this they can deposit their micro savings. Direct benefit transfer by the government has also been made possible by these Jan Dhan accounts, which are linked with Aadhaar and mobile phones. Be it transfer of Kisan Samman Nidhi or transfer of COVID related cash to 20 crore women, all this has been made possible only due to Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY).

But, we must understand that, today when the share of private banks in deposits and lending is around 36 per cent, only 10 per cent of Jan Dhan accounts have been opened by private banks. This fact speaks tons about the role of public sector banks in financial inclusion.

Not only this, 90 per cent livelihood loans to six crore women under Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana are being provided by PSBs and regional rural banks (RRBs), sponsored by PSBs. Similarly, the task of giving loans to street vendors is also performed by public sector banks. In such a situation, naturally, the profitability of private sector banks is higher than that of the public sector banks, because these banks are free from the duty of financial inclusion.

Government banks are bound to implement all government schemes. If financial inclusion and social banking are removed

from the functioning of public sector banks, their profits can also increase in leaps and bounds.

REGULATION BY RBI

The RBI argues that it does not have much say in PSBs' affairs and, therefore, it cannot control them, whereas it has control over private banks. This argument doesn't hold water. The RBI does have control and regulatory powers over PSBs, which include say in key appointments, audit and policy on loans, etc.

As far as NPAs of public sector banks are concerned, it is well known that between 2004 and 2014 (UPA regime), huge loans were given in the name of infrastructure loans and a large number of these loans turned out to be NPAs. To recover these bad debts in one way or the other, Insolvency and Bankruptcy Law was enacted. But, in the process, a lot of money from public sector banks was lost. In such a situation, since the rules have been tightened now and the chances of such frauds recurring in future are very limited.

Therefore, privatization of public sector banks in the name of efficiency can be harmful in view of social banking and financial inclusion requirements.

Supporters of privatization of banks argue that if the manufacturing sector in the country is to be promoted, then privatization of public sector banks is necessary. But now the question is that there is no unanimity about handing over the public sector banks to the big industrial houses, as the same may lead to cronyism. If the promoters of private banks in the

country are not in a position to buy state-owned banks, there is also a danger that the privatization of public sector banks will lead to an increase in the stake of foreigners in the banking sector. It's notable that the exposure of foreigners in the Indian banking system has increased manifold in the last nearly two decades.

Some experts are of the view that privatization is no solution to the present day banking problems. Experience shows that the efficiency of an organization does not depend on its ownership, but on its management. If seen, after the nationalization of banks, the confidence of the general public increased in financial institutions and the mobilisation of household savings in the country increased significantly. Due to all this, necessary financial resources could be mobilized for development in the country. No government bank failed due to the central government's patronage in public sector banks. Many private banks were saved from failure, thanks to interventions of PSBs.

Recently, a private bank named Lakshmi Vilas Bank had to be handed over to DSB, a Singaporean bank. In such a situation, if the financial sector of the country goes under foreign domination due to the privatization of banks, then the economy will have to suffer its consequences. Therefore, it would not be appropriate to carry out the privatization of public sector banks only on the basis of suggestions made by some institutions or some economists. It is necessary to study the changes caused by this and its possible side effects.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

I HAVE MENTIONED EVERYTHING IN MY AFFIDAVIT. MAKING AN ALLEGATION AND PROVING THE ALLEGATION ARE TWO DIFFERENT THINGS. —BIHAR LAW MINISTER KARTIKEYA SINGH



I ASK HIM (NITISH KUMAR), IS HE TRYING TO TAKE BIHAR BACK TO LALU'S TIMES? KARTIKEYA SINGH SHOULD BE DISMISSED. —FORMER DY CM, BIHAR SUSHIL KUMAR MODI

The idea of India has always been inclusive

May the 'inclusive idea of India' be on the march on the celebrated occasion of the 75th anniversary of independence

The word 'inclusive' denotes 'including or containing everything'. It would further mean embracing all people, irrespective of race, gender, age, language, ideology, creed, class, culture, social mores, food habits, dress patterns, nationality, disability or other conditions. To be included is a universal human right.

'Being inclusive' implies equal access and opportunities for all. It rules out discrimination and intolerance. It advocates removal of barriers between individuals, communities and nations. A few of the related words are 'including, surrounding, containing, encompassing, wide-ranging, universal, global and all together'.

'To be inclusive' is to



MD **THOMAS**

(The author is Director, Institute of Harmony and Peace Studies.)

embrace and celebrate differences. There are differences in backgrounds, perspectives and experiences, like gender. People think, feel, understand, act, react, and the like, differently. Engaging with every category and to be integrated with one and all is the ultimate value of life.

'Taking everyone along', along with going together, crossing all borders is the spirit of inclusiveness. 'Nation' is totally an inclusive idea. It is a country or all the people in a country. It has no particular religion, language, culture, and the like. It is a large body of people, united in terms of a certain territory and government. Nation or country accommodates diverse languages, ideologies, ethnic groups, etc.

People of a certain nation

are known for their 'collective identity', mostly supported by a set of shared history, features, beliefs, institutions, interests and sentiments. A strong sense of community, backed by integrity, integration, solidarity and relatedness are the assets of the people of a certain nation.

India is a nation and a country, at the same time. The 'Republic of India', Bharat Ganrajya is a country in South Asia. It is the seventh largest country by area, the second most populous country and the most populous democracy in the world. It is a nation with a self-governing State with cultures and traditions.

'Patriotism', obviously, is at the core of a nation. It is the feeling of love, devotion and sense of attachment to one's

country. Ethnicity, language, cultural traits, social traditions, historical roots and political affiliations could be at the back of the patriotic sentiments.

Patriotism motivates one to have special affection towards one's country, define oneself in terms of one's country, being interested in the welfare of one's country and being ready to sacrifice oneself for the sake of national prospects. This is often the natural trait of all the citizens, while the degree varies.

Patriotism is not the same as nationalism, even though they share several factors. The former is loyalty to a group conceived of in judicial and political terms, whereas the latter is loyalty to a group understood primarily on ethnic and cultural terms. The former has focus on values and beliefs,

while the latter on heritage.

Furthermore, patriotism leads one to serve the country, while nationalism makes one plunge into taking pride in national symbols, monuments and achievements, as well as reviving cultural traits. In either case, devotion to one's country or nation leads one to a sense of 'national consciousness', which proceeds to exalt one's nation or country above some or all others.

'Islamic State' and 'Hindu Raashtra' are outstanding instances of the inordinate type of patriotism and nationalism. Now, what is wrong with 'Islamic State' and 'Hindu Raashtra'? Islamic State is a radical and militant Islamic group of the Sunni tradition. 'Hindu Raashtra' is the fanatic and extremist idea of Hindu polity

that was conceived and mooted by Savarkar. Both are religion-based, exclusive and violent ideologies that brutally cross the courtesy lines between communities of other affiliations and proceed to hate, and even engage in brutal massacres. They function as a 'blend of power, money and faith', though in disguise.

Like 'Islamic State' elsewhere, 'Hindu Raashtra' in India sharply violates the basic fibre of being inclusive. It negates and contradicts the fundamental right of other religious, ideological and cultural traditions to co-exist peacefully.

The India of today is multi-ethnic, multi-lingual, multi-ideological, multi-religious, multicultural, multi-cuisine, multi-dressed, multi-coloured,

multi-traditional, multi-party, multi-community, and the like. This is what the tri-coloured 'Indian flag' is all about.

The greatest ideal of India is 'vasudhaiv kutumbakam' from Maha Upanishad, meaning 'the world is one family.' Let good thoughts come from all directions' is its real driving force. 'Satyameva jayate', 'truth alone prevails' is the expression to real development and progress. 'Sarve bhavantu sukhinah', 'let all be happy', is the esteemed destination of India. Nothing less than these ideals could be acceptable to India.

May the 'inclusive idea of India' be on the march on the celebrated occasion of the 75th anniversary of India as a free nation, in special, towards a leadership beyond borders!

Taiwan, China hold opposing military drills amid tensions

AP ■ HUALIEN (TAIWAN)

Taiwan is staging military exercises to show its ability to resist Chinese pressure to accept Beijing's political control over the self-governing island, following new rounds of threatening drills from China. The exercises Wednesday off the southeastern county of Hualien follow days of Chinese missile firings and incursions into Taiwan's sea and airspace by ships and planes from the People's Liberation Army, the military wing of China's ruling Communist Party. "We strongly condemn Communist China's continuous military provocations around Taiwan's sea and air that undermine regional peace," Taiwan Defence Ministry spokesperson Sun Li-fang told reporters at Hualien Air Force Base.

"Communist China's military operations just provide us with the opportunity for combat-readiness training," Sun said. Taiwan's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Joanne Ou said China was using recent visits by US Congress members including House Speaker Nancy Pelosi as a pretext for escalating its attempts to intimidate Taiwan into accepting what it calls its terms for "peaceful reunification". "China launched military provocations on these grounds. This is absurd and a barbaric act, which also undermines regional stability and interferes with shipping and commercial activities in the Indo-Pacific region," Ou said. China sees the island as a breakaway province to be annexed by force if necessary, and considers visits to Taiwan by



foreign officials as recognising its sovereignty. Alongside its military threats, China imposed visa bans and other sanctions Tuesday on Taiwanese political figures. China exercises no effective legal authority over Taiwan and it's unclear what effect the sanctions would have. China has refused all contact with Taiwan's government since shortly after the 2016 election of President Tsai Ing-wen of the pro-independence Democratic Progressive Party. Tsai was overwhelmingly reelected in 2020. The DPP also controls the legislature, while the vast majority of Taiwanese favor maintaining the status quo of de facto

independence along with strong economic and social connections between the sides. China accuses Washington of encouraging the island's independence through the sale of weapons and engagement between US politicians and the island's government. The US says it does not support independence and has no formal diplomatic ties with the island, but it is legally bound to ensure Taiwan can defend itself against threats from China, including a blockade. Aside from putting its military on alert, Taiwan has largely played down the threat from the Chinese exercises and life has continued as normal among a population of 23 million that has lived under the shadow of bellicose rhetoric and saber rattling from China for more than seven decades.

Measles outbreak in Zimbabwe kills 157 unvaccinated children

AP ■ HARARE

A measles outbreak in Zimbabwe has killed 157 children, most of whom were unvaccinated due to their family's religious beliefs, officials said. The measles outbreak was first reported in the eastern Manicaland province in early April and has since spread to all parts of the country. At least 2,056 cases have been reported and virtually all of the deaths have been children who were not vaccinated, Information Minister Monica Mutsvangwa said. Zimbabwe's Cabinet has invoked a law used to respond to disasters to deal with the outbreak, she said. The government says it is embarking on a mass vaccination campaign targeting children aged between 6 months and 15 years old and is engaging traditional and faith leaders to support the drive. Zimbabwe continued vaccinating children against measles even during the height of the coronavirus pandemic, but the drive has been hampered by religious groups that preach against vaccines. The Christian sects are against modern medicine and tell their members to rely on self-proclaimed prophets for healing. Church gatherings that have resumed following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions have "led to the spread of measles to previously unaffected areas," said the health ministry in a statement



last week. Measles is among the most infectious diseases in the world and mostly spreads in the air by coughing, sneezing or close contact. Symptoms include coughing, fever and a skin rash, while the risk of severe measles or dying from complications is high among unvaccinated children. Outbreaks in unvaccinated and malnourished populations have been known to kill thousands. Scientists estimate that more than 90% of the population needs to be immunised to prevent measles outbreaks. The World Health Organisation in April warned of an increase in measles in vulnerable countries as a result of a disruption of services due to COVID-19. In July, UNICEF said about 25 million children worldwide have missed out on routine immunisations against common childhood diseases, calling it a "red alert" for child health.

