WORLD 5

BDESH'S OPP PARTY HOLDS

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sunday pioneer

Rahul's confidant Sukhu picked as Himachal CM

as president of the NSUI and

Indian Youth Congress in the

State and despite hailing from

lower hills, fought and won

elections for the Shimla

Continued on Page 2

Municipal Corporation.

Mukesh Agnihotri named Dy CM; oath on Sunday

PNS SHIMLA

After deliberations with all the stakeholders and the newly elected MLAs, the Congress high command announced the name of Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu as the new Chief Minister of Himachal Pradesh. Sukhu, who headed the Congress campaign committee in Himachal Pradesh is a multi-term MLA from Nadaun in Hamirpur in the lower hills and has been the president of the State Congress Committee in the past.

Mukesh Agnihotri, the Leader of the Opposition in the outgoing Assembly, will be the Deputy Chief Minister, the party said after a meeting of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP) in Shimla.

Sukhu, the 58-year-old MLA, was elected the CLP leader and will take oath as Chief Minister on Sunday, the party said. After a meeting of the CLP in Shimla, it's second in 24 hours, Congress's central observer and Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel announced the election of Sukhu as the CLP leader.

Addressing the media accompanied by another observer, former Haryana Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, and AICC incharge for Himachal Pradesh Rajeev Shukla, he announced that Agnihotri would be the Deputy Chief Minister.



Himachal Pradesh Congress president Pratibha Singh's supporters raise slogans during ongoing CLP meeting, in Shimla on Saturday

Soon after, the Congress leadership left for the residence of the Governor to stake claim to form the Government.

The names were finalised by the party leadership following deliberations with the MLAs over two days amid hectic lobbying by aspirants, including State Congress chief Pratibha Singh, the wife of Virbhadra Singh.

In a meeting on Friday evening, the MLAs had unanimously passed a resolution authorising the party presi-dent to pick the legislature party leader after the three leaders reached the venue with their supports and raised slogans in their favour.

Sukhu, a former president of the Himachal Pradesh Congress Committee, is a fourterm MLA and is close to party leader Rahul Gandhi, sources He was known as a detractor of Congress veteran and six-time Chief Minister Virbhadra Singh.

He cut his teeth in politics

Bhupendra gets 2nd term as Gujarat CM

PNS NEW DELHI

Bhupendra Patel will be the Chief Minister of Gujarat for a second term as the BJP Legislature Party of newly elected MLAs elected him as its

He will take oath as the 18th Chief Minister of Gujarat at a function at the Helipad ground near the new secretariat in Gandhinagar on December 12. About two dozen MLAs may be inducted in the new Council of Ministers

The final call on the names of the Ministers will be taken

by the BJP Central leadership. It remains to be seen if the BJP inducts first-timers Hardik Patel, Rivaba Jadeja, Darshana Shah and Payal Kulkarni as Ministers. The BJP had fielded 45 new faces by dropping sitting MLAs of which 43 won their seats.

Outgoing MoS Home Harsh Sanghavi, among the 11 BJP leaders who won by over one lakh margin, is expected to be retained as Minister, sources said. A number of new faces could be inducted into the Patel Cabinet, sources added.

Continued on Page 2



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh being offered sweets by Gujarat Chief Minister-designate Bhupendra Patel during a meeting of newly-elected BJP MLAs, at BJP headquarters 'Kamalam' in Gandhinagar on Saturday. Gujarat BJP president CR Paatil is also seen. Swearing-in ceremony will be held on December 12

Border police station in Punjab hit by rocket

A strategy of Pak to bleed India by thousand cuts: DGP; **Opp demands CM Mann's resignation**

PNS CHANDIGARH

Arocket-propelled grenade was fired at a police station in Punjab's border district of Tarn Taran triggering concerns all around with DGP Gaurav Yadav describing the attack as a strategy of the neighbouring nation to bleed India by a thousand cuts.

Soon after the attack, the Opposition demanded Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann's resignation, saying he had failed in maintaining law and order in the border State.

The Punjab DGP said that according to preliminary information, it is military grade hardware and suspected it to have been smuggled from across the border. There was no casualty in Friday night's RPG attack — the second in the State in the last seven months police said. The grenade damaged some windowpanes of a building.

There is a clear indication that it is a strategy of the neighbouring nation to bleed India by a thousand cuts," the DGP said. In coordination with the BSF and Central agencies, the Punjab Police will investigate the matter, he said.

Some unidentified people fired the projectile which hit the Saanjh Kendra adjoining the Sarhali police station on the Amritsar-Bathinda highway on Friday night, police said.

Yadav, who visited the site, said that according to a preliminary investigation, the grenade was fired by using an RPG from the highway at 11.22 Centre of the Sarhali police station. "We have registered an FIR under UAPA (Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act) in this regard," the DGP told the media here. Yadav said police have recovered the rocket launcher and propeller.

"We are investigating technically and forensically. We are collecting clues from the scene of the crime to reconstruct what happened," the DGP said. A forensic team and a squad of the army have reached the site. The DGP said that the "cowardly attack" was carried out at night as the "enemy nation was feeling rattled" after the seizure of huge quantities of heroin and cache of arms and ammunition in the last one month which were sent through drones.

"This year alone, there were more than 200 drone crossings and in the last one month, several drones were intercepted, heroin, weapons and ammunition seized," he said, adding, "It appears that our enemy nation was feeling rattled and to distract this, the cowardly attack was carried out at night," the DGP said.

The police are exploring all angles and theories. The handlers and operators in Pakistan and elements which were in touch in Europe and North America and their links are also being probed to arrest the real

perpetrators, he said. The DGI further said the movement of drones has increased, especially in Tarn Taran and Amritsar, and last month many drones were shot down.

Shiromani Akali Dal chief Sukhbir Singh Badal said, "This is 2nd time in 6 months police building attacked with rocket launcher in Punjab. It is direct result of the AAP Govt's apathy in maintaining law & order & allowing narco-terrorism to raise its head again. @BhagwantMann should realise gravity of situation & take concrete measures."

BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh alleged that the AAP Government had completely failed in maintaining law and order. Referring to the RPG attack and also the recent murder of a cloth merchant in Jalandhar, Chugh said Mann should seek an apology from the people of the State for "failing" in discharging his responsibilities.

Punjab Congress chief Amrinder Singh Raja Warring dubbed the incident quite serious. "Ominous signals. This is quite serious. Enemies of peace have the audacity to attack police stations. It does not portend well for Punjab. We have to fight against it together. Govt at the Centre and State have to take the lead. Can't take such threats lightly," he

CAPSULE

ISHAN HITS FASTEST ODI DOUBLE TON

Chattogram: Ishan Kishan was an epitome of insane power-hitting as his record-breaking fastest double hundred provided a healing touch in India's crushing 227-run consolation victory over Bangladesh in the inconsequential third ODI.

GMAIL DOWN ACROSS GLOBE, USERS HIT New Delhi: Google's email

service Gmail faced service disruption for over one hour from 7.30 pm on Saturday, according to the company's dashboard

SC TO HEAR ON DEC 13 BILKIS BANO'S PLEA

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is to hear on Tuesday a plea filed by Bilkis Bano, who was gangraped and seven members of her family killed during the 2002 Gujarat riots, challenging the remission of sentence of 11

India abstains from UN vote TV actress Veena's on aid to sanctioned nations

PNS NEW DELHI

n an apparent rebuff to Pakistan, India has abstained from voting in an UN resolution to allow humanitarian aid to countries facing sanctions.

New Delhi is of the view

that Pakistan uses terror groups even while seeking such aid thereby circumventing all laws and efforts to fight terrorism. India abstained asserting

that blacklisted terror groups, including in its neighbour-hood, have taken full advantage of such carve-outs and have been able to raise funds and recruit fighters.

The 15-nation Council, currently being presided over by India, voted on the resolu-tion tabled by the US and Ireland to create a sanctions carve-out that exempted humanitarian efforts, with

Washington asserting that the resolution "will save countless lives" after being adopted.

India was the sole abstention while all other 14 members $\,$ of the Council voted in favour of the resolution that decided that processing or payment of funds, other financial assets, economic resources, and provision of goods and services necessary to ensure the timely delivery of humanitarian assistance are permitted and are not a violation of the asset freezes imposed by the Council or its Sanctions

Committee Council president and India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj, speaking in her national capacity as she delivered the explanation of the vote, said "our concerns emanate from proven

instances of terrorist groups taking full advantage of such humanitarian carve-outs, and making a mockery of sanction regimes, including that of the 1267 Sanctions Committee."

