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Money, drugs, booze flow as Gujarat goes to poll today

Recovery of liquor, cash, drugs 28 times of that seized in 2017, says EC

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

On the eve of the first phase of polling in Gujarat, the Election Commission (EC) on Wednesday came out with startling figures of seizures of cash, liquor, freebies, drugs, and even drugs manufacturing units, made by enforcement agencies in the State. Overall, the seizures this time round are over 28 times the recoveries made during the 2017 Assembly polls in the State.

Voting will be held on Thursday for the first phase of Gujarat Assembly elections in 89 seats spread across 19 districts in Saurashtra-Kutch and southern parts of the State where 788 candidates are in the fray.

In fact, two drugs manufacturing units and drugs worth ₹478 crore were unearthed on Wednesday itself with the enforcement agencies still carrying out their operations in Vadodara (Rural) and Vadodara City till late in the evening.

Voting will be held between 8 AM and 5 PM on Thursday across 14,382 polling stations, the office of the State Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) said in a release. Out of the 89 seats going to polls in the first phase, the BJP won 48 in the 2017 elections, the Congress had won 40, while one seat was bagged by an Independent candidate.

As per information shared by the EC, the Gujarat ATS unearthed two



mephedrone (synthetic drug) manufacturing units and about 143 kg of mephedrone worth about ₹478 crore in Vadodara (Rural) and Vadodara City.

"The ongoing seizure process of heavy consignment of drugs is being led by a team of officers of ATS, Gujarat. If added, the ongoing seizure of drugs, it becomes whopping 28 times. The ATS have detained five people from Nadiad and Vadodara and a criminal case is being registered in ATS Police Station, Ahmedabad under relevant sections of the NDPS Act, 1985," the poll body said in a statement.

The EC further stated that the operation is in progress and complete details will be made available once the operation is completed. Besides the contraband seized in the ongoing operation, drugs worth ₹61.96 crore have been recovered. The total seizures in the 2017 Gujarat Assembly Election were ₹27.21 crore. Going by the seizure chart as on

November 29, 2022 which marks total seizures of ₹290.24 crore, there is a massive jump in the amount of seizures which is 10.66 times of seizures in 2017.

The data showed that 411851.23 litres of liquor worth ₹14.88 crore has been recovered despite prohibition of liquor in the State. The EC's enforcement authorities have seized precious metals and gold worth ₹15.79 crore; freebies worth ₹171.24 crore.

"The process of effective expenditure monitoring starts months before the announcement of elections and includes host of activities like appointment of experienced officers as Expenditure Observers, sensitizing and reviewing enforcement agencies for more coordinated and comprehensive monitoring, marking of expenditure sensitive constituencies, ensuring planning of adequate availability of field level teams in the monitoring process and regular follow-ups with DEOs/SPs with

a view to curb the role of money-power in vitiating elections. Visits by the Commission to review the electoral preparedness along with the review of Central Observers and DEOs, SPs has already been taken for comprehensive monitoring," the EC said in a statement on Wednesday.

Similarly, seizures in Himachal Pradesh Assembly elections, where polling concluded on November 12, saw more than five-fold increase over figures of the 2017 Assembly elections.

As compared to ₹9.03 crore worth of seizures in the 2017 Assembly Elections, the seizures in 2022 rose to ₹57.24 crore in the State.

Apart from the BJP, the Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), 36 other political outfits, including the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Samajwadi Party (SP), Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) and Bharatiya Tribal Party (BTP) have also fielded candidates in various seats which will go to polls in the first phase of the election. The BJP and Congress are contesting in all the 89 seats.

The new poll entrant AAP is contesting in 88 seats. Its candidate from Surat East constituency had withdrawn his candidature, leaving the party with one less seat to contest in the first phase.

Among other parties, the BSP has fielded 57 candidates, BTP 14 and CPI-M four candidates. As many as 339 Independents are also in the fray in the first phase of polls. Out of the total 788 candidates, 70 are women, including nine fielded by the BJP, six by the Congress and five by the AAP.

AAP's chief ministerial candidate Isudan Gadhi is contesting from Khambhaliya seat in Devbhumi Dwarka district of Saurashtra region that goes to polls on Thursday.

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Somebody has to speak up, says defiant Lapid

‘Kashmir Files a brilliant film but has fascist features, jury also felt so’

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Israeli filmmaker Nadav Lapid has been facing flak for his comments on the movie 'The Kashmir Files'.

Israeli filmmaker Nadav Lapid, whose remarks on "The Kashmir Files" film triggered a major uproar in the country has defended his observations and said, "somebody has to speak up."

He also said the film has fascist features and the entire jury shared his views.

His latest statements on Wednesday came two days after the filmmaker, who was the head of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) jury in Goa, said the film is a "propaganda" and "vulgar."

Israeli Ambassador to New Delhi Naor Gilon had reacted sharply to his remarks on the closing ceremony of the festival on Monday and asked the filmmaker on Tuesday to apologise and said he should be ashamed.

Director of the film Vivek Agnihotri and actor Anupam Kher, who acted in 'The Kashmir Files', also slammed Lapid.

Speaking to Israeli news website *Ynet* over the phone on the controversy over his remarks, Lapid said, "It's crazy, what's going on here. It's a Government festival and it's the biggest in India. It's a film that the Indian Government, even

if it didn't actually make it, at least pushed it in an unusual way. It basically justifies the Indian policy in Kashmir, and it has fascist features." This comment was a rough translation of the interview in Hebrew.

He said there are claims that the move captured dimensions hidden by intellectuals and the media. "It is always the same method — that there is the foreign enemy, and there are traitors from within."

In his interview, Lapid said while he was watching the movie, he was shocked by the "transparent combination between propaganda and fascism and vulgarity". "I couldn't help but imagine an Israeli film like this in another year and a half or two," he told *Ynet*.

Asked if he anticipated the massive backlash to his remarks, Lapid said he was "apprehensive".

"It is not an easy position, you are a guest, I am the president of the jury here, you are treated very nicely. And then you come and attack the festival. There was apprehension, and there was discomfort," he said, adding, "Let's put it this

way: I'm happy to be on my way to the airport now."

The filmmaker said if the chairman of a foreign jury spoke critically about a film of his country, he would be "happy" even if it is "not a pleasant feeling". "In countries that are increasingly losing the ability to speak your mind or speak the truth, someone needs to speak up. When I saw this movie, I couldn't help but imagine its Israeli equivalent, which doesn't exist but could definitely exist. So I felt I had to," he said.

Meanwhile, in an exclusive interview to a private television channel in India, Lapid spoke at length about the controversy over his comments on 'The Kashmir Files'.

When told that his comment has erupted into a huge controversy and that the Israeli Ambassador had to apologise for what he said, Lapid said he is nobody's property. He also said politicians have a way of making profit out of controversies. Lapid said, "I accept the fact that 'The Kashmir Files' is a brilliant movie. It was my duty to say what I saw."

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AAP may not even open account in Gujarat: Shah

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Union Home Minister Amit Shah has downplayed AAP's challenge in Gujarat polls, claiming Arvind Kejriwal's party may not even open its account, and said the BJP State unit's announcement on setting up anti-radicalisation cell is a good initiative that can be considered by other States and the Centre.

In an interview to *PTI*, Shah described Prime Minister Narendra Modi's popularity, all-round development of Gujarat during his tenure as the Chief Minister and the implementation of zero appeasement policy as the main reasons for people repeatedly reposing faith in the BJP over the last 27 years.

"The BJP will register an unprecedented victory in Gujarat. People have full faith in our party and our leader Prime Minister Narendra Modi," said Shah, who has been crisscrossing the State and addressing five rallies a day in the run-up to the two-phase polls on December 1



Union Home Minister Amit Shah during his election campaign roadshow ahead of the Assembly elections, in Ahmedabad. PTI

and 5. On the question of AAP entering Gujarat Assembly elections, the BJP leader said, "Every party has a right to contest elections, but it is up to people whether they accept the party or not. AAP is nowhere in the mind of the people of Gujarat. Wait for election results, maybe AAP's name would not figure in the list of successful candidates."

While the Congress has been the BJP's principal rival in Gujarat, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal-led APP has

undertaken an aggressive campaign in Modi's home State.

On the Congress, Shah said, "It is still the main Opposition party, but the party is going through a crisis, and its impact is visible in Gujarat as well."

Asked about Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra, Shah said sustained efforts are a must in politics. "I have always been of the view that politicians need to be hard working and it is good when someone works hard," he said.

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China warns USA not to interfere in ties with India

Beijing wants to stop border tensions from causing India to partner with US: Pentagon report

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI / WASHINGTON

With tension still persisting at the border in Ladakh, China has warned the US and asked it to refrain from interfering in its ties with India. It sought to pre-empt India from partnering more closely with the US in view of the border tensions. Underlining this point in its latest report on the Chinese military build-up, Pentagon has said that throughout the face-offs, Chinese officials sought to downplay the severity of the crisis, emphasising Beijing's intent to preserve border stability and prevent the stand-off from harming other areas of its bilateral relationship with India. The report was presented to the Congress late on Tuesday.

"The PRC (People's Republic of China) seeks to prevent border tensions from causing India to partner more closely with the United States. PRC officials warned US officials to not interfere with the PRC's relationship with India," the report said.

"In a section on the China-India border, throughout 2021, the PLA sustained the deployment of forces and continued infrastructure build-up along the LAC," the Pentagon said. Negotiation made "minimal progress" as both sides resisted losing perceived advantages on the border, it said.

The eastern Ladakh border face-off erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong Lake area. "Each country demanded the withdrawal of the other's forces and a return to pre-face off conditions, but neither China nor India agreed on those condi-

tions," the Pentagon report said. "The PRC blamed the stand-off on Indian infrastructure construction, which it perceived as encroaching on PRC territory, while India accused China of launching aggressive incursions into India's territory," it added.

Since the 2020 clash, the PLA has maintained a continuous force presence and continued infrastructure build-up along the LAC. The 2020 Galwan Valley incident was the deadliest clash between the two nations in the past 46 years, the report said.

On June 15, 2020, patrols violently clashed in Galwan Valley resulting in the death of 20 Indian soldiers and four PLA soldiers, according to the PRC officials, it said.

China has previously criticised the US for commenting on its border dispute with India. In June this year, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian termed the critical remarks by a top US General on its infrastructure build-up at the China-India border as a "despi-

cable act" and criticised the attempts of some American officials to "add fuel to the fire", emphasising that Beijing and New Delhi have the "will and capability" to properly resolve their differences through talks.

Responding to US Army's Pacific Commanding General Charles A Flynn who termed the situation in eastern Ladakh as "alarming", spokesman Zhao had said, "The China-India boundary question is a matter between the two countries. Both sides have the will and capability of resolving the question through dialogue and consultation." Contd on Page 2

China objects to Indo-US exercise

Beijing: China on Wednesday said it opposed the joint Indo-US military exercises being held near the Line of Actual Control, asserting that it violates the spirit of the two border agreements signed between New Delhi and Beijing.

Bilkis Bano moves SC against remission to rape convicts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Bilkis Bano, who was gang-raped and seven members of her family slaughtered during the 2002 Gujarat riots, on Wednesday filed a plea before the Supreme Court challenging the remission of sentence of 11 convicts in the case by the State Government. The top court said it will consider listing the matter for hearing.

A Bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice PS Narasimha took note of the submissions of lawyer Shobha Gupta that the victim herself has challenged the grant of remission and release of the convicts.

"The review has to be heard first. Let it come before Justice Rastogi," the CJ said. When the counsel for Bano asked for the matter to be heard in open court, the Bench said, "Only the court concerned can decide that."

The CJ said he would take a call on the issue in the evening.

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CAPSULE

CHINA'S EX-PRESIDENT JIANG ZEMIN DEAD

Beijing: Jiang Zemin, China's first head of state to have visited India in 1996 and heralded a new era of constructive cooperation between the two countries passed away on Wednesday due to leukemia and multiple organ failure in Shanghai at the age of 96.

TERROR GROUP ISIS SAYS LEADER QURASHI KILLED

Beirut: The Islamic State jihadist group said Wednesday that its leader Abu Hasan al-Hashimi al-Qurashi has been killed in battle and announced a replacement. A spokesman said Hashimi, an Iraqi, was killed "in combat with enemies of God", without elaborating on the date of death.

India's GDP growth fell to 6.3% in July-Sept quarter

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's economic growth slowed down to 6.3 per cent in the July-September quarter of this fiscal, dragged down mainly by the poor performance of manufacturing and mining sectors, official data showed on Wednesday.

However, India remained the fastest-growing major economy as China registered an economic growth of 3.9 per cent in July-September 2022.

The Indian economy grew by 8.4 per cent in July-September, 2021-22, as per the data released by the National Statistical Office

(NSO). The gross domestic product (GDP) expanded by 13.5 per cent in the April-June quarter this fiscal.

The second quarter GDP growth is almost at par with the RBI's projection of 6.1 per cent to 6.3 per cent released earlier this month in one of the articles published in its bulletin.

"Real GDP or GDP at Constant (2011-12) Prices in Q2 2022-23 is estimated at ₹38.17 lakh crore, as against ₹35.89 lakh crore in Q2 2021-22, showing a growth of 6.3 per cent as compared to 8.4 per cent in Q2 2021-22," the NSO statement said.

The real GDP in absolute terms stood at ₹33.10 lakh crore in the July-September quarter of 2020. It had contracted by 6.6 per cent in the second quarter of 2020-21 on account of the staggering impact of lockdown restrictions to curb the spread of coronavirus.

As per the data, Gross Value Added (GVA) grew by 5.6 per cent to ₹35.05 lakh crore in July-September this year.

The GVA growth in the farm sector is 4.6 per cent in the second quarter compared to 3.2 per cent a year ago.

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Rainbow items allowed at stadiums: FIFA

AP ■ DOHA

One day after Iran and Wales were eliminated at the World Cup, FIFA finally gave a public assurance on Wednesday that rainbow items and banners supporting protests in Iran will be allowed into stadiums. Stadium security staff organized by Qatari authorities had seized items with rainbow colours and slogans such as "Women. Life. Freedom" to stop them from getting inside stadiums.

In the first week of the tournament, seven European teams including Wales lost the fight to wear multi-colored "One Love" armbands during World Cup matches and some fans complained they weren't allowed to bring items with

rainbow colours, a symbol of LGBTQ rights, into the stadiums of the conservative Islamic emirate. The match between Iran and the United States on Tuesday was charged with emotion among Iranian fans, some of whom had come to Qatar not only to support their team, but the protest movement back home with banners and flags.

"FIFA is aware of some incidents where permitted items were not allowed to be displayed at stadiums," soccer's world body said in a statement on Wednesday, more than a week after some incidents were reported at World Cup stadiums. "FIFA has received assurances by authorities that venue commanders have been contacted in relation to the agreed



England and Wales players took a knee before their final World Cup group game to show solidarity with the fight against discrimination of all kind on Tuesday.

rules and regulations for the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022." FIFA's assurances that have seemed to be overridden by Qatari authorities.

Wales and Iran will not

play any more games at the World Cup after results late Tuesday sent England and the United States from their Group B into the knockout rounds.

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Won't go ahead with it: Maha Govt to Bombay HC on BMC delimitation

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a development that will further delay the crucial elections to the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), the Maharashtra Government on Wednesday informed the Bombay High Court that it would not go ahead with the process of delimitation relating to the BMC till December 20.

Relying on a submission made by the State Government's special counsel Vikram Nankani, a HC bench of Justices S V Gangapurwala and Arif Doctor adjourned till December 20 the hearing of two petitions challenging the Eknath Shinde Government's move to reverse the previous Uddhav Thackeray dispensation's decision to increase the number of civic wards in Mumbai by nine wards.

The previous Uddhav Thackeray government had increased the wards from 227 to 236 which the current Eknath Shinde dispensation reversed saying the delimitation should be based on the latest census figures.



est census figures.

In his submission before the high court, Nankani said that a similar matter was pending before the Supreme Court which is scheduled to hear the case on December 13.

Senior counsel Aspi Chinoy sought an early hearing in the case on a date convenient to all sides. The HC bench scheduled the next hearing of the case for December 20.

It may be recalled that the high court had on November 17 sought replies from the state government, State Election Commission (SEC) and BMC to a petition filed by an ex-municipal corporator to reversal of Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government's decision on civic wards' delimitation.

Six weeks after it came to power in the state on June 30 this year, the Eknath Shinde

government had annulled the previous government's decision to increase BMC's civic wards from 227 to 236.

Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray)'s former corporator R S Pednekar had moved the Bombay High Court seeking the annulment of the August 4, 2022 ordinance. The ex-corporator also sought orders to the State Election Commission (SEC) to conduct BMC elections on the basis of delimitation based on the Supreme Court orders of July 20, 2022. The SEC had earlier this year issued a draft notification for delimitation of all 236 wards.

After the challenge to the ordinance culminated into an Act on September 8, Pednekar challenged the validity of the Act too.

In the normal course, the BMC polls were to be held in February 2022. However, the polls have already been delayed by more than nine months. Given the ongoing litigation over the delimitation of wards, it is unlikely that the polls will be held before February 2023.

‘Aftab confesses to killing Shraddha in polygraph test’

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Aftab Amin Poonawala, accused of killing his live-in partner Shraddha Walkar, has confessed to committing the crime during his polygraph test conducted at the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL), Rohini here, sources said on Wednesday.

The polygraph test ended on Tuesday after multiple sessions, the sources said.

“The accused has confessed to killing Shraddha Walkar and disposing of her body parts in several areas,” they said.

FSL officials said Poonawala will undergo narco analysis test on Thursday at a government hospital in Rohini.

Head of the Department of Crime Scene Management at FSL, Rohini, Sanjeev Gupta, said, “The narco analysis test on Poonawala will be conducted on Thursday at Baba Saheb Ambedkar hospital in Rohini. The FSL team is pre-



pared for the test. The FSL team along with the doctors will be present at the time of the test.” According to the officials, the narco test would take around three to four days.

On Monday and Tuesday, the remaining sessions of polygraph test on Poonawala were conducted. The polygraph test is not admissible in a court.

During probe, the Delhi Police recently contacted a woman who met Poonawala after Walkar's murder.

On Wednesday, police said Poonawala had called the woman, a psychologist, to his residence in Mehrauli twice in October. Poonawala came in contact with the woman through a dating mobile application, police said.

TV anchor who introduced actor to conman Suresh arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Police on Wednesday arrested a Mumbai based former TV anchor Pinky Irani, who allegedly introduced Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez to Suresh Chandrashekar, in connection with an extortion case linked to the conman.

Delhi Police spokesperson Suman Nalwa said Irani, a resident of Mumbai, has joined the investigation at the Economic Offence Wing (EOW) office.

Irani was remanded in police custody for three days by a court which said police must be given a free hand to probe the matter thoroughly.

Irani allegedly facilitated the conman's meeting with Bollywood personalities including actor Jacqueline Fernandez and was instrumental in disposing of the money extorted from the complainant and other sources, the court was told.

“After having sufficient evidence against her, she has been arrested in this case and produced before the court where her police remand for three days has been granted. Further investigation is in progress,” Nalwa said.

Chandrashekar, who is currently in jail, is accused of cheating various people, including high-profile individuals such as former Fortis Healthcare promoter Shivinder Mohan Singh's wife Aditi Singh.

Delhi records warmest Nov

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi recorded its warmest November in six years, with an average maximum temperature of 28.8 degrees Celsius, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD) data. The mean maximum temperature for the month is 28.2 degrees Celsius. Weather experts attributed the higher-than-average maximum temperature this month to the lack of strong western disturbances. According to the IMD data, Delhi logged an average maximum temperature of 27.8 degrees Celsius in 2021; 27.9 degrees Celsius in 2020; 28.1 degrees Celsius in 2019, 28.5 degrees Celsius in 2018, and 27.9 degrees Celsius in 2017.