UN chief appoints Indian bureaucrat to inaugural internet governance forum leadership panel

PTI ■ UNITED NATIONS

Secretary in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology Alkesh Kumar Sharma is among 10 eminent persons from around the world appointed by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres on his inaugural Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Leadership Panel. In line with the mandate of

the IGF and as recommended in the Secretary-General's Roadmap for Digital Cooperation, the Secretary-General has established the Panel as a strategic, empowered, and multistakeholder body to support and strengthen the IGF. In addition, the Panel consists of five ex-officio members, including Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology Aman-



deep Singh Gill as well as senior representatives of the current, immediately previous, and immediately upcoming IGF host countries. The Panel will address strategic and urgent issues and highlight Forum discussions and possible follow-up actions, in order to promote greater impact and dissemination of IGF discussions according to its Terms of Reference.

Germany flying 6 fighters 8K miles in 24 hours to Singapore

AP ■ BANGKOK

A group of German air force fighter jets landed in Singapore on Tuesday as part of a marathon bid to fly them some 12,800 kilometers (8,000 miles) from their home base to Southeast Asia in just 24 hours. The exercise comes at a time of heightened tensions between China and the U.S. And its allies over Taiwan and demonstrates the ability for a European nation to move air power quickly to the region. The European Union unveiled a new strategy in September for boosting economic, political and defense ties in the Indo-Pacific. German Defense Minister Christine Lambrecht



told reporters that despite the war in Ukraine being a priority at the moment, the Eurofighter mission underscores that Asia has not been forgotten. "We are at the side of all of those who stand for our values such as democracy, freedom and security, and are also willing to contribute," she said as the aircraft took off from Neuburg, Germany, on Monday, the dpa news agency reported. "Our focus at the moment

is naturally on the eastern flank, for which Russia's brutal war of aggression is to blame, but we also have to keep an eye on other regions." Part of the EU's new strategy for the Asia-Pacific is focused on improving maritime security and ensuring safe passage through sea lanes, and several European nations have sent naval assets to the region for maneuvers this year. As China has grown more assertive in the region, the United States, Britain

and others have also made it increasingly a priority. Germany sent the frigate Bayern to the region on a nearly seven-month deployment that wound up earlier this year, the first time a German warship had been in the Indo-Pacific for nearly two decades. It took part in joint exercises with allies including Australia, Singapore, Japan and the United States, and was denied a port call in China. The six multirole Eurofighter jets involved in the current exercise were accompanied by four transport aircraft and three tankers. They were refueled in-air along the lengthy flight, and also made stops along the way for refueling, inspection and rotations of pilots.

INDOSTAR HOME FINANCE PRIVATE LIMITED
Registered Office : One World Center, Tower 2A, 20th Floor, Jupiter Mills Compound, S B Marg, Mumbai - 400013, India

Notice under Section 13 (2) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002

I, the undersigned being the authorized officer of IndoStar Home Finance Private Limited (IHFLP), hereby give the following notice to the below mentioned Borrower(s) who have deliberately failed to discharge their legal and contractual liability(ies) i.e. defaulted in the repayment of the loan amount i.e. principal as well as the interest and other charges accrued thereon under the Home Loan advanced/granted to them by IndoStar Home Finance Private Limited and as a consequence thereof, the said Loan(s) have become Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) in the books of the IHFLP in accordance with applicable RBI regulations. Accordingly, Demand Notice(s) were issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and rules there-to ("SARFAESI Act"), on their last Known addresses through India Post and were also affixed on outer door /other conspicuous part thereto as per the applicable provisions of SARFAESI Act. As such the said Borrower(s) are hereby intimidated/put to notice by way of publication of this Demand Notice to clear their entire outstanding dues under the Home Loan facilities availed by them from IHFLP against securities created by them in favour of IHFLP, the details of which are specified hereunder:

LOAN ACCOUNT NO.	BORROWER(S) DETAILS	PROPERTY DETAILS	DEMAND NOTICE DETAILS
LNGHA0HL-06180003291, LNGHA0HL-06180003292	BORROWER:- AAKASH SINGH CO-BORROWER:- MEENA SINGH	Property Bearing:- 2nd FLOOR, WITHOUT ROOF/ TERRACE RIGHTS, PROPERTY NO. C-28 A OUT OF KHASRA NO. 32/11 EAST UTTAM NAGAR, VILLAGE-POSSANGIPUR, BLOCK C INDIA DELHI WEST DELHI - 110059. NORTH:- ROAD, SOUTH:- GALI, EAST:- PART OF PROPERTY, WEST:- PLOT NO. C-29	11/03/2022, ₹ 29,61,296/- (Rupees Twenty-Nine Lakh Sixty One Thousand Two Hundred Ninety-Six Only)
LNGHA0HL-08180004581, LNGHA0HL-08180004582	BORROWER:- NEHA MEHTA CO-BORROWER:- KARAN MEHTA	Property Bearing:- 3rd FLOOR, WITH ROOF RIGHTS, PROPERTY NO. C-28A OUT OF KHASRA NO. 32/11 EAST UTTAM NAGAR, VILLAGE - POSSANGIPUR, BLOCK - C, INDIA DELHI WEST DELHI - 110059. NORTH:- ROAD, SOUTH:- GALI, EAST: PART OF PROPERTY, WEST:- PLOT PNO. C-29	11/03/2022, ₹ 21,68,930/- (Rupees Twenty-One Lakh Sixty Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Thirty Only)
LNDEL0HL-09180005413, LNDEL0HL-09180005414	BORROWER:- SUMAN KUMARI CO-BORROWER:- KAMLESH	Property Bearing:- PORTION OF PROPERTY NO. C-21, BLOCK-C, 2ND FLOOR, WITHOUT ROOF RIGHTS KHASRA NO. 841/805/644, 806/644, 645, 650, 651,652, 657 & 646, VILLAGE- WAZIRPUR SAWAN PARK INDIA DELHI NORTH WEST DELHI - 110052. NORTH:- REMAINING PORTION OF THE SAID PROPERTY SOUTH:- GALI 15 FT, EAST:- REMAINING PORTION OF THE SAID PROPERTY, WEST:- PROPERTY NO. C-22	11/03/2022, ₹ 17,75,446/- (Rupees Seventeen Lakh Seventy Five Thousand Four Hundred Forty-Six Only)
LNDELLAP-01190008575, LNDELLAP-01190008576	BORROWER:- MUNDER SINGH CO-BORROWER:- KAMLESH	Property Bearing:- PLOT NO. 390, KHASRA NO. 1133, GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR, VILLAGE CHAPRAULA, DADRI UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA - 201301. NORTH:- OTHER PROPERTY, SOUTH:- OTHER PROPERTY EAST:- OTHER PROPERTY, WEST:- ROAD	18/06/2022, ₹ 11,20,496/- (Rupees Eleven Lakh Twenty Thousand Four Hundred Ninety-Six Only)
LNDEL0HL-06190010759	BORROWER:- RAMJILAL KASHYAP CO-BORROWER:- MAMITA KASHYAP	Property Bearing:- Flat No SF 04, 2ND FLOOR (LHS- FRONT SIDE), WITHOUT ROOF RIGHTS, LEVEL-3, BUILT ON PROPERTY NO. A-2 SAINT NAGAR COLONY, KHASRA NO: 414,415,418 SADULLABAD LONI, GHAZIABAD, UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA-20102. NORTH:- GALI, SOUTH:- OTHERFLAT, EAST:- GALI, WEST:- ENTRANCE OF FLAT	18/06/2022, ₹ 7,85,452/- (Rupees Seven Lakh Eighty-Five Thousand Four Hundred Fifty-Two Only)
LNDELLAP-03190009924	BORROWER:- DEEPAK DHARMA PAL CO-BORROWER:- DHARMA PAL GUARANTOR:- RAKHI	Property Bearing:- Khasra No.146, Distt. - Gautam Budh Naga & Khata No.146, Gram Dabra Pargana, Tehsil Dadri, Greater Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh - 201310 North:- Plot of Surender, South:- Road 17 Ft, East:- Plot of Harishchandra, West:- Plot of Surender	23/06/2022, ₹ 10,66,705/- (Rupees Ten Lakh Sixty-Six Thousand Seven Hundred Five Only)
LNDEL0HL-09210018963	BORROWER:- KAMAL SINGH CO-BORROWER:- USHA DEVI	Property Bearing:- Property No. 100, Khasra No. 274 Akash Nagar, Phase-S-B, Village Rasulpur Sikoda, Pargana Dasna, Uttar Pradesh, Ghaziabad - 201013 NORTH:- Other Plot, SOUTH:- Road 18Ft, EAST:- Vacant plot, WEST:- Vacant Plot	23/06/2022, ₹ 11,53,869/- (Rupees Eleven Lakh Fifty-Three Thousand Eight Hundred Sixty-Nine Only)
LNDEL0HL-08180004831, LNDEL0HL-08180004832	BORROWER:- POOJA CO-BORROWER:- MANOJ KUMAR GUARANTOR:- BHIM SINGH	Property Bearing:- Municipal No. 2369/8d, 2nd Floor, Gali chhodhi Wali, Mandir Wali Gali, Village Shadi Khampur, Delhi, East Delhi - 110008. NORTH:- 2369/D-3, SOUTH:- OTFIER PROPERTY, EAST:- OTHER PROPERTY, WEST:- Rasta 10 feet Wide/ Stairs	23/06/2022, ₹ 9,99,625/- (Rupees Nine Lakh Ninety-Nine Thousand Five Hundred Twenty-Five Only)
LNDEL0HL-01200013333	BORROWER:- ARVIND KUMAR CO-BORROWER:- SUNITA	Property Bearing:- Plot No: 28, Khasra No. 114/5/1, 4,7, 6/2, 14/1, 15, Pratapgarrh Part 2, NEAR SECTOR 56, Waka Mauja Gauchhi, Tehsil Gauchhi, Faridabad Haryana, India - 121001 NORTH:- ROAD 15 FEET, SOUTH:- VACANTPLOT, EAST:- ROAD 16 FEET, WEST:- OTHER	23/06/2022, ₹ 4,56,833/- (Rupees Four Lakh Fifty-Six Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty-Three only)
LNDEL0HL-07180004038, LNDEL0HL-07180004039	BORROWER:- SATISH CHAND CO-BORROWER:- ASHA DEVI	Property Bearing:- Flat No. F-107, (GF), Out of Khasra No. 18, GALI NO 5, EAST VINOD NAGAR, Village-Khichri Pur, Illaqa Shahdara, DELHI EAST DELHI, INDIA- 110091. NORTH:- Other Property, SOUTH:- Other Property, EAST:- Other Property, WEST:- Road	23/06/2022, ₹ 10,46,775/- (Rupees Ten Lakh Forty-Six Thousand Seven Seventy-Five Only)
LNDEL0HL-04190010182	BORROWER:- DEVENDER KUMAR SHARMA CO-BORROWER:- VANDANA SHARMA	Property Bearing:- FIRST FLOOR & (RHS FLAT), LEVEL 3, WITHOUT ROOF RIGHTS, PART OFFPROPERTY NO. 3181, SCHOOL WALI GALLI, LAL DARWAZA, BAZAR, SITA RAM, DELHI - 110006. NORTH:- ENTRANCE OF FLAT/OTHER FLAT, SOUTH:- OTHER PROPERTY, EAST:- OTHER PROPERTY, WEST:- OTHER PROPERTY	18/06/2022, ₹ 14,58,446/- (Rupees Fourteen Lakh Fifty-Eight Thousand Four Hundred Forty-Six Only)
LNDEL0HL-07180004014, LNDEL0HL-07180004015, LNDELLAP-02210016259	BORROWER:- VISHAL SHARMA CO-BORROWER:- PUSHPA SHARMA	Property Bearing:- PROPERTY NO. D2/8,(OLD PLOT No-3IA) GROUND FLOOR (LHS) BLOCK-D, GALI NO 2, VILL DABRI VASHIST PARK, SOUTH WEST DELHI, DELHI INDIA -110046. NORTH:- GALI 10 FT, SOUTH:- ROAD 20 FT, EAST:- RSHFLAT/PLOTNO. D - 68, WEST:- OTHERPLOT	18/06/2022, ₹ 19,56,987/- (Rupees Nineteen Lakh Fifty-Six Thousand Nine Hundred Eighty-Seven Only)

This substituted service/publication of Demand Notice(s) is being made as per the provisions of SARFAESI Act. The above mentioned Borrower(s) are advised to make the payments of all the amounts mentioned above along with interest and other charges as applicable thereon, within 60 days from the date of publication of this Demand Notice failing which (without prejudice to any other rights and remedies available) to IHFLP under the terms of Loan Agreement and applicable laws including without limitation further steps for taking possession of the Secured Assets/Mortgaged Properties specified above and subsequent sale/auction of the same towards recovery of the outstanding loan amounts, shall be initiated under the provisions of Sec 13 (4) of the SARFAESI Act. The aforementioned parties and/or any other person acting for and on their behalf are also advised not to sell, transfer, dispose of, alienate, encumber and/or create any third party rights or interest in any manner in the above mentioned Secured Properties mortgaged in favour of IHFLP on first exclusive charge basis.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

"Any person who contravenes or abates contravention of the provision of the SARFAESI Act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for all the consequences including imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act."