Kamboj also made a thinly-veiled reference to Pakistan and the terror outfits based on

"There have also been several cases of terrorist groups in our neighbourhood, includ-ing those listed by this Council, re-incarnating themselves as humanitarian organisations and civil society groups pre-cisely to evade these sanctions," she said in an apparent reference to Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD), which calls itself a humanitarian charity but is widely seen as a front organisation for the Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LET).

Continued on Page 2

son bashes her head with bat, dumps body

Veteran actress Veena Kapoor was killed by her son who hit her on the head with a baseball bat repeatedly in a fit of rage in her posh Juhu home in Mumbai. The accused son has been arrested by the

According to the police, Kapoor's son murdered her for property reasons.

After being beaten up repeatedly by a baseball bat, Kapoor later succumbed to her injuries at home, and her son disposed of her body 90 km from her residence, in an isolated jungle.

The murder has shaken up

the TV industry.

The shocking news of Veena Kapoor's murder was



revealed by her co-actress Nilu Kohli, who had worked with the 74-year-old performer for several years on TV and film

Shocked and grief-stricken by the death of her friend and colleague, actress Nilu Kohli took to Instagram and revealed the story behind the twisted and brutal murder of veteran actress Veena Kapoor.

woman IOA president

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Ushering in a new era in country's sports administration, the legendary PT Usha was on Saturday elected as the first woman president of Indian Olympic Association (IOA).

The 58-year-old Usha, a multiple Asian Games gold medallist and fourth place finisher in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics 400m hurdles final, was declared elected unopposed for the top post in the polls held under the supervision of Supreme Courtsion of Supreme Courtappointed retired SC judge.

The elevation of Usha to the top job marked an end to the long drawn crisis in the fac-tion-ridden IOA, which was warned of a possible suspension by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) if elections are not held this

PT Usha first | Soccer writer Wahl dies at WC match in Qatar

AP ■ LUSAIL

Grant Wahl, one of the most well-known soccer writers in the United States, died early Saturday while covering the World Cup match between Argentina and the Netherlands.

US scribes seated near him said Wahl fell back in his seat in the media tribune at Lusail Iconic Stadium during extra time and reporters adjacent to

him called for assistance. Emergency services workers responded very quickly, the reporters said, and the reporters later were told that Wahl had died. Wahl tweeted on Wednesday that he had celebrated his birthday that day. American reporters who

knew Wahl said he was 49. Continued on Page 2

Morocco shocks Portugal, 'Messi' Argentina in semis

Morocco became the first African country to reach the World Cup semifinals by beating Portugal 1-0 on Saturday, likely ending Cristiano Ronaldo's chances of winning soccer's biggest prize.

Youssef En-Nesyri scored the winning goal in the 42nd minute to continue Morocco's improbable run that has generated an outpouring of pride in the Arab world during the first World Cup to be staged in the West Asia.

The 37-year-old Ronaldo, one of soccer's greatest players, didn't start for the second straight game but came on as a substitute in the 51st minute.



Morocco's Youssef En-Nesyri celebrates after scoring his side's first goal during the World Cup quarterfinal soccer match between Morocco and Portugal, at Al Thumama Stadium in Doha, Qatar, Saturday

In another quarterfinals on Friday Argentina advanced to World Cup semifinals after beating the Netherlands in penalty shootout. Argentina took a 2-0 lead, conceded an equalizer in the 11th minute of second-half stoppage time to send the match to extra time at 2-2, and then won the shootout 4-3 amid a deafening noise

inside Lusail Stadium. FIFA opened a discipli-

nary case against Argentina for its players' actions during the quarterfinal match against the Netherlands. The soccer governing body cited "order and security at matches" in its disciplinary

code for charging the

Argentina soccer federation.

IGIA clogged, number of flights cut

PNS NEW DELHI

from 14 at present.

After massive congestion at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport led to thousands of complaints from inconvenienced passengers, the airport authorities at Delhi airport are planning to reduce 14 flights from Terminal 3; 11 from Terminal 2 and eight from Terminal 1.

The officials said that a four-point action plan has been drawn up by the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) to put in place immediate remedial measures such as increasing the number of Xray screening systems to 16

4 killed in TN, Mandous peters out sans disaster

 $R^{\text{elatively a lesser degree of}}_{\text{damage, including those}}$ to houses marked the landfall of cyclonic storm Mandous in Tamil Nadu and at least four people were killed in rain-related incidents, authorities said here on Saturday. "There is no damage on a

large scale," Chief Minister M K Stalin said after visiting affected fishing neighbour-hoods here and distributing relief assistance to them. Tamil Nadu and particularly Chennai has "come out of the impact of Mandous," he said.

Stalin, answering a question, told reporters that esti-Continued on Page 2 | mation of loss was being done



and if required Central assistance would be sought. Four persons were killed, he said,

apparently referring to rainrelated incidents. Continued on Page 2

Ink attack on Maha Min Patil over Ambedkar, Phule remarks

Maharashtra's Higher and Technical Education Minister Chandrakant Patil faced a backlash over his controversial statements on Dr Balasaheb Ambedkar and Mahatma Phule, as a protester hurled ink on his face in Pune's satellite town of Chinchwad on Saturday evening.

A day after the minister stirred up a hornet's nest through his remark that late Ambedkar and Phule "begged" money from people to set up schools, scores of students owing allegiance to the National Students' Union of India (NSUI) tried to block the convoy of his cars and staged a black flag demonstration while he was on his way to attend a community function.

The ink attack on Patil came little later when he came out of a party worker's residence from where he headed for a community function organised in memory



of Swami Mahasadhu Morya. Soon after he hurled ink on the minister's face, the police detained him. The identity of the person who indulged in the ink attack on the minister was not immediately known.

Before long, the video of the ink attack on the minister went viral. The ruling BJP leaders hit out at the miscreant and the behind the ink attack on their minister.

Talking to media persons after the attack, Patil said: "I am not going to get scared by this kind of attacks. Whoever behind this attack should come out in the open and take on me directly".

Patil came in severe criticism for his controversial

remark made at a university programme held on Friday at Paithan in Aurangabad, where he said: "Those who set up schools like Ambedkar, Phule did not depend on government aid. They started schools by begging for money from people. They told people: I'm starting a school, please give me

Later on Friday evening, Patil issued a clarification saying: Later in the evening, Patil clarified, "Who started schools in the state? Ambedkar and Phule. This is the truth. When I used the word begging, I meant they sought funds along the lines of the donations received under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), donations or crowd-funding."

"Bheek is bhiksha (begging for charity). The concept is a person going door to door, asking for donations to start something for a good cause. This is a vernacular word for the whole concept. But, these days, reporting statements out of context or creating controversies over words spoken in vernacular language has become a habit with the media," the minister said.

In a related development, the youth Congress put up banners across Pune city saying: "Kothurd is an Assembly seat won (by Patil) through beginning" The banner carried the cartoon of Patil, who won the Maharashtra Assembly polls from Kothurd constituency in Pune in 2019.

Maharashtra's former

deputy chief minister and

senior NCP leader Ajit came down heavily on Patil for his controversial remarks about Ambedkar and Phule. "We will not tolerate this kind of insult on our icons. What does he mean when he said that late Ambedkar and Phule indulged in begging to raise money for constructing schools. Time has come to show his place to Chandrakant Patil, " Pawar said, while speaking to media persons at Indapur in Pune

ED attaches ₹152.31 cr assets of Chhattisgarh CM's Deputy Secy

PNS NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has Enforcement provisionally attached movable and 91 immovable properties worth Rs 152.31 crore belonging to Chhattisgarh Chief Minister's Deputy Secretary Saumya Chaurasia (21 properties), IAS officer Sameer Vishnoi (five properties), businessman Suryakant Tiwari (65 properties), coal trader Sunil Agarwal and others in a money laundering case linked to the coal levy scam in the State worth Rs 540 crore.

The attached properties include cash, jewellery, flats, coal Washeries and plots of land located in Chhattisgarh.

"ED investigation revealed that as part of a grand conspiracy, policy changes were made and Director Mining issued a Government Order on July 15, 2020 to modify an existing efficient online system of issuance of transport permits, to introduce a manual



layer where coal users were forced to apply for NOC with State Mining officers," the ED said in a statement.

Armed government order, the extortion" at the rate of Rs 25 per tonne of transported coal, started in earnest. Suryakant Tiwari was the "main henchman" at the ground level who deployed his employees in various regions to extort money industrialists. His team was physically coordinating with lower level government functionaries and coal transporters and representatives of user companies.