Mahesh Palawat, vice president (meteorology and climate change), Skymet Weather, said northwest India saw three western disturbances of moderate intensity in the first half of the month. However, these did not yield heavy snowfall in the mountainous region in the north.

“Strong western disturbances lead to heavy snowfall in the mountains and even rainfall in parts of northern plains. We did not witness any strong WD this month,” Palawat said.

On Wednesday, Delhi recorded a minimum temperature of 8.3 degrees Celsius, two notches below normal, and a maximum temperature of 27 degrees Celsius.

ED arrests bizman in Delhi Excise scam

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has arrested liquor businessman Amit Arora in connection with its money laundering probe into alleged irregularities in the Delhi excise policy case.

Arora is the director of Gurugram-based liquor company Buddy Retail Pvt Ltd. This is the sixth arrest in this case by the ED.

The businessman was arrested last night under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), officials said.

He is expected to be produced before a local court where the agency will seek his custody, the sources said.

SEC in Delhi deploys 493 micro observers at sensitive locations

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A total of 493 micro observers have been deployed at sensitive or hyper-sensitive polling locations that aim at keeping a close watch on the proceedings at the booths by the State Election Commission on Wednesday.

“The Micro-Observers will remain stationed at these locations throughout the poll day and keep a close watch on the proceedings at the booths inside these locations. The Commission has also issued instructions for webcasting at these sensitive/hyper-sensitive polling locations,” said a senior SEC official. “However, the Commission has also launched the web interface of the mobile app ‘Nigam Chunav Delhi’ wherein the functionalities of the app have been integrated with the web portal of the Commission that is sec.delhi.gov.in,” he said.

“The web interface provides easy access to the voter information, details of contesting candidates including affidavit details as well as enables the citizens to lodge complaints,” he informed.

Bilkis Bano moves SC against remission to rape convicts...

From Page 1

Earlier, a bench of Justices Ajay Rastogi and CT Ravikumar had said it would hear a fresh plea moved by a women's organisation, National Federation of Indian Women, challenging the remission of sentence and the release of convicts in the case.

The top court had issued notice to State and Central Governments on the batch of petitions challenging the remission. As per the affidavit filed

by Union Home Ministry, trial court and CBI objected to the remission, while the Gujarat Government and Union Home Ministry supported the early release. Bano was 21 years old and five months pregnant when she was gang-raped while fleeing the riots that broke out after the Godhra train burning incident.

Her three-year-old daughter was among the seven family members killed.

The 11 men convicted in the case walked out of the Godhra sub-jail on August 15 after the Gujarat Government allowed their release under its remission policy. They had completed more than 15 years in jail.

China warns...

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“Some US officials have pointed fingers and sought to fan the flames and drive a wedge between the two countries. This is disgraceful. We hope the US could do more things that contribute to regional peace and stability,” Zhao made the remarks during a media briefing in Beijing on June 9.

The India-China border dispute covers the 3,488 km long LAC. While China claims Arunachal Pradesh as Southern Tibet, India asserts that the dispute covered the Aksai Chin area which was occupied by China during the 1962 war.

India has consistently maintained that peace and tranquility along the LAC are important for the overall development of bilateral ties.

The Indian and Chinese militaries have held 16 rounds of Corps Commander-level talks to resolve the border standoff.

IN-BRIEF

PRE-BOARD FOR CLASS 10 & 12 ON DEC 15-28

New Delhi: Pre-board examinations for Class 10 and Class 12 in Delhi Government schools will be conducted from December 15 to December 28, according to Delhi Government's Directorate of Education (DoE). According to the guidelines, no student will be allowed to submit answer sheets before the completion of the exam, and only 24 students will be allowed to be seated in one classroom.

COURT PENALISES MAN FOR SHIFTING POWER POLE

New Delhi: The Special Electricity Court in Rohini, convicted and penalized Ramesh Kumar Aggarwal, resident of Aman Vihar on finding him guilty of shifting of the electricity pole, which has caused damage to wires and ABC cables, which is a punishable offence under The Electricity Act, 2003. “A compensation of ₹60,000/- and a sum of ₹3,000/- as cost of the proceedings was approved by the court for the electricity theft that Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited would recover from the convicted consumer,” a senior Tata power-DDL official said.

MCD POLLS: HP CM CAMPAIGNS FOR BJP CANDIDATES

New Delhi: Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur on Wednesday held a roadshow in favour of BJP candidates in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) elections. The chief minister, who has been campaigning in the Delhi civic polls, will address four public meetings in Ashok Vihar, Shastri Nagar, Shalimar Bagh and Rohini on Thursday.

IGNCA, ICCR HOLD EXHIBITION ON EGYPTIAN ART

New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts in collaboration with Indian Council for Cultural Relations organized an exhibition on contemporary Egyptian art to celebrate 75 years of diplomatic relations between India and Egypt. It is an exhibition of Egyptian photographs and sculptures.

TRAFFIC AWARENESS DRIVE: 39K CHALLANS IN NOIDA

Noida: The Gautam Buddh Nagar traffic police issued 39,765 e-challans at a daily average of 1,325 for violations in November as it observed Traffic Awareness Month. According to official data, 280 vehicles were impounded for various violations, including air pollution, during the month. “As part of enforcement, 39,765 e-challans were issued for various traffic rule violations and a total of Rs 16,59,800 was collected in fines and deposited in stage treasury,” the traffic police said in a statement.

FAKE VISA RACKET BUSTED, 8 ARRESTED

New Delhi: The Delhi Police on Wednesday busted a fake visa racket and arrested eight people for allegedly running it from Connaught Place in central Delhi, police said on Wednesday. The crime branch of the Delhi Police received information regarding a gang which was operating from Connaught Place and other areas. Later, a raid was conducted at many places and the 8 accused were arrested. Special Commissioner of Police (crime) Ravindra Singh Yadav said.

PRIORITISE HOSTEL ALLOTMENT: JNUSU URGES ADMN

New Delhi: The Jawaharlal Nehru University Students' Union (JNUSU) has urged the varsity administration to ensure priority hostel allotment to first-year students in the SC and ST categories. In a letter to Dean of Students Sudheer Pratap Singh, the JNUSU said the hostel allotment list for male students was yet to be published despite undergraduate and postgraduate classes starting already, causing them “extreme difficulties”.

India's GDP...

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However, the GVA in the manufacturing sector contracted 4.3 per cent during the quarter from 5.6 per cent growth during the year-ago period.

GVA in mining also declined by 2.8 per cent in the quarter compared to 14.5 per cent growth. The GVA growth in the construction sector also decelerated to 6.6 per cent in the quarter from 8.1 per cent.

The electricity, gas, water supply and other utility services segment grew by 5.6 per

cent in the quarter compared to 8.5 per cent a year ago. GVA growth in the services sector -- trade, hotel, transport, communication and services related to broadcasting -- was 14.7 per cent during the second quarter against 9.6 per cent.

Financial, real estate and professional services grew by 7.2 per cent in the first quarter over 6.1 per cent earlier.

Public administration, defence and other services posted 6.5 per cent growth against 19.4 per cent in the second quarter of the last fiscal.

The NSO stated that Nominal GDP or GDP at Current Prices in Q2 2022-23 is estimated at Rs 65.31 lakh crore, as against Rs 56.20 lakh crore in Q2 2021-22, showing a growth of 16.2 per cent as compared to 19.0 per cent in Q2 2021-22.

Somebody has to...

From Page 1

“It is a very subjective way,” he added.

Lapid even apologised if people got hurt because of his remarks. He also added that other jury members felt the same way, but refrained from speaking openly,” he said. “The Kashmir Files” was screened at the film festival alongside 14 other films.

Speaking at the closing ceremony of 53rd edition of the International Film Festival of India, Lapid had said, “All of us are disturbed. It felt to us like

a propaganda, vulgar movie inappropriate for an artistic competitive section of such a prestigious competition. I feel totally comfortable in sharing these feelings openly on stage, since the spirit of the festival truly accepts critical discussion which is essential for art and life.”

Claiming that his statements and opinions were shared by all the jury members, Lapid said, “All of us were sitting in the screening room and had the same feelings after the screening. Everyone was aware of what was going to be said. I have emails and WhatsApp to prove it. I understand that under pressure or fear or anxiety, people can suddenly change their statements.”

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is general information that RRM SERVICES (Registration No:1186/2008 dated 07.05.2008) is situated at C-95, Karampura, Delhi 110015 informs that Dr. Ravinder Singh, Dr. Neetu Singh, Dr. Jinder Singh and Mrs. Megna Tyagi are renounced from the partnership firm and RRM SERVICES will not be responsible for their any acts and transactions in future and M/s HMDS SERVICES Private Limited is joining to RRM SERVICES as new partner. All the changes are effective from 03.07.2022. If anybody, institution have any problems/claim regarding these changes kindly contact given Mobile No. 4917042909986. Dr. Amit Tyagi (Partner of RRM SERVICES) Place at Delhi-110027

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OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER TRANSMISSION LINE MAINTENANCE DIVISION - IV.

Pampore Kashmir - 192121 Email: xentlmd4@gmail.com

EXTENSION NOTICE-2

Again in view of the poor response the last date of receipt of tenders (online), bid submission end date and bid opening of NIT No: TLMD/IV/e-NIT/20 of 2022-23 for Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of digital programmable/ universal meters in existing place of old/defunct /malfunctioned digital Megawatts, Ammeters and voltmeters for control room control desk of 450MVA, 220/132kV Grid station Pampore is further extended as under:

1	e-Bid submission end date and time	05-12-2022 up to 14:00 hrs
2	Date of opening of online techno commercial	06-12-2022 at 14:00 hrs

All other terms and conditions shall remain same. The tender document / NIT / BOQ can be downloaded from website <http://jktenders.gov.in>.

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DIPK-NB-5280/22

Executive Engineer, TLMD-IV Pampore

AAP...

From Page 1

“But in politics only sustained efforts show results. So let's wait and see,” he said.

Shah, who has been talking about issues of national security in the campaign for the state election, said they are important in every assembly poll.

The Opposition has accused the BJP of raising national issues like terrorism in state elections to divert the people's attention from governance-related concerns.

“Is the security of Gujarat associated with national security or

not? “Security of Gujarat and national security are not different issues. And if the country is not secure, how can Gujarat be secure? Therefore, national security is a major issue in all state assembly polls. “Being a border state, the people of Gujarat are sensitive about national security. We cannot afford to have national security impacted at any one location in the country,” he said while replying to a question. With the Opposition often accusing the government of misusing investigation agencies against its political rivals, Shah said there is an independent and neutral judiciary in the country, and “if there is any misuse of investigation agencies, then they can approach the judiciary”.

Shah, who has been raising law and order issues in his campaign speeches, described ending lawlessness as one of the achievements of the BJP government in Gujarat. The former BJP president described the party's poll promise to set up an anti-radicalisation cell as a good initiative and said any organisation like PFI that pushes youths towards terrorism will not be tolerated. He said the Popular Front of India (PFI) was banned after due diligence and several states had demanded it.

“The Modi government decided to ban PFI after gathering a lot of information and proof related to their anti-national activities, especially their activities to push youth towards terrorism by radicalising

them. “And several states have demanded to ban PFI. Such activities of any organisation will not be tolerated in the Modi government,” Shah told PTI.

On whether BJP's announcement in manifesto on setting up an anti-radicalisation cell in Gujarat will be implemented in other states also, Shah said, “It is a good initiative. Let it be implemented (here) first. It will be given a legal shape and its working mechanism will be decided.”

He said radicalisation should be checked not only in Gujarat but in the entire country.

“And (anti-radicalisation cell) can be considered at the national level and in other states,” Shah said, adding the entire world is concerned about radicalisation.

Kejriwal, Gadkari, Lekhi hold roadshows



AAP National convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal waves during a roadshow for MCD elections at Malka Ganj in New Delhi on Wednesday Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer



Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, MoS Meenakshi Lekhi during a MCD polls roadshow for BJP candidate Sharad Kapoor, ward no 146, Amar Colony in New Delhi on Wednesday Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

No power can stop AAP from winning MCD polls: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Led by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, the Aam Aadmi Party on Wednesday turned the last leg of its MCD election campaign into an impressive show of strength.

After conducting a door-to-door campaign on Tuesday, Kejriwal took out a massive road show on Wednesday and addressed a Jansabha after that. The road show began from Malka Ganj Chowk near Kamla Nagar and went to Ghanta Ghar Chowk with the entire stretch engulfed in hues of blue, yellow and white.

Addressing the jansabha, Kejriwal, "No power can stop AAP from winning MCD elections, because people of Delhi will vote for the party that wants to work and not for the party that wants to stop all the work," he said, adding, "These people (BJP) stopped the Mohalla Clinic and CCTV project files, I faced great difficulties in getting the projects cleared."

He said Delhi LG VK Saxena stopped free yoga classes, but now freebies are being run on donations. "I won't let a single project stop in Delhi," he said.

Charging the BJP-led MCD of turning the national capital into a garbage heap, he said, "It pains my heart to see Delhi be engulfed by garbage. Despite being the CM I have no power to clean garbage because MCD is under BJP.

Delhiites gave us the responsibility of schools, hospitals, electricity, water, we fixed everything and provided free healthcare and electricity to everyone.

Public gave BJP one job, they had to look after the garbage but even in 15 years, they could not clean Delhi. BJP has deployed 7 CMs, 1 Dy CM and 17 Cabinet Ministers to fight against an Aam Aadmi like me. Had they done some work in the last 15 years, BJP would not need to bring all its bigwigs from across the country in a municipal election," he said.

The Chief minister said when the public wanted to

know the what the BJP has done in its 15-year-long MCD tenure, Home Minister Amit Shah said Kejriwal did not give us any funds to carry out development work. "Look at his audacity. The Home Minister is asking for funds from a state government. We gave 1 lac crores to the MCD, but BJP turned all of it into dust.

Despite getting all the funds their leaders cry, yell and howl on the streets of Delhi asking for money. The Centre doesn't give Delhi Government any funds, you don't see me begging like them."

Gave us the job of fixing schools and hospitals, the result is front of you; now give us the chance to fix garbage management," said Kejriwal. Kejriwal said the MCD poll is not about any political party but about the prestige and progress of Delhi. "These people have turned Delhi into such a herbage dump that it is now difficult for a common man to live here.

You gave us the job of fixing schools, hospitals, electricity, water and governance, you have the results in front of you. World class schools, hospitals, Mohalla Clinics, free electricity-water, faceless and doorstep services. But garbage management is under the MCD. We have to come together and solve this garbage problem," he said..

He went on to add, "It pains my heart to see Delhi be engulfed by garbage. Despite being the CM, I have no power to clean this garbage because of the division of powers.

It has been 15 years since they have been running the MCD, yet they failed at handling garbage. If you let us run the MCD, then we will be able to clear out the garbage very easily. Give me 5 years in MCD, we will give you a sparkling clean Delhi."

Reaching out to the MCD employees, Kejriwal said their salary will come into their accounts in the first week of the month from now, no matter how he did it. "I will arrange the funds and make it possible," he said.

BJP extorting money from traders: Sisodia

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia accused the BJP on Wednesday of extorting money from traders in Krishna Nagar in east Delhi and said AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal would help them get rid of the "curse".

Sisodia held marches in various wards of Laxmi Nagar, Krishna Nagar and Patparganj and interacted with the people on the civic issues that were being faced by them.

The AAP leader said drains in most of the colonies were choked and overflowing.

"Water accumulates in the streets and causes many diseases, but the BJP has completely ignored all this over the years. The BJP has never considered garbage management as their duty in the past five



years," he said. Addressing the public in Krishna Nagar, Sisodia alleged that the BJP extorted money from the traders and imposed conversion charges arbitrarily, but it had been unable to provide a proper parking facility in the past 15 years.

"Along with this, it conducted various inappropriate sealing operations and tried to shut down many businesses. This impacted many families," he said.

CM misleading RWAs by promising them financial powers, says Patra



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Wednesday raised questions over the status of Mohalla Sabhas and the Swaraj Bill promised by the AAP and accused Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal of "misleading" RWAs by promising them "financial and political powers" ahead of civic polls in the national Capital.

It has been reported that the Kejriwal Government earmarked Rs 20 crore for Mohalla Sabhas in 12 Assembly segments but the funds are unaccounted for, BJP Spokesperson Sambit Patra claimed in a Press conference. "Which Mohalla Sabhas asked you to bring a new excise policy to promote monopoly and cartelisation and setting up shops all around the city?" Patra asked, referring to alleged irregularities in the Delhi Government's Excise Policy-2021 being probed by the CBI.

Patra also alleged that Kejriwal "usurped the idea of empowerment" of Residents Welfare Association (RWAs) from the BJP's 'Sankalp Patra' for elections to the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) where it promised working with the associations and financial support.

RWAs in the national Capital will be granted "financial and political" powers, besides the status of "mini parishad" (Councillor) if the AAP is voted to power in the MCD polls, Kejriwal said on Tuesday.

84 re-contesting Councillors' assets up 49%, says ADR

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The average assets of 84 re-contesting councillors in the MCD are Rs 4.37 crore which was Rs 2.93 crore in 2017. The average asset growth for these 84 re-contesting Councillors, between the MCD Elections of 2017 and 2022 is Rs 1.44 crores.

According to a report by the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR), average percentage growth in assets for these 84 re-contesting councillors is 49 per cent.

The ADR report showed that assets of 75 councillors of the 84 who are again contesting the MCD have increased by three to 4,437 per cent. "Out of the 84 re-contesting councillors, assets of 75 councillors (89 per cent) have increased ranging from 3 to 4,437 per

'Jahan Jhuggi Wahin Makan' to benefit 10L slum dwellers'

New Delhi: Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri on Wednesday said nearly 1.35 crore Delhi residents, including 10 lakh slum dwellers, will benefit from various redevelopment initiatives, including 'Jahan Jhuggi Wahin Makan', undertaken by the Centre in the city.

Holding the AAP led Delhi Government responsible for delay, the Union Minister alleged that there are 299 JJ clusters where the responsibility for rehabilitation has been cast on Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board (DUSIB), which falls under Delhi government and unfortunately, no work has been carried out so far.

"In Delhi there are 675 clusters, out of which 376 clusters (comprising 1.72 lakh households) are on DDA and Central Govt lands. DDA has



completed survey of 210 clusters, wherein application forms of the dwellers have been taken through digital mode. The Survey work of remaining 166 will commence immediately after municipal elections and will be completed by March 2023," Puri said while addressing a press conference.

"The planned re-development and rehabilitation work is not restricted to only Jhuggi Jhopri clusters in the national capital but also covers work done for group housing societies, housing for middle class through various schemes of DDA, for farmer residing in the rural areas," said Puri. SR

Capital to go dry for 3 days due to MCD polls

SAURAV GUPTA ■ NEW DELHI

Bacchus lovers please take note as Delhi will have three consecutive dry days starting November 2 due to Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) elections on November 4. Liquor vends will also remain closed on November 7 on account of voting of votes.

Besides these restrictions, restaurants, five star hotels and bars cannot also serve liquor on these days, according to official here on Tuesday. Even teens run by the armed forces are barred from selling liquor, they said. This ban is the standard drill in a poll bound area, they added.

Sale of liquor will stop at 5 pm on November two and will continue till 5 pm on November four when polling ends. Liquor stores, restaurants, hotels and bars cannot serve liquor throughout the day on November seven, officials added. The forthcoming dry days come during the ongoing



wedding season where liquor is served during festivities by some people. The restrictions have come as a dampener for the hospitality industry, sources said adding it will lead to considerable loss of income.

Given the restrictions, many buyers head towards the neighbouring NOIDA, Ghaziabad, Faridabad and Gurugram to stock up their quota of liquor. However, strict checking at the borders to check smuggling during those days will also prove a hindrance, sources said.