Place – Delhi

Date – 17/08/2022

Sd/-

Authorised Officer

IndoStar Home Finance Pvt Ltd.

EU to host Serbia-Kosovo talks in Brussels amid tensions

AP ■ BELGRADE (SERBIA)

War-time rivals Serbia and Kosovo are holding high-level crisis talks on Thursday which the European Union mediators hope will de-escalate growing tensions in the Balkans where Russia has been trying to further increase its influence amid the war in Ukraine. Hopes that the rare face-to-face meeting between Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic and Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti, to be held in Brussels, could produce a major breakthrough are slim. But Western officials over-seeing the decades-old deadlock between the two neighbours hope that at least it could eliminate increasing war-mongering rhetoric by both sides. "All open issues will be addressed and should be addressed through the EU-facilitated dialogue," European Commission spokesperson for foreign affairs Nabila Massrali told reporters. "Both parties must end their hostilities at this point" and "act responsibly". The latest tensions between Serbia and its former province of Kosovo soared late last month when Kurti's Govt declared that Serbian identity documents and vehicle license plates would no longer be valid on Kosovo territory.

Israel carried out Gaza strike that killed 5 minors: Reports

AP ■ JEBALIYA (GAZA STRIP)

A Palestinian human rights group and an Israeli newspaper reported Tuesday that an explosion in a cemetery that killed five Palestinian children during the latest flare-up in Gaza was caused by an Israeli airstrike and not an errant Palestinian rocket. It was one of a number of blasts during the fighting that did not bear the tell-tale signs of an Israeli F-16 or drone strike, and which the Israeli military said might have been caused by rockets misfired by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant group. The five children, aged 4 to 16 years old, had gathered in the local cemetery, one of the few open spaces in the crowded Jebaliya refugee camp, on Aug. 7, hours before an Egyptian-brokered cease-fire ended three days of heavy fighting. Residents said a projectile fell from the air and exploded in the cemetery. When The Associated Press visited the site, it saw none of the usual signs of an airstrike by an Israeli F-16 or drone, adding to suspicions that the blast was caused by an errant rocket. Both the Israeli military and Palestinian rights groups said at the time that they were still investigating the blast. On Tuesday, the Gaza-based Palestinian Center for Human Rights said its investigation of shrapnel and other evidence led it to conclude that the blast was caused by an Israeli airstrike. "This was a missile fired from an Israeli aircraft," said Raja Sourani, the director of the group, as he displayed pictures of what he said was a fragment showing the missile's serial number.



Spain: 10 injured while leaving stopped train near wildfire

AP ■ MADRID

An approaching wildfire in eastern Spain caused a train driver to stop and change directions to avoid the flames as several passengers were injured when they got off, authorities said. The train was travelling in the Valencia region on Tuesday night when the driver decided to reverse course because of the wildfire advancing from around the town of Bejis, further east. Some passengers got off the train when it stopped in the countryside, including ones who broke windows to escape, officials said. Ten people were injured, Spanish state news agency Efe reported. The government of Castellón province on Wednesday tweeted a video of firefighters running for their lives as towering flames from the Bejis fire roared behind them. The wildfire is one of two still raging out of control in Spain. South of Valencia city, a bigger fire around the Val d'Ebo area has forced more than 1,500 people to evacuate towns and villages since the weekend. The European Forest Fire Information System says 275,000 hectares (679,000 acres) have burned in wildfires so far this year in Spain. That's more than four times the country's annual average of 67,000 hectares (165,000 acres) since 2006, when records began. In the neighbouring Portugal, authorities said they hoped to bring under control a wildfire that has burned for 12 days and scorched large swaths of pine forest in the Serra da Estrela Natural Park.

Bangladeshi tribunal sentences five Islamist militants to death for mosque bomb attack in 2015

PTI ■ DHAKA

A Bangladeshi tribunal on Wednesday handed down death sentences to five militants from the banned JMB outfit, including a former navy soldier, for a bomb attack at a mosque inside a major navy installation near southeastern port city of Chattogram seven years ago. Chattogram Anti-Terrorism Tribunal Judge Abdul Halim pronounced the verdict as four of the five convicts were on the dock, court officials said.

The fifth militant was tried in absentia as he was on the run. All the convicts belonged to outlawed Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB). Pronouncing the death sentences, the judge also imposed a penalty of Tk 50,000 (USD 526 approx) on each of them. In his observation, the judge commented that the convicts' act of terrorism inside a naval base tantamount to attack on Bangladesh's independence and sovereignty, belittling those who were engaged to guard the country's maritime boundary.

British Sikh Windsor Castle intruder told guards he wanted to kill Queen

PTI ■ LONDON

A British Sikh man found in the grounds of royal residence Windsor Castle armed with a crossbow on Christmas Day last year told palace guards that he was there to kill Queen Elizabeth II, a UK court was told on Wednesday. Jaswant Singh Chail, from Southampton, identified himself as "Indian Sikh" who wanted to "assassinate" the 96-year-old monarch as revenge for the 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre in a video that emerged soon after the arrest. The Queen was in her private apartments at the time of the incident on the morning of December 25, 2021.



Crimea 'sabotage' highlights Russia's woes in Ukraine war

AP ■ KYIV

A spate of fires and explosions has turned Russian-annexed Crimea from a secure base for the further invasion of Ukraine into the latest flashpoint highlighting Moscow's challenges ahead in a war that is nearing the half-year mark. A statement from British defense intelligence Wednesday that "Russian commanders will highly likely be increasingly concerned with the apparent deterioration in security across Crimea, which functions as rear base area for the occupation". Even Russia itself acknowledged it was an "act of sabotage" that caused Tuesday's explosions and fires that ripped through an ammunition depot near Dzhankoi in once-secure Crimea, leading to chaotic scenes when around

3,000 people had to be evacuated. As a vivid reminder of Russia's vulnerability in Crimea, detonations at the depot near Dzhankoi were still continuing Wednesday. A week earlier, Russia's military in Crimea already came under pressure when Ukraine said nine Russian warplanes were destroyed following explosions. At the time, Moscow still offered the possibility of a wayward cigarette butt as the cause. No such explanations would suffice anymore as the war, which had long centered on brutal fighting in Ukraine's eastern Donbas region, has now given southern Crimea increasing importance. Worsening the outlook in Crimea was a report by the Kommersant business paper, that explosions had also taken place near Gvardeyskoye in the



centre of the peninsula. By Wednesday, there still was no comment from the Russian authorities. The British intelligence report said Gvardeyskoye and Dzhankoi "are home to two of the most important Russian military airfields in Crimea".

Ukraine has stopped short of claiming responsibility for any of the blasts, including those at another Crimean air base last week. Russia seized the Crimean Peninsula in 2014 and has used it to launch attacks against Ukraine in the war that began

on Feb 24. If Ukrainian forces were behind the explosions, that would represent a significant escalation in the war. Such attacks could also indicate that Ukrainian operatives are able to penetrate deeply into Russian-occupied territory. On the eastern front, the stalemate between both sides continued, with the brutality of the shelling causing ever more death and destruction. In the Donetsk region at the forefront of the Russian offensive, two civilians were killed and seven others were wounded by recent Russian shelling of several towns and villages. Russian Tu-22M3 long-range bombers fired cruise missiles at the Odesa region overnight, leaving four people injured, according to Odesa regional administration spokesman Oleh Bratchuk.



Ukrainians flee grim life in Russian occupied Kherson

AP ■ KYIV

It was early one morning when life under Russian occupation became too much for Volodymyr Zhdanov: Rocket fire aimed at Ukrainian forces struck near his home in the city of Kherson, terrifying one of his two children. His 8-year-old daughter "ran in panic to the basement. It was 2 o'clock in the morning and (she) was really scared," said Zhdanov, who later fled the city on the Black Sea and has been living in Kyiv, the capital, for the past three weeks. Kherson, located north of the Crimean Peninsula that was annexed by Moscow in 2014, was the first city to fall after Russia's invasion on Feb. 24. The port remains at the heart of the conflict and Ukraine's efforts to preserve its vital access to the sea. For Russia, Kherson is a key point along the land corridor from its border to the peninsula. Zhdanov and others who made the hazardous journey to escape from the region describe increasingly grim conditions

there, part of a heavy-handed effort by Russia to establish permanent control. The streets in the city, which had a prewar population of about 300,000, are mostly deserted. Rumors swirl about acts of armed resistance and the sudden disappearance of officials who refuse to cooperate with the Russian authorities. Occupation forces patrol in markets to warn those trying to use the Ukrainian currency, the hryvnia, in transactions. Pro-Moscow officials have been installed in local and regional governments, as well as on the police force. Workers at various municipal services face pressure to cooperate with Russian managers. Most schools have closed. Supplies of essential goods are uneven, halting most commercial activity. There are shortages of medicines and spikes in the price of other commodities. Many residents had been determined to hold out as long as possible for a promised Ukrainian counterattack that hasn't materialized.

Biden signs massive climate and health care legislation

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden signed Democrats' landmark climate change and health care bill into law on Tuesday, delivering what he has called the "final piece" of his pared-down domestic agenda, as he aims to boost his party's standing with voters less than three months before the midterm elections. The legislation includes the most substantial federal investment in history to fight climate change — some USD

375 billion over the decade — and would cap prescription drug costs at USD 2,000 out-of-pocket annually for Medicare recipients. It also would help an estimated 13 million Americans pay for health care insurance by extending subsidies provided during the coronavirus pandemic. The measure is paid for by new taxes on large companies and stepped-up IRS enforcement of wealthy individuals and entities, with additional funds going to reduce the federal deficit.



In a triumphant signing event at the White House,

Biden pointed to the law as proof that democracy — no matter how long or messy the process — can still deliver for voters in America as he read-tested a line he will likely repeat later this fall ahead of the midterms: "The American people won, and the special interests lost." "In this historic moment, Democrats sided with the American people, and every single Republican in the Congress sided with the special interests in this vote," Biden said, repeatedly seizing on the

contrast between his party and the GOP. "Every single one." The House on Friday approved the measure on a party-line 220-207 vote. It passed the Senate days earlier with Vice President Kamala Harris breaking a 50-50 tie in that chamber. "In normal times, getting these bills done would be a huge achievement," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., said during the White House ceremony. "But to do it now, with only 50 Democratic votes in the Senate,

over an intransigent Republican minority, is nothing short of amazing." Biden signed the bill into law during a small ceremony in the State Dining Room of the White House, sandwiched between his return from a six-day beachside vacation in South Carolina and his departure for his home in Wilmington, Delaware. He plans to hold a larger "celebration" for the legislation on Sept. 6 once lawmakers return to Washington.

China, US spar over climate on Twitter

AP ■ BEIJING

The world's two biggest emitters of greenhouse gases are sparring on Twitter over climate policy, with China questioning whether the US can deliver on the landmark climate legislation signed into law by President Joe Biden this week. "You can bet America will meet our commitments," US Ambassador to China Nicholas Burns tweeted in response on Wednesday, using a national flag emoticon for "America." He called on China to resume suspended climate talks, writing, "We're ready." The punchy exchange, part of a longer back and forth on Twitter, is emblematic of a broader worry: US-China cooperation is widely considered vital to the success of global efforts to curb rising temperatures. With the breakdown in relations over Taiwan and other issues, some question whether the two sides can cooperate.