Since his employees were spread across the State, they maintained WhatsApp groups, excel sheets of each Coal Delivery Order and the extorted amounts and shared them with Suryakant Tiwari, who in turn maintained detailed handwritten Diaries of the incoming bribe amounts and their utilization for purchase of benami lands, payment of bribes and payments for political

expenditure. "This kind of systemic extortion was not possible without the knowledge and active participation of the State machinery. The fact that it ran uninterrupted without a single FIR etc. and collected around Rs 500 crore in 2 years, clearly indicates that all the accused persons were acting in a concerted manner at the instructions of person(s) at the highest level, having command and control over the State machinery," it said in

a statement. The ED is investigating the entire gamut of transactions in relation to the extortion

"The ED investigation has revealed that an amount of at least Rs 540 crore has been extorted in the last two years,"

The ED has analyzed thousands of hand written Diary entries. ED has not merely relied on the Diary entries, but has done detailed investigation including Bank Account analysis, analysis of seized WhatsApp chats and recording of the statements to

corroborate the Diary Entries. "ED has unravelled the modus operandi where influential members of the Extortion syndicate like Suryakant Tiwari, Saumya Chaurasia, Sameer Vishnoi etc have used their relatives to create benami assets. Land deals were done at a minimum cheque amount and large amounts of cash out of the extortion collection was infused to buy the assets," it

Fugitive JeM commander Nengroo's 2-storey house demolished in Pulwama

PTI SRINAGAR

The residence of Jaish-e-The residence of mander Ashiq Nengroo was demolished by the authorities in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district on Saturday, Nengroo is a wanted JeM

commander and an accused in the 2019 Pulwama attack in which 40 CRPF personnel were

The two-storey house in Rajpora's New Colony had come up on state land, officials claimed, adding that it was demolished by the district administration in the presence of the police.

In April this year, the central government declared Nengroo as a "designated terrorist" under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

In a notification, the Union Home ministry said Nengroo has been involved in the infiltration of terrorists into Jammu and Kashmir and has also been responsible for incidents in the Union

> He is running a terror PUBLIC NOTICE

Be it known to all that my client Md. Anis Sabri had purchased a property khasra no.240 moja piran kaliyar pargana rudki distt. Haridwar in 1997 for charitable purpose and name of Md. Dishad Sabri Beyum Mussarat, Mh. Sharif Ahmad and Md. Hilal Ahamad were also

THE PIONEER A

CHANGE OF NAME

Chaudhary, S/o. Abdul Mannan

Chaudhary, Resident of Patthar

Deia, Siddharthnagar, UP, have

declared that my name has been

wrongly mentioned in my 10th &

12th class Certificate, issued from

NIOS as Hammad Abdullah instead of Hammad Abdullah

I, hitherto known as Manisha

Paul Thottam (alias Manisha

Thottam or Manisha Sachdeva)

D/o Late Raj Kumar Sachdev

(alias Late R. K. Sachdev) and W/o

Sh. Paul Thottam residing at D-

70, 3rd Floor, Saket, Delhi - 110017

have changed my name and shall

hereafter be known as MANISHA

Chaudhary.

SACHDEV.

Abdullah

PD(90216)A

PD(90217)A

Hammad

syndicate in Kashmir and is now "engaged in a perilous campaign to orchestrate terror in Jammu and Kashmir", remote controlled from Pakistan, the ministry had said.

A police spokesperson said Pulwama district administration retrieved one Kanal of state land which was under Nengroo's illegal occupation.

The said terrorist had raised the two-storied concrete structure on the said land a few years ago when he was an active terrorist associate in the area and had illegally occupied the said land by force," the spokesperson added.

He said Nengroo is and is presently managing his terrorist activities across the

56 crore registered voters link Aadhaar details with electoral rolls

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Nearly 56 crore of the approximately 95 crore registered voters have linked their Aadhaar details with the electoral rolls, an exercise the Government and the Election Commission believe would weed out duplicate entries from the voters list.

EC officials said between 55 and 56 crore voters have shared their Aadhaar details with poll authorities for linkage with the electoral roll. The Representation of the People Act was amended in December last year to pave way for voluntary linkage of Aadhaar and voter list details.

Subsequently, later this year, the Union Law Ministry had issued rules to bring into force the changes carried out in the electoral law. According to a law

ministry notification, using the newly-introduced Form-6B, existing voters may share poll authorities. "In exercise of the powers

conferred by sub-section (5) of



Representation of the People Act, 1950 (43 of 1950), the Central Government hereby notifies the 1st April, 2023 as the date on or before which every person whose name is included in the electoral roll may intimate his Aadhaar number in accordance with the said section," read the notification. The new form was introduced with effect from August 1 "for collecting Aadhaar numbers".

In July, the Election Commission had warned of "severe" disciplinary action officers for any leakages of physical forms filled by electors to share their Aadhaar details.

Rahul's confidant Sukhu picked as Himachal...

From Page 1

Son of a road transport corporation driver, Sukhu had a modest beginning and used to run a milk counter at Chhota Shimla in his early days.

Rising through the ranks, he was a relentless fighter and remained the party's State unit president for a record six years from 2013 to 2019 despite being frequently at loggerheads with Virbhadra, a six-time

He won the Assembly election for the first time in 2003 from Nadaun in Hamirpur district, retained the seat in 2007 but was defeated in 2012 and won again in 2017 and 2022. Sukhu will be the first

Congress leader from Lower Himachal -- comprising areas merged in Himachal in 1966 such as Nalagarh, Una, Hamirpur, Kangra and lower hills of Kullu -- to occupy the top post. He will be the second chief minister from Hamirpur district, after BIP's Prem Kumar Dhumal.

power from the BJP in the hill State winning 40 of the 68

The polling was held on November 12 and the results were declared Thursday. The polling was held on

November 12 and the results were declared on Thursday.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge earlier said the party observers sent to the hill State were seeking the views of all party legislators individually and they would convey to him their opinions, based on which the party

would take a decision on the

chief ministerial candidate. Intense lobbying continued for the chief minister's post on Saturday. From morning itself, Congress MLAs made a beeline to Cecil Hotel in Shimla where the party's central observers Baghel and Hooda - and AICC in-charge for Himachal Pradesh Rajeev Shukla have put

Several leaders, including State Congress Chief Pratibha Singh, leader of the Opposition in the outgoing Assembly Mukesh Agnihotri and head of committee Sukhwinder Singh Sukhu, met the observers

Bhupendra gets 2nd term as Gujarat... after the BJP registered its best

From Page 1 Patel's name was declared

as the leader of the legislative party unanimously at the party's State headquarters Kamalam' in Gandhinagar. "The newly-elected MLAs met at 'Kamalam,' where the proposal to name Patel as the Chief Minister of Gujarat was unanimously approved," the BJP said in a statement.

The Congress's tally was reduced to 17, while the Aam Pardo MLA Kanu Desai proposed his name, which got the approval of all the MLAs unanimously. Union Ministers Rajnath Singh, Arjun Munda and former Karnataka CM Yediyurappa participated in the meeting as central

observers. Soon after, Patel met Governor Acharya Devvrat and staked a claim to form the Government. He will visit Delhi to extend formal invitations to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah and the party's national general secretary BL Santosh to attend his oath-taking ceremony. Patel, 60, had resigned as the entire Cabinet on Friday to were for relations and trust. In pave the way for formation of these polls, BJP won once

a new Government in the State again," he added.

winning 156 seats the BJP has broken Congress's 1985 record in the State — when Madhavsinh Solanki won 149

ever victory in the just

concluded Assembly elections

182 seats and the majority

mark in Gujarat is 92. By

The State's Assembly has

winning 156 seats.

Aadmi Party won 6. Speaking to the media ahead of the meeting of newlyelected MLAs Hardik Patel said once again BJP has formed Government and this is to see how Gujarat becomes strong

and goes ahead in the next 5-10 years.
"I don't know, I've played the role of a mere soldier from the beginning. I'll accept whatever role the party assigns me," he said on being asked about a cabinet berth. Sanghavi said the Opposition left no stone unturned to defame the people of Gujarat to win elections but the public gave them a reply. "These elections

IGIA clogged, number of flights...