Rajiv Sharma, a booze lover said that the liquor shops should not be closed, instead the checking should be increased so that no political party or independent candidates use it to seek votes from the people.

Cong promises RO purifiers to poor

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Congress on Wednesday promised RO water purifiers to the poor, day-boarding facility at MCD-run schools and waiver of previous house tax dues in its manifesto for elections to the civic body.

Unveiling the manifesto, Congress leader Supriya Shrinate said the water provided by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) had always been "unfit" for regular use and extremely contaminated to consume.

"The water provided by the MCD has never been fit for regular use, forget consuming it. It is extremely contaminated. Delhi Congress promises 'Saaf Paani Wali Dilli, Sheila Dikshit Wali Dilli'," Shrinate said. The Congress has also promised a pollution- and



Delhi Congress President Anil Chaudhary with party's incharge for Delhi, Ajay Kumar, Congress leader Supriya Shrinate and others releases the party's manifesto for the MCD elections at DPCC office in New Delhi on Wednesday Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

garbage-free national capital. It will clear the landfill sites and provide better parking facilities for all. Speaking on the other promises included in the manifesto, Shrinate said, "Day boarding facilities will be started in MCD-led schools. This will not only empower the poor but also end child labour."

Cyclists' group for cycle lanes, parking facilities for bicycles

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A cyclists' group has called for systematic reorganisation of infrastructure to include additional cycle lanes, parking facilities for bicycles and public cycle-sharing systems in the run up to the civic polls in the national Capital.

In a letter to candidates contesting from Council Area 160, Saibullah, a Saket-based cyclists' group said there was a need to enact policies to enable a shift from use of automobiles to sustainable and healthy modes such as cycling in a city like Delhi.

In its letter to the candidates, the cyclists' group said, "As we know, Delhi has been suffering from rising air pollution levels which has, in turn, led to adverse effects on human health.

It is our firm belief that



cycles can play an important role in curbing air pollution and fighting climate change in cities. "There is a need to enact policies that enable a shift from the use of the automobile to sustainable and healthy modes such as cycling in a city like Delhi. Constructing separate cycle lanes in Delhi and foot traffic for cyclists is important to tackle safety concerns."

The group also recommended traffic enforcement to discourage drivers from parking their vehicles or motorcyclists from using cycle tracks.

SAURAV GUPTA ■ NEW DELHI

In what could open a new front in the AAP-BJP confrontations, the Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) of the Delhi Government on Wednesday said it has uncovered a "massive scam" pertaining to bogus, fake and ghost registrations of non-construction workers as construction workers and fraudulent disbursement of funds to the tune of Rs 900 crore to them by the Labour Department.

"Preliminary inquiry into just 800 random registration forms of individuals as construction workers out of a total of about 17 lakh persons registered as such workers by the Delhi Building and other Construction Workers Welfare Board (DBOCWWB) has uncovered the proverbial tip of

the iceberg, with 424 out of the 800 being established as fake," as per the Anti Corruption Branch (ACB) sources said. They pointed out to some bizarre instances wherein "individuals pursuing B-Tech and M.Com registered as Construction Workers and got sums upto Rs 15,000 transferred into their accounts".

"Scores of individuals living in Gorakhpur, Sant Kabir Nagar, Muzaffarpur, Jaunpur and Baghmer in Rajasthan, who had never visited Delhi, got themselves registered and availed of financial transfers from DBOCWWB," they claimed.

The list goes on. "People running kirana shops, working in factories, domestic helps, export houses, tailoring units and Momos Stalls were registered as construction workers

by the AAP Government and paid thousands from the DBOCWWB," they pointed out. "Of the 424 found to be fake by applying basic computer algorithms, 206 had suspicious mobile numbers and addresses.

Upon verification of the registration forms, the beneficiaries were gotten in touch with, trails of which led to other States, different professions and economically well off backgrounds," the sources maintained.

This apart, 44 had common fake address of Gautam Colony, Narela, 37 had common fake address of Kapashera, 38 had common fake address of Burari and 33 were permanent residents of Gorakhpur and Sant Kabir Nagar in Uttar Pradesh, they pointed.

A majority of these had

nothing to do with construction works, leave apart them being construction workers, they said.

"The Directorate of Vigilance (DoV) and ACB of the Delhi Government are investigating into the charges of bogus, false and ghost registrations of non-construction workers as construction workers and fraudulent disbursement of funds to the tune of Rs. 900 crores to them by the Delhi Building and other Construction Workers Welfare Board (DBOCWWB)," said sources.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had recently declared further disbursement of Rs. 5,000 to 10 lakh such 'workers', about 08 lakh (75 per cent to 80 per cent of the total strength) of which are said to be bogus and false, they

claimed adding "the attempt, of course, was to make money out of the disbursed amounts and bribe the voters ahead of the forthcoming MCD polls". "These facts were brought to the fore in complaints lodged by none other than the Members of the DBOCWW Board, chaired by Manish Sisodia, who is also the Labour Minister," the sources said.

"The Delegation of DBOCWW informed that at present the Board is having funds to the tune of approximate Rs. 3000 Crore at its disposal and alleged that the its funds are not being spent on the schemes/welfare activities mandated by the Delhi Building and Other Workers' Welfare Act, 1996 and are instead being utilized for activities outside the purview of the Act/Rules," they stated.

Pak drones major challenge: BSF DG

'We don't have fool-proof system to counter menace. Govt OK's ₹30 cr for cameras, gadgets at Pak, Bangla borders'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Border Security Force (BSF) Director General Pankaj Kumar Singh on Wednesday said the illegal activity of drones along the western front (Pakistan) remains a "major challenge" as the force "does not" have a fool-proof system to counter the menace.

He, however, said the Government has sanctioned a fund of ₹30 crore to procure surveillance cameras, drones or unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and other monitoring gadgets for the BSF deployed to guard Indian frontiers along Pakistan and Bangladesh even as it is deploying 5,500 security cameras in the front areas.

"... we will find solutions in the times to come and we are increasingly detecting and killing the drones," Singh said while addressing media on the eve of 58th Raising Day of BSF.

"We have launched to enhance the surveillance in border areas on a very big scale. This entails use of surveillance cameras and drones on the western and eastern theatres (Pakistan and Bangladesh fronts respectively). We have got around 5,500 CCTV surveillance cameras and some other gadgets and the Union Home Ministry has



BSF DG Pankaj Kumar Singh addresses the Annual Press Meet on the eve of the 58th BSF Raising Day on Wednesday

sanctioned a ₹30 crore fund for this procurement," he said.

The BSF has also developed some "low-cost technology solutions" that help us to mount effective surveillance in the border areas. Similar tools provided by foreign vendors were found very costly and hence we have now developed locally low-cost sensors and surveillance devices, he said.

The DG said the troops were getting "more and more" efficient in detecting and shooting down drones that fly from across Pakistan into India. The BSF has shot down 16 drones along the Pakistan front this year, he said. According to the BSF, 114 drone sightings were made by its troops along the Pakistan front (both IB and LoC) last year

while the numbers this year till November 10 have risen to almost double at 218.

The BSF chief said ensuring robust cyber security was also a "major challenge" before security agencies like the BSF as he cited the recent example of the Ransomware attack on the servers of the AIIMS here.

"Now with 5G technology coming up, we need to be prepared to ensure that our systems are safe," he said.

The BSF secures the India-Pakistan international border running from Jammu to Punjab and further up to Rajasthan and Gujarat. It works under the operational command of the Army at the Line of Control. It also guards the frontiers with Bangladesh.

JKSSB job scam: 20 booked, 14 places raided



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Wednesday conducted searches at 14 locations in Jammu and Kashmir in connection with alleged irregularities in the Accounts Assistant recruitment examination conducted by the Jammu and Kashmir Services Selection Board (JKSSB).

The agency has booked 20 persons, including members of the JKSSB, in connection with the alleged manipulation of the examination. Premises of former member of JKSSB Neelam Khajuria were also being searched, officials said.

A case was registered against 20 accused including then member (JKAS) of JKSSB; then Medical Officer, BSF Frontier Headquarters, Paloura; Ashok Kumar, then ASI in the J&K Police, Roshan Bral working as teacher, MeritTrac Services Private Limited, Bengaluru, Neelam Khajuria, JK Administrative Service and then Member, JKSSB, Anju Raina.

Then Section Officer, JKSSB, Mukta Devi; Lakshmi Sharma, Mukesh Kumar, Shubam Patyaur, Manisha Kumari, Avinash Sharma, Bandana Sharma, Gurjeet Kour, Bandana Choudhary, Rajinder Makhnotra, Gurpreet Singh, Kulwinder Singh, Harpal Singh and unknown officials and others have also been named as accused in the case.

Notices to TRS Min, RS MP for link with imposter CBI officer

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Wednesday served notices to Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) Minister Gangula Kamalakara and Rajya Sabha MP Vaddiraju Ravichandra after they were found to be allegedly associated with a fake CBI officer arrested from Tamil Nadu Bhawan in New Delhi.

A senior CBI official confirmed that a CBI team arrived at Kamalakara's residence in Karimnagar and served notices to the Minister. Another CBI team served notice to Ravichandra.

"They have been called to join the investigation at CBI Delhi headquarters on Thursday morning. They will be questioned in a case of fake CBI officer arrested a few days back in Delhi who claimed himself a senior IPS officer and accepting undue pecuniary advantage from various persons in lieu of their work done," he said.

On November 28, CBI arrested Kovvi Reddy Srinivas Rao of Chinnawaltair in Vishakhapatnam for impersonating a CBI Joint Director.

In a statement, CBI mentioned that they had registered a case against a private person, a resident of Chinnawaltair, Vishakhapatnam on the allegations of impersonating a senior IPS officer of CBI.

The accused was staying at Tamil Nadu House allegedly impersonating himself as Additional Director General of Police (ADGP).

"He has been impersonating himself as an IPS officer and Joint Director of CBI in lieu of undue advantage from unknown private persons for lobbying with unknown public servants for getting a favourable response in various matters which include the cases registered by different central investigative agencies," the CBI had said.

ED attaches properties worth ₹22.10 crore in BS-IV vehicle scam

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached properties worth ₹22.10 crore of firms connected to Diwaker Road Lines and Jatadhara Industries Pvt Ltd, (controlled by former MLA JC Prabhakar Reddy) and others in an ongoing money laundering investigation in the case relating to the BS-IV vehicles scam.

The attached properties also belong to C Gopal Reddy and Company (belonging to MLA's close associate Gopal Reddy, a Civil contractor of Tadipatri, Ananthapur District of Andhra Pradesh) and family members of JC Prabhakar Reddy. The Supreme Court in its order dated March 29, 2017, had ordered that vehicles that were not compliant to BS IV emission norms should not be sold in India by any manufacturer or dealer from April 1, 2017 and that the registering authorities were also prohibited from registering such vehicles from the cut off date.

However, Jatadhara Industries Pvt Ltd (JIPL) and C Gopal Reddy and Company in contravention to the SC Order purchased BS-III vehicles from Ashok Leyland Ltd. at discount and fraudulently registered the same as BS-IV vehicles by fabricating the invoice copies. Investigation revealed that some of the registrations were done in Nagaland, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, the ED said in a statement.

The ED has gathered evidence in the form of fabricated invoices from RTO authorities in Nagaland and original invoices issued by Ashok Leyland as scrap for these vehicles and established the crime. The crime proceeds generated by owning/plying and/or selling these vehicles have been quantified as ₹38.36 crore, the agency said.

As a result of the probe, movable properties of ₹6.31 crore and 68 immovable properties of ₹15.79 crore belonging to JC Prabhakar Reddy and his family member and C Gopal Reddy and his family members have been attached, it said.

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

Whereas
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Manoj Jitendra Singh/ Usha Singh/ LBGHZ00005792456/ LBGHZ00005879912	House No 138, Hig Duplex Niti Khand 3, Indirapuram Ghaziabad/ November 25, 2022	July 29, 2022/ Rs. 81,24,151/-	Delhi/ NCR

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

Date : December 01, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

10

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

Whereas
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Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Seema Shaili/ Devashish Shaili/ LBDEL00002891453	Flat No. T3-003, Ground Floor, T-3, Plot No-301, Eminent Heights, Dharmpur, Dehradun Uttaranchal/ November 24, 2022.	June 23, 2021 Rs. 37,20,436/-	Delhi/ Dehradun
2.	Amit Kohli/ Vinod Kohli/ LBGHZ00002473336	Flat No-205, 2nd Floor, Tower T3, Eminent Heights, Dehradun, Uttaranchal/ November 24, 2022	March 25, 2021 Rs.39,95,068/-	Delhi/NCR Dehradun
3.	Amit Kohli/ Vinod Kohli/ LBGHZ00002548751	Flat No-204, 2nd Floor, Tower T3, Eminent Heights, Dehradun, Uttarakhand/ November 24, 2022	March 25, 2021 Rs. 40,07,578/-	Delhi/NCR Dehradun

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

Date : December 01, 2022
Place: Delhi/NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

10

ICICI Bank
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh, Delhi-110005

PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET
[See proviso to rule 8(6)]
Notice for sale of immovable asset
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the **Physical possession** of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Ltd. will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is", as per the brief particulars given hereunder:

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of E-Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Sanjiv Lamba (Borrower), Madhu (Co-Borrower) LBDEL00002935333	Flat No 1603, 16th Floor, Tower- A2, Palm Court, Plot No. GH-01D Sector-16C, Greater Noida, Gautam Buddha Nagar 201301. Super Builtup Area- 1185 Sq. Ft.	Rs.66.64, 963.81 as on November 23, 2022	Rs. 32,00,000/- Rs. 3,20,000/-	December 08, 2022 From 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM	December 23, 2022 From 11:00 AM Onwards

The online auction will take place on the website of e-auction agency **M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited (URL Link-<https://disposalhub.com>)** The Mortgages/ notice are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till **December 22, 2022 before 05:00 P.M.** failing which, this/these secured asset/s will be sold as per schedule.

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at: **ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh, Delhi-110005** on or before **December 22, 2022 before 05:00 P.M.** and thereafter they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before **December 22, 2022 before 05:00 P.M.** along with scan image of Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, in case prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at: **ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh, Delhi-110005** on or before **December 22, 2022 before 05:00 P.M.** Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/Scheduled Bank in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited" payable at Delhi.

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the e-auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact **ICICI Bank Limited on 9599281817/ 8584874809**

Please note that Marketing agencies **1. M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited. 2. Augoe Asset Management Pvt.Ltd** have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property.

The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit **www.icicibank.com/n4p4s**

Date : December 01, 2022
Place : Delhi/ Ncr

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

10

Ahead of assuming UNSC chair, India's UN representative meets General Assembly Prez

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE | AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI | UNITED NATIONS

With India set to preside over the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the month of December, its envoy in the United Nations Ruchira Kamboj has discussed priorities and issues before the body with UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres and President of the UN General Assembly Csaba Korosi.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will visit New York to preside over "signature events" in the UN Security Council on renewed orienta-

tion for reformed multilateralism on December 14 and on countering terrorism on December 15.

India assumes the monthly rotating Presidency of the Security Council from December 1, the second time after August 2021 that India will preside over the Council during its two-year tenure as an elected UNSC member.

"Today, delighted to call on Secretary-General @antonio-guterres. Discussed the priorities and programme of work ahead of India's December Presidency in the @UN Security Council," Kamboj tweeted late Tuesday.



On Monday, Kamboj met Korosi, who tweeted: "Always a great pleasure to meet with India's PR @ruchirakamboj. Today's discussions focused on India's presidency of the Security Council, which begins on Thursday. I look forward to the month ahead."

India's 2021-2022 term on the Council ends December 31, with Kamboj, India's first woman Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York sitting in the President's seat at the powerful horseshoe table for the month. India will also take over the year-long G20 Presidency from December 1.

Countering terrorism and reformed multilateralism will be among the key priorities for India during its UNSC presidency that will culminate in the completion of its two-year tenure as non-permanent member of the 15-nation powerful body.

PM shrugging away from responsibility: Cong on post Covid vax deaths

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A day after the Government told the Supreme Court that it cannot be held liable to compensate for the deaths post administration of Covid vaccines, the Congress on Wednesday took a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi for "shrugging away" from its responsibility.

"First: No deaths due to oxygen shortage. Then: No aid to Covid victims. Now: No accountability for vaccine-related deaths. Prime Minister Modi really knows how to shrug away responsibility. A true event manager!" the Congress said on its Twitter handle.

Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinate also took a

dig, saying this government is never responsible for anything. "If there is death due to the side effects of Covid vaccine anywhere in the country, then the government is not responsible for it - people are getting it as per their wish. This is Modi government's affidavit in the Supreme Court. (Well this government is never responsible for anything)," she said in a tweet message.

In another tweet, she said, "Thank you Modi ji for quickly traversing the journey from photo on every vaccine certificate to no responsibility."

The Government cannot be held liable to compensate for the deaths due to an adverse event following immunisation (AEFI) post administration of Covid-19 vaccines, the Centre has told the Supreme Court.

ICG holds meet to deal with oil spills in coastal areas

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to hone preparedness to deal with oil spill disaster in coastal areas, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) on Wednesday conducted the 24th National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOS-DCP) and Preparedness Meeting in Chennai.

Presently, as the third largest importer of crude, India receives a large volume of oil through ships. Similarly, it stands sixth in the world as major chemical importer country.

Both oil and chemicals if spilled pose inherent risks to the maritime zones of India and the connected coastlines housing large coastal popula-

tion, marine ecosystem, industries and various installations along with supporting tourism industry. Therefore, preventive measures by the Central Coordinating Agency, Ports, Ship Owners, Oil Handling Facilities, Coastal States and other concerned stakeholders are required to be taken to prepare for any likely marine spill.

In this backdrop, ICG Director General V S Pathania, who is the Chairman of NOS-DCP, chaired the meeting. About 100 delegates, including representatives of various Ministries, Central and State Government departments and agencies, State Pollution Control Board, Ports and Oil Handling Companies participated.

Events galore as India to chair G-20

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With India ready to assume the Presidency of the prestigious G-20 grouping on Thursday for one year, the country will witness a series of events throughout the year including lighting up of 100 monuments with the G-20 logo, a lotus, and other such spectacles.

Besides the cultural extravaganza, India will host nearly 200 meetings of ministers and officials of the G-20 nations at more than 50 places in various parts of the country. The high-profile G-20 summit will be held in New Delhi for two days starting September nine,

next year, sources said here on Wednesday.

Delegates from the G-20 nations will also interact with 75 educational institutions besides showcasing G-20 at the Hornbill festival in Nagaland, and sand artist Sudarshan Patnaik etching the 20-nation global forums' logo on Puri beach.

The government is keen to showcase unique diversity of India and the foreign delegates will be flown to some places so far not frequented much by tourists and others, they said.

The officials meetings including at the ministerial level and those at official and non-governmental levels will take place between December

1, 2022, and November 30, 2023.

With Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call to connect all districts and blocks of the country with the G-20, sources said the important meetings will be held in remote parts of the country.

Moreover, as part of the government's initiative to showcase the 'One District One Product' initiative, G20 delegates will be gifted with local products. Products unique to these particular regions and districts will be promoted during those G20 meetings. Also, plans are afoot to include the youth through events such as quiz competitions and talks, cultural pro-

grammes and competitions revolving around the G20 summit and its themes.

The Prime Minister on November eight unveiled the logo, theme and website of India's G-20 Presidency via video conferencing. Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister said from 1st December 2022, India will preside over the G-20 Summit and said it is a historic opportunity for the country.

He said the G-20 is the premier forum for international economic cooperation representing around 85% of the global GDP, over 75% of the worldwide trade, and about two-thirds of the world population.

Calling this a momentous occasion, the Prime Minister said the Presidency of G-20 during the year of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is a matter of pride for every Indian. The Prime Minister expressed happiness over the growing interest and activities about the G-20 and related events.