After Congress passed the climate bill last Friday, Burns took to Twitter over the weekend to say the US was acting on climate change with its largest investment ever — and that China should follow. On Tuesday night, China's Foreign Ministry responded with its own tweet: "Good to hear. But what matters is: Can the US deliver?"

The verbal skirmish grew out of China's suspension of talks with the US on climate and several other issues earlier this month as part of its protest over a visit to Taiwan by a senior American lawmaker, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Climate has been one of the few areas of cooperation between the feuding countries. US officials criticised China's move, with Secretary of State Antony Blinken saying it "doesn't punish the United States — it punishes the world." Asked to respond, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian called on the US last week to "deliver on its historical responsibilities and due obligations on climate change and stop looking around for excuses for its inaction." The Min later tweeted some of his answer, and Burns responded four days later with his tweet on the US climate bill. Using the acronym for the People's Republic of China, he ended with, "The PRC should follow+reconsider its suspension of climate cooperation with the US." China elaborated on its "Can the US deliver?" message with a second tweet suggesting that the US meet rich country pledges to help poorer countries cope financially with climate change and lift sanctions imposed last year.

South Korean leader: Seoul won't seek own nuclear deterrent

AP ■ SEOUL

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said Wednesday his government has no plans to pursue its own nuclear deterrent in the face of growing North Korean nuclear threats, as he urged the North to return to dialogue aimed at exchanging denuclearization steps for economic benefits. In a news conference in Seoul, Yoon said South Korea doesn't desire political change in North Korea that's brought by force and he called for diplomacy aimed at building sustainable peace between the rivals amid tensions over the North's accelerating weapons program. Yoon's comments came days after he proposed an "audacious" economic assistance package to North Korea if it abandons its nuclear weapons program, while avoiding harsh criticism of the North after it threatened "deadly" retaliation over a COVID-19 outbreak it blames on the South. Tensions could rise further next week as the United States and South Korea kick off their biggest combined military training in years to

counter the North Korean threat. The North describes such drills as invasion rehearsals and has often responded to them with missile tests or other provocations. Yoon's proposal for large-scale aid in food and healthcare and modernizing power and port infrastructure resembled previous South Korean offers that were rejected by North

Korea, which is speeding its development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, seen by leader Kim Jong Un as his strongest guarantee of survival. Still, Yoon expressed hope for "meaningful dialogue" with North Korea over his plan

and stressed that Seoul is willing to provide corresponding economic rewards at each step of a phased denuclearization process if the North commits to a genuine "roadmap" toward fully abandoning its weapons program.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of Fullerton India Home Finance Company, That Mr. Raj Kumar Sawaria is owner of Third floor, with roof rights, LHS, said floor, part of Property bearing No. 282, area measuring 100 Sq. Yds., Situated in the area of Village Garhi Jharu, now Commonly known as Anrit Puri B, New Delhi (the said property), by virtue of Sale deed dated 27.07.2019, registration No. 406, executed by Mr. Om Prakash. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owner want to sell the said floor to Mr. Anil Kumar who is taking Loan from Fullerton India Home Finance Company for purchase the said floor, if anybody has any objection/s upon the ownership of above owner of the said property/floor, its sale, mortgage/litigation, and any kind of objections, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.
Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
259, Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar, New Delhi-15
Ph: 011-41125728, kumar.associates.advocates@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client that Mr. Kavitjett Singh and Mrs. Preet Pal Kaur are the owners of Built up Property bearing No. 32-D, known as 32-D/1/B, area measuring 114 Sq. Yds., out of area measuring 82 Sq. Yds., and Property No. 32-D, area measuring 70 Sq. Yds., total area measuring 124 Sq. Yds., out of Khirsa No. 256, 258, 259, Situated in the area of Village Ghondli, in the abadi of East Azad Nagar, Illaga Shuhada, Delhi, wide two separate GPS, AITS and Will each dated 23.10.1998. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owners want to sell the said property to a person who intends to obtain loan from our client against the said property, if anybody has any objection/s upon the ownership of above owner over the said floor, its sale, mortgage/litigation, and any other objections, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.
Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
200, Indir Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar, New Delhi-15
Ph: 011-41125728, kumar.associates.advocates@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
Public at Large is hereby notified that the Proprietorship Firm "RAMS AMBULANCE SERVICES" having Sh. Anmol Sehrawat as its proprietor and operating address as Booth No. B-90, Sector - 18, Urban Estate, District Gurugram, Haryana - 122001, has changed its name to "RAMS SERVICES" (GSTN: 06HLQPS1737C1ZT). The firm "RAMS AMBULANCE SERVICES" henceforth, shall be known as "RAMS SERVICES" (GSTN: 06HLQPS1737C1ZT) having same proprietor as Sh. Anmol Sehrawat and same operating address as Booth No. B-90, Sector-18, Urban Estate, District Gurugram, Haryana - 122001. Sh. ANMOL SEHRAWAT PROPRIETOR "RAMS SERVICES" BOOTH NO. B-90, SECTOR-18, URBAN ESTATE, DISTRICT GURUGRAM, HARYANA-122001.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that Share Certificate No(s) 253 for 100 share(s) having Distinctive No(s) 2418871 – 2418970 held under Folio No. 253 respectively of Elofic Industries Limited., having its registered Office at 14/4, Mathura Road, Faridabad, Haryana – 121003 registered in the name of Ashok Gupta has been lost. I, Ashok Gupta now have applied to the Company for issue of duplicate share certificate(s) in lieu of the above. Any person having any objection to the issue of duplicate Share certificate(s) in lieu of the original share certificate(s) as aforesaid is requested to lodge his/her/their objection thereto with the Company at their above address 14/4, Mathura Road, Faridabad, Haryana – 121003 in writing within 15 days from the date of publication.

Name & Address of the shareholder
ASHOK GUPTA
A-15, Guru Nanak Road, Kewal Park Extn., Azadpur, North West Delhi, Delhi - 110033
Place: DELHI
Date: 18-08-2022

Thailand's restive south hit by wave of arson and bombings

AP ■ HAT YAI (THAILAND)

A wave of arson and bombing attacks overnight hit Thailand's southernmost provinces, which for almost two decades have been the scene of an active Muslim separatist insurgency, officials said on Wednesday. At least 17 attacks occurred on Tuesday night in Pattani, Narathiwat, and Yala provinces, mostly at convenience stores and gas stations, military spokesperson Pramote Promin said. Three civilians were reported injured. There have been no claims of responsibility. More than 7,300 people have been killed since the insurgency began in 2004 in the three provinces, the only ones with Muslim majorities in Buddhist-dominated Thailand. Attacks have also taken place in neighbouring Songkhla province. Muslim residents have long charged they are treated like second-class citizens in Thailand, and separatist movements have been periodically active for decades. Heavy-handed crackdowns have fuelled the discontent. The attacks are the most high-profile ones since early April, when the Thai government and BRN — Barisan Revolusi Nasional Melayu Patani, believed to be the biggest of several insurgent groups — agreed to halt violence during the Muslim holy period of Ramadan.

Pak PM likely to meet Chinese Prez during SCO summit: Report

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is likely to have a bilateral meeting with Chinese President Xi Jinping next month on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Uzbekistan, according to a media report on Wednesday. President Xi is expected to attend the SCO summit scheduled for September 15 and September 16 in Samarkand, The Express Tribune reported. Pakistan is part of the SCO which also includes China, Russia, India and the Central Asian states of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. A bilateral meeting between President Xi and Prime Minister Shehbaz is on

the cards at the sidelines of the SCO summit, sources were quoted as saying by the Express Tribune. However, there is no official clarity on whether President Xi will attend the summit in person. Some reports suggest that he may attend the summit virtually because of the strict COVID-19 protocols, the report said. The sources also said that Pakistan was exploring options for a possible bilateral meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Shehbaz. However, nothing is final yet, the sources added. In an informal meeting, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov invited his Pakistani counterpart Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari to visit Moscow.

Victims of UK tainted blood scandal to get Govt payout

AP ■ LONDON

Thousands of people in Britain who contracted HIV or hepatitis from transfusions of tainted blood in the 1970s and 1980s will receive 100,000 pounds (\$120,000) in compensation, the U.K. Government said Wednesday. Survivors welcomed the payment, which came after years of campaigning, but said it should be expanded to include more people whose lives were blighted by the scandal. The payment will be made by October to survivors and bereaved partners of the dead but not to other family members, such as parents or children.

UJVN LIMITED
H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006
Telephones: 0135 - 2763808, Fax: 0135-2763508
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: www.ujvn.com
वज सं. 527
TENDER NOTICE दिनांक: 16.08.2022
The Office of the Executive Engineer (E&M), Joshiyara Barrage Joshiyara (Uttarakashi), invites sealed tenders from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below :
Tender No: NIT-08/EE(E&M)/MB-II/Barrage/2022-23
Name of work / Supply/Services: 1. Annual Routine Maintenance of Electrical work of colony and HT /LT Line at Joshiyara Colony
Estimated cost: Rs. 8,74,372/- Only (GST extra)
Date of availability of bid document on website: - 17.08.2022
Last date for submission of tender: - 09.09.2022 up to 11:00 Hrs.
For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website. The tender documents can be downloaded from the Nigam's website "www.ujvn.com"
"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY" Executive Engineer (E&M)

LANDMARK THE HOMES 81
SECTOR-81, GURUGRAM (HARYANA)

PROJECT APPROVED UNDER HARYANA GOVT. AFFORDABLE HOUSING POLICY 2013

Online applications are invited from general public for booking and allotment of 74 residential apartments in Affordable Housing Project in the name of "LANDMARK THE HOMES 81" proposed to be developed by M/s SRV Automotives Pvt. Ltd., as per terms and conditions of the policy prescribed by the Town & Country Planning Department, Govt. of Haryana vide notification no. PF-27/48921 dated 19.08.2013 and amendment thereof (details available at the department website i.e. www.tcpharyana.gov.in).

PROJECT DETAILS:

1. Project ID:	113
2. Colonizers/Developers:	M/s SRV Automotives Pvt. Ltd.
3. Project Approvals:	License No. 4 of 2021 Dated: 02.03.2021 Building Plans Sanctioned Vide Memo No. ZP-1466/SD (DK)/2021/12887 DATED 02.06.2021. RERA Registration No: 36 of 2021, Dated: 16.07.2021
4. Location:	Sector 81, Gurugram, Haryana
5. Project Area:	5.0 Acres comprising a total 694 nos. of apartments out of which remaining/surrender 74 nos. of apartments are available. 4 nos. of apartments are reserved for management quota. Community Facilities: One Community Hall of 2046.83 sq. ft. and One Aanganwadi cum creche of 2023.63 sq. ft.
6. Facilities:	Gated Entry, Security Post, Drop off Zone, Ample Parking, Kids play area, Water body, Badminton Court, Lawn tennis, Commercial Complex

7. Details of Apartments offer for Public:

Unit Type	Unit Carpet Area @ 4200 (Sq.ft)	Unit Balcony Area @ 1000 (Sq.ft)	Total price of Unit (Rs.)	At the time of Online Application (Rs.)	No. of Units
Unit-3 (2bhk)	559.82	179.33	2451264	117562.20	22
Unit-4 (2bhk) (3 units under MQ)	566.61	124.16	2479746	118988.10	9
Unit-6 (1bhk)	348.04	85.34	1547121	73088.40	37
Unit-7 (1bhk)	398.86	85.34	1760552	83760.60	5
Unit-2 (3bhk) (MQ)	644.86	152.34	2808412	135420.60	1