From Page 1

Mn. Sharif Ahmad and Md. Hilal Ahamad were also include in sale deed for the said charitable purpose. Begum Mussarat and Md. Sharif expired in 2015 and 2019 subsequently. After their death their families and Md. Hilal moved to some unknown place and now not traceable. My client giving this notice for public purpose, if any member want to contact please contact with proof with in 15 days from the date of communication. After said period nothing will be considered and will not binding upon my client.
RITU RASTOGI-Advocate
Ch. no. 239, Setalvad Block,
Supreme Court of India. 9958183999 The Ministry is discussing with domestic airlines ways to address overall congestion at the Delhi airport, including the possibility of reducing the number of flights operated during peak hours.

Long queues at immigration, unorganised security checks, chaos at the lounge at Delhi airport Terminal 3 has become a nightmare for passengers despite authorities reducing flights. Several passengers took to social media to highlight the massive congestion at Delhi airport and complain about the situation to the concerned authorities. Visuals from the airport show men and women lined up in several queues for

saying they had to wait for two to three hours at the clearance

According to the officials, the effort is to progressively reduce the number of peak hour departures to 14. Generally, peak hours are in the morning and evening. The peak hours are from 5 am to 9 am and 4 pm to 8 pm. On an average, it handles around 1.90 lakh passengers and about 1,200 flights daily. spokesperson for the airport operator DIAL (Delhi International Airport Ltd) on Saturday said it is working constantly with the stakeholders -- CISF and Immigration -- to cope with the demand which includes deployment of additional

4 killed in TN. Mandous peters out...

From Page 1

As many as 181 houses — hutments — were damaged and information on other kinds of damage was being compiled. In 201 relief camps, 9,130 people belonging to 3,163 families are being sheltered.

Around 400 trees fell in the city under the impact of 70 kmph wind speed, when the weather system crossed the Civic agencies including

the Greater Chennai Corporation here in addition to police, removed the fallen trees, and in total 25,000 personnel were involved in cyclone related relief and rescue tasks. This is in addition to 496 personnel of the NDRF and State DRF.

From Page 1 "We could always count

on Grant to deliver insightful and entertaining stories about our game, and its major protagonists," the US Soccer Federation said in a statement.

"Grant's belief in the power of the game to advance human rights was, and will remain, an inspiration to all. Grant made soccer his life's work, and we are devastated that he and his brilliant writing will no longer be with us." Wahl was covering his

eighth World Cup. He wrote Monday on his website that he had visited a medical clinic while in Qatar. "My body finally broke

down on me. Three weeks of little sleep, high stress and lots of work can do that to you," Wahl wrote.

over the last 10 days turned into something more severe on the night of the USA-Netherlands game, and I could feel my upper chest take on a new level of pressure and discomfort." Wahl wrote that he tested

Soccer writer Wahl dies at WC match in...

negative for Covid-19 and sought treatment for his symptoms. "I went into the medical clinic at the main media center today, and they said I probably have bronchitis. They gave me a course of antibiotics and some heavy-duty cough syrup, and I'm already feeling a bit better just a few hours later. But still: No bueno," he wrote.

Wahl wore a rainbow Tshirt in support of LGBTQ rights to the United States' World Cup opener against Wales on November 21 and

wrote that security refused him entry and told him to remove the shirt. Gay and lesbian sex is criminalised in Qatar, a conservative Muslim

Wahl wrote he was detained for 25 minutes at Ahmed Bin Ali stadium in Al Rayyan, then was let go by a security commander. Wahl said FIFA apologised to him.

US State Department spokesman Ned Price tweeted late Friday: "We were deeply saddened to learn of the death of Wahl and send our condolences to his family, with whom we have been in close communication. We are engaged with senior Qatari officials to see to it that his family's wishes are fulfilled as expeditiously as possible." Wahl is survived by his wife, Dr Celine Gounder, an associate professor at New York University School of Medicine, attending physician at Bellevue Hospital Center and CBS News contributor.

Gounder tweeted that she

was thankful for the support of her husband's "soccer family" and friends who had reached out. "I'm in complete shock," she wrote. at times in FIFA's annual awards, Wahl wrote this week that he had been among 82 journalists honored by FIFA and the international sports press association AIPS for attending eight or more World

Cups.
Wahl graduated from Princeton in 1996 and worked for Sports Illustrated from 1996 to 2021, known primarily for his coverage of soccer and college basketball. He then launched his own website.

security check, with some systems and manpower. **NORTHERN RAILWAY**

1ST CORRIGENDUM NOTICE The advertised tender notice no. No. 128-W/280/e Tender Notice/NIT-93/2022-23/W-3 dated 09.12.2022 in for the work namely "Improvement of Goods Platform and PF No.01 & Provision of Goods Shed at Goods platform (Line No.07) of Adarsh Naga ation(ANDI) in the section of ADEN/DLI." Contract value has been changed to Rs 4,48,60554.46/- and EMD has been changed to of Rs. 3,74,300/- on IREPS or ministrative ground. No. 128-W/280/e Tender Notice/NIT-93/2022-23/W-3 Dated

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NORTHERN RAILWAY 1ST CORRIGENDUM NOTICE

The advertised tender notice no. No. 128-W/280/e Tender Notice/NIT-95/2022-23/W-3 dated 09.12.2022 for the work namely "Provision of shed at Goods Platfrom at Shakur Basti Station (SSB) & Provision of roads at Goods Platfrom at Shakur Basti Station SSB) in the section of ADEN/DLI." Contract value has been changed to Rs 1,40,06,667.36/- and EMD has been changed to of Rs. 3,70,000/- on IREPS or administrative ground. No. 128-W/280/e Tender Notice/NIT-95/2022-23/W-3 Dated

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

India abstains from UN vote for aid to sanctioned...

From Page 1

Falah-e-Insaniat Foundation (FIF), a charity run by terror outfits JuD and LeT, and Al Rehmat Trust, backed by another terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) are also based in Pakistan.

"These terrorist organisations use the umbrella of the humanitarian assistance space to raise funds and recruit fighters," she said. "India will call for caution and due diligence to be exercised while

extending humanitarian assistance to proscribed entities under 1267, who continue to thrive with full State hospitality in territories universally acknowledged as terrorist havens by the international community," she said. Kamboj reiterated that under no circumstances, the garb of humanitarian cover, intended to be provided by these exemptions, should be misused by proscribed terrorist groups to expand their terror activities in the region and beyond.

"More importantly, such exemptions must not facilitate the 'mainstreaming' of terror entities in the political space in our region. Due diligence and extreme caution in the implementation of this resolution, therefore is an absolute must," she said. Kamboj said for this very reason, India had sought in the text of the resolution a proactive role for the 1267 Monitoring Team, coupled with robust reporting standards and mechanisms.

"We regret that these specific concerns were not fully addressed in the final text adopted today. We hope that this shortcoming will be corrected in the future, as and when we review the implementation and feedback from the Monitoring Team on this resolution."Before the UNSC vote, US Ambassador to the UN Linda Thomas-Greenfield said, "We hope the members of this Council will vote in favor of this resolution, because we must all do

everything in our power to help humanitarian partners reach the world's most vulnerable, regardless of where they live, who they live with, and who controls their territory." US Secretary of State Antony Blinken welcomed the adoption of the resolution, saying the Security Council is sending a clear message that sanctions will not impede the delivery of critical humanitarian assistance by reputable humanitarian organisations.

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BJP trying to buy AAP Councillors: CM

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday sharpened his attack on the BJP as he addressed the newly elected party Councillors and congratulated them for their win in the MCD (Municipal Corporation of Delhi) elec-

tions.
"It was a very very difficult election. The way conspiracies were drawn, and the whole machinery were used against us... I think it was one of the most difficult elections we have contested so far," Kejriwal can be heard saying in a video he shared on Twitter. He further alleged the BJP is trying to "buy" its Councillors.

The AAP national convener claimed that the BJP has started telephoning his party's councillors and offering them up to Rs 20 lakh each.

"This election was very, very tough. A few people say it was an easy election, but it was not. The way they conspired against us and the way they used State machinery against us, it was the toughest elections we ever contested. Heavy BJP machinery deployed during campaigning made the MCD

AAP so far," he added. Kejriwal spoke about the massive BJP campaign the city witnessed in his latest address. "Seven chief ministers, 17 Union Ministers, Amit Shah, (BJP chief) JP Nadda, all of them were there.

"Besides, the media was used against us. Some or the other clip was released," Kejriwal said, referring to the videos of jailed Delhi Minister Satyendar Jain from Tihar, which were released just ahead of the elections.