Remarking that the G-20 logo is not just any logo, the Prime Minister said it is a message, a feeling that runs in India's veins. He said, "It is a resolve that has been omnipresent in our thoughts through 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam'. He added that the thought of universal brotherhood is being reflected via the G-20 logo.

IN SHORT

R-DAY: BSF WOMEN CAMEL CONTINGENT TO TAKE PART

New Delhi: The Republic Day parade on January 26 next year will witness the BSF's first-ever women contingent riding camels along with their male counterparts, a top officer said on Wednesday. The famed camel contingent of the BSF has been a part of the Republic Day celebrations since 1976 after it replaced a similar squad of the Army which had been participating in the annual parade since it was first held in 1950.

EX-BABU APPROACHES EC OVER SHAH'S REMARK

New Delhi: Former bureaucrat EAS Sharma has approached the Election Commission over Home Minister Amit Shah's speech at an election rally in Gujarat in which he said that perpetrators of violence were "taught a lesson" in 2002. He asked the poll watchdog to ascertain the veracity of the remarks and take action if true.

'REGISTER AS COMPANY TO BROADCAST LOCAL NEWS'

New Delhi: The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on Wednesday asked multi-system operators to apply to register as a "company" within the next three months if they wish to provide local news and current affairs programmes on their networks as platform services. MSOs can then transmit their own programming service, either directly to their own subscribers or through one or more Local Cable Operators.

DEF MIN EXTENDS PENSION PAYMENT

New Delhi: The Ministry of Defence has approved the extension of pension payment for three months for banks' pensioners, who migrated to SPARSH, System for Pension Administration (Raksha) and whose identification was due in November 2022. All defence pensioners are urged to complete their annual identification/life certification by February 2023, defence ministry officials said here on Wednesday.

All set for 1st phase of Guj Assembly polls in 89 seats

788 candidates in election race

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Voting will be held on Thursday for the first phase of Gujarat Assembly elections in 89 seats spread across 19 districts in Saurashtra-Kutch and southern parts of the state where 788 candidates are in the fray. Campaigning for the first phase of the elections in the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-ruled state ended at 5 pm on Tuesday.

Voting will be held between 8 am and 5 pm on Thursday across 14,382 polling stations, the office of the state Chief Electoral Officer (CEO) said in a release. Out of the 89 seats going to polls in the first phase, the BJP won 48 in the 2017 election, the Congress had won 40, while one seat was bagged by an independent candidate. Apart



Polling officials collect EVMs and other election equipment at a distribution centre before leaving for their respective polling stations ahead of the first phase of Gujarat Assembly elections, in Rajkot on Wednesday

PTI Photo

from the BJP, Congress and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), 36 other political outfits, including the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), Samajwadi Party (SP), Communist Party of India-Marxist (CPI-M) and Bharatiya Tribal Party (BTP) have also fielded candidates in various seats which will go to polls in

the first phase. The BJP and Congress are contesting in all the 89 seats. The new poll entrant AAP is contesting in 88 seats. Its candidate from Surat East constituency had withdrawn his candidature, leaving the party with one less seat to contest in the first phase. Among other parties, the BSP

has fielded 57 candidates, BTP 14 and CPI-M four candidates. As many as 339 independents are also in the fray in the first phase of polls. Out of the total 788 candidates, 70 are women including nine fielded by the BJP, six by the Congress and five by the AAP. AAP's chief ministerial candidate Isudan Gadhvi is contesting from Khambhalia seat in Devbhumi Dwarka district of Saurashtra region that goes to polls on Thursday. AAP state unit president Gopal Italia is contesting from Katargam in Surat.

Among other prominent candidates in the first phase are Rivaba Jadeja, the wife of cricketer Ravindra Jadeja, who is contesting from Jamnagar (North), and BJP MLAs Harsh Sanghavi and Purnesh Modi from different seats in Surat and five-time MLA Parshottam Solanki from Bhavnagar (Rural). Sitting Congress MLAs like Lalit Kagathara, Lalit Vasoya, Rutvik Makwana and Mohammad Javed Pirzada are

among the candidates in fray in the first phase from seats in Saurashtra region. Seven-time MLA and veteran tribal leader Chhotu Vasava is contesting from Jhagadia in Bharuch. With 54 seats, the Saurashtra-Kutch region will be crucial for the Congress as it seeks to better its performance.

In the region, the Congress won 30 seats in 2017 compared to 16 in the 2012 election. The BJP, on the other hand, was reduced to 23 seats in 2017 as against 35 won by it in the previous election.

In south Gujarat, the Congress in 2017 bettered its tally to 10 compared to six in the previous polls, while the BJPs tally dropped to 25 in the last election from 28 earlier. South Gujarat also comprises Surat city with 12 seats which have remained the BJP's bastion since a long time.

The BJP has this time found a challenger in the AAP which has fielded some of its senior state leaders from Surat and hopes to win seven-eight seats in the city, as declared by its national convener Arvind Kejriwal.

Gujarat AAP's state president Gopal Italia is the candidate from Katargam, general secretary Manoj Sorathiya from Karanj and Patidar community leader Alpesh Kathiriya from Varachha Road in Surat. Out of the total 4,91,35,400 registered voters in Gujarat, 2,39,76,670 are eligible to cast their votes in first phase of elections.

BJP leaders slam Cong for using 'abusive' words against Modi

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

On the eve of the Gujarat Assembly polls' first phase, the BJP on Wednesday intensified its attack on the Congress over its president Mallikarjun Kharge's 'Ravan' jibe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said people will give a befitting reply to the opposition party.

During a roadshow, BJP president J P Nadda said Kharge's barb and another Congress leader Madhusudan Mistry's 'aukaat' remark at Modi expose the party's mindset and betray its frustration as the party stands nowhere while the BJP is getting one-sided support across the state.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh told reporters that the people of Gujarat will give a befitting reply to those using abusive words for the prime minister who, he asserted, is Gujarat's 'honour and pride'.

Nadda alleged that Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi have been unable to reconcile themselves to accepting Modi as prime minister and often used objectionable comments against him. Their party's leaders have taken cue from them in targeting Modi, he said. "Any



leader using such a language in democracy should be ashamed. People of India love and trust Modi," the BJP chief said.

Addressing a poll rally in Gujarat on Monday, Kharge had said the prime minister asks people to vote "looking at his face" in all elections. "Are you 100-headed like Ravan?" he had asked.

The BJP dubbed Kharge's remarks an insult to the people of Gujarat. Kharge's "Ravan" remark against Modi reflects the mentality of the "entire Congress leadership", Singh said. "Modi is Gujarat's honour and pride in the 21st Century. And today, foul language is being used by the Congress for our prime minister," he said. Voting for 89 of 182 assembly constituencies in Gujarat will be held on

Thursday in the first phase. Singh said other opposition parties are also trying to level baseless allegations against the prime minister.

Using abusive words for anyone does not reflect a healthy democracy, he said.

"The prime minister's post is not just a person, it is an institution. I am confident the people of Gujarat will give a befitting reply to those who had used abusive words for the prime minister, who is Gujarat's honour and pride," Singh added.

The BJP also posted on social media a collage of various controversial comments made by Congress leaders, including Sonia Gandhi's "maut ke saudagar" remark in 2007, targeting Prime Minister Modi.

Lalu to undergo kidney transplant on Dec 5: Tejashwi

PTI ■ KURHANI (BIHAR)

Rashtriya Janata Dal president Lalu Prasad will go under the knife at Singapore on December 5 for a kidney transplant, his son and Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Tejashwi Yadav said on Wednesday.

The RJD heir apparent made the disclosure at a rally in Kurhani assembly segment, where the disqualification of the party's MLA Anil Sahani has necessitated a by-poll, which, incidentally, is also scheduled for December 5.

"Lalu ji wanted to be here, but he is in Singapore where he will undergo a kidney transplant on December 5. He has, however, asked me to convey

his message to you that he wants the BJP to be defeated," said Yadav, whose party is backing Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U) in Kurhani. "Lalu ji has asked me to remind you all that his poor health is to be blamed on the vendetta politics of the BJP, which has forced him to spend a long time in jail," said Yadav. Prasad enjoys a cult status among the OBCs and the minorities, despite allegations of corruption during the tenure as Bihar CM and Railway Minister. "The vendetta continues. Even on the day we were proving majority on the floor of the House, raids were being conducted on the premises of our people," Yadav said.

Cong exhorts EC to take for strict action against 'sponsored' opinion polls

New Delhi: The Congress has urged the Election Commission to take strict action against the alleged airing of "sponsored" opinion polls on the Gujarat assembly election ahead of voting in the first phase on Thursday and claimed it was a brazen attempt to influence the electorate.

A delegation of Congress leaders led by AICC legal cell head Vivek Tankha met the Election Commission and apprised the poll body of the "violations by media". The opposition party urged the EC to take action against news channels violating directions issued by it in respect of pro-

grammes related to the dissemination of election results. They alleged that the media channels were predicting the poll outcome in a bid to influence the voters and this was a serious issue.

Tankha also claimed that they have information concerning the "safety of the ballot boxes" and urged the Commission to ensure there is no tampering.

The Congress said it has observed that certain news channels have been publishing/publicising programmes related to the dissemination of results for 2022 Gujarat Legislative Assembly. PNs

952 illegal appointments so far in schools, CBI tells HC

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Central Bureau of Investigation has so far been able to dig out the names of 952 people who obtained illegal appointments in Bengal school services.

The CBI probing the TET and school level appointment scam has told the Calcutta High Court that it has so far been able to find out 952 people who secured forged recommendations of appointment to various schools.

After getting the CBI report the Court stayed its own order directing the SSC to publish in its website the names of 183 fake candidates who had obtained appointments via illegal means.

The Court had also asked the Commission to get the names of the illegal appointees in newspapers. The Court deci-

sion had come after the SSC had told it that 183 people had been illegally appointed. However after the CBI's submission that it had dug out the names of 952 illegal appointees thus far, the Court stayed the earlier order and directed the investigation to be carried further.

The Court also made a passing remark which could further embarrass Trinamool Congress Government when the single Bench rued tendency of the State to rush to the Supreme Court to get stays against High Court orders disqualifying illegally appointed school employees — instead of helping the judiciary in disposing of such cases.

A section of higher judiciary had recently come under severe attack from TMC leadership who have questioned impartiality of some judges.

Ex-Minister Nawab Malik's bail rejected

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

A Mumbai special court on Wednesday rejected a bail plea filed by Maharashtra's former Minister Nawab Malik in an alleged money laundering case involving underworld don Dawood Ibrahim.

More than a fortnight after he had reserved his order, Special judge RN Rokade pronounced his order, rejecting regular bail to Malik. A detailed copy of the order was awaited.

Having concluded the hearing on a plea by Malik seeking bail in the alleged money laundering case on November 14 and had reserved the order, Special judge R N Rokade was to pass the order on November 23. The court had deferred the order to Wednesday (November 30).

Malik was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials on February 23 2022 after eight-long hours of intense questioning in connection with purchase of a huge plot of land at "a throw-away price" from two alleged henchmen of Karachi-based Dawood Ibrahim.

EMU trains graze in Sealdah, no injury reported

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

The passengers of a Kolkata local train had a providential escape when the EMU train they were travelling in grazed past another train on Wednesday afternoon at the entry point of the Sealdah station supposedly the busiest train terminus in the country.

The accident that led to no injuries resulted in the entire train services from Sealdah North station getting choked for several hours, Railway authorities said.

The accident occurred when the driver of one of the EMU trains bound for the carshed overshot the signal by a few metres and stopped barely a couple of feet ahead of a level junction of two tracks.

The other EMU train going to Ranaghat grazed past the driver's cabin of the first train leading to the first train getting derailed.

As the second train was at a very low speed a major accident was averted, E Chakrabarty the Eastern Railway CPRO said.

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For Detailed Information and online application process, please access our website www.ladytatatrust.tatatrusts.org

Program Officer

SALE NOTICE

The under mentioned Assets will be sold through auction on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for recovery of dues as per court orders, in the following cases:-

Case Details	Asset Details
ICICI BANK LTD VS ISHAR KHAN, CS (COMM) NO. 2441/21	Vehicle No. DL8CAF8216, Make and Model- RENAULT DUSTER, Manu Year- 2014
ICICI BANK LTD VS ATHRAV REAL BUILD PRIVATE LIMITED, CS SCJ No.2128/19	Vehicle No. DL3CCK2226, Make and Model- HONDA AMAZE, Manu Year- 2015
ICICI BANK LTD VS SALEEM, CS No. 50/22 (DJ No. 1564/17	Vehicle No. DL12A1981, Make and Model- HONDA AMAZE, Manu Year- 2016
ICICI BANK LTD VS SANCHIT, CS(Comm) - 785/2019	Vehicle No. UP14GT1840, Make and Model- MARUTI CELERIO, Manu Year- 2017
ICICI BANK LTD VS KUSHANK SHARMA, CS (Comm) No. 3178/2021	Vehicle No. DL8CAX0652, Make and Model- HYUNDAI MOTORS INDIA LTD GRAND I10, Manu Year- 2019
ICICI BANK LTD VS SARVJEET, CS (COMM) No. 959/2021	Vehicle No. DL1ZC7097, Make and Model – HYUNDAI GRAND I10, Manu Year- 2019

Auction Date: December 09, 2022 From 11:00 am to 2:00 pm.
Place of Auction: Godara Yard, Khewat No. 166/1, Near Atul Kataria Chowk, Behind Gyan Devi, School, Sec- 17, Sukhrali, Gurugram - 122022
Contact Person - Rajeev Ranjan (8584874809)/ Jitendra Kumar (7304914763)

Case Details	Asset Details
ICICI BANK LTD VS ASLAM KHA, CS(Comm) No.3444 of 2021	Vehicle No. UP14HT7751, Make and Model- ASHOK LEYLAND LTD PARTNER, Manu Year- 2019

Auction Date: December 09, 2022 From 11:00 am to 2:00 pm.
Place of Auction: Mahakal Parking yard, Kharsa No 527 Village Banthla Near Indane Gas Plant Loni Ghaziabad-UP, 201102
Contact Person - Rajeev Ranjan (8584874809)/ Jitendra Kumar (7304914763)

Case Details	Asset Details
ICICI BANK LTD VS DEV DUTT YADAV, CS No. 3207/17	Vehicle No. UP14CX5126, Make and Model- MARUTI UDYOG LTD EECO, Manu Year- 2016

Auction Date: December 23, 2022 From 11:00 am to 2:00 pm.
Place of Auction: Godara Yard, Khewat No. 166/1, Near Atul Kataria Chowk, Behind Gyan Devi, School, Sec - 17, Sukhrali, Gurugram - 122022
Contact Person - Rajeev Ranjan (8584874809)/ Jitendra Kumar (7304914763)

Terms of Sale

The particulars of the said asset specified herein above have been stated to the best of the information and knowledge of the undersigned, who shall however not be responsible for any error, misstatement or omission in the said particulars. The interested participant/s are therefore requested, in their own interest, to satisfy himself/ themselves/ itself with regard to the said asset and other relevant details pertaining to it before committing the bids. All bidders are required to come at auction site with original KYC documents to participate in the auction.

Successfully bidder shall have to deposit sale amount within 5 days from the approval date by the way of pay order/demand draft/RTGS/NEFT.

The intending bidders may visit ICICI Bank Ltd, Shal Towers, Plot No. 23, New Rohtak Road Karol Bagh/Delhi- 110005 for details and inspection of the said hypothecated vehicles

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APPLICATIONS ARE INVITED FOR ADMISSION AGAINST VACANT SEATS FOR FOLLOWING PROGRAMS (2022-23)

MBA

Duration: 2 Years full time

Eligibility: Passed Bachelor Degree of minimum 3 years duration from any recognized Indian University; or its equivalent, recognized by A.I.U, securing minimum marks as prescribed by AICTE in the qualifying Examination.

Applications are invited as per the following schedule:

a) Last date for submitting the Application Form is 6th December, 2022.

b) Date of publication of Merit List is 8th December, 2022.

c) Last date for Admission to the candidate offered seat as per the Merit List is 12th December, 2022.

For registration, submit a Demand Draft (DD) of Rs. 25000/- in favor of "Galgotias Institute of Management & Technology" payable at Delhi/Noida/Greater Noida.

Admission strictly on merit as per AKTU norms.

For successful candidates, Rs. 25000/- will be adjusted in their academic fee and for unsuccessful candidates, Rs. 1000/- will be deducted as registration fee and balance of Rs. 24000/- will be refunded.

Note: Pre-Registration for direct admission in Management / against Vacant seats on 'https://aktu.ac.in' is mandatory.

For registration at campus, please contact

Ms. Shilpi Chandra - Director Admission.

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1, Knowledge Park, Phase-II, Greater Noida,

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B. Pharm.

Duration: 4 Years

Eligibility: Passed 10+2 examination or its equivalent with Physics and Chemistry as compulsory subjects along with one of the Mathematics/Biology subjects.

Eligibility for Lateral Entry in B. Pharm. 2nd Year: Passed 2/3 years Diploma in Pharmacy from an Institution located in U.P. with minimum 45% marks (40% for SC/ST) OR whose parents are domicile of U.P. are eligible for admission to second year of B. Pharm.

D. Pharm.

Duration: 2 Years

Eligibility: Passed 10+2 examinations (science stream) with Physics, Chemistry and Biology or Mathematics or equivalent approved by the Pharmacy Council of India

Applications are invited as per the following schedule:

a) Last date for submitting the Application Form is 6th December, 2022.

b) Date of publication of Merit List is 8th December, 2022.

c) Last date for Admission to the candidate offered seat as per the Merit List is 12th December, 2022.

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Note: Pre-Registration for direct admission in Management / against Vacant seats on 'https://aktu.ac.in' is mandatory

For registration at campus, please contact

Ms. Shilpi Chandra - Director Admission.

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Computer Science and Engineering *

Computer Science and Engineering (Data Science)

Computer Science and Engineering (Artificial Intelligence)

Computer Science and Engineering (Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning)

Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Data Science

Computer Science and Design

Information Technology*

Electronics & Communication Engineering*

Mechanical Engineering*

Civil Engineering*

Electrical Engineering*

Electrical and Electronics Engineering*

Eligibility: Passed 10+2 examination with Physics and Mathematics as compulsory subjects along with one of the Chemistry/Bio-Technology/Biology/Technical Vocational subject, securing minimum marks as prescribed by AICTE.

Eligibility for Lateral Entry in B. Tech. 2nd Year: Passed Minimum Three years / Two years (Lateral Entry) engineering diploma in the above branches recognized by Board of Technical Education/B.Sc. degree and passed 10+2 standard with mathematics as one of the subjects from any recognized university, securing minimum marks as prescribed by AICTE.

*NBA Accredited Course; Students who graduate in the accredited courses during the validity period of accreditation will be deemed to have graduated with an NBA degree.

MBA

Duration: 2 Years

Eligibility: Passed Bachelor Degree of minimum 3 years duration from any recognized Indian University; or its equivalent, recognized by A.I.U, securing minimum marks as prescribed by AICTE in the qualifying Examination.

MCA

Duration: 2 Years

Eligibility: Passed BCA / B.Sc. (Computer Science) / B.Sc. (IT) or graduation degree (e.g.: B.Sc. / B.Com. / B.A. / B. Voc. / etc.) with Mathematics at 10+2 level or at Graduation level, securing minimum marks as prescribed by AICTE in the qualifying Examination.

Applications are invited as per the following schedule:

a) Last date for submitting the Application Form is 6th December, 2022.

b) Date of publication of Merit List is 8th December, 2022.

c) Last date for Admission to the candidate offered seat as per the Merit List is 12th December, 2022.

For registration, submit a Demand Draft (DD) of Rs. 25000/- in favor of "Galgotias College of Engineering & Technology" payable at Delhi / Noida / Greater Noida.