8. Applicable GST and cesses, levies & fees etc. shall be charged over & above the said total price of the unit.
9. **Payment Terms:**
I. With online application: Booking amount i.e. 5% of Total Price of unit
II. On Allotment: 20% of Total Price of unit
III. The balance 75% amount of the flat cost will be recovered as per stages of construction as prescribed in the Agreement for Sale. No interest shall fall due before the due date of payment. Any default in payment will bear penal interest as provided in Rule 15 of the HRERA, rules, 2017.
10. **Parking:** Two wheeler parking with each apartment.
11. **Broad Specification of Apartment:**
Flooring: Vitrified/Ceramic Tiles, Wall Finish: Oil Bound distemper, Kitchen Details: SS Single bowl Sink, Granite top platform, Balcony Flooring: Anti Skid Tiles, Railing: M.S Steel, Window/External Door: UPVC/MS/Aluminium or equivalent, Door: Flush Doors, Bathroom Fittings: Chinaware or equivalent, C. P. Fittings: Modern & elegant, Electrical: ISI marked products for wirings, switches & circuits.
12. **Application Timelines:** Application will be filled online by registration on <https://edraw.tcpharyana.gov.in/tcp-dms/home> starting from 04th August 2022 and last date of submission of online application form is 27th August 2022.
13. **ELIGIBILITY:**
1. Any person can apply but an applicant in a specify colony shall make only one application. 2. Any person can apply, however, the PMAY beneficiaries, which include their spouse or dependent children, identified by the Urban Local Bodies Department, Haryana under "Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna - Housing for all programme shall be granted preference in allotment. First Priority shall be given to the identified beneficiaries of the said town followed by other PMAY beneficiaries of the state of Haryana. Thereafter, for the remaining flats, Persons which include their spouse or dependent children who do not own any flat/plot in any HUDA developed colony/sector or any licensed colony in any of the urban areas in Haryana, UT of Chandigarh and NCT Delhi shall be given next Preference in allotment of flats. Any successful applicant under this policy shall not be eligible for allotment of any other flat under this policy in any other colony. In case he/she is successful in more than one colony, he/she will have choice to retain only one flat. All such applicants shall submit an affidavit to this effect. 3. PAN Card & Aadhaar Card is mandatory.
14. **ALLOTMENT CRITERIA:**
1. The allotment of apartments shall be done through online draw in the presence of Committee consisting Deputy Commissioner or his representative (at least of the cadre of Haryana Civil Services), Senior Town Planner (Circle office), DTP of the concerned District and the representative of concerned colonizer. 2. After fixation of date for online draw, an advertisement shall be issued by the Developer informing the applicant about the details regarding date/time and venue of the online draw in the same newspaper in which the original advertisement was issued. For detailed criteria and time frame to be adopted for scrutiny and allotment, the applicant may also refer to the details in the affordable housing policy 2013 notified by No. PF-27/48921 dated 19.08.2013 (available at the department website i.e., www.tcpharyana.gov.in)
2. In the event the purchaser(s) wants to avail a loan facility from any bank, financial Institution or his/her employer to facilitate the purchase of the flat, the developer shall facilitate the process but shall not be held liable for any delay in payment or refusal to grant the loan to purchaser(s).

M/s SRV Automotives Private Limited, CIN: U70100DL2005PTC134174
Corp. Office: Landmark House, Plot No. 65, Sector 44, Gurugram, Haryana – 122003
Please Contact – 8929887878

Interest subvention on short farm loan restored

Cabinet OK's ₹34,856 crore towards scheme

New Delhi: With RBI hiking the lending rate, the Union Cabinet on Wednesday earmarked ₹34,856 crore towards the interest subvention scheme to help banks provide short term agriculture loans of up to ₹3 lakh at a rate of 7 per cent.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur said the Cabinet has decided to restore interest subvention on short term agriculture loans to 1.5 per cent for all financial institutions.

The interest subvention of 1.5 per cent will be provided to lending institutions for financial years 2022-23 to 2024-25 for short term loans of up to Rs 3 lakh to the farmers.

The interest subvention support requires additional budgetary provisions of ₹34,856 crore for the period of 2022-23 to 2024-25 under the scheme, an official statement said. Thakur said the government's support to banks for the interest subvention scheme was stopped in May 2020 as lenders were themselves able to provide short term agriculture loan at 7 per cent.

However, with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) increasing the repo rate or short-term lending rate thrice by 140 basis



points in recent months, it became necessary to compensate banks so that they can continue providing agriculture loans at 7 per cent.

Thakur also said the government has not let the fertiliser prices to rise despite the increase in global prices.

Further, the minister said the fertiliser subsidy in the current fiscal year is likely to be more than ₹2 lakh crore.

In the Union Budget for 2022-23, the fertiliser subsidy was estimated at ₹1.05 lakh crore. The subsidy was ₹1.62 lakh crore in the last financial year. On the interest subvention scheme, the official statement said the government support will ensure sustainability of credit flow in the agriculture sector as well as ensure financial health and viability of the lending institutions, especially regional rural banks and cooperative banks.

Banks will be able to absorb the increase in the cost

of funds following the hike in repo rate by RBI and will be encouraged to grant loans to farmers for short term agriculture requirements.

This will also lead to generation of employment since short term agriculture loans are provided for all activities including animal husbandry, dairying, poultry, and fisheries, the statement said.

The government had introduced Interest Subvention Scheme (ISS), now renamed as Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS), to provide short term credit to farmers at subsidised interest rates.

Under the scheme, short term agriculture loan of up to ₹3 lakh is available to farmers engaged in agriculture and other allied activities at 7 per cent. An additional 3 per cent subvention (Prompt Repayment Incentive - PRI) is also given to the farmers for prompt and timely repayment of loans.

PNS

Govt provides additional ₹50K cr under ECLGS to hospitality sector

New Delhi: The Government on Wednesday approved an additional ₹50,000 crore under the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) to ensure low-cost credit flow to hospitality and related segments hit hard by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Union Cabinet has approved the enhancement in the limit of ECLGS by ₹50,000 crore from ₹4.5 lakh crore to ₹5 lakh crore, with the additional amount being earmarked exclusively for enterprises in hospitality and related sectors, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur told reporters here.

The increase has been done on account of the severe disruptions suffered by hospitality and related enterprises due to the pandemic.

The enhancement is expected to provide much needed relief to enterprises in these sectors by incentivising lending institutions to provide additional credit of up to ₹50,000 crore at low cost, an official statement said.

The ECLGS was announced in May 2020 in wake of the outbreak of Covid-19 to help various sectors, especially in the MSME segment, to get credit at a concessional rate of 7 per cent. Loans of about ₹3.67 lakh crore have been sanctioned under ECLGS till August 5, 2022.

In Union Budget 2022-23, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced extending the validity of ECLGS till March 2023 and an increase in the limit of guaranteed cover by ₹50,000 crore.

The additional amount of ₹50,000 crore would be made applicable to

enterprises in hospitality and related sectors till the validity of the scheme (March 31, 2023).

The statement further said the ongoing pandemic has adversely impacted contact-intensive sectors, especially the hospitality and related segments, more severely.

"While other sectors were back faster on the path of recovery, demand continued to be subdued for these sectors (hospitality and related activities) for longer period, suggesting the need for suitable interventions for their sustenance and recovery," it said.

Given their high employment intensity and direct and indirect linkages with other sectors, their revival is also necessary for supporting overall economic recovery, it added.

This additional guarantee cover is expected to support the recovery of these sectors, the release said. PTI



Sensex settles above 60K mark, logs 4th day of gains



Mumbai: Equity benchmarks maintained their winning run on Wednesday, with the Sensex ending above the crucial 60,000 mark amid persistent foreign fund inflows.

The 30-share BSE index jumped 417.92 points or 0.70 per cent to settle at 60,260.13. During the day, it climbed 481.04 points to 60,323.25.

The broader NSE Nifty went higher by 119 points or 0.67 per cent to close at 17,944.25.

From the Sensex pack, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, Bharti Airtel, Tech Mahindra, HCL Technologies, NTPC, Wipro and Hindustan Unilever were the biggest gainers.

On the other hand, Mahindra & Mahindra, Maruti, UltraTech Cement and Power Grid were among the laggards. "Consistent participation by FIIs is the backbone of the current rally in

the domestic market. This reversal in the FII trend is owed to the resilience showcased by the Indian economy even as inflation continues to plague the western markets."Declining commodity and oil prices also instilled confidence in foreign investors," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

In Asia, markets in Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled higher, while Seoul ended lower.

Equities in Europe were trading lower during mid-session deals. US markets had ended mostly higher on Tuesday. Meanwhile, the international oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.13 per cent to USD 92.22 per barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) remained net buyers in the Indian capital market on Tuesday, picking up shares worth ₹1,376.84 crore, according to exchange data. PTI

Rupee gains 29 paise to close at 79.45 against US dollar

Mumbai: The rupee gained 29 paise to settle at 79.45 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday as heavy buying in domestic equities and persistent foreign capital inflows strengthened investor sentiment.

Besides, softening crude oil prices and easing inflationary pressures supported the domestic unit, forex traders said.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened strong at 79.32 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 79.26 and a low of 79.48.

It finally ended at 79.45 against the American currency, registering a rise of 29 paise over its previous close of 79.74.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.06 per cent to 79.74.

On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex



ended 417.92 points or 0.70 per cent higher at 60,260.13, while the broader NSE Nifty advanced 119 points or 0.67 per cent to 17,944.25.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, slipped 0.06 per cent to USD 92.28 per barrel.

Foreign institutional investors remained net buyers in the capital market on Tuesday as they purchased shares worth Rs 1,376.84 crore, as per exchange data.

After turning net buyers last month, foreign investors have continued to invest in Indian equities and pumped in Rs 22,452 crore in the first two weeks of August. PTI

Gold slips ₹3; silver declines ₹256

New Delhi: Gold in the national capital on Wednesday slipped ₹53 to ₹52,340 per 10 grams amid a decline in international precious metal prices and rupee appreciation, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the yellow metal had closed at ₹52,393 per 10 grams.

Silver also declined ₹256 to ₹57,957 per kg from ₹58,213 per kg in the previous trade.

The rupee appreciated 44 paise to 79.30 against the US dollar in the opening trade on Wednesday, mainly on account of foreign fund inflows.

In the international market, gold was quoting lower at USD 1,772 per ounce while silver was flat at USD 19.96 per ounce. "Gold prices have kept a steady trading range on mixed global cues and firm dollar," said Tapan Patel, Senior Analyst (Commodities) at HDFC Securities. PTI



India's oil demand to rise 7.7% in '23

New Delhi: India's demand for petroleum products like petrol and diesel will grow by 7.73 per cent in 2023, the fastest pace in the world, an OPEC report said. India's demand for oil products is projected to rise from 4.77 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2022 to 5.14 million bpd in 2023, OPEC said in its monthly oil report.

The growth in demand is the fastest in the world ahead of 1.23 per cent of China, 3.39 per cent of the US and 4.62 per cent of Europe.

For 2023, the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) projected a growth of 4.67 per cent in India's demand to 5.38 per cent. This, however, will be lower than 4.86 per cent growth in China. India is the world's third largest oil importing and consuming nation behind the US and China.

The demand for petroleum products in India is supported by the healthy economic growth of 7.1 per cent, continuing economic reopening amid ease of Covid restrictions and easing of trade-related

bottlenecks supporting both mobility and industrial sector activity.

The report said the oil demand will see a dip in the third quarter (July-September) due to the arrival of the monsoon but will pick up the following quarter on the back of the festival and holiday season.

"Overall, based on the most recent trends, demand for diesel and jet kerosene would likely account for a bigger part of the growth in demand in H2 as consumption of these two products had fallen sharply due to the pandemic," it said.

India's crude imports edged higher averaging 4.7 million bpd in June, with Russian oil flows up 0.9 million bpd, the report said quoting secondary sources.

"In terms of crude imports by source, Kpler data shows Russia moving up to be the top supplier of crude to India in June, securing a 24 per cent share. Iraq fell to second with a share of 21 per cent, followed by Saudi Arabia which was stable at 15 per cent," it said.

The report of OPEC - an organisation of the world's

major oil exporting nations such as Saudi Arabia and Iraq, stated that India's crude imports are likely to remain close to current levels in July, with Russian inflows remaining above 1 million bpd and with expectations for slightly lower flows from elsewhere. It saw India's economy continuing on a recovery path, supported by pent-up demand for services and higher industrial output.