The Chief Minister said the BJP pressured the media to spread "propaganda against

you. They have started calling the councillors. Somebody is being offered Rs 10 lakh and some Rs 20 lakh," the AAP supremo said. "I am completely sure no

They (BJP) will try to buy

one from you will fall for their offer. However, we need to expose them. Put your phone on recording and whenever there is a call from them, record it," he added.

"Despite all the tricks", Kejriwal said the BJP "could not breach the AAP's reputation" which it has earned through its





work and trust. "Despite their propaganda, the people voted for us in the MCD. It means people trust what we did and earned in the last few years. The BJP thought people are gullible but they are not," he said, adding the saffron party's "propaganda" did not work. The AAP does positive politics and talks about its work, unlike the BJP which "spreads fake videos and letters" of a jailed conman, he claimed without taking any name. Several purported videos of Jain meeting visitors and the jail superintendent, eating fruits and vegetables and getting massages in his prison cell have gone viral,

giving ammunition to the BJP

to attack the AAP.

Earlier, jailed conman Sukesh Chandrashekhar wrote to the Delhi Lieutenant Governor alleging that Jain "extorted" Rs 10 crore from him in 2019 to ensure his safety in prison. "We do positive polítics and talk about our work. The BJP through fake videos and letters of a jailed conman did not allow us to discuss our

work narrative," Kejriwal said.

"Moreover, the way they pressured the media, they scolded the media and twisted its arm, they ran a misinformation campaign against us. There was a new fake video every morning at 9 o'clock," he alleged. Speaking at the event, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said it is going to be a golden era for the MCD.

...Now we have to clear the mountains of garbage, clean all streets, fix all roads and improve the primary health system," he said. AAP's Delhi convenor Gopal Rai said, "The people have ousted the BJP's 15-year-long reign in the MCD with a hope of getting their city cleaned...We have to live up to

2 newly elected Councillors return to Cong hours after joining AAP

fter protests erupted in Amustafabad and Brij Puri areas on Friday night, Delhi Congress's vice-president Ali Mehdi and the two sitting Councillors who joined the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Friday, returned to the Grand Old party early on Saturday. They later also issued an apol-

Delhi Congress president Anil Kumar on Saturday confirmed that the Delhi unit's Vice-president Ali Mehdi and two councillors are still with the party, a day after the latter had defected to the AAP. Kumar introduced all counicllors at a press conference. Interestingly, during a press conference, former MLA called Congress leader that he has received a call from AAP MLA Prahlad Singh Swahney who offered him to support in the MCD.

Earlier, posting a video on Twitter and apologising for his move, Mehdi said that he had made a "big mistake" by crossing over to the AAP and asserted that he is a loyal worker of Congress and Rahul

Gandhi. "I made a huge mistake. I accept my fault and ask for an apology from Rahul Gandhi with folded hands," Mehdi said in the video. He also changed his bio on the social media platform from "Indian" to "Worker of Rahul "I don't want any post. I

just want to work for the Congress. I made a big mistake and I apologise for it with folded hands and I want to apologise to Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi, Sonia Gandhi and all the residents of my area and party workers. I am a worker of Rahul Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi, I was a Congressi and will always remain a Congress worker," said Mehdi in a tweet, adding that he had also spoken to the councillors and they, too,

ogizing for joining the AAP.

Senior congress leaders like Ajay Maken, social media in-charge of Congress, Manu Jain, and others also criticised Mehdi and called him a "snake' for crossing over to the AAP.

Mehdi and two newly elected councillors from Congress- Sabila Begum and Nazia Khatoon — joined the AAP on Friday, taking its tally in the MCD to 136. Sabila won from Mustafabad, while Khatoon won from Brij Puri.

As Mehdi and two councillors joined the AAP, residents of Mustafabad staged a protest. Videos of protests that emerged on social media showed people raising slogans against Mehdi and burning his effigy. Former Delhi Congress president Subhash Chopra played a major role to bring back Mehdi and two councillors in the

After announcing his return to the Congress fold, Mehdi said, "In the areas from which these councillors (Sabila and Nazia) won, people voted for me and my father and not any particular party."

'CM order to recall DDCD V-C Shah infructuous, matter with President'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Terming Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's order to Planning Department to recall the order restricting Dialogue and Development Commission of Delhi (DDCD) vice-chairman Jasmine Shah from discharging his duties, is infructuous, unconstitutional and an eyewash, sources said that the matter had been referred to the President of India in November itself, hence no decision whatsoever can be taken by anyone in this regard.

In a note, sources stated

that the Lieutenant-Governor on November 30, 2022, while disposing of a file sent by the Planning Minister/Deputy Chief Minister, Manish Sisodia and endorsed by the Chief Minister, seeking to override the Planning Department order of November 17, 2022, that had restricted Jasmine Shah from functioning as VC, DDDC and availing facilities thereof, Saxena had invoked difference of opinion under Article 239AA(4) of the Constitution,



matter to the President of India for a final decision."The L-G's decision to this effect was also formally communicated to the Chief Minister in writing, then itself," said sources.

According to Article 239A (4) of the Constitution, if there is a difference of opinion between the council of ministers headed by the Chief Minister and the Lieutenant-Governor, the final decision rests with the President and is binding on them. Till the President takes a call, the L-G is the competent authority to delay," Kejriwal said in his

Lieutenant-Governor VK Saxena had last month asked Kejriwal to remove Shah from the post of vice-chairman of the DDCD over allegations of misusing his office for "political purposes". Kejriwal had on Thursday (December 8) directed the Planning department to recall the order restricting Shah from discharging his duties. "... the punitive action visited upon Shah is without any justification and requires to be recalled It is my cherished hope and

desire that the L-G will be an active participant in the endeavour to convert Delhi into a world class city and to that end, the implementation of initiatives conceptualised by the DDCD will be facilitated.

"I, therefore, direct the nodal department i.e. the Department of Planning, GNCTD to immediately recall the order November 17, and all actions emanating there from so that the status quo ante as prevailing on November 16 is restored without any further

the Lt Governor had directed that Shah be prohibited from discharging the functions of vice chairperson, DDCD, and using the official premises pending the decision of the President, they said. Given the facts, the December 8 order of the CM is not only "infructuous but also unconstitutional At best it can be termed as an eyewash", the sources said, adding it has been issued to "divert attention and play up to the gallery".

Since the decision is now pending with the President, no decision whatsoever can be taken by anyone in this regard. CM Kejriwal, knowing this constitutional position fully well, passed an illegal order on December 8, they said. A petition filed by Shah in connection with the matter is also pending before the Delhi High

The Lt Governor's action against DDCD chief Jasmine Shah came after BJP MP Parvesh Verma complained that Shah was "working as a spokesperson of the AAP" even

Councillors' poaching claims spur BJP-AAP-Cong slanging match national spokesperson Shehzad party is doing the work of Poonawala and Delhi unit

Kejriwal engaged in breaking Councillors of other parties, says LoP Bidhuri

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

head of the Mayor's elec-Ahead of the Mayor's elec-tion, the Aam Aadmi Party, the BJP and the Congress on Saturday alleged that attempts were being made to lure their newly elected MCD Councillors.

The fresh war of words came as two Congress Councillors who on Friday defected to AAP returned to the party fold and BJP Councillor from Anand Vihar Monica Pant filed a complaint with the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) against an AAP leader Shikha Garg, alleging that she tried to "bribe her for switching sides.

AAP convener and Delhi



elected Councillors of his party, cautioned them that the BJP would "try to buy them out". The BJP leaders, at a Press conference, also alleged that "an agent" of Kejriwal was trying to poach party Councillors. The Congress also accused

Kejriwal's party of indulging in poaching after two of its defectors returned. Kejriwal also told

Councillors to record audio and video of such offers to expose those involved and to report any bribing attempt by the BJP to party MLAs from their area or MCD coordina-

media cell head Harish Khurana at a Press conference lashed out at the AAP on Saturday saying Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has started a "new model" — "Pralobhan for Parshad" (alluring Councillors) after his city model prove to be a failure and they are trying to poach the party's newly elected councillors. BJP MLA Vijender Gupta along with newly elected Councillor Monika Pant lodged a complaint to the Anti-Corruption Branch seeking a probe in the poaching attempt by the AAP.

"Before the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) elections, Kejriwal claimed that the saffron party will only be able to score 30 seats, which the people of the national capital turned down by making the party win 104 wards," Poonawala said.