Admission strictly on merit as per AKTU norms.

For successful candidates, Rs. 25000/- will be adjusted in their academic fee and for unsuccessful candidates, Rs. 1000/- will be deducted as registration fee and balance of Rs. 24000/- will be refunded.

Note: Pre-Registration for direct admission in Management / against Vacant seats on 'https://aktu.ac.in' is mandatory.

For registration at campus, please contact

Ms. Shilpi Chandra - Director Admission.

GALGOTIAS COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY

1, Knowledge Park, Phase-II, Greater Noida,

Gautam Budh Nagar, UP-201310.

Contact No: 91-7303382054, 7303382055, 7303382056

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Ragging is Strictly Prohibited

Nicely placed

With G20 presidency, India is in a position to resolve the biggest issues, including the war in Ukraine

With India assuming the G20 presidency today, chances of resolution of global conflicts and major issues increase. Minister of State for External Affairs Meenakshi Lekhi said, "India is showing its might and transforming the world with its civilisational values." This may be a bit over the top, but there is no denying the fact that New Delhi, with its reasonably cordial ties with the nations like Russia and Iran, is nicely placed to play the role of an honest broker in various quarrels. The war in Ukraine is perhaps the biggest crisis the world faces today, its ramifications being economic, political, military, and cultural. Russian President Vladimir Putin, like almost everyone else, was convinced that there would hardly be any war. Ukraine is too small and weak to take on the might of the Russian military whose capabilities even the American generals acknowledge. The Russian bear, so went the received wisdom, will smother whatever army Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has been able to cobble together. But it increasingly became a David-versus-Goliath contest, with Putin's forces suffering setbacks; they even had to evacuate the territories they had grabbed in the initial momentum of the offensive. At present, there is a kind of stalemate—not just military but also political. Putin may like to end the hostilities but for that he would need a face-saving armistice. The United States is unable to do that, primarily because of President Joe Biden's ineptitude. Last year, he had called Putin a "killer," incensing not just the Russian leader but also people.

European leaders, who have been extremely critical of Moscow because of the war it unleashed, are also not the folks Putin and his coterie would be comfortable with. Chinese President Xi Jinping too is known for belligerence rather than peace-making. In such a geopolitical milieu, India can initiate or boost proposals that could be viewed by the warring countries with an open mind. It is true that Ukraine is unhappy with India's refusal to condemn the Russian attack, but it is equally true that the Zelenskyy Government doesn't hold that grudge too strongly. Besides, Kiev couldn't be unaware of the fact that India has been following the policy of non-alignment for decades. At any rate, New Delhi's refusal to take sides also means that Moscow would be more inclined to listen to the ceasefire plan the former proposes. Three other things will also help India exercise authority. First, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has never badmouthed other leaders and countries; even during the crises of Balakot and Galwan, he did not use rough language. Secondly, he has experience in improving relations between countries. It is primarily because of his interventions that today we have excellent relations with Arab nations, despite the misdeeds of some saffron zealots. And, finally, in general India and Indians have a good image all over the world. All these factors are likely to help Modi have a successful G20 presidency.

PICTALK



Taj Mahal with the setting sun, in Agra.

PTI

Covid protests in China

The ongoing Covid protests in major cities across China are indeed unprecedented as well as surprising

Protests against strict Covid measures in China have now spread to the big cities. Demonstrators took to streets in the capital Beijing and the financial centre Shanghai. Many held up blank pieces of paper to express their discontent and acknowledge the censorship. What is surprising is how the protests have grown in their scope in matter of days. What started as a protest against the death of 10 people who died of fire in Urumqi where rescue wasn't allowed due to Covid protocols, quickly became an expression of anger and disapproval of the policies of the communist party. The protesters have called for President Xi Jinping to step down. Interestingly Xi awarded himself another term and there were no protests then. But at the core of the protests is people's hardships caused by arbitrary and stringent anti covid measures adopted by the Chinese government. Millions have suffered nearly three years of mass testing, quarantines, and strict lockdowns. People suffered in silence without raising their voice or at least not making it loud enough to cross Chinese borders.

It is very unusual for people to publicly criticize Communist Party leaders in China. Any anti government activity is severely dealt with by the government. So far the government has not tried to crush the rallies though some people were arrested in Shanghai and parts of the city cordoned off. To look politically correct people gathered on the banks of a river in the capital Beijing and sang the national anthem. The protests are now spreading to universities which must set off alarm bells for the Communist government. During Saturday night's protest people shouted slogans such as "Xi Jinping, step down" and "Communist party, step down," something unheard of in China. Such demands are highly unusual in China. China has a history of suppressing protests with an iron fist - both online and offline. Such a large-scale defiance has not been witnessed since the 1989 Tiananmen movement. The protests are growing and getting bolder by the day, it is not that the Communist party is oblivious to it but maybe it wants to gauge how far it would go and then crack a whip, the only way it knows to deal with the protests and dissent. But then it could also underestimate the spark which sometimes is enough to burn a forest.

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'One Earth, One Family, One Future'

India's G20 presidency commences today. Here is Prime Minister Narendra Modi's reflection on the occasion.

The previous 17 Presidencies of the G20 delivered significant results - for ensuring macro-economic stability, rationalising international taxation, relieving debt-burden on countries, among many other outcomes. We will benefit from these achievements, and build further upon them. However, as India assumes this important mantle, I ask myself - can the G20 go further still? Can we catalyse a fundamental mindset shift, to benefit humanity as a whole? I believe we can.

Our mindsets are shaped by our circumstances. Through all of history, humanity lived in scarcity. We fought for limited resources, because our survival depended on denying them to others. Confrontation and competition - between ideas, ideologies and identities - became the norm. Unfortunately, we remain trapped in the same zero-sum mindset even today. We see it when countries fight over territory or resources. We see it when supplies of essential goods are weaponised. We see it when vaccines are hoarded by a few, even as billions remain vulnerable.

Some may argue that confrontation and greed are just human nature. I disagree. If humans were inherently selfish, what would explain the lasting appeal of so many spiritual traditions that advocate the fundamental one-ness of us all? One such tradition, popular in India, sees all living beings, and even inanimate things, as composed of the same five basic elements - the panchtatvaof earth, water, fire, air and space. Harmony among these elements - within us and between us - is essential for our physical, social and environmental well-being.

India's G20 Presidency will work to promote this universal sense of one-ness. Hence our theme - 'One Earth, One Family, One Future'.

This is not just a slogan. It takes into account recent changes in human circumstances, which we have collectively failed to appreciate.

Today, we have the means to



produce enough to meet the basic needs of all people in the world.

Today, we do not need to fight for our survival - our era need not be one of war. Indeed, it must not be one!

Today, the greatest challenges we face - climate change, terrorism, and pandemics - can be solved not by fighting each other, but only by acting together.

Fortunately, today's technology also gives us the means to address problems on a humanity-wide scale. The massive virtual worlds that we inhabit today demonstrate the scalability of digital technologies.

Housing one-sixth of humanity, and with its immense diversity of languages, religions, customs and beliefs, India is a microcosm of the world.

With the oldest-known traditions of collective decision-making, India contributes to the foundational DNA of democracy. As the mother of democracy, India's national consensus is forged not by diktat, but by blending millions of free voices into one harmonious melody.

Today, India is the fastest

“ DURING OUR G20 PRESIDENCY, WE SHALL PRESENT INDIA'S EXPERIENCES, LEARNINGS AND MODELS AS POSSIBLE TEMPLATES FOR OTHERS, PARTICULARLY THE DEVELOPING WORLD ”

growing large economy. Our citizen-centric governance model takes care of even our most marginalised citizens, while nurturing the creative genius of our talented youth.

We have tried to make national development not an exercise in top-down governance, but rather a citizen-led 'people's movement'.

We have leveraged technology to create digital public goods that are open, inclusive and inter-operable. These have delivered revolutionary progress in fields as varied as social protection, financial inclusion, and electronic payments.

For all these reasons, India's experiences can provide insights for possible global solutions.

During our G20 Presidency, we shall present India's experiences, learnings and models as possible templates for others, particularly the developing world.

Our G20 priorities will be shaped in consultation with not just our G20 partners, but also our fellow-travellers in the global South, whose voice often goes unheard.

Our priorities will focus on healing our 'One Earth',



NARENDRA MODI

creating harmony within our 'One Family' and giving hope for our 'One Future'.

For healing our planet, we will encourage sustainable and environment-friendly lifestyles, based on India's tradition of trusteeship towards nature.

For promoting harmony within the human family, we will seek to depoliticise the global supply of food, fertilizers and medical products, so that geo-political tensions do not lead to humanitarian crises. As in our own families, those whose needs are the greatest must always be our first concern.

For imbuing hope in our future generations, we will encourage an honest conversation among the most powerful countries - on mitigating risks posed by weapons of mass destruction and enhancing global security.

India's G20 agenda will be inclusive, ambitious, action-oriented, and decisive.

Let us join together to make India's G20 Presidency a Presidency of healing, harmony and hope.

Let us work together to shape a new paradigm - of human-centric globalisation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

APPOINTMENT OF JUDGES

Sir —Calling the sermons about the appointment of judges as the "law of the land", the Supreme Court is on a serious fault line because the very concept of collegium is not only undemocratic and unconstitutional but immoral also. While the current Minister of Law has dutifully tried to defy the dictates of such collegium being a part of the democratically elected Union Government, the judges who reached the position through the collegium have no moral authority to preach about the law of the land. The people of India elect their representatives to make or amend the laws of the land, and the Supreme Court ought to be the custodian of the constitution. But just because of the prejudices and selfish motives the supreme court judges have no right to press their malicious dictates on the people of this country, which the highest court has been doing not only as appointments of judges but through various judgments and comments against some individuals or the state also, especially after the present BJP Govt took over in 2014. The erstwhile spokesperson of BJP Nupur Sharma is one of them whose life threat was raised manifold due to the comments of SC. The SC must realise that democratic institutions thrive on mutual respect and independence and that Making Laws is the prerogative of the parliament, not the SC. The Supreme Court should be responsible enough in making comments which are taken note of by the people and the government alike. It is therefore important that the SC judges behave more responsibly in their conduct.

Let the better sense prevail upon the SC judges to make way for NJAC which was quashed by it. That only can be some hope for transparency and justice in the Courtrooms.

Dr Jai Prakash Gupta | Ambala

SEVEN SIXES IN AN OVER

Sir — Records are there to be broken. All we witnessed is 6 sixes in an over by Indian Ravi Shastri and Yuvraj Singh in competitive games in the past. But a

Peace in Gujarat



Union Home Minister Amit Shah was spilling the beans when he claimed in an election rally in Gujarat that the State returned to permanent peace only after the "perpetrators of violence" — read Muslims — were "taught a lesson" in 2002. Sabarmati Express in flames at

youngster Ruturaj Gaikwad broke all records by scoring a six off a no-ball and thus creating a new record of 7 sixes in an over. Thus, the opener hit 43 runs in an over to set a list A world record in Vijay Hazare Trophy, matching the joint effort of Brett Hampton and Joe Carter off William Ludik for Northern Districts against Central Districts in a Ford Trophy game in 2018.

Gaikwad rewrote the record in the penultimate over of his team's Vijay Hazare Trophy Quarter Final match against Uttar Pradesh at Ahmedabad. Shiva Singh was the bowler to suffer the fate. However, the record for most sixes in an over, in all, is held by Lee German of New Zealand, who clubbed 8 over the fence during a Shell Trophy match at Wellington.

CK Ramaniam | Mumbai

SC DOESN'T WANT MORE JUDGES

Sir — On Tuesday, November 29 the

the Godhra station, which killed as many as 59 people, allowed teaching. Riots that followed left 1,044 dead, 223 missing and 2,500 wounded. The Concerned Citizens Tribunal Report put the toll at 1,926. Mass violence included the Naroda Patiya massacre and the Gulbarg Society massacre, in which Ehsan Jafri, a former member of the Lok Sabha, was killed along with others.

Though the events of 2002 were officially classified as a communal riot, many scholars described it as a pogrom, with some commentators referring to them as state-sponsored terrorism or ethnic cleansing. The Home Minister's statement is worryingly close to what scholars have called the events of 2002. BJP won the 2002 Gujarat assembly election handsomely riding on the "communal riots," and twenty years later, it aims at repeating the feat in the 2022 Gujarat assembly election, painting the riots as an act to establish peace. Strangely, peace through pogrom is a new paradigm.

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode

Supreme Court refused to entertain a plea seeking to double the number of judges in the high courts and trial courts, as more judges do not mean more disposal of the cases rather than having a requirement of good judges.

The court bench said that doubling the number of judges is not the solution to the pendency cases. Petitioner submitted that nearly 5 crore cases are pending in courts, which means nearly 20 crore people are affected, and this is close to the population of the US but the Supreme Court was not convinced by his arguments. The court remarked that it may impose costs on such PILs for taking up the judicial time which was meant to hear genuine matters. With this, the Supreme Court is not in favor of increasing the number of judges but quality judges.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

Diamond businessmen and jewellers in Surat city in Gujarat should be conferred Bharat Ratna for their contribution to the country's economy.



Delhi CM — Arvind Kejriwal

NATO will reinforce its presence from the Black to the Baltic Sea.

US Secretary of State — Antony Blinken

The people on this team have done some of the best work of their entire careers, and my deepest hope is that my actions don't penalize my team.

Actor — Will Smith

I'm donating my match fees from this Test series to the Pakistan Flood appeal.

English skipper — Ben Stokes

The Congress in the state is united and determined to ensure that it will be an outstanding success. And indeed it will be!



Congress leader — Jairam Ramesh

FIRST COLUMN

GENDER STEREOTYPES MUST BE QUESTIONED

This is how incidents like Shraddha murder can be checked



RUCHI SAINI

Live-in relationships are a wrong practice. These are leading to crime. These 'educated' girls are paying for this. It should be completely banned—these were the thoughts of a Minister of State about the murder of 27-year-old Shraddha Walker.

Shraddha was allegedly strangled by her live-in partner Aftab Poonawala after a heated argument in their Delhi flat, who then chopped her body and kept it in the refrigerator. According to the Minister of Panchayati Raj, the murder is a part of "a well-planned conspiracy taking place in the country to target Hindu girls through love jihad. Lakhs of Shraddhas become victims."

A ghastly case of violence against women has yet again been appropriated by right-wing and patriarchal apologists to further their parochial views around women, religion, and modernity. The aim is to send a clear message to the modern, independent, and educated Indian woman: "Transgress the codes of Hindu society, and risk becoming a victim of gender crime." These codes include the importance of the heterosexual institution of marriage, and the prohibition of inter-religious marriage as a safeguard for women from violence.

Unsurprisingly, none of these claims stand their ground when verified. According to the latest round of the National Family Health Survey in India (NFHS 2019-21), approximately 30 per cent of married Indian women faced domestic and sexual violence, and no significant difference was observed in violence reported by Hindu and non-Hindu married women. Additionally, out of the respondents who reported experiencing physical abuse, the vast majority belonged to poor and uneducated backgrounds. Clearly, being married or less educated does not protect women from violent crimes in India, and neither does the perpetrators' religious affiliation.

Instead of asking what could Shraddha have done to prevent her murder, we need to ask what is it that empowered Aftab to gruesomely murder a woman who left her family for him. Also, what is it that disempowered Shraddha, despite her independence and education, to suffer the abuse inflicted by Aftab before her murder?

Answers may rectify existing gendered and sexist social structures that facilitate such abuse. It is not the female victim's lifestyle choices, but rather the norms, beliefs, and motivations of the male perpetrator that are the source of gender violence. Society is quick to assign blame to victims – on clothes, marital status, or religious affiliation. For those wondering why Shraddha did not lean on personal and professional networks to escape the abusive relationship, I suggest that they take a cursory look at the Islamophobia, victim-blaming, and slut-shaming unleashed on social and print media post her murder.

In my current research study with female students at a public university in India, many shared how the personal and professional support systems available to victim-survivors of gender violence are plagued with rampant sexism, misogyny, and prejudice.

Rage should not exclusively be for fatal victims of gender violence, or those with visible marks of physical assaults, but also for the wife who endures verbal abuse from her husband to keep the family together, the daughter-in-law who endures economic deprivation because of social conditioning, and the trans friend disowned by their family because of the prioritization of social mores over the child's happiness.

What aspects of a heteronormative and patriarchal society help sustain these horrific acts? The extent of our complicity in sustaining psychological or verbal violence in our families, workplaces, or interpersonal relationships be also questioned. That can help build a truly egalitarian nation to allow a safe space for women and gender minorities to thrive, prosper, and contribute to national success.

(The author is a research scholar at the University of Maryland, College Park)

G20 can create value chains led by farmers

Initiatives by government and civil society have seen emergence of collectives of small and marginal farmers

Since time immemorial, foodgrains have been crossing continents for centuries. From the silk and spice routes to the current operations run by various alliances and agencies, humanity has witnessed acceleration of the commodity trading and intensifying as a constituent derivative of globalisation.

Throughout 2023, G20, which consists of countries accounting for 85 per cent of the global GDP, over 75 per cent of the global trade, and about two-thirds of the world population, will discuss a range of plans, which will reflect ambition and engagement of the member countries. The spectrum to create the global value chains encompasses some that are actively regulating a very diverse collection of interests of market forces and of a few individuals. The spectrum also includes a span of expected outcomes, with some looking for a detailed strategy for involvement of farmers collectively.

With the active participation and interwoven participation of state and non-state actors, new horizons have emerged. Therefore, this year might be remembered as a year of new-alliances to create a democratic and India-led global value chain. There is an opportunity to link Indian agriculture to the world to enhance export opportunities and address global food and nutritional security in the Indian way.

Agriculture at this juncture can provide huge support to the diplomatic community. It will not only help to localize the efforts undertaken to achieve the SDG targets but also benefit to democratize the value chains.

Moreover, the upcoming G20 meeting may open a new chapter on food diplomacy. For example, Kala Namak Rice of Uttar Pradesh, Chikori of Etah and Kasganj of Uttar Pradesh, Allahabadi Surkh Guava, Malihabadi Dasher of Uttar Pradesh, and Malbhog Banana of Hajipur are a few items awaiting the attention of Indian diplomats.

Initiatives undertaken by various government departments and civil society institutions have seen an emergence of collectives of small and marginal farmers with robust financial transactions. The Government of India's consistent and concerted endeavors to usher into reforms for boosting agricultural exports have created a background of this diplomatic exercise.

Further, the execution of agriculture export policy with subsequent waves of change in the cooperative sector after the formation of the Ministry of Cooperation and credit support have created a phenomenal change in the trade capacity of these collectives. For example, there is a ready-made six clusters in Maharashtra through collectives for grapes, mango, pomegranate, banana, oranges and onion.

The active participation and active involvement of jumbo states like Uttar Pradesh with their own export policy in consonance with national policies has created a boon for this sector. Much awaited Warehousing and Logistic Policy 2018 and UP Food Processing Policy 2017 has not

only created a robust supply chain but also has given ample opportunity to enable the FPOs with overseas markets.

In India, agriculture and horticulture production is around 600 million tonnes per year. Industrialists can also venture into agriculture as this will benefit farmers and will increase their earnings. Not only aromatic Spices but also Indian shrimps, basmati and non-basmati rice, grapes, bananas, pomegranate, vegetables, including potatoes, processed/value-added products, cashew, plant parts/medicinal herbs in value added form, including herbal medicines, food based nutraceuticals, aromatics, spices (cumin, turmeric, pepper), ethnic and organic food are a few potential winning sectors key to securing nutrition and food security to the global population.

The value chain here covers the entire network of actors involved in input supply, production, processing, marketing, and consumption, whilst operating inside an institutional environment that facilitates or hinders its performance. In this neo-system of agricultural value chain, farmers' collectives will participate at all the three main levels.