"India's economy may maintain its upward recovery momentum, but it would be moderate given several risk factors, including high inflation, less accommodative monetary conditions and a deteriorating external environment.

"Import inflation is expected to continue rising in 2H22, leading to a higher trade deficit considering that India is a major importer of commodities and slowing global demand would weigh on exports," it said. Also, the recent hikes in interest rates may also weaken the country's growth prospects since they prompt the deferral of investment plans in sectors without adequate capacity utilisation. PTI

Sebi rejigs advisory committee on investor protection education fund

New Delhi: Capital markets regulator Sebi has restructured its advisory committee on Investor Protection and Education Fund (IPEF).

The panel is mandated to recommend investor education and protection activities that may be undertaken directly by the markets regulator, or through any other agency, for utilisation of the Sebi Investor Protection and Education Fund.

The eight-member committee will now be chaired by Monika Halan, writer, speaker and professor at NISM, according to the latest update with the markets watchdog.

The panel was earlier headed by G Mahalingam, former whole-time member of Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi). Prior to Mahalingam, the committee was chaired by Abraham Koshy, former professor of



IIM-Ahmedabad. A Balasubramanian, MD and CEO at Aditya Birla Sun Life AMC; M G Parameswaran, founder of brand-building.Com; Vijay Kumar Venkataraman, chief-trade services at Nurture.Farm and former MD and CEO of NCDEX; and Mrin Agarwal, founder of Finsafe India, will continue as members of the committee.

The committee also comprises three Sebi officials -- executive director G P Garg and chief general managers Santosh Sharma and Jayanta Jash. In 2013, the regulator had set up a committee to find out ways and means to best utilise the investor protection and education fund. PTI

Airtel pays ₹8,312.4 cr to DoT to clear 4-yr instalment in advance for 5G spectrum

New Delhi: Telecom operator Bharti Airtel has paid Rs 8,312.4 crore to the Department of Telecom towards dues for spectrum acquired in the recently concluded 5G auctions, the company said on Wednesday.

With the payment, Airtel has paid four years of 2022 spectrum dues upfront.

Airtel said it believes that this upfront payment, coupled with the moratorium on spectrum dues and AGR (adjusted gross revenue)-related payments for four years, will free up future cash flows and allow Airtel to dedicate resources to single-mindedly concentrate on the 5G rollout.

Telecom tycoon Sunil Bharti Mittal's Bharti Airtel



made a successful bid of Rs 43,039.63 crore.

"This upfront payment of 4 years allows us to drive 5G rollout in a concerted manner given our operating free cash flow. Airtel also has access to Rs 15,740.5 crore in capital from the rights issue, which is yet to be called.

"With the ideal spectrum bank, best technology and adequate free cash flow, we are

excited to bring to the country a world-class 5G experience," Bharti Airtel MD and CEO Gopal Vittal said in the statement.

The company had an option to pay Rs 3,848.88 crore upfront and the rest in 19 annual instalments.

The country's biggest ever auction of telecom spectrum received a record Rs 1.5 lakh crore worth of bids, with Mukesh Ambani's Jio cornering nearly half of all the airwaves sold with Rs 87,946.93 crore bid.

Over the last one year, Airtel said it has also cleared Rs 24,333.7 crore of its deferred spectrum liabilities much ahead of scheduled maturities. PTI

FPIs stock holding slips 14% to USD 523 bn in Jun qtr: Report

New Delhi: The value of the foreign portfolio investors (FPI) holdings in the domestic equities dropped 14 per cent to USD 523 billion in the three months ended June 2022 from the preceding quarter, according to a Morningstar report.

This was the third consecutive quarterly decline in the value of FPIs' investments in Indian equities. Foreign investors were cautious since the start of the year and it intensified as the year progressed, following the influence of worrying trends in both global and domestic markets.

"During the quarter ended June 2022, the value of FPI investments in Indian equities

fell by 14 per cent to USD 523 billion from USD 612 billion recorded in the previous quarter," the report noted.

As of June 2021, the value of FPI investments in Indian equities was USD 592 billion.

FPIs' contribution to Indian equity market capitalisation also fell during the quarter under review to 16.9 per cent from 17.8 per cent in the March quarter.

Offshore mutual funds form an important component of total foreign portfolio investment, apart from other large FPIs, such as offshore insurance companies, hedge funds and sovereign wealth funds. PTI

Wheat production declines to 3% to 106.84 mn tonnes

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

India's wheat production is projected to have declined nearly 3 per cent to 106.84 million tonnes while the overall foodgrain production is estimated to have touched a record 315.72 million tonnes in the 2021-22 crop year.

The wheat production is estimated to have declined due to heatwave that resulted in shrivelled grains in the northern states of Punjab and Haryana.

Releasing the fourth advance estimate for the 2021-22 crop year, the Union agriculture ministry on Wednesday

said a record output is also estimated for rice, maize, gram, pulses, rapeseed and mustard, oilseeds and sugarcane. The crop year 2021-22 was from July 2021 to June 2022.

The country's overall foodgrain production is estimated to be record 315.72 million tonnes in the crop year that ended in June 2022, according to the ministry.

Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar said record production of so many crops was the result of the government's farmer-friendly policies as well as tireless hard work of the farmers and the diligence of the scientists.

Cottonseed oil futures fall on soft demand

New Delhi: Cottonseed oil cake prices on Wednesday declined by ₹36 to ₹2,701 per quintal in futures trade as participants reduced their bets tracking a weak trend in spot market.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, cottonseed oil cake for August delivery fell by ₹36 or 1.33 per cent to ₹2,701 per quintal with an open interest of 1,900 lots.

Analysts said sell-off by participants at existing levels amid subdued trend in market mainly weighed on cottonseed oil cake prices. PTI



Elevated ATF prices, rupee depreciation likely to pose threat to domestic carriers' recovery: Report

Mumbai: Elevated Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) prices and Rupee depreciation are likely to pose a serious threat to the recovery process for domestic carriers, credit ratings agency ICRA said on Wednesday.

In India, ATF accounts for around 45 per cent of the operational cost of an airline.

Besides, as much as 35-50 per cent of the airlines' operating expenses are US dollar driven, as per ICRA.

An area of concern remains the ATF prices, which

surged by around 77 per cent Y-o-Y in August, given the elevated crude oil prices due to geo-political issues arising from the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the ratings agency said.

On an aggregate basis, it said a return to normalcy will lead to recovery in passenger load factors, which, in turn, will aid revenues; however, these two factors will continue to weigh on the domestic airlines' earnings in FY23.

This apart, the expected

launch of Jet Airways and the entry of Akasa Air, are likely to intensify the competition for the domestic carriers.

"ICRA believes that the domestic air traffic yields have moved up by 25-30 per cent over pre-Covid levels on domestic routes. The industry earnings in FY2023 will continue to reel under pressure owing to the elevated jet fuel prices, coupled with the depreciation of the Indian Rupee against the US dollar," Suprio Banerjee, Vice President and

Sector Head at ICRA, said.

On a month-on-month basis, domestic air passenger traffic was 7 per cent lower in July compared to the June passenger volumes of 10.05 million, given some impact of the cyclicity in passenger travel, mainly arising from the lean period during the monsoon, it said.

ICRA said the hardening of fares impacted leisure travel during the month which, in turn, also impacted the volumes. PTI

Akasa Air well-capitalised; strong financials to place order for more planes in next 18 months: CEO

New Delhi: Akasa Air is well-capitalised and its growth is secure with the financial means to place an order for more planes, its chief Vinay Dube said on Wednesday, days after the passing away of the airline's key investor Rakesh Jhunjhunwala.

The carrier, which took to the skies on August 7, received its third aircraft on August 16 and the same will be used for flights on the Mumbai-Bengaluru route shortly. With the passing away of

ace investor Jhunjhunwala, whose backing itself had provided a tailwind for the country's newest airline, the future trajectory of the airline will be closely watched.

Against this backdrop, Dube on Wednesday thanked Jhunjhunwala for his support in recruiting some of the best aviation talents in the country.

"He wanted us to have a top-notch leadership team that made all day-to-day decisions at the airline without having to fall

back on him or any other investor," Dube, Founder and CEO of the carrier, said in a statement. Seeking to dispel any possible apprehension about the way forward for Akasa Air, he said the airline will continue to grow its fleet by adding one new aircraft every two weeks.

"Thanks in no small part to Jhunjhunwala, for which we will always be grateful, Akasa Air is a well-capitalised airline with the financial means to induct 72 aircraft over the next

five years.

"In fact, our financial platform is strong enough to allow Akasa to place an aircraft order in the next 18 months that will be significantly larger than our first. In simple terms, our growth is secure," he emphasised. The 62-year-old Jhunjhunwala passed away on August 14, a week after Akasa Air operated its first flight from Mumbai to Ahmedabad, and he was also on the inaugural flight. PTI

SERENA TROUNCED BY RADUCANU

AP ■ CINCINNATI

Serena Williams bowed out of the WTA/ATP Cincinnati Masters at the first hurdle on Tuesday, losing in straight sets to US Open champion Emma Raducanu as the end of her glittering career looms ever closer.

Williams, who last week indicated that she is planning to retire after this month's US Open, was no match for British teenager Raducanu, who romped to a 6-4, 6-0 win.

The 40-year-old Williams left the court swiftly after the defeat without speaking to television reporters and did not hold a press conference.

Raducanu broke Williams at the start of both sets to claim victory in what was her first and likely last meeting with the 23-time Grand Slam singles champion.

"I was nervous from the first point to the last," Raducanu said. "Serena is dangerous and can come back from any situation."

"I had to stay focused. I'm so pleased I managed to keep my composure."

Williams, winner of titles here in 2014 and 2015, was competing in only her fourth match of 2022 after starting her season at Wimbledon due to injury.

Raducanu announced her intentions from the start with a break to love of Williams and never let up.

The young Briton improved to 14 wins, 17 defeats since winning the Open last September from a qualifying start.

Raducanu meanwhile said she was honoured to be part of the spectacle on Tuesday in what was one of Williams' final games as a professional.

"We all need to honour Serena and her amazing career," she said. "I'm so grateful for the experience of playing her and for the fact that our careers have crossed."

"All she has achieved is inspirational. It's a true honour to share the court with her."

Raducanu never let Williams into the match.

The young Londoner seeded 10th took a 4-1 lead in the opening set and complete-

US OPEN CHAMPION EMMA RADUCANU BROKE UNITED STATES SUPERSTAR SERENA WILLIAMS AT THE START OF BOTH SETS TO CLAIM VICTORY IN WHAT WAS HER FIRST AND LIKELY LAST MEETING WITH THE 23-TIME GRAND SLAM SINGLES CHAMPION. WILLIAMS LAST WEEK INDICATED THAT SHE IS PLANNING TO RETIRE AFTER THIS MONTH'S US OPEN

ly swept the second, advancing on her first match point, an unreturnable serve.

Raducanu committed a single unforced error in the opening set compared to a dozen for Williams.



Kyrgios overcomes tricky Davidovich



AP ■ CINCINNATI

Nick Kyrgios began the last major US Open tune-up with a 7-5, 6-4 win over Alejandro Davidovich Fokina on Tuesday at the ATP/WTA Cincinnati Masters.

The Australian marched through with 29 winners — including 10 aces — and three breaks of the Spaniard's serve to reach the second round.

The 28th-ranked Kyrgios has won all 11 of his first-round matches this season and won his 22nd match since returning to the ATP in June after skipping the clay season.

He now faces good friend Taylor Fritz after the American crushed Sebastian Baez 6-1, 6-1.

"Physically, I didn't feel the best, but you have to keep pushing, keep trying," Kyrgios said.

"Alejandro's a hell of a player, he's got a lot of shots at his disposal. I had to serve well and dictate," the Montreal quarter-finalist added.

"It was tricky conditions out there, the courts are a lot more lively than Montreal, it was harder to control the ball."