Criticising the slogan of AAP "Kejriwal's Government, Kejriwal's Councilours", Poonawala alleged that now BJP leaders including agent, as the workers of the to switch to the AAP.

horse-trading of BJP Councilours by roaming from street to street. Giving the merits on which

the allegations are being leveled against the AAP, BJP Councillor from Anand Vihar, Dr Monika Pant said that the Kejriwal's agent, Shikha Garg called her on Friday to meet. "When I asked her the

purpose of the meeting, she asserted that it is something important. After meeting, she gave me many temptations including extra funds to support AAP, but I refused," Pant

Leader of Opposition Ramvir Singh Bidhuri also alleged that Kejriwal is engaged in breaking the Councillors of other political parties but alleges that efforts are being made to buy the Councillors of AAP. Every one is witnessed who broke two Councillors from the Congress even before

"agent" of Kejriwal was trying

they were sworn in," he added.

Khurana claimed that an

AAP appoints 4 MLAs to look over 12 administrative zones of MCD

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

fter winning the Municipal ACorporation of Delhi (MCD) elections, the AAP on Saturday said they have appointed MLAs Atishi, Saurabh Bhardwaj, Durgesh Pathak, and senior leader Adil Khan to look over 12 administrative zones of the Corporation.

"These people will coordinate with the Councillors of their zones, hold meetings with them and explain their work and visit their areas to understand the problems faced by local citizens. This was done as it was not possible for one person to coordinate with all councilors and therefore responsibility has now been divided

between four people," said a senior AAP official. "These four people will listen to the problems of the councilors and get them resolved.

All the councilors will be in direct contact with these four senior AAP leaders and will get their assistance in resolving the problems of their areas. These senior leaders of Aam Aadmi Party will prepare a report on councilors, on the basis of which decision will be taken to include them in the committees," he said.

"These four senior leaders will sit together with the councilors in their zones and explain their work to them. Apart from this, they will tour their wards with them and understand

This was done as it was not

possible for one person to coordinate with all councilors and therefore responsibility has now been divided between four people. These four leaders will listen to the problems of the councilors and get them resolved," he said.

Informing about responsibility of wards being given to AAP senior leaders, he said that Adil Khan will be in charge of Civil Lines, Rohini, and Najafgarh. Saurabh Bhardwaj will be in charge of Narela, Keshavpuram and West Zone. The responsibility of Sadar, Karol Bagh, and Shahdara North will be with Durgesh

Metro services to be hit for a few hours due to maintenance work

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Metro operations on a section of the busy Blue Line will be partially curtailed in the initial few hours on December 11 due to a planned maintenance work, officials said on Saturday.

The hit segment will be between Ramesh Nagar and Kirti Nagar metro stations. "To undertake the scheduled track maintenance work between Moti Nagar and Kirti Nagar on the Blue Line i.e., Line-3/4 (Dwarka Sec-21 to Noida Electronic City / Vaishali), train services on the morning of

December 11 will be regulated," the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) said in a statement. Train services will be suspended from Ramesh Nagar to Kirti Nagar section from the start of revenue services till 7 AM. Hence, Moti Nagar metro station will be closed till resumption of train services on the section, it said.

In the rest of the sections of the Blue Line i.E, from Dwarka Sec-21/Dwarka to Ramesh Nagar and Kirti Nagar Noida Electronic City/Vaishali, train services will continue to remain available according to routine.

DCW issues notices to Centre, city Govt over sudden deaths 'linked' to Covid

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Taking suo motu cognisance of increasing cases of sudden deaths in the country, the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) on Saturday issued notices to the Central and Delhi Governments seeking details of any committee con-stituted to investigate these

These incidents have raised serious concerns and is being widely speculated that they are somehow connected to COVID-19," the commission said. Citing media reports, the DCW said in a statement that a bride in her early twenties recently died due to sudden cardiac attack during her mar-



riage ceremony in Lucknow. Similarly, a 16-year-old teen died while playing cricket and a man died in a temple in Madhya Pradesh while he was doing 'parikrama'.

In this regard, DCW Chairperson Swati Maliwal has issued notices to the Director General of Health Services of the Union as well as the Delhi Government. The commission has also issued notice to Indian

(ICMR) in the matter. Through the notices, the DCW said it has sought details of any committee constituted by the stakeholders concerned to investigate these deaths.

It has also sought steps taken to create awareness among people regarding the cause of such deaths, along with precautions that people should be advised to take.

'Students will now get UG honours degree in 4 years' staff reporter NEW DELHI Education Policy (NEP). Whi

Delhi University will give an undergraduate 'honours' degree even to the students opting for three years, Vice Chancellor Yogesh Singh said.

According to new norms prepared by the University Grants Commission (UGC) in a draft, students will now get an undergraduate honours degree only after completing a fouryear course.

These norms have been mentioned in a draft titled 'Curriculum and credit framework for four-year undergraduate programmes'. Likely to be notified on Monday, the draft has been prepared in accordance with the National Education Policy (NEP). While DU's new Four-Year Undergraduate Programme (FYUP) has been implemented from the academic year 2022-23, at least for this academic session university will follow a system approved by it its academic bodies, Singh said.
"We will allow the student

to gain an honours degree after three years as well. We will follow our regulations approved by our academic bodies in August," Singh said. The Executive Council (EC), varsity's top decision-making body, in February approved an Undergraduate Curriculum Framework-2022 (UGCF-2022) as formulated by a NEP

Snake found in Dubai-bound AI plane's cargo

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A snake was found in the cargo hold of an Air India Express flight that had operated from Calicut to Dubai on Saturday.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has started a probe in the matter. The B737-800 aircraft came from Calicut, Kerala and the passengers were safely deplaned.

The senior official at the DGCA said a snake was found in the cargo hold of the plane on arrival at the Dubai airport and the airport fire services were also informed.



Union MoS for Defence Ajay Bhatt with Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral R Hari Kumar, Geetika Lidder, wife of Brig LS Lidder and Tarini Rawat, daughter of first Chief of Defence Staff Gen. Bipin Rawat during the unveiling of a bust of CDS Rawat, at the United Service Institution of India (USI) in New Delhi on Saturday

Staffer held for trying to extort ₹26L from Japanese firm HR

STAFF REPORTER ■GURUGRAM

man was arrested for Aallegedly demanding money and threatening to kill an HR of a Japanese company, police said on Saturday. The accused, identified as Pramod (18), worked in the same company, they said, adding he had pany, they said, adding he had hatched an extortion plan to pay his debts after being inspired by a crime web series.

According to the complaint filed by Anurag Singh, a pative of Luckney in LIP and

native of Lucknow in UP and working as an HR officer in a Japanese company — Hayakawa Electronics — in IMT, Manesar, he received a call on his mobile wherein the caller said he has got money to

an unknown mobile number when I was at my home in sector 17 A.

"The caller identified himself as Imran and asked me if I was an official in Hayakawa

kill him. "Around 4 pm on Sunday, I received a call from

company. When I said yes, he claimed that he received Rs 26 lakh from an employee of my company to kill me," Singh said in his complaint to the police. The accused again called Singh and demanded ₹12 lakh. He also threatened to kidnap

his daughter, police said. Subsequently, an FIR was registered and a team was formed to nab the caller, they said. The team of crime unit finally nabbed accused on Tuesday.

Rocket fired at police station | Ex-CM Farooq to take part in Tarn Taran 2nd since May

PNS NEW DELHI

The latest projectile attack I on a police station in Tarn Taran district of Punjab is the second such hit as a similar incident had occurred in May at the Intelligence Wing headquarters of Punjab police in Mohali.

The attacks and the operation of an international crime syndicate from Punjab are a pointer to the audacity of the ultras as two key positions at the Centre are manned by Punjab cadre IPS officers with Samant Kumar Goel heading Research and Analysis Wing and Dinkar Gupta is the current chief of NIA. The crime syndicate case is being probed by the NIA.

Further, the menace of the cross border drones for shipping drugs and arms are also on the rise, especially along the frontier with Pakistan in Punjab and all these security challenges are indicative of a

pattern, sources in the security agencies conceded.

A rocket-propelled grenade was fired at a police station in Punjab's border district of Tarn Taran. Punjab Director General of Police Gaurav Yadav described grenade as a military-grade ardware.

Citing preliminary information, the DGP said the projectile to be a military-grade hardware and said there was a possibility that it was smuggled from across the border.

There is a clear indication that it is a strategy of the neighbouring nation to bleed India by a thousand cuts," he

Some unidentified people fired the projectile which hit the Saanjh Kendra adjoining the Sarhali police station on the Amritsar-Bathinda highway on Friday night, according to the police.