Firstly, as they deal directly with the products by producing, processing, or trading. Next through the Startups/FPO/Cooperatives they act also as supporters and deal indirectly with the product, but their services add value to it in their way of innovation and subsequent supply chain. Lastly, where they need support for this festival of G20 diplomats to network with global contacts and long-standing relationships with international groups.

This yearlong diplomatic festival through G20 is going to bring



new agribusiness value chain actors contains services of pre-farm production, like fertilizers, seeds, pesticides, tools and agricultural machinery; on-farm production, such as primary food processing and products, plus by-products; and post-farm production, related to secondary food processing, packaging and preservation.

To make the global agro value chains democratic, the international linkages have to do with the interdependencies of national and international markets, in which the agroindustry functions. The GVC has the specific condition that the market outlets negotiate with the foreign market, the latter comprising global wholesalers and retailers to reach out to international consumers. The retail sector of the Indian cooperative and support given through virtual platforms a new chapter can be written.

Laws, regulations, policies, international trade agreements, social norms, and public goods, all contribute to the agribusiness' milieu. Consequently, our diplomats will negotiate every bit of this with their counterparts of the global north. There is an environment that comprises economic, political, cultural, and demographic factors that shape the development goals and strategies of India at this juncture by democratizing the value chain.

In accordance with the policies, there are also institutional linkages. These relationships, among the different types of organizations that operate and interact with the agroindustry production chain, tend to affect the dynamics of the production chain, the access to international markets.



The farmers' collectives would be the ones which ultimately gain

LINKING FARMERS' COLLECTIVES TO THE OVERSEAS MARKET IS RELEVANT AS AGRO VALUE CHAINS ARE BUYER-DRIVEN. WE HAVE AN ARMY OF FPOS/COOPERATIVES WHICH ARE ORGANISED, COORDINATED, AND CAN REACH THE GLOBAL CONSUMER MARKET

(The author is member, Pradhan Mantri-MSP Committee)

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

ALL OF US WERE DISTURBED AND SHOCKED BY THE MOVIE 'THE KASHMIR FILES'. IT FELT TO US LIKE A PROPAGANDA AND VULGAR MOVIE. — ISRAELI FILMMAKER NADAV LAPID



HE HAS NO RIGHT TO CALL IT 'VULGAR PROPAGANDA', (HE) HAS TO BE A VULGAR OR MENTALLY SICK PERSON. HE'S A MEMBER OF THE 'TOOLKIT GANG.' — ACTOR ANUPAM KHER

Ensuring a clean world is best business investment

It is high time that we move forward in a planned and systematic manner initiating futuristic investments

Every year December 2 is observed as the National Pollution Control Day to honour those who lost their lives in the Bhopal Gas Tragedy on this day in 1984. It was one of the biggest industrial pollution disasters in history. The leakage of the poisonous methyl isocyanate from an insecticide plant of the Union Carbide Corporation created havoc in the residential neighbourhood and the impact of that disaster is still witnessed in the flora and fauna of the area.

According to many estimates more than 400 tons of the industrial waste is still present on the site, not surprisingly the pollution in soil and water is even blamed



KAMAL NARAYAN OMER

today for birth defects in the region. The aim of commemorating the day is to remind people of the significance of a healthy and safe environment and the imperative role that it plays in our wellbeing.

It is not a secret that the world is facing an existential crisis which has been further fuelled by the pandemic, making us realise the fragility of human life. History is witness to the innumerable ways in which man has directly as well as indirectly influenced his environment while being influenced by it with far reaching implications for both. Human population has been rather late in realizing the significance of a clean and pollution free environment but then it's better late

than never.

The last decade has witnessed impending changes to the ecosystem and resulted in an array of unwanted alterations that are a serious threat to mankind. It has not only disturbed the environment and the fundamental aspects essential for the existence of human life namely air, water, food and shelter but also lead to global warming as well as habitat loss. The pressing concerns if not addressed immediately can play havoc with the planet, which is our only resort to life and wellbeing.

Lately, there has been a growing focus on living sustainably in harmony with nature while also ensuring that we collectively work towards a greener and

healthier planet. With Indian metros topping the chart of the most polluted cities in the world, the government has been trying to actively get involved in the discourse surrounding environment and pollution. From ban on single use plastic and firecrackers to river cleanliness projects, initiating reforms for a healthier environment has been on the government's agenda. However, for a long-term and sustainable impact it should be noted that at the policy implementation level environmental concerns should receive precedence over financial gains.

It is high time that we move forward in a planned and systematic manner initiating futuristic investments which can address both the

concerns with a more resource effective approach and help break the vicious circle of environment degradation and economic development.

With concepts like Vocal for Local, Go Green and Swatch Bharat catching the fancy of all, it is the time to include all stakeholders in this change for a better world. Governments and policy makers can initiate advocacy changes to achieve a sustainable world. Business organizations should encourage positive actions centred on ethical environmental practices.

The onset of the pandemic has made all of us realize that "Leave no One Behind" as proclaimed in the SDG's is the much-needed approach.

The knowledge of constitutional provisions regarding environment protection should be encouraged to bring greater public participation, environmental awareness and education and to sensitize people to work towards preserving ecology and environment.

Reusing disposable items instead of discarding them immediately, carrying a cloth bag on a shopping spree, opting for handmade porcelain and clay dishes in place of microwavable plastic utensils and using public transport or car-pooling are some small but significant steps that can prove beneficial in future, if followed as a mass change. Remember any policy regulation by the government can prove to be sustainable only

through people's participation and willingness, which in turn can be achieved through awareness creation.

The adverse health impact of pollution is an immediate public health concern in the country from different kinds of cancer to asthma, from infertility to Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), a multitude of diseases are linked to pollution. The post-Covid 19 recovery plans cannot be successful if we fail to include actions to mitigate the process of environmental hazards. Instead of opting for short-term, kneejerk solutions, it is imperative that we ensure long-term sustainable solutions to the ever-growing problem of pollution for a better future for all.

Ukraine welcomes arms offers, no word on Patriot missiles

AP ■ BUCHAREST

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken condemned Russia's weeks-long assault on Ukraine's power grid, saying as NATO scrambled on Wednesday to scrape up replacement electrical gear that Russia had turned its war machine to strikes aiming to "turn off the heat...so that civilians suffer."

Blinken spoke at a NATO foreign ministers meeting in Bucharest, Romania devoted in part to coordinating aid to keep the lights — and furnaces — on in Ukraine, where Russian strikes have damaged an estimated third of that country's electrical infrastructure.

"Because President (Vladimir) Putin is failing to defeat Ukraine militarily, he is now prosecuting war against civilians," Blinken said.

"And he's doing that by trying to destroy Ukraine's energy infrastructure, to turn off the light, to turn off the heat, to turn off the water so that civilians suffer. "What is very clear to me ... is that support remains strong, resolute, determined" on the behalf of NATO foreign ministers to continue supporting Ukraine as Russia's invasion moves toward a February anniversary, Blinken said.

NATO estimates that Russian strikes have damaged one-third of Ukraine's electrical



infrastructure. It says the missiles appear to be particularly targeting vulnerable transmission networks, leaving Ukrainians dealing with darkness and cold.

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba has underscored that his country's biggest needs now are electrical gear and more advanced air-defense systems than it has gotten from the US and other allies so far, to deal with the Russian missile strikes.

"In a nutshell, Patriots and (electricity) transformers is what Ukraine needs the most," Kuleba declared on Tuesday.

Heading into a one-on-one session with Blinken on the sidelines of the NATO gathering, Kuleba said that Ukraine at the session had received "a number

of commitments, new commitments, from various NATO members with regard to providing Ukraine with more defensive weapons and energy equipment."

But Kuleba declined to answer questions about whether that included promises of badly wanted Patriot missile batteries, from the US or any other ally.

Ukraine is seeking US-made Patriot missile batteries or other more advanced air defense systems than it has gotten so far from the United States and other allies to block Russian air strikes. Kuleba did not respond to repeated questions from a reporter ahead of a meeting with Blinken about whether he had gotten any commitments on

Patriots.

The provision of Patriot surface-to-air missiles to Ukraine would mark a major advance in the kinds of air defense systems the West is sending to help the war-torn country defend itself from Russian aerial attack.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg confirmed that deliveries of such sophisticated surface to air missiles systems are under consideration among some allies. The military organization does not possess any weapons, only its member countries do.

A senior US defense official who briefed Pentagon reporters on Tuesday, on condition of anonymity, said that the United

States is open to providing Patriots. While Ukraine has asked for the system for months, the US and its allies have been hesitant to provide it to avoid further provoking Russia.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said on Tuesday that his country's offer to send Patriots to Poland remains on the table, despite Warsaw's suggestion that they should go to Ukraine instead.

Ukraine does not have personnel trained to use Patriots — a complicated air defense system of which there are three main types, with varying ranges and altitudes. Germany has lent them to Slovakia and Turkey but sent its own technicians to operate the missiles.

China to have 1,500 nuclear warheads by 2035: Pentagon report

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

China is expanding its nuclear arsenal and is likely to have a stockpile of about 1,500 warheads by 2035, up from the current estimated number of 400, the Pentagon has said, with Beijing focusing on accelerating its nuclear capabilities as it seeks to challenge America's global dominance.

In its annual report to Congress on China's ambitious military build-up, the Pentagon said on Tuesday that over the next decade, Beijing aims to modernise, diversify, and expand its nuclear forces.

China's current nuclear modernisation exercise has exceeded the previous modernisation attempts in both scale and complexity, it said.

China is investing in and expanding the number of its land, sea, and air-based nuclear delivery platforms and constructing the infrastructure necessary to support this major expansion of its nuclear forces, the report said.

China is also supporting this expansion by increasing its capacity to produce and separate plutonium by constructing fast breeder reactors and reprocessing facilities. In 2021, Beijing probably accelerated its nuclear expansion, it said.



The Pentagon said it estimates that China's operational nuclear warheads stockpile has surpassed 400.

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) plans to "basically complete modernisation" of its national defence and armed forces by 2035, said the report.

"If China continues the pace of its nuclear expansion, it will likely field a stockpile of about 1,500 warheads by its 2035 timeline," it said.

The Chinese strategy is a determined pursuit to amass and expand its national power to transform, at least, aspects of the international system to make it more favourable to its political system and its national interests as they define them, said a senior defence official.

"They aim to expand their national power through both domestic and foreign policy initiatives. So, the global security initiative that President Xi Jinping laid out at ... is one of these in which the PRC seeks to

kind of paint itself as a provider of global public goods," the official said.

There have been more coercive and aggressive actions in the Indo-Pacific region, including some of which the US would highlight as being dangerous, the official noted. "So PLA vessels and aircraft have exhibited an increase in unsafe and unprofessional behaviour in the Indo-Pacific region, including for the aircraft aerobatics, discharging chaff and other activities that could make it dangerous for nearby aircraft to maneuver safely," the official noted.

Reacting to the Pentagon report, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhao Lijian said that in recent years, the US has been hyping up various versions of the "China threat" narrative simply to find pretext for expanding its nuclear arsenal and perpetuating military predominance. The world knows well that this is a go-to tactic of the US."

EU seeks specialised court to investigate Russia war crimes

AP ■ BRUSSELS

The European Union proposed Wednesday to set up a U.N.-backed specialised court to investigate possible war crimes committed by Russia in Ukraine, and to use frozen Russian assets to rebuild the war-torn country.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said in a video message that the EU will work with international

partners to get "the broadest international support possible" for the tribunal, while continuing to support the work of the International Criminal Court.

Since Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered the invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, his military forces have been accused of abuses ranging from killings in the Kyiv suburb of Bucha to deadly attacks on civilian facilities, including the March 16 bombing of a theatre

in Mariupol that an Associated Press investigation established likely killed close to 600 people.

Investigations of military crimes committed during the war in Ukraine are underway around Europe, and the Hague-based International Criminal Court has already launched investigations.

Ukrainian first lady Olena Zelenska on Tuesday also urged that Ukraine's invaders be held account as she addressed law-



makers in London.

"Victory is not the only thing we need. We need justice," she said, comparing Russian war crimes to the atrocities committed by Nazi Germany in World War II.

She called on Britain to lead efforts to set up a criminal tribunal to prosecute senior Russians over the invasion, similar to the postwar Nuremberg trials of leading Nazis.

Von der Leyen on Wednesday added that the 27-nation bloc wants to make Russia pay for the destruction it

caused in neighbouring Ukraine by using Russian assets frozen under sanctions.

She estimated the damage to Ukraine at 600 billion euros.

"Russia and its oligarchs have to compensate Ukraine for the damage and cover the costs for rebuilding the country," von der Leyen said. "We have the means to make Russia pay."

Von der Leyen said 300 billion euros of the Russian central bank reserves has been immobilised, and that 19 billion euros of Russian oligarchs' money has been frozen.

"In the short term, we could create with our partners a structure to manage these funds and invest them," she said.

"We would then use the proceeds for Ukraine, and once the sanctions are lifted, these funds should be used so that Russia pays full compensation for the damages caused to Ukraine."

The EU said the lifting of the restrictions on Russian assets could be linked to conclusion of a peace deal between Ukraine and Russia that would settle the question of damages reparation.



Turkey: More steps needed for nod to Nordic States' NATO bid

AP ■ BUCHAREST

Sweden and Finland have made some progress in meeting Ankara's security concerns but still need to undertake "concrete steps" to win Turkey's approval for their NATO membership bids, the Turkish foreign minister said Wednesday.

Meanwhile, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg underlined that "it is time to welcome them as full fledged members of the alliance."

The military alliance is eager to add the two Nordic nations to its ranks.

Sweden and Finland abandoned their longstanding policies of military nonalignment and applied for membership in the alliance after Russian forces invaded Ukraine in February, amid concerns that Russia might target them next.

Turkey, which has accused the Nordic countries of ignoring threats to Turkey from Kurdish militants and other groups that it considers as terrorists, has not endorsed their accession.

The parliaments of Turkey and Hungary have yet to ratify

their applications. The 28 other NATO states have already done so.

Turkey's Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu met with his Swedish and Finnish counterparts in the sidelines of a NATO meeting in Bucharest on Tuesday.

"These two countries have taken some steps to fulfill their obligations. We do not ignore the steps that were taken," Cavusoglu told Turkish journalists on Wednesday. "However, there is no concrete development yet on some issues such as the extradition (of suspects wanted by Turkey) and the freezing of terrorist assets."

"We reminded (them) that in the end, it's the Turkish people and the Turkish parliament that needs to be convinced," he said.

The minister of Sweden and Finland sounded more upbeat.

Swedish Foreign Minister Tobias Billström told Sweden broadcaster SVT that "progress was being made" regarding NATO membership, and that he would soon travel to Turkey.

Russia says nuclear talks with US delayed amid differences

AP ■ MOSCOW

Moscow has postponed a round of nuclear arms control talks with the United States set for this week because of stark differences in approach and tensions over Ukraine, a senior Russian diplomat said Tuesday.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said the decision to put off the talks that were scheduled to start Tuesday in Cairo was made at the political level. The postponement marked another low point in badly strained U.S.-Russian relations and raised concerns about the future of the last remaining nuclear arms control pact between the two powers.

"We faced a situation when our U.S. Colleagues not just

demonstrated their reluctance to listen to our signals and reckon with our priorities, but also acted in the opposite way," Ryabkov told reporters in Moscow.

Ryabkov claimed the U.S. Wanted to focus solely on resuming inspections under the New START treaty and stone-

walled Moscow's request to also discuss specifics related to the weapons count under the strategic arms reduction pact.

This week's meeting of the Bilateral Consultative Commission established under the treaty would have been the first in more than a year. The timing of the talks was intended to show that Russia and the U.S. Remain committed to arms control and keeping lines of communication open despite soaring tensions over Ukraine.



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M/s Bamboo Hotel And Global Centre Delhi Private Limited, is pleased to inform that the "Upscale and Mid Market Hotel with Large Conferencing Facility (Formerly a Hotel Complex & Convention Centre) at Asset-13, Hospitality district, DIAL, IGI Airport, Delhi had been accorded with Environmental Clearance vide SEIAA-D/C-408/ EC-363/2022 dated 22.09.2022 from the State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority (SEIAA)-Delhi. The copies of the clearance letters are available with the Ministry of Environment & Forest&CC and can also be seen on their website <http://environmentclearance.nic.in>
M/s Bamboo Hotel and Global Centre Delhi Private Limited

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To be known to all that my client, **SMT. KUDRAT JAHAN, W/o LATE ABDUL RASHID, R/o H.NO.84/13, SHALIMAR BAGH, DELHI-110088** has applied for conversion of the aforesaid plot from lease hold to free hold vide File No.F.16 (1568) 75/ LAB*in DDA.The original documents i.e. Possession letter of the above said plot has been lost. An NCR/LR NO.10265 32/2022 dated 28.11.2022 to this effect has been lodged in P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi. Any person (s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above Address/Phone No. 8368196003 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objection with respect to this property can personally inform or write to Deputy Director (Residential) or Director (Land), DDA, Vikas Sadan, New Delhi

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To be known to all that I, **Sheela Bisht W/o Sh. K.S. Bisht/r/o DDA Janta Flat No. P-5/A 6, Ground Floor, Pocket-P, Dilshad Garden, Delhi-110095** has applied for conversion of DDA Janta Flat No. P-5/A6, Ground Floor, Pocket-P Dilshad Garden, Delhi -110095 from lease hold to free hold in DDA. The original documents i.e Demand-cum-Allotment letter of the above flat has been lost. An FIR to this effect has been lodged in P.S. Crime Branch in vide S.O. No.430/2014 LR No.38167/3/2022 dated 08.05.2022. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above address/ phone No. 9911158194 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform or write to Dy. Director (Residential) H or Director (H)-1, D Block, 3 rd Floor, Vikas Sadan, JNA, New Delhi.

NORTHERN RAILWAY

(E-Auction Notice)

Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/PS, Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites bids through e-Auction through IREPS (<https://ireps.gov.in>) for the allotment of under mention contracts at following Railway stations/locations:


E-Catalogue No.	Date & Time of bidding	Railway Stations/Locations/Lots
Parking-24-2022	15.12.2022 at 12:00 Hrs	Sampla(SPZ) 2 nd Entry, Kurukshetra(KKDE) 1 st Entry, Meerut City (MTC), Narela(NUR) & Ghaziabad (City Side) = Total 5 Sites
Parking-25-2022	16.12.2022 at 12:00 Hrs	Ghaziabad(GZB) Bhoor Side, Sampla(SPZ) 1 st Entry, New Delhi (NDLS)AGS (For one year), Kurukshetra(KKDE) 2 nd Entry & Sahabad Markanda(SHDM) = Total 5 Sites
Parking-26-2022	19.12.2022 at 12:00 Hrs.	Sahibabad(SBB), Karnal(KUN), Kurukshetra(KKDE) Site-1, Subzi Mandi & Delhi Cantt (DEC) = Total 5 Sites
Parking-27-2022	21.12.2022 at 12:00 Hrs.	Naya Ghaziabad(GZN), Tapri (TPZ), Mansa(MSZ), Kurukshetra(KKDE) Site-2 & Panipat (PNP) 2 nd Entry = Total 5 Sites
Parking-28-2022	23.12.2022 at 12:00 Hrs.	Khatauli (KAT), Ganaur(GNU), Panipat (PNP) 1 st Entry, Karnal (KUN), Nangloi (NNO) & Adarsh Nagar(ANDI) = Total 6 Sites
Parking-29-2022	26.12.2022 at 12:00 Hrs.	Modinagar(MDNR), Pataudi Road(PTRD), Sarojini Nagar (SOJ) PRS, Madipur (PRS) & Baraut (BTU) =Total 5 Sites

Website particulars where complete details of E-Auction can be seen <https://ireps.gov.in>

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SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

SUICIDE BLAST TARGETING POLICE TRUCK KILLS 4, INJURES 20 IN PAK

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD/KARACHI

A suicide bomber from the banned Pakistani Taliban blew himself up near a patrolling police truck carrying security personnel to protect polio workers in the restive Balochistan province on Wednesday, killing at least four people and injuring 26 others, including 23 policemen.