It marked a happy return to Cincinnati for Kyrgios, who was fined a record \$113,000 during a spectacular meltdown at the tournament in 2019

Elsewhere, Spanish third seed Carlos Alcaraz advanced in his tournament debut, defeating American Mackenzie McDonald 6-3, 6-2.

Italian 10th seed Jannik Sinner celebrated his 21st birthday by beating Thanasi Kokkinakis 6-7 (9/11), 6-4, 7-6 (8/6).

Venus, Osaka exit in 1st round

AP ■ CINCINNATI

Venus Williams and Naomi Osaka both exited the ATP/WTA Cincinnati Masters on Tuesday with straight-set, opening-round losses.

Williams, 42, who won her last match at the Midwestern pre-US Open event in 2019, lost to 2016 champion Karolina Pliskova 7-5, 6-1.

Osaka's summer form slump deepened meanwhile as the four-time Grand Slam

winner was defeated 6-4, 7-5 by China's Zhang Shuai.

Pliskova, one of the game's biggest servers, struck eight aces and broke four times in a win over Williams lasting for nearly one and three-quarter hours.

Williams, semi-finalist from a decade ago, has gone winless in her last five matches, last earning a victory in the Wimbledon first round.

Pliskova said she had to lift her level to run away with the second set.

"Venus is a great champion, she's a fighter with a big game and big serve," the Czech said. "She played well at certain points in the first set, I'm feeling physically strong so I was able to up my game in the second set."

Osaka's first-round defeat was the second in as many weeks for Japan's former world number one, now ranked 39th.

The 24-year-old was eliminated in the Toronto first round and has won just a single match out of four on

cement — at the WTA Silicon Valley in July.

World number 44 Zhang moved into the second round in 75 minutes as she won her first main draw match here since 2014.

The Chinese player was on the winning Cincinnati doubles team in 2021 and claimed US Open doubles honours in 2021 with Australian Sam Stosur.

The win brings Zhang level at 3-3 in her series with Osaka.



Ronaldo blasts 'lies' over Man Utd future

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Cristiano Ronaldo has hit out at the "lies" surrounding reports about his future at Manchester United.

The Portugal forward missed United's pre-season tour to Thailand and Australia due to personal reasons as speculation swirled over whether he would be leaving Old Trafford.

It has been reported Ronaldo wants to play Champions League football, but United maintain the 37-year-old is not for sale and remains an integral part of the plans of new boss Erik ten Hag.

The former Real Madrid star played the full 90 minutes of United's 4-0 defeat at Brentford on Saturday, which left them bottom of the Premier League.

In a reply to a fan account on Instagram that referred to a report linking the United frontman to Atletico Madrid, Ronaldo said fans would "know the truth" in a couple of weeks, adding: "The media is telling lies."

"I have a notebook and in the last few months of the 100 news I made, only five were right. Imagine how it is. Stick with that tip."

Manchester United will seek to kickstart their Premier League campaign when they



host fierce rivals Liverpool on Monday.

United's owners, the Glazer family, have come under fire following the team's terrible start.

Former United defender Gary Neville has warned the club could finish in the bottom half of the Premier League if they do not address their "horror story" recruitment strategy.

Manchester United supporters' group The 1958 is planning a protest march outside Old Trafford against the club's owners ahead of the Liverpool match.

In a statement the group said the ownership was "systematically starving and killing the greatest football institution in world football, for greed".

"We appreciate emotions are running high," it added. "We must keep it legal, we must keep it peaceful.... Bring the heat, bring the noise, bring the passion. Let's show the Glazer family that this time it will not blow over."

Billionaire Elon Musk sparked a social media frenzy on Tuesday evening when he raised the prospect of buying United from the Glazer family.

The Tesla CEO made the comment in a tweet, then later clarified his position by saying he had no intention of buying a sports team and that it had been a "long-running joke".



Ravi headed for Russia camp ahead of Worlds

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Fresh from winning a gold medal at the Birmingham Commonwealth Games, India's star wrestler Ravi Dahiya is all set for a 29-day training camp in Russia ahead of the World Championships in Serbia in a month's time.

According to a Sports Authority of India (SAI) statement, the 24-year-old Tokyo Olympics silver medalist is headed to Vladikavkaz with his coach Arun Kumar, sparring partner Sahil and physiotherapist Munish Kumar on Wednesday night.

"The travel, visa, board and lodging cost of all four would be covered under

The 24-year-old Tokyo Olympics silver medalist is headed to Vladikavkaz with his coach Arun Kumar

TOPS," the SAI stated.

The 2019 World Championship bronze medalist had trained in Bulgaria besides competitive exposure in Turkey and Mongolia ahead of the CWG.

The World Championships is slated at Belgrade from September 10-18.

GOALKEEPER ERROR NEARLY COSTS PSV

AP ■ GLASGOW

Armando Obispo spared Walter Benitez's blushes as PSV Eindhoven rescued a 2-2 draw against Rangers in the Champions League play-off first leg on Tuesday.

PSV goalkeeper Benitez looked to have gifted Rangers the advantage when he allowed Tom Lawrence's free-kick to squirm through his hands in the second half at Ibrox.

Benitez's howler put Rangers 2-1 ahead after Antonio Colak had cancelled out Ibrahim Sangare's opener for PSV.

But Obispo bailed out his team-mate with a priceless late leveller that leaves the tie on a knife-edge heading into next week's second leg in Eindhoven.

Although PSV will be favourites on home turf, Rangers should still fancy their



chances after staging a rousing comeback from 2-0 down to defeat Union Saint-Gilloise 3-0 in the third qualifying round.

Following on from that dramatic comeback, this was another tense European night for Rangers in their bid to

return to the Champions League group stage.

Rangers last played in that round of the competition in 2010-11 before financial problems saw them drop into Scottish football's bottom tier, from where they eventually returned to the top-flight.

They were knocked out of the Champions League qualifiers by Malmo last season, then enjoyed a memorable run to the Europa League final, only to lose to Eintracht Frankfurt in the final.

In a nod to Rangers' European heritage, Ibrox legend John Greig was watching from the stands alongside former Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson.

But Giovanni van Bronckhorst's team initially struggled to rise to the occasion on a rainy night in Glasgow.

"It was very close. The tie is open. PSV are an excellent

team and they showed that. We still have the chance to go through," Van Bronckhorst said.

FC Copenhagen held off a fightback from visiting Trabzonspor to win their first leg 2-1.

Viktor Claesson gave the home team a first half lead.

Lukas Lerager added a second three minutes after half time, smashing the ball in from close range after a corner.

The Turkish champions responded by penning the Danes back, but struggled to break through. Their only goal was a 25-yard shot from Tasos Bakasetas that took a deflection off centre back David Khocholava with 11 minutes left.

In Norway, hosts Bodo/Glimt edged Dinamo Zagreb 1-0. Norwegian veteran Amahl Pellegrino headed in the only goal in the 37th minute.

Hockey India election process to be completed by October 9

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Hockey India's election process will be completed by October 9, the Committee of Administrators-managed sports body said on Wednesday after submitting the first draft of its modified constitution to the FIH. In a joint statement, the FIH and CoA said the final draft of the constitution will be delivered to the FIH headquarters at Lausanne "within the next 10 days".

"The first draft of the modified constitution of Hockey India, as directed by honourable Delhi High Court, has been submitted today to FIH and the CoA, Hockey India will have a final draft delivered within the next ten days. Additionally, the process of elections for Hockey India was mutually decided to be completed by October 9th,

2022," the joint statement read.

A two-member delegation from the FIH is in the national capital to discuss the way forward and avert a possible suspension of Hockey India, currently placed under a CoA on the directive of the Delhi High Court.

The good news for HI is that FIH "does not consider the court as third party", ruling out the possibility of a ban with only months left for the men's World Cup in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela.

The meeting was attended by FIH's acting president Seif Ahmed, CEO Thierry Weil and the members of the CoA — Justice Anil R Dave, former Judge of the Supreme Court, S Y Quraishi, former Chief Election Commissioner of India and Zafar Iqbal, a former Olympian.

Speaking in context of the Delhi HC order with respect to HI, Ahmed said, "We don't consider the court as a third party and respect the judiciary. We believe that the order of a court is not an interference."

Dave said, "The interaction was extremely positive and encouraging. We have been able to conclude and agree on some important next steps to ensure the continued smooth functioning of Hockey in India keeping in mind the foremost importance of the spirit of the sport and best interest of our athletes."

On Tuesday, the visiting FIH delegation also met Sports Secretary Sujata Chaturvedi.

"This was a positive meeting and the conversation with her is in alignment with the outcomes from today's discussions with the CoA, Hockey India," the statement read.

PTI ■ HARARE

Skipper KL Rahul's form and fitness will be observed keenly when India take on Zimbabwe in a three-match series, starting Thursday, in 50-over format, which is fast losing popularity and struggling to retain its identity.

Supposed to be one of the most vital cogs in India's T20 World Cup top-order, Rahul would like to make full use of the game time he gets as an opener during the three games against Regis Chakabva's side.

Rahul's immediate task at hand after almost three-month lay-off, during which he underwent a sports hernia surgery, is to keep his opening slot in T20 cricket and adapt to the team's philosophy of going hell for leather from ball one.

It won't just be about runs that skipper Rohit Sharma or coach Rahul Dravid would be looking at when they monitor Rahul's performance in Zimbabwe.

Rather they would like to check out his approach and the manner in which he is scoring runs, something he would need to tweak before that first Asia Cup game against Pakistan on August 28.

On the Harare Sports Club batting belt where Zimbabwe chased down Bangladesh's 300 plus and 290-odd targets in successive games in the recently-concluded series, India's batting line-up with Rahul, Shikhar Dhawan, Shubman Gill, Deepak Hooda and Sanju Samson will certainly prove to be more than a handful for hosts.

And unlike Bangladesh, a bowling attack comprising Mohammed Siraj, Prasidh Krishna, Deepak Chahar, Kuldeep Yadav along with all-rounders Shardul Thakur and Axar Patel has more potency in any conditions against this Zimbabwe line-up.

For Zimbabwe, the aim would be to become the proverbial banana peel on which Rahul and his men can slip as a series win for 'Men in Blue' would hardly win

CAPTAIN KL RAHUL IN FOCUS IN ZIMBABWE



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them any accolades but a defeat would invite sharp criticism.

The hosts therefore wouldn't mind if the likes of Sikandar Raza, Chakabva and Innocent Kaia repeat their batting performances from the Bangladesh encounters and show the world that the previous series win was not just a mere flash in the pan.

OBJECTIVES OF SERIES

Gone are the days of Flower brothers (Andy and Grant), Heath Streaks (now tainted and suspended), Neil Johnsons, Murray Goodwins and Henry Olongas. It was a side that could take the Mickey out of the opposition on good days.

Zimbabwe cricket, like the

country itself has gone through turmoil over the past two decades and the quality has been severely impacted.

Someone like 36-year-old Raza, 34-year-old skipper Chakabva or 34-year old Donald Tiripano are sincere performers but would never make any opposition feel threatened.

India's tours of Zimbabwe are normally a kind of gift from 'big brother' to help a 'younger' gain financial stability.

The TV and digital rights revenue from three India games will cover Zimbabwe cricket's more than half the costs for the year.

So this earns BCCI a goodwill gesture.

On the cricketing part, this

gives selectors a chance to look at bench strength and also jot down some of the names, who will figure in the larger picture for the 2023 50-over World Cup.

Right now, Indian cricket possesses such quality that it can field three white ball teams in three different continents at the same time.

This is one such glorified 'A' series as a lot of the members will be playing in the home A series against New Zealand and Australia later this year.

CHAHAR AND KULDEEP

Two bowlers who would be looking to give it their all are Deepak Chahar, who is back in the mix after six months and

Kuldeep Yadav, who is slowly getting his mojo back.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar has consolidated his place in the T20 set-up but Chahar with his swing bowling in Powerplay overs and ability to hit big shots in the death overs will like to make an impression. He is already in the standby list for the Asia Cup.