However, there was no casualty in the incident.



Saanjh Kendra centre provides services like copy of FIRs, passport verification and no-objection certificates.

The DGP further said the renade was fired by using the RPG from the highway at 11.22 PM on Friday and it hit the Suvidha Centre of the Sarhali police station.

The Punjab police has registered an FIR under UAPA (Unlawful Activities

(Prevention) Act). In May, a projectile loaded with an explosive substance had hit the Punjab police Intelligence Wing headquarters in Mohali. While no one was injured in this hit as nobody was present in the building, a few window panes were bro-

While the police has been twice lucky as no casualty was reported from the two incidents, a foolproof mechanism is the need of the hour through a synegised generation of actionable intelligence to avert any possible tragedy from such attacks, officials added.

ken in the attack.

in Bharat Jodo Yatra in J&K

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

Paramer Congress president Rahul Gandhi is going to spend eight days during the concluding phase of the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' in Jammu and Kashmir and the former Chief Minister and a towering leader of the State National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah has committed to take part in the yatra. Leaders from other political parties like Sharad Pawar, Aditya Thackeray others have participated in the yatra earli-

Senior party leader and Rajya Sabha member Rajni Patil who is also AICC incharge J-K affairs, said Rahul Gandhi is expected to enter the Union Territory in the third week of next month and appealed to the people as well as political, social and NGOs to "join the yatra which is above politics and meant to unite hearts for the benefit of the



spend eight days in Jammu and Kashmir -- four days each in Jammu and the valley -- after reaching here in the third week of January. The date and route were not finalised so far," Patil, flanked by senior party leaders including J-K Pradesh Congress Committee president Vikar Rasool Wani, told reporters in Jammu.

Earlier, she held a series of meetings with senior party leaders including former legislators and ministers in preparations for the smooth conduct

Asserting that the Rahul Gandhi-led historic yatra has generated a "good atmosphere" in the country, Patil said the yatra has nothing to do with

yatra has nothing to do with politics and the party is not evaluating its political benefits.

"Gandhi is leading this yatra to unite the people and strengthen the message of unity in diversity besides understanding the problems, sufferings and aspirations of differings and aspirations of different sections of the society," the Congress leader said.

She said a rousing reception awaits Bharat Jodo Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir.

"There is great enthusiasm amongst people since Jammu and Kashmir has suffered the most and lost its identity, status and rights of a historical state of the country, apart from record unemployment and recruitment scams," the Congress leader said.

She said the final phase of the yatra in Jammu and Kashmir would be most sigsince it is very close to the heart of the Congress party and Gandhi family and Rahul Gandhi would like to send an important message to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and the rest of the country through

"People anxiously wait for the yatra and we have positive messages from different quarters of Jammu and Kashmir, she said, hoping that people of all walks would welcome and

She appealed to all likeminded parties, groups, NGOs and individuals and others to welcome and join the yatra to send a message of unity, brotherhood, harmony and strength of togetherness from the soil of Jammu and Kashmir.

(National Conference) president Farooq Abdullah has announced his decision to join the yatra and we welcome his statement," she said, adding her party would also like others including the PDP to join it.

SARS-CoV-2 may create viral toxin causing severe Covid infection: Study

Study advises caution as people drop guard against Covid

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

⊓he SARS-CoV-2 virus may The SAKS-COV 2 villa toxin that causes severe Covid-19 infections, a recent study published in the journal Nature Communications has cautioned even as people across the countries have dropped their guard against the pan-

The researchers of the study which comes in the backdrop of the WHO warning that a lethal pathogen may replace the Covid-virus, demonstrated how the SARS-CoV-2 "spike" protein can harm cell barriers that line the interior of blood veins within bodily organs like the lungs, causing what is known as a vascular leak.

One of Covid-19's deadliest symptoms, pulmonary oedema, which contributes to acute respiratory distress syndrome, may be avoided by blocking the function of this protein (ARDS). "In theory, by specifically targeting this pathway, we could block pathogenesis that acute respiratory distress syndrome without needing to target the virus itself," said study lead author Scott Biering, a postdoctoral scholar at the University of California, Berkeley.

"In light of all the different variants that are emerging and



the difficulty in preventing infection from each one individually, it might be beneficial to focus on these triggers of pathogenesis in addition to blocking infection altogether."

While many vaccine sceptics have stoked fears about the potential dangers of the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein -- which is the target of Covid-19 mRNA vaccines -- the researchers say that their work provides no evidence that the spike protein can cause symptoms in the absence of viral

Instead, their study sugand the body's own immune response to trigger life-threatening symptoms. In addition, the amount of spike protein circulating in the body after vaccination is far less concentrated than the amounts that have been observed in patients with severe COVID-19 and that

were used in the study.

The amount of spike protein that you would have in a vaccine would never be able to cause a leak," said study senior author Eva Harris, a professor of infectious diseases and vaccinology at UC Berkeley. "In addition, there's no evidence that [the spike protein] is pathogenic by itself. The idea is that it's able to aid and abet an ongoing infection.

By examining the impact of the SARS-CoV-2 spike protein on human lung and vascular cells, and on the lungs of mice, the research team was able to gests that the spike protein may uncover the molecular pathtein to disrupt critical internal barriers in the body. In addition to opening new avenues for the treatment of severe COVID-19, understanding how the spike protein contributes to vascular leak could shed light on the pathology behind other emerging infectious diseases.

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on December 13 a plea filed by Bilkis Bano, who was gangraped and seven members of her family killed during the 2002 Gujarat riots, challenging the remission of sentence of 11 convicts in the case by the state government.

A bench of justices Ajay Rastogi and Bela M Trivedi is likely to take up the plea of Bano, who has also filed a separate prayer seeking a review of the apex court's May 13, 2022 order on a plea by a convict. The top court had asked

the Gujarat government to consider the plea for premature release of the convicts in terms of its policy of July 9, 1992 about deciding a remission petition within a period of two months.

In her plea against the grant of remission which had led to the release of the convicts on August 15, Bano said the state government passed a mechanical order completely ignoring the requirement of law as laid down by the Supreme

"The enmasse premature release of the convicts in the much talked about case of Bilkis Bano, has shaken the resulted in a number of agitations across the country," she said in the plea.

Referring to past verdicts, the plea said enmasse remissions are not permissible and moreover, such a relief cannot be sought or granted as a matter of right without examining

the case of each convict individually based on their peculiar facts and role played by them in the crime.

The present writ petition challenging the decision of the state/central government granting remission to all the 11 convicts and releasing them prematurely in one of the most gruesome crimes of extreme inhuman violence and brutality by a group of human beings upon another group of human beings, all helpless and innocent people - most of them were either women or minors, by chasing them for days together persuaded by hate towards a particular community," it said.

The plea, which gave minute details of the crime, said Bano and her grown-up daughters were shell-shocked with this sudden development.

"The decision of the government came as a shock to the citizens, nationally and internationally, and the society across segments showed anger, disappointment, distrust and protested the clemency shown by the government.
"When the nation was cel-

ebrating its 76th Independence Day, all the convicts were released prematurely and were were circulated and this is how the present petitioner along with the entire nation and the whole world came to know about the shocking news of premature release of all the convicts (respondents no. 3-13) of one of the most gruesome crime this country has ever

seen of multiple time gang rape of a pregnant woman," it

SC to hear Bilkis plea against remission on Dec 13

It referred to wide-virtual public protest in each city, on all social media platforms and news channels, portals. It was also reported heavi-

ly that Muslims of the area started fleeing away from Rahimabad in fear after release of these 11 convicts, the plea said. The separate review plea said Bano was not made a party to the petition by a convict who along with others was released under the state's remission policy which is not in force. "İn view of the develop-

ment that the policy dated July 09, 1992 stood cancelled vide circular dated May 08, 2003 of State of Gujarat, it was necessary to be examined whether still the policy dated 09.07.1992 would be the relevant policy for remission application of the convicts to be considered, if at all the State of Gujarat is the appropriate Government under section 432 CrPC," the review plea said.

The top court is already seized of PILs filed by CPI(M) leader Subhashini Ali, independent journalist Revati Laul, former vice chancellor of Lucknow University Roop garlanded and felicitated in Rekha Verma, and TMC MP release of the convicts.

Bano was 21 years old and five months pregnant when she was gangraped while fleeing the riots that broke out after the Godhra train burning incident. Her three-year-old daughter was among the seven family members killed.