The attacker targeted the paramilitary Constabulary truck in Quetta's Baleli area, which was going to provide security to polio workers at the ongoing drive. Quetta Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIGP) Ghulam Azfar Mahesar confirmed the attack and said that a total of three vehicles were hit in the blast.

"Looking at the crime scene and given that the truck toppled, it is estimated that 25 kilograms of explosives were used," he said.

The death toll from the targeted suicide attack in Quetta rose further as another child died during treatment, Geo News reported. The attack killed a cop and a child on the spot, and reportedly left 26 including 23 cops wounded, it said.

The death toll climbed to 4 after a woman and her child injured in the bombing suc-



cumbed to their injuries later in the day, the report quoted the hospital administration as saying. Earlier, the hospital administration had said that most of the injured are out of danger.

The banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) group claimed responsibility for the attack which came just two days after the group announced to call off its ceasefire.

It said the attack was in retaliation for the killing of Abdul Wali also known as Omar Khalid Khurassni killed in Afghanistan in August.

Mahesar said that the explosion was a suicide attack as they have found the remains of a suicide bomber near the crime

scene.

Preliminary police investigations showed that a rickshaw hit the police truck. Authorities have declared an emergency in the hospitals of Quetta to treat the victims.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif condemned the incident and directed the authorities to initiate an investigation into the attack.

According to the state-run Radio Pakistan, the premier expressed grief and sorrow over the loss of life.

He also said that polio workers across the country were fulfilling their responsibilities without caring for their lives.

"Eliminating polio virus

from the country is amongst the top priorities of the government and we will not rest until polio is completely eradicated," he said, asserting that "evil elements" would always fail to harm the anti-polio campaign in the country.

President Dr Arif Alvi also condemned the attack and prayed for the forgiveness of the deceased and the recovery of the injured. He said that children were Pakistan's most valuable asset and the government was determined to protect them from diseases such as polio.

"The State will not allow anti-social elements to interfere in the mission of complete eradication of polio," he said.



Taliban: 10 killed in bombing of Afghan religious school

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

A Taliban official says at least 10 students were killed Wednesday when a bomb blast hit a religious school in northern Afghanistan.

Interior Ministry spokesman Abdul Nafi Takor says several others were wounded in the blast at the madrassa in Aybak, capital of the northern Samangan province.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. But the

Afghan affiliate of the Islamic State group has been waging a campaign of violence that escalated since the Taliban took power in August 2021.

IS has carried out bombings targeting in particular Afghanistan's Shiite Muslim minority but has also targeted Sunni mosques and madrassas, especially ones connected to the Taliban. The Taliban and the Islamic State group both adhere to a hard-line ideology but are bitter rivals.

Former President Jiang Zemin, who guided China's rise, dies

AP ■ BEIJING

Former President Jiang Zemin, who led China out of isolation after the army crushed the Tiananmen Square pro-democracy protests in 1989 and supported economic reforms that led to a decade of explosive growth, died Wednesday. He was 96.

Jiang died of leukemia and multiple organ failure in Shanghai, where he was a former mayor and Communist Party secretary, state TV and the official Xinhua News Agency reported. A surprise choice to lead a divided Communist Party after the 1989 turmoil, Jiang saw China through history-making changes including a revival of market-oriented reforms, the return of Hong Kong from British rule in 1997 and Beijing's entry into the World Trade Organization in 2001.

Even as China opened to the outside, Jiang's government stamped out dissent. It jailed human rights, labor and pro-democracy activists and banned the Falun Gong spiritual movement, which the ruling party saw as a threat to its monopoly on power.

Jiang gave up his last official title in 2004 but remained a force behind the scenes in the wran-



gling that led to the rise of current President Xi Jinping, who took power in 2012. Xi has tightened political control, crushed China's little remaining dissent and reasserted the dominance of state industry.

Rumors that Jiang might be in declining health spread after he missed a ruling party congress in October at which Xi, China's most powerful figure since at least the 1980s, broke with tradition and awarded himself a third five-year term as leader.

Jiang was on the verge of retirement as Shanghai party leader in 1989 when he was drafted by then-paramount leader Deng Xiaoping to pull together the party and nation. He succeeded Zhao Ziyang, who was dismissed by Deng due to his sympathy for the student-led Tiananmen Square protesters and was held under house arrest until his 2005 death.



Landmark same-sex marriage Bill wins Senate passage

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The Senate passed bipartisan legislation Tuesday to protect same-sex marriages, an extraordinary sign of shifting national politics on the issue and a measure of relief for the hundreds of thousands of same-sex couples who have married since the Supreme Court's 2015 decision that legalized gay marriage nationwide.

The bill, which would ensure that same-sex and interracial marriages are enshrined in federal law, was approved 61-36 on Tuesday, including support from 12 Republicans. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer said the legislation was "a long time coming" and part of America's "difficult but inexorable march towards greater equality."

Democrats are moving quickly, while the party still holds the majority in both chambers of Congress. The legislation now moves to the House for a final vote.

President Joe Biden praised the bipartisan vote and said he will sign the bill "promptly and proudly" if it is passed by the House. He said it will ensure that LGBTQ youth "will grow up knowing that they, too, can lead full, happy lives and build families of their own."

The bill has gained steady momentum since the Supreme Court's June decision that overturned the federal right to an abortion, a ruling that included a concurring opinion from Justice Clarence Thomas that suggested same-sex marriage could also come under threat. Bipartisan Senate negotiations got a kick-start this summer when 47 Republicans unexpectedly voted for a House bill and gave supporters new optimism.

Australia steps up calls for US to drop WikiLeaks charges

AP ■ CANBERRA

Australia's Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said he recently told US President Joe Biden's administration to bring WikiLeaks founder and Australian citizen Julian Assange's prosecution to a close.

Albanese's comments Wednesday to Parliament appear to be an escalation of Australia's diplomatic pressure on the United States to drop spying charges against the 51-year-old who is resisting extradition from Britain.

"I have raised this personally with representatives of the United States government. My position is clear and has been made clear to the US administration: That it is time that this matter be brought to a close," Albanese told Parliament.

"This is an Australian citizen," Albanese added. "I don't have sympathy for Mr Assange's actions on a whole range of matters, but...You have to reach a point whereby what is the point of...Continuing this legal action which could be caught up now for many years into the future?"

Albanese did not say whether he discussed Assange directly with Biden when the



pair held a bilateral meeting on the sidelines a Cambodian summit two weeks ago. But Albanese said he had advocated for Assange "recently in meetings". Albanese compared Assange's treatment to that of former US Army intelligence analyst Chelsea Manning, who the prime minister said was "now able to participate freely in US society".

US prosecutors allege Assange helped Manning steal classified diplomatic cables and military files that WikiLeaks later published, putting lives at risk. Then-US President Barack Obama commuted Manning's 35-year sentence to seven years, which allowed her release in 2017.

International news outlets that cooperated with WikiLeaks to publish confidential US State

Department cables in 2010 — The New York Times, The Guardian, Le Monde, El Pais and DER SPIEGEL — published an open letter this week calling for Assange's prosecution to be dropped.

Albanese spoke in response to independent lawmaker Monique Ryan's question if the Australian government would intervene to bring Assange home.

Albanese's government has been circumspect about Assange's prosecution since it was elected in May. Ministers' criticisms have been restrained to phrases such as the case had "dragged on for too long".

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Lucern Legal LLP
269, Rama House, Ground Floor, Masjid Moh. Subhash, Phase, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9667071729/8128628636 (Vt.)
Contact# 011-40046316

Oath Keepers' Rhodes guilty of Jan 6 seditious conspiracy

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Oath Keepers founder Stewart Rhodes was convicted Tuesday of seditious conspiracy for a violent plot to overturn President Joe Biden's election, handing the Justice Department a major victory in its massive prosecution of the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection.

A Washington, D.C., jury found Rhodes guilty of seditious after three days of deliberations in the nearly two-month-long trial that showcased the far-right extremist group's efforts to keep Republican Donald Trump in the White House at all costs. Rhodes was acquitted of two other conspiracy charges.

The verdict marks a signif-



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DL7SAU6037,	DL6SV7289,	DL3ST3668,
DL5SV5416,	DL5SS2425,	DL7SX4010,
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DL7SAE1812,	DL7SAD8221,	DL6SV9228,
DL7SAD806,	DL6SV5835,	DL6SV5774,
DL7SAE6805,	DL6SV6783,	DL7SAD7607,
DL5SV8086,	DL6SV5835,	DL7SAD0423,
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DL3S0572,	DL6SV6090,	DL7SAR9668,
DL7SAB3976,	DI93009,	DL7SAK5520,
DBW6949,	DL7SAE2264,	DL4SAB1539,
DL5SR6204,	DL7ST0581,	HR3SA1028,
DL5SW3423,	DL5SL1572,	DL4SB4226,
UP8154732,	DL7SAL211,	DL4SB4231,
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DL6B463,	DL7SW0901,	DL7Z1443,
DL5SS1237,	DI04189,	DL3SAK0870,
DL5SS9106,	DL7SF6823,	UP07AA2968,
DL5ST1666,	DL7SO2090,	DL7SAY5125,
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CH03X7779,	DL7SR9418,	DL7SE7258,
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DL8SAC4248,	DL4CS6388,	DL7SZ9655,
DL7SA0871,	DL6SD7390,	DL5SP0586,
DL5SM9281,	HR3SA7674,	DL7SAR4774,
UP13H4738,	NOREG72,	DL7SAD4769,
DL7SAK0569,	DL7ST9642,	DL4SAM1021,
HR26AJ6228,	UP85C2444,	DL8SAC1782,
DL7SV7630,	DL7SS6438,	DL6SV0848,
DL7S28994,	DL8SAC1606,	DL4SAK1959,
DDP4300,	DL7SAT264,	DL7SBA1734,
DL7SW9415,	DL7SAK1496,	DL4SP4327,
DL7SAQ4281,	DL7SAJ9148,	DL7SAB4575,
DL7SAQ0984,	DL4SA3394,	DL7SAR8356,
DL9SS3002,	DL7SAB7890,	AP28AQ3703,
DL3SAT9965,	DL7SAU8280,	HR23F0070,
UP14AE7308,	DL7SAY4640,	HR70C6552,
NOREG69,	DL6SX7380,	DL4CA9549,
CHS.NO-1052565,	ENGNO0DHG-BKH28997,	DL4CA93028,
DL6SL3463,	DL9SP2436,	DL8CNA5917,
DL3SO1468,	DL7SZ4087,	HR26BV1945,
DL2SG5240,	DL8SAJ0308,	DL7CH1154,
DL7SAD1123,	DIU9698,	DL4CAE6115,

NORTHERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No.: 65/2022-2023 Dated: 30.11.2022

Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system

Principal Chief Materials Manager, Northern Railway, New Delhi-110001, for and on behalf of the President of India, invites e-tenders through e-procurement system for supply of the following items:-

S.No.	Tender No.	Brief Description	Qty.	Closing Date
01	07221176	SOLE BAR SIZE- 2400 MM	1264 NOS	26.12.2022
02	07221069	ALUMINIUM AXLE BOX FRONT COVER	3125 NOS	26.12.2022
03	12221005	SINGLE CORE ELASTOMERIC CABLE SIZE 240 MM, 1500 VOLTS	3800 MTR	26.12.2022
04	77225155	MANUFACTURING & SUPPLY OF COMBINATION FISH PLATES	300 SET	26.12.2022
05	09222583A	22 .22 MM DIA LOCK BOLT (DIA CODE-E) WITH COLLAR	194727 NOS	27.12.2022
06	19221842	FINGER CONTACT FOR REVERSER WITH FLEXIBLE SHUNT	756 NOS	28.12.2022
07	14221206	METAL CUTTING GAS	75088 KGS	02.01.2023
08	07220099	IRS TYPE DOOR LOCK	15880 NOS	06.02.2023

Note:- 1. Vendors may visit the IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for details. 2. No Manual offer will be entertained.

Serving Customers with a Smile

NORTHERN RAILWAY

INVITATION OF TENDER THROUGH E-TENDERING (E PROCUREMENT SYSTEMS)

1. NIT No	GSU/DLI/04/22-23 Dated : 28.11.2022
2. Name of work with its location	Linking of P-way track including insertion and dismantling of turnouts in running as well as non running track ordinary track, insertion of glued joints, making of sand humps, supplying, leading and stacking of Pway ballast including putting into track, leading of all Pway material including rails and ordinary/turnout PSC concrete sleepers with short and long lead, construction and extension of platforms including vacuum dewatered flooring, road work and pathway with precast interlocking paving blocks, E/Work in cutting and filling including of CSL at OS Stations naming MOY, SHDM, DHZM, NLKR and BHD in DUK Section of Delhi Division.
3. Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 65743761.03
4. Earnest Money	Rs. 476700
5. Completion period of work	8 Months
6. Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender	Upto 15.00 hrs on 20.12.2022 Opening of tender at 15.00 hrs. on 20.12.2022.
7. Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender from can be purchased etc.	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

No.- CPM/GSU/Engg./NIT/04/2022-23 (NIT-04) Dated:- 28.11.2022

Dy.CPM/Eng/GSU N.Rly, New Delhi

For & on behalf of President of India

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Egyptians call on British Museum to return Rosetta stone

AP ■ CAIRO

The debate over who owns ancient artifacts has been an increasing challenge to museums across Europe and America, and the spotlight has fallen on the most visited piece in the British Museum: The Rosetta stone.

The inscriptions on the dark grey granite slab became the seminal breakthrough in deciphering ancient Egyptian hieroglyphics after it was taken from Egypt by forces of the British



empire in 1801.

Now, as Britain's largest museum marks the 200-year anniversary of the decipher-

ment of hieroglyphics, thousands of Egyptians are demanding the stone's return.

"The British Museum's holding of the stone is a symbol of Western cultural violence against Egypt," said Monica Hanna, dean at the Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport, and organizer of one of two petitions calling for the stone's return.

The acquisition of the Rosetta Stone was tied up in the imperial battles between Britain and France.

CHAMPIONS STUNNED

AP ■ DOHA

France coach Didier Deschamps, whose team were already through to the knockouts, made nine changes but they were a shadow of their usual selves and Khazri punished them in the 58th minute at Education City Stadium.

Tunisia then had to hold on for the victory as an Antoine Griezmann goal in stoppage time was disallowed following a VAR review.

Khazri, who grew up in Corsica and plays in Ligue 1 for Montpellier, was one of six players in the Tunisian line-up who were born on French soil and he was capped by France at Under-21 level.

There is a large Tunisian community in France who will savour the result, the country's first win against European opposition at a World Cup and just their third ever in 18 matches at the tournament.

However, they needed Australia to drop points in the day's other Group D game to stand a chance of reaching the last 16 for the first time.

The Socceroos' 1-0 win over Denmark means it is they who go through with France.

The world champions and Australia finished level on six points, but France top the section on goal difference and will await the Group C runners-up in the last-16 on Sunday.

Les Bleus had been the first team to secure a place in the next round after winning their opening two games in Qatar so it was no surprise that Deschamps opted to make changes.

Kylian Mbappe was one of those to drop out, with Eintracht Frankfurt's Randal Kolo Muani getting his first international start up front.

There was also a start at right-back for Axel Disasi, the first outfield player to make his France debut in



a World Cup match since 1966, while Real Madrid midfielder Eduardo Camavinga started at left-back.

Griezmann denied equaliser

France were unrecognisable as Deschamps repeated what he had done four years ago, when he made sweeping changes for the final group game against Denmark.

The result then was a soporific 0-0 draw which did not ultimately stop France from winning the title.

This time France's second string performed as if they had never played together before and Tunisia — with a partisan crowd behind them — sensed their chance as they looked to get beyond the group stage at a World Cup for the first time.

The crowd erupted when Tunisia put the ball in the net just eight minutes in.

Nader Ghandri diverted a Khazri free-kick past Steve Mandanda, but he was just offside.

Starting at this World Cup for the first time, captain Khazri also stung the palms of Mandanda with a volley in the 35th minute, while a shot that Kingsley Coman skewed well wide was as close as France came.

They were disjointed, and it was no surprise when Tunisia took the lead.

France appealed in vain for a foul as Youssef Fofana was dispossessed by Ellyes Skhiri, and Khazri ran through before slotting a shot past Mandanda.

Deschamps then sent on Mbappe as well as Griezmann and Ousmane Dembele in an attempt to avoid France's first World Cup group-stage defeat since their disastrous 2010 campaign.

Griezmann thought he had equalised deep into injury time when he volleyed home inside the box, but the referee disallowed the goal for offside after a lengthy VAR review.



Spirited Australia beat Denmark to reach knockouts

AP ■ DOHA

Australia joined France in the Round of 16, defeating Denmark 1-0 in their final Group D fixture of the ongoing FIFA World Cup 2022, at the Al Janoub Stadium in Qatar, on Wednesday. With the score level at 0-0 at half-time, Mathew Leckie scored a stunning solo goal in the 60th-minute to hand Australia the crucial win. It looked like Tunisia enter the Round of 16 after having grabbed a goal via Wahbi Khazri in the 58th-minute, but Leckie's goal settled the Aussie nerves. Tunisia ended up winning 1-0 at the Education City Stadium.

It is Australia's first time in

the knockout stage since 2006, the only other time they advanced out of the group stage.

Leckie took a pass just around the center circle and moved in and around a Danish defender, eventually lacing a left-footed shot that beat goalkeeper Kasper Schmeichel diving to his left.

Australia finished with six points in Group D.

The World Cup proved to be a major disappointment for Denmark after reaching the semifinals in the 2020 European Championship. They slogged through a 0-0 draw in their opening match with Tunisia and then recovered in a 2-1 loss against France.

Rashford takes England WC knockouts

AP ■ DOHA

England booked a World Cup last 16 clash against Senegal as Marcus Rashford and Phil Foden inspired a 3-0 win against Wales that sent their neighbours crashing out of the tournament on Tuesday.

Gareth Southgate's side sealed first place in Group B thanks to key contributions from Rashford and Foden after they were restored to the team by the England boss.

Foden showed why there has been such a clamour for him to start as he won the free-kick that Rashford converted to break the deadlock early in the second half at the Ahmad bin Ali Stadium in Doha.

Foden doubled England's lead just seconds later to effectively ended the one-sided 'Battle of Britain' and Rashford struck again to ensure Wales' first World Cup since 1958 ended in disappointment.

With Foden and Rashford providing the cutting edge so lacking in their previous match — a dour goalless draw against the United States — England won for just the second time in their last nine games.

A spluttering first half showed the Three Lions still



have room for improvement as they chase a first major trophy since the 1966 World Cup.

But the ruthless way they demolished Wales after the break provided encouragement ahead of Sunday's showdown with Group A runners-up

Senegal. While England fans regard Germany and Scotland as their main rivals, Wales have never hidden how much they enjoy getting one over on their hated neighbours.

The Wales squad were famously filmed celebrating

England's embarrassing Euro 2016 exit against Iceland, while Welsh striker Kieffer Moore recently said he would love to knock the English out of the World Cup.

With those slights in mind, condemning Wales to elimination was a welcome bonus for England. But more importantly they eased the angst that had mounted since they were booed off after the lethargic United States stalemate that followed their 6-2 rout of Iran in the group opener.

RASHFORD 'BELONGS' ON WC STAGE: MAGUIRE

AP ■ DOHA

Marcus Rashford's eye-catching performance in England's 3-0 win against Wales shows he "belongs" on the World Cup stage, according to Manchester United and international teammate Harry Maguire. Maguire said he was delighted to see his clubmate back in top form after a tough year in which he slipped out of the international picture due to fitness issues and a loss of form.