Another player, who would fancy a debut would be Maharashtra man Rahul Tripathi, a consistent IPL performer and may be someone who VVS Laxman could use in the middle-order at times at the expense of Shardul Thakur.

In all, a 3-0 clean sweep is the order of the day and any diversion would be considered a below-par effort.

SQUADS

India: KL Rahul (Captain), Shikhar Dhawan, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Shubman Gill, Deepak Hooda, Rahul Tripathi, Ishan Kishan (wk), Sanju Samson (wk), Shardul Thakur, Kuldeep Yadav, Axar Patel, Avesh Khan, Prasidh Krishna, Mohd Siraj, Deepak Chahar, Shabbaz Ahmed.

Zimbabwe: Regis Chakabva (captain), Ryan Burl, Tanaka Chivanga, Bradley Evans, Luke Jongwe, Innocent Kaia, Takudzwanashe Kaitano, Clive Madande, Wessly Madhevere, Tadiwanashe Marumani, John Masara, Tony Munyonga, Richard Ngarava, Victor Nyauchi, Sikandar Raza, Milton Shumba, Donald Tiripano.

Shastri had very little tolerance for failure: Karthik



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Ravi Shastri used to push players to achieve special things but he had very little tolerance for failure during his stint as India's head coach, said veteran wicketkeeper batter Dinesh Karthik.

The 37-year-old had played sporadically during Shastri's tenure as India coach, especially during the 2019 World Cup.

The Shastri-Kohli tenure was a good one for Indian cricket but often the duo was criticised for not standing by a few players, who probably needed a bit more empathy during their lean patch.

"He (Shastri) had a very low tolerance for somebody who wouldn't bat at a certain pace he did not like or someone who was doing very differently in the nets and in the match, he would go and bat differently," Karthik said on Cricbuzz.

"He (Shastri) would not be very appreciative of that. Shastri knew exactly what he wanted from the team, the way in which it was played but his tolerance was very little for failures. He always used to push people to do very well."

Karthik, who at 36, is a designated finisher in T20 set-up, has already said that he feels way more relaxed and secured in the Rohit Sharma-Rahul Dravid era.

Shastri had a successful coaching stint as under him India claimed Test series victories on Australia soil twice, drew the Test series 2-2 in England and also entered the World Test Championship final.

"I think Shastri, the player was somebody, who was probably not as talented but fulfilled his talent as coach. He did much better than what he was expected to do. As a coach, he was a larger-than-life person. He was somebody who pushed players to try and achieve special things," he added.

India to play 38 Tests, 42 ODIs, 61 T20Is in Men's FTP '23-'27

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian men's team will be playing a whopping 138 bilateral international matches during the next five-year Future Tours & Programme (FTP) Cycle between May, 2023 to April, 2027, the ICC said on Wednesday.

Most sought-after team commercially, the 'Men In Blue' will play 38 Tests, 42 ODIs and 61 T20Is in the five-year period and focus on shortest format is an indicator how priorities across formats will be changing.

The ODI bilaterals will remain but mostly be three-match series.

India expectedly has a choc-a-bloc calendar but as usual there won't be any bilateral cricket series with Pakistan due to obvious political reasons.

The 12 Members will play a total of 777 international matches - 173 Tests, 281 ODIs and 323 T20Is - in the 2023-2027 FTP cycle compared to the 694 in the current one.

This includes the next two cycles of the ICC Men's World Test Championship, multiple ICC events and a host of bilateral as well as tri-series action.

As far as India's schedule is concerned, the traditional India versus Australia Test series for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy, that used to be a four-match affair for a long time will become five-Test series.

India will be playing five-Test series against both England and Australia and also on the T20 front, there are a lot of



five-match series which is on expected lines with the broadcasters demand with premium advertisement rates for short-form matches.

During the next FTP cycle, India would be travelling to West Indies (July-Aug 2023) for a full tri-format series

including 2 Tests, ODIs and 3 T20Is.

The marquee five-Test home series against England will be tentatively held between Jan-March in 2024.

While Australia is visiting India early next year to regain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in a four-Test series

as a part of previous cycle, India's next big trip Down Under is in December-January, 2024-25 when they play Australia in a five-Test series for the first time since 1991.

In this cycle, India will host Bangladesh for a two-Test series in September 2024.

27 ODIs BEFORE WC

The Indian team will play 27 ODI games before it plays the 2023 50-over World Cup in India scheduled in October-November next year.

The 27 ODIs starts with India's series against Zimbabwe in Harare from Thursday. The chunk among the 27 ODIs is from the previous FTP cycle which also include home three-match series against South Africa and an away three-match event against New Zealand just after T20 World Cup.

40 TESTS FOR OZ

Australia and England during the same five-year phase will be playing 40 and 43 Test matches respectively, which is a few games more than India.

The inaugural World Test Champions New Zealand in the next cycle have 32 Tests earmarked, while South Africa in the same duration play only 29 Tests. They mostly play two and some three-Test series.

Pakistan have only 27 Tests between May, '23-April '27 while Sri Lanka and West Indies play 25 longest format games each respectively.

AP ■ LONDON

Ben Stokes was dismissed from the stroke of lunch on the opening day of the first Test between England and South Africa at Lord's on Wednesday, to leave his side perilously placed on 100-5.

South Africa fast bowler Kagiso Rabada once again proved his worth, removing openers Alex Lees and Zak Crawley after England had been sent in to bat by Proteas captain Dean Elgar.

Fellow quicks Marco Jansen and Anrich Nortje followed up by capturing the prized wickets of Joe Root and Jonny Bairstow, with all four dismissed batsmen out in single figures as England slumped to 55-4.

With the final ball of the morning session, Nortje squared up Stokes (20) to have the England skipper caught in the slips. Ollie Pope was the lone batsman to hold firm, with 51 not out.

Spearhead fast bowler Rabada had been doubtful for the opening match of the three-Test series with an ankle injury, but the 27-year-old showed no sign of discomfort, taking 2-26 in nine overs.

England came into the



game with a perfect record of four wins from as many Tests under their new leadership pairing of Stokes and coach Brendon McCullum.

All of those victories had been achieved by chasing down targets in the fourth innings, something that cannot happen in this match after Elgar won the toss and fielded a green-tinged pitch under overcast skies.

Rabada had left-hander Lees caught behind for five and removed Crawley for nine after he nicked a ball that nipped away low to Aiden Markram at second slip.

Star batsman Root was powerless to prevent further

collapse, the former England captain lbw for eight to a huge inswinger from left-arm pace-man Jansen.

Root reviewed Indian umpire Nitin Menon's decision but replays indicated the ball would have clipped leg stump.

Bairstow had made 106 and an unbeaten 114 during England's most recent Test -- a seven-wicket win over India at Edgbaston last month.

But he was bowled between bat and pad for a five-ball duck by Nortje as he tried to drive on the up, with England now 55-4 inside 17 overs.

Pope completed a 69-ball fifty but the session belonged to South Africa.



Pakistan win 1st ODI by 16 runs

AP ■ ROTTERDAM

Pakistan overcame a slow start and early loss of an opener to beat the Netherlands by 16 runs in their first ODI.

Pakistan won the toss and chose to bat first. Only at 3-0 after four overs, it got worse for the visitors at 10-1 in six overs following Vivian Kingma's maiden wicket which claimed Imam-ul-Haq (2) leg before wicket on referral by the Netherlands.

Opener Fakhar Zaman led the recovery with 109 runs in 109 balls, including 12 fours and a six, before he was run out.

Zaman and captain Babar Azam (74 in 85) shared a 168-run partnership for the second

wicket, and Shadab Khan later smashed a 28-ball 48 not out as Pakistan posted a challenging total of 314-6.

Dutch pacer Bas de Leede took 2-42 in 10 overs.

In reply, the Netherlands came close with 298-8. Dutch captain Scott Edwards was not out on 71 in 60 balls. Opener Vikramjit Singh and No. 5 Tom Cooper both hit 65 runs each. Cooper scored at a much faster pace, needing 54 deliveries for his 65 compared to 98 balls for Singh.

Pacers Haris Rauf (3-67) and Naseem Shah (3-51) did most of the damage.

The second of three ODI matches is at Rotterdam on Thursday.

Praggnanandhaa notches up 2nd straight win

PTI ■ MIAMI

Young Indian Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa continued his fine run in the FTX Crypto Cup, the American finale of Champions Chess Tour, beating Anish Giri of the Netherlands 2.5-1.5 in the second round here on Wednesday.

Having started his campaign with victory over world No.4 and the top ranked junior Alireza Firouzja, the 17-year old Indian prodigy scored the all-important win in the fourth and final game, to hand Giri his second straight loss.

Praggnanandhaa, who played a key role in the Indian 'B' team's Bronze medal win in the recent chess Olympiad in Mahabalipuram near Chennai, edged out his Dutch opponent in 81 moves in the fourth game after the first three ended in draws.

The Indian GM is now on six points after two wins, the same as world No.1 Magnus Carlsen of Norway, who beat Hans Niemann 3-1.

Praggnanandhaa will take on Carlsen in the third round later on Wednesday night.

Want to win another World Cup: Russell

AGENCIES ■ ANTIGUA

West Indies all-rounder Andre Russell has hinted at a possible return to the Men in Maroon side at this year's ICC T20 World Cup in Australia.

Russell has not represented West Indies since last year's ICC T20 World Cup in Dubai, but the veteran could be in line for a quick return to international cricket at this year's 20-over tournament. "Of course, of course. The maroon is all over," Skysports quoted Russell as saying.

"Honestly, I have two franchise hundreds and I wish those hundreds were actually playing for West Indies.

"I don't regret saying this just now. I really enjoyed playing for Jamaica Tallawahs but those two hundred, it would be more special coming in international cricket."

Following his stint in England, Russell will play for the Trinbago Knight Riders in the month-long Caribbean Premier League that commences at the end of this month.

"I always want to play and give back," Russell told Sky Sports.

"But at the end of the day, if we are not agreeing on certain terms...they have to respect my terms as well. At the end of the day, it is what it is. We have families and we have to make sure that we give our best opportunity while we have one career. It's not like I can start over again. I'm 34 and I want to win another World Cup - or two more - for West Indies because at the end of the day, I'm here now, and I'm just taking it day by day," he added.



Hetmyer, Keemo out of NZ ODIs

Antigua: West Indies suffered big blows ahead of their upcoming ODI series against New Zealand with star all-rounder Shimron Hetmyer, Keemo Paul and Gudakesh Motie have been ruled out of the series. The replacements are middle-order batter Jermaine Blackwood and leg-spinning allrounder Yannic Cariah. Odean Smith, the seam-bowling all-rounder, has been added as a reserve.

Chandrakant Pandit named new head coach of KKR

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The doyen of India's domestic coaches Chandrakant Pandit has been appointed Kolkata Knight Riders' head coach for the upcoming IPL season, the franchise announced on Wednesday.

Pandit replaces Brendon McCullum, who is now the head coach of the England Test side.

Pandit, the most celebrated coach in the Indian domestic circuit, recently guided Madhya Pradesh to their maiden Ranji Trophy title, having won the national championship multiple times with Mumbai and Vidarbha.

Known to work wonders with unheralded domestic teams, this will be the former India wicketkeeper's first big assignment at the elite level.

"We are very excited that Chandu is joining the Knight Riders family to lead us through the next phase of our journey," KKR CEO Venky Mysore said in a statement.

"His deep commitment to what he does and his track

record of success in domestic cricket, is there for everyone to see. We are looking forward to his partnership with our skipper Shreyas Iyer, which promises to be an exciting one," he added.

Accepting the new challenge, Pandit said, "I have heard from players and others who have been associated with the Knight Riders, about the family culture, as well as the tradition of success that has been created.

"I am excited about the quality of the support staff and the players who are part of the set up and I am looking forward to this opportunity with all humility and positive expectations."

The 60-year-old Pandit played five Tests and 36 ODIs for India between mid '80s to early '90s.

In an interview to PTI, Pandit had said that he had once had a meeting with KKR's principal owner Shah Rukh Khan during the early years of IPL but back then he had made it clear that he wasn't keen to join support staff as an assistant coach.