"I'm really pleased for Marcus," said Maguire.

"Over the last year or so obviously he's been out of the England team and England set-up. I think he's really found his form again this season for

Manchester United. He's a massive player for our club."

Rashford had not kicked a ball for England since missing a penalty in the Euro 2020 final shootout against Italy last year when he arrived in Qatar.

He endured a difficult season for United following the defeat at Wembley, making just 13 Premier League starts in 2021/22 and scoring just four times in the top flight.

But he forced his way back into Gareth Southgate's squad after impressing for United this season.

And Rashford has made up for lost time in Qatar, scoring a goal as a substitute in England's opening 6-2 win against Iran before his two strikes on Tuesday.

Pulisic sinks Iran as US advance

AP ■ DOHA

Christian Pulisic fired the United States into the last 16 of the World Cup on Tuesday as the Americans downed Iran 1-0 in their politically charged grudge match.

Chelsea star Pulisic bundled home the do-or-die Group B game's only goal on 38 minutes to set up a second round clash with Group A winners the Netherlands on Saturday.

The victory was no less than US coach Gregg Berhalter's youthful side deserved in what was only the third international football clash between the bitter ideological rivals.

The build-up to a pulsating showdown had been marked by steadily escalating tension, with Iran's Football Federation on Sunday demanding FIFA sanction US Soccer for posting a modified version of their country's flag on social media.

But despite an electrifying atmosphere at Doha's Al Thumama Stadium, Tuesday's game played out without controversy as the US avenged their 1998 World Cup defeat to Iran to send the Asian qualifiers crashing out of the tournament.

Iran's fans had roared their team onto the field at the start of the game amid a deafening



cacophony of air-horns and cheers from the crowd of 42,127.

But despite the intimidating reception it was the Americans who looked more comfortable, quickly establishing their dominance. US captain Tyler Adams and Juventus' Weston McKennie controlled proceedings in midfield to leave Iran struggling to gain foothold.

After sustained US pressure, the breakthrough finally came in the 38th minute.

A brilliant crossfield pass from McKennie picked out Dest down the right.

The AC Milan defender headed back across goal and Pulisic was on hand to bravely finish.

There was alarm for US fans with Pulisic needing sustained treatment after a heavy collision with Beiranvand but it was the Iranians and their noisy fans who were left winded by the goal.

Frappart to be first woman referee at men's WC



AP ■ DOHA

Stephanie Frappart will become the first woman to referee a men's World Cup match after FIFA announced on Tuesday that she will take charge of Thursday's Group E match

between Germany and Costa Rica.

France's Frappart is one of three women referees among the 36 selected for the tournament in Qatar, alongside Rwandan official Salima Mukansanga and Japan's Yoshimi Yamashita.

Three other female officials have travelled to the World Cup as assistant referees.

For the 38-year-old Frappart, refereeing her men's World Cup match is the latest step in a rapid rise to the top level in Europe.

She was the first woman to referee in France's Ligue 1 in 2019, the same year she took charge of the women's World Cup final in her home country.

Frappart also officiated the 2019 UEFA Super Cup final between Liverpool and Chelsea, before refereeing the Champions League in 2020 and then the French Cup final last season.

Spain face Japan looking to seal last-16 spot

AP ■ DOHA

After conceding late to miss out on a victory against Germany, Spain finds itself with some work left to do against Japan to guarantee its spot in the round of 16 at the World Cup.

It doesn't need much, though, as a draw on Thursday will be enough, and even a loss may allow La Roja to advance depending on the other Group E result between Germany and Costa Rica.

Japan doesn't have it as easy, but a win will guarantee the Japanese a place in the knockout stage for a second straight time. It would be the first time Japan advances past the group stage in back-to-back tournaments. If Japan loses, though, it will head home no matter what. The Japanese opened their campaign with a surprising win over four-time champions Germany before losing to Costa Rica. They were eliminated by Belgium in the last 16 in Russia.

Spain, which conceded an 83rd-minute equalizer against Germany, may also go home with a loss if Costa Rica beats Germany or if the Germans win big to overcome Spain's goal difference after La Roja's 7-0 opening win over Costa Rica.



A victory at Khalifa International Stadium will guarantee Spain first place in the group, and keep it on track for a possible matchup with five-time champions Brazil in the quarterfinals. Spain enters the final round with four points, one more than both Japan and Costa Rica. Germany has one point.

"We are not thinking about our opponents in the knockout rounds," Spain midfielder Koke Resurrección said. "We need

to beat Japan first and then we'll see which team we'll have to play against. If it's Brazil in the quarterfinals, so be it, and we'll try to prepare for it as best as possible."

Germany's chances of staying alive in Qatar will largely depend on Spain winning its match against Japan. Then a victory over Costa Rica would be enough for the Germans.

What may not help Germany is the fact that Spain coach Luis Enrique is expected to rotate some of his players after making only one change from the first to the second game — Dani Carvajal coming in for César Azpilicueta in the right back position.

Teenager Gavi, who started in the first two matches, trained separately from the group after the 1-1 draw with Germany because of a knock on a knee. He was expected to be available for Thursday's match but was not likely to start.

Another midfielder expected to be rested is 34-year-old Sergio Busquets, the only remaining player from Spain's World Cup-winning squad in 2010. Striker Alvaro Morata, who scored a goal in each of the first two matches after coming off the bench, could get a spot in the starting lineup against Japan.

Under-pressure Belgium not 'in crisis mode', says Castagne

AP ■ DOHA

Belgium are not in "crisis mode" ahead of their crucial World Cup match against Croatia despite rumours of infighting and division in the squad, full-back Timothy Castagne said on Wednesday.

The world's second-ranked side have to win at the Ahmad Bin Ali Stadium on Thursday to be sure of reaching the last 16 after a surprising 2-0 loss to Morocco.

Belgium have reached at least the quarter-finals at each of the past four major tournaments but have struggled in Qatar, labelling to a 1-0 win over Canada in their opener.

However, Leicester defender Castagne said spirits in the camp were high.

"Our confidence isn't as low as people think," he said. "We know that we have our destiny in our own hands. It's true we didn't play so well in the first two matches but we're not in crisis mode like some people are saying in the press."



Belgium will have to push for the win as a draw would leave them needing Morocco to lose heavily to Canada in order for the Belgians to go through.

Morocco, like Croatia, can secure their place in the knockout phase by avoiding defeat.

NEW ZEALAND WIN ODI SERIES AGAINST INDIA

PTI ■ CHRISTCHURCH

A sloppy India lost the three-match ODI series against New Zealand 0-1 after rain washed out the third and final game here on Wednesday.

Chasing 220, New Zealand were cruising at 104/1 in 18 overs, 50 runs ahead of the Duckworth-Lewis par score, when rain interrupted the game yet again in the white-ball series.

Kane Williamson and Co, needing just 116 runs from as many as 32 overs, though had to be content with a 'no result' as the game was two overs short to be technically called complete.

Having won the first ODI in Auckland by seven wickets, New Zealand thus sealed the series 1-0.

The second match in Hamilton, too, was abandoned after two stoppages.

Overall, only two matches in the six-ball white-ball series produced result, exposing the poor planning on part of the concerned authorities. The series was organised less than a week after the T20 World Cup in neighbouring Australia.

As for India, the series exposed their flawed selection policy.

It all began with an inspiring bowling show by the Kiwi pacers with comeback man Adam Milne (3/57) and Daryl Mitchell (7-0-25-3) bundling out India for 219 in 47.3 overs after Kane Williamson won a good toss at an overcast Hagley Oval.

The likes of Rishabh Pant (10 off 16 balls), Suryakumar Yadav (6; 10b) and Deepak Hooda (12; 25b) were the biggest failures as they lacked application and failed to bid time after Milne rocked the top-order.

Seeking to save the series, India found themselves in a spot of bother, losing half of the side in 25.3 overs.

But thanks to the efforts by Washington Sundar (51 off 64 balls; 5x4s, 1x6) and Shreyas Iyer



(49; 59b) India managed to get past the 200-run mark.

Milne, who sat out the second ODI, took the opening duo of Shubman Gill (13; 22b) and Shikhar Dhawan (28; 45b) after Matt Henry stifled them with a tidy bowling display (10-2-29-0), before Mitchell and Tim Southee (8.3-1-36-2) wrapped up the issue.

Dhawan and his men were further disappointed by an inexperienced bowling attack as they struggled to get a breakthrough.

Finn Allen (57 from 54 balls; 8x4, 1x6) smashed his fourth ODI fifty and his 97-run opening partnership with Devon Conway (38) set the tone.

After a sedate start — 28 for no loss in 7 overs — they struggled gears with Conway smashing Chahar for four boundaries in an over, before Allen took the attack to rookie pacer Umran Malik.

Dhawan struggled with his limited bowling options as the Kiwis shone in their own conditions.

The Indian batters showed a lack of application as Milne and Mitchell led New Zealand's fine bowling show.

The spin bowling all-rounder, who showed his mettle with the bat with a 37 not out from 16 balls in India's 306 for 7 in the first ODI, anchored the show with his maiden ODI fifty after Iyer failed to convert a promising start.

Among the designated batters, only Iyer looked in control and played some delectable shots before being dismissed by

a well-judged forward-running catch by Devon Conway off Lockie Ferguson's bowling.

Iyer hit eight fluent boundaries during his 59-ball knock but fell one run short of fifty as India looked in deep trouble, losing half of their side for 121 runs.

Williamson stood out with his captaincy and cleverly rotated his bowlers. Asked to bat under overcast conditions, India had a slow and cautious start.

Gill, who looked fluent in the first two ODIs, curbed his stroke-making instinct and was five off 18 balls, while his senior partner Dhawan looked to attack.

Dhawan stepped out to Southee with disdain in the third over but the bowler bounced back with a maiden in his next over. Henry, on the other end, was at his tidy best.

The Indian openers began to break free towards the end of

powerplay.

Gill began scoring with successive fours off Milne, but soon lost his patience and chipped one to the square leg for a soft dismissal.

Desperate to step up the run-rate, Dhawan played on to become Milne's second victim.

Having taken T20 cricket by storm, Suryakumar failed to spend time in the middle and became Milne's third scalp.

Hooda, who retained his spot despite criticism surrounding Sanju Samson's axe in the second ODI, failed to impress yet again and got out for 12.

After Iyer failed to convert his start, India were in desperate need of a partnership with Sundar and Hooda in the middle.

But Hooda never looked in control and fell to a rising Southee delivery down the leg side.



Labuschagne hits 154 as Oz take control

AP ■ PERTH

Marnus Labuschagne cracked a masterful unbeaten 154 while Usman Khawaja and Steve Smith hit 50s as a dominant Australia took control of the opening Test against the West Indies at Perth Stadium on Wednesday.

The hosts reached an ominous 293-2 at stumps on day one following captain Pat Cummins' decision to bat in hot and dry conditions.

The total was built off the back of a 142-run stand between Labuschagne and Khawaja, who came together after David Warner was out for five, then an unbeaten 142 with Smith.

A focused Labuschagne, who survived chances on 75 and 137, brought up his eighth century in his 29th Test and with the in-form Smith unbeaten on 59 the omens are not good for the visitors, who have failed to win a Test in Australia for 25 years.

"When you finish the day at around 300 for 2, you feel good. It was nice to build partnerships throughout the day," said

Labuschagne.

"Scoring a Test hundred any time is amazing, so to be able to do it in the first Test of the summer can hopefully set you up for this game, and also the summer.

"It was all about the process, build your whole game around it and don't worry about anything else," he added.

The West Indies bowled with plenty of discipline in front of just 10,929 spectators, but the chances were few and far between.

After getting the early wicket of Warner for five, they had to toil for hours in the heat to bag another, with Khawaja compiling 65 before edging Kyle Mayers to wicketkeeper Joshua Da Silva just before lunch.

"We bowled well in spurts, but we didn't get the breaks," said West Indies coach Phil Simmons.

"We'll look to get a couple of wickets early tomorrow and try and peg them back that way. Even if they get 450 we're still in it because I think the wicket looks like it can get better."

Rishabh Pant match-winner, Samson has to wait: Dhawan



PTI ■ CHRISTCHURCH

India's stand-in skipper Shikhar Dhawan on Wednesday said Rishabh Pant is a proven 'match-winner' and deserves full backing from the team management while he endures a difficult phase.

Dhawan also asked Sanju Samson to wait for his chances.

Known for his flamboyance, the left-handed Pant once again failed after miscuing a rising delivery to get out for a 16-ball 10 as India folded for 219 in

the third and final ODI against New Zealand here on Wednesday.

"Overall you have to see the larger picture and who is your match winner. You analyse and your decisions are based on that," Dhawan said at the post-match interaction.

Pant's scores in his last nine innings across the two white-ball formats read 10, 15, 11, 6, 6, 3, 9, 9 and 27.

Samson, on the other hand, shone in the limited opportunities and was impressive in the

IYER, GILL RISE IN ODI RANKINGS

PTI ■ DUBAI

Indian batters Shreyas Iyer and Shubman Gill were rewarded for their superb show in the three-match ODI series against New Zealand in the latest ICC player rankings issued on Wednesday.

Iyer and Gill jumped six and three places to climb to No.27 and No.34 spot, respectively, after scoring half-centuries in the series, which India lost 0-1 after the second and third games were washed out.

Shikhar Dhawan, however, slipped two places, despite scoring a half century in the opening game. Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, who were rested for the series, slipped one place each to 8th and 9th respectively.

New Zealand batters Tom Latham and Kane Williamson also moved up in the charts.

Latham scored a stunning century in the series opener.

His 145 not out off 104 balls was followed by a 10-place rise to No.18. Skipper Williamson, who played the perfect second fiddle with an unbeaten 98-ball 94 in Auckland, broke into the top 10 after gaining one place.

Virus strikes England on eve of 1st Pak Test

AP ■ RAWALPINDI

Several England players have been struck by a virus ahead of the team's first Test in Pakistan in 17 years, leading to discussions about postponing the start of the match by one day.

Only five England players — Harry Brook, Zak Crawley, Keaton Jennings, Ollie Pope and Joe Root — turned up for the training at the Pindi Cricket Stadium on Wednesday. The rest of the squad members, including captain Ben Stokes, stayed in the hotel as team officials said six or seven players had been affected by the virus.

Brook, Crawley, Pope and Root all were named in England's playing XI for the first Test.

"There's obviously a few guys not feeling 100%," Root told reporters, adding that he didn't feel good yesterday but woke up lot better on Wednesday before coming for the training at the stadium. "It's nothing like food poisoning or COVID... I think it's just one of those things that we've unfortunately picked up as a group. We try to do absolutely everything right to make sure we're prepared really well for this game."

"Sometimes you just pick up a virus and when you're all tied



together in one, I tell you, you can spread it out. We did everything we can to try and mitigate that, but you have to see how things go tonight and tomorrow."

England team spokesman Danny Rueben said several staff members of the England contingent have also been affected by the virus.

The Pakistan Cricket Board said it was discussing the start of Thursday's first Test with the England Cricket Board "and will provide further updates in due course."

Root said he wasn't sure whether it was possible to delay the game by a day and have it start on Friday.

"It's such a monumental

tour and important series for so many reasons," Root said. "We've waited 17 years to come to Pakistan to play a Test match, if it means waiting another day, is that the worst thing in the world?"

"We're all desperate to play this game and we know how important it is to the fans of Pakistan and their team as well. I don't think it's necessarily the worst thing in the world if we have to wait one more day to make sure the game isn't canceled and everyone gets what they want, which is an exciting three-match series."

England has already named its playing XI for the first of the three-Test series with Liam Livingstone set to make his Test

debut and Ben Duckett is penciled as opener with Crawley. Veteran fast bowler James Anderson and Ollie Robinson are the two specialist fast bowler with Stokes as the other seaming option.

England is already out of contention for next year's World Test Championship final and is placed seventh in the WTC table.

Pakistan is in fifth place and has a realistic chance of making it to the final at the Oval in 2023, if it manages to win a majority of the remaining five Tests at home. Pakistan is scheduled to host New Zealand for a two-Test series later this month after the three Tests against England ends at Karachi.

Sharath Kamal bestowed with Khel Ratna

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Table tennis legend Achanta Sharath Kamal was on Wednesday bestowed with the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna, the country's highest sporting honour, by President Droupadi Murmu in a glittering National Sports Awards ceremony at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here on Wednesday.

While Sharath is the lone Khel Ratna award recipient, 25 sportspersons, including shuttlers Lakshya Sen, HS Prannoy, woman boxer Nikhat Zareen, track and field athletes Eldhose Paul and Avinash Sable, were conferred with the Arjuna Award. The creme de la creme of Indian sports were recognised for their achievements in the past few years at a specially organised ceremony.

The event is traditionally held every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of hockey legend Major Dhyan Chand on August 29. But last year also, the event was held on another date.

The star attraction of the ceremony was Sharath, who received his Khel Ratna award amid thunderous applause from the select dignitaries present at the Durbar Hall.

The Khel Ratna is given for the spectacular and most outstanding performances by a sportsperson over a period of previous four years. It carries a cash prize of Rs 25 lakh, a medal and a scroll of honour. The Arjuna award carries a cash prize of Rs 15 lakh, a bronze statue and a scroll of honour.

The 40-year-old Sharath had returned from Birmingham Commonwealth Games as the most-decorated Indian athlete with four medals. He is the second table tennis player after Manika Batra to get the Khel Ratna. Besides a yellow metal in the mixed doubles, Sharath also pocketed his singles gold after 16 years, the first having won at the 2006 Melbourne CWG.

The lanky paddler has claimed a whopping 13 medals from the CWG overall. He also won two bronze medals at the



2018 Asian Games, and is now in search of an elusive Olympic glory at the 2024 Paris Games.

While Sharath took away the spotlight, the star attractions among Arjuna awardees were shuttler Sen, world champion boxer Zareen, boxer Amit Panghal and triple jumper Eldhose Paul, all gold medallists at Birmingham Games.

The Khel Ratna was the first award to be given by the President, followed by the Dronacharya award in the lifetime category, won by Rohit Sharma's coach Dinesh Jawahar Lad, football coach Bimal Prafulla Ghosh and wrestling mentor Raj Singh.

The Dronacharya Award is the regular category were handed to Jiwanjot Singh Teja (archery), Mohammad Ali Qamar (boxing), Suma Siddharth Shirur (para shooting) and Suiet Maan (wrestling).

Discus thrower Seema Punia was the first to receive the Arjuna award from the President, followed by Paul, Sable, Sen, Prannoy and Panghal, among others.

India register first victory against Australia in 6 yrs

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

Fighting India scored a last-minute goal to stun Australia 4-3 in the third hockey Test for their first win in six years against the world number one side here on Wednesday.

It was a rare win for world number five India against Australia, who had thrashed them 7-0 in the Birmingham Commonwealth Games final earlier this year. India had last beaten Australia 3-2 in regulation time on November 29, 2016 in the first outing of the two-match bilateral Test tour in Bendigo, Victoria.

Since then, the two sides have played 13 matches with Australia winning outright on 10 occasions while two games were decided via penalty shootout.

India won one penalty shootout out of the two. One match (during the men's Hockey World League Finals in Bhubaneswar in 2017) was



drawn 1-1 and no shootout was applied.

The shootout, which was introduced in 2011, is applied to decide which team gets additional bonus point (apart from one point each) after a drawn match in regulation time.

Wednesday's famous win also kept the five-match series alive with Australia leading 2-1. India had lost 4-5 and 4-7 in the

first two Tests. The fourth match will be played here on Saturday and the final one on Sunday.

Skipper Harmanpreet Singh (12th minute), Abhishek (47th), Shamsher Singh (57th) and Akashdeep Singh (60th) scored for India.

Australia's goals came from the sticks of Jack Welch (25th), skipper Aran Zalewski (32nd) and Nathan Ephraums (59th).