NGT order to phase out public transport vehicles below BS-IV in 6 months stayed

PTI NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has The Supreme Court
stayed an order of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) to phase out all public transport vehicles with BS-IV (Bharat Stage) engines and below in the next six months. A bench of Justices S K Kaul and Abhay S Oka issued

notice to the parties in the case and sought their replies on the appeal filed by the West Bengal government. The NGT in its order had

said the state government must ensure that public transport vehicles with BS-IV engines and below are phased out in six months so that only including Kolkata and Howrah, thereafter.

"It is her (counsel for the West Bengal government) say that in terms of the directions of this court in order dated October 24, 2018, no motor vehicle conforming to the emission standard Bharat Stage-IV was to be sold or registered in the country with effect from April 1, 2020. Thus, registrations were

carried out till that date as permitted, and therefore the 15year period has to be counted from the date of registration. Otherwise, it will amount to making the vehicles unusable in less than 15 years. Issue notice. In the meantime, the operation of the aforesaid direction is stayed," the bench

The eastern bench of the NGT had noted that a huge number of private and commercial vehicles older than 15 years was plying in Kolkata and Howrah, which was

The tribunal in its order had said while phasing out the old vehicles, a move towards use of cleaner and greener technology with the introduction of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) buses and electric buses may be expe-

Must consider environmental dimension of justice: Prez

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tlimate change is knocking On the doors and people in poorer nations are going to pay a "heavier price" for the degradation of the environment President Droupadi Murmu said on Saturday and asserted that society must now consider the environmental dimension of justice

In her address at an event hosted here by the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) to mark Human Rights Day, she also made a fervent appeal that humans must learn to treat nature and biodiversity with dignity and

Name of the

Department

Panipat, Dahar Village Site

The Panipat Co-op. Sugar Mills Ltd.,

Job Work item for Sugar Mill, Dahar Site

Transportation of Molasses from New Sugar Plant,

Dahar Village to Old Sugar Mill Site (Distance 6 K.M.)



"I wonder what would the animals and trees around us tell us if they could speak. What would our rivers say about human history and what would our cattle say on the topic of human rights. We have trampled on their rights for long and now the results are before us,"

Name of Work/

Notice/ Tender

she said.

Just as the concept of human rights exhorts society to consider every human being as no different, "we should treat the whole living world and its habitat with respect", the President said, adding, "We must learn, rather relearn to

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at 10:00 A.M

Opening

Date

10.12.2022

at 10:00 A.M.

treat nature with dignity. This is not only a moral duty; let us remember it is necessary for our own survival too."

Human Rights Day is observed to commemorate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). It was approved and proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly on December 10, 1948, as a universally accepted value-based document of understanding the importance of the promotion and protection of human rights.

The theme of this year's Human Rights Day is 'Dignity, Freedom, and Justice for All'. This is close to the ideals expressed in the Preamble of

Amount

(Approx. in lac)

00.15

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(in lac.)

India's Constitution, Murmu said.

"I have said before that we should strive to expand the notion of justice. Over the past few years, the world has suffered from a high number of natural disasters caused by unusual weather patterns.

"Climate change is knocking on the doors. People in poorer nations are going to pay a heavier price for the degradation of our environment. We must consider the environmental dimension of justice now," she said.

The President asserted that the challenge of climate change is so enormous that "it forces us to redefine 'rights'".

Website of the

department

Estimated 2.2 mn unknown marine species threatened with extinction

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

While nearly 28,000 deepsea animal species have been described and named, an estimated 2.2 million other marine species, including deepsea, are unknown to science, of which many are thought to be threatened with extinction. Leading international marine scientists have warned that many may go extinct due to human activities like pollution and their habitat destruction deep sea before they are

discovered. "It will be the loss of unique, potentially valuable genetic resources resulting in unpredictable effects on global ecosystems essential to human food supplies and climate regulation," the scientists in a new policy brief presented at the UN Biodiversity Conference (COP15) recently in Montreal, underlining that without knowledge of these species, effective deep sea conservation is impossible.

They also urged global policy-makers to support urgently needed new research to fill a critical knowledge gap.

In 2019, the scaly-foot snail (Chrysomallon squamiferum) became the first deep-sea species listed as globally endangered due to the threat of deep-seabed mining. "Conservation of deep-sea species found in 'areas beyond



national jurisdiction' is particularly challenging," the policy

"We know very little about them, and there is not yet an international framework to guide the implementation of conservation measures," says lead author of the brief, Stefanie Kaiser of the Senckenberg Research Institute and Natural History Museum, Frankfurt.

Knowledge of deep-sea species biodiversity is an obvious first step to effective pro-tection of both the species and the ecosystem processes associated with them.

The scientists warn that deep sea species are increasingly exposed to pollution and habitat destruction. In particular, global warming, ocean acidification and resource depletion could lead to dramatic changes in deep-sea biodiversity with unpredictable consequences for humans as well. The scientists have called for support to develop inter-

national research strategies,

infrastructure, cooperation and exploration. "Deep-sea areas seem very distant and insignificant at first glance; it's not immediately clear what this vast ecosystem and its inhabitants are doing for us," explains

"The deep sea -- defined as 200 to 11,000 metre depth and beyond -- is the world's largest habitat, covering more than half of earth's surface. It is essential to global climate regulation by storing carbon dioxide and heat and by maintaining biodiversity." The 15th Conference of

United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is an international meeting bringing together governments from around the world. Participants will set out

the Parties (COP15) to the

new goals and develop an action plan for nature over the next decade. The government of Canada's priority is to ensure the COP15 is a success for

The detailed tender have already been uploaded on the website https://etenders.hry.nic.in . The tender should be filled on the above website on or before 15-12-2022 at 10:00 A.M. The "TECHNICAL BID" will be opened on 15-12-2022 at 10:30 A.M. If a tenderer qualifies in "TECHNICAL BID" then only "FINANCIAL BID" will be opened on 15-12-2022 at 12:30 P.M. The Negotiation, if necessary will be held in the presence of lowest tenderer or his representative who may be present at that time on 15-12-2022 at 02:00 P.M.

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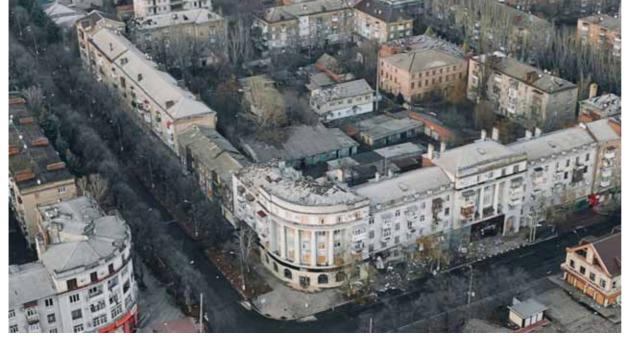
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Russia grinds on in eastern Ukraine, Bakhmut 'destroyed'

 $R^{ussian \quad forces \quad have}_{"destroyed" \quad the \ eastern}$ Ukrainian city of Bakhmut, President Volodymyr Zelenskyv said, while Ukraine's military on Saturday reported missile, rocket and air strikes in multiple parts of the country that Moscow is trying to con-quer after months of resis-

The latest battles of Russia's 9 1/2 month war in Ukraine have centered on four provinces that Russian President Vladimir Putin triumphantly — and illegally — claimed to have annexed in late

The fighting indicates Russia's struggle to establish control of those regions and Ukraine's persistence to reclaim them. Zelenskyy said the situation "remains very difficult" in several frontline cities in east-



Luhansk provinces. Together, the provinces make up the Donbas, an expansive industrial region bordering Russia that Putin identified as a focus from the war's outset and where Moscow-backed separatists have fought since 2014. Bakhmut, Soledar, Maryinka, Kreminna.

For a long time, there is no living place left on the land of these areas that have not been damaged by shells and fire," Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address, naming cities that have again found themselves in the crosshairs.

"The occupiers actually destroyed Bakĥmut, another Donbas city that the Russian army turned into burnt ruins.' Zelenskyy didn't specify what he meant by "destroyed" - and some buildings remain standing and residents still mill about in city streets. The

Staff reported missile attacks, about 20 airstrikes and more than 60 rocket attacks across Ukraine between Friday and Saturday

Spokesperson Oleksandr Shtupun said the most active fighting was in the Bakhmut district, where more than 20 populated places came under fire. He said Ukrainian forces repelled Russian attacks in Donetsk and neighboring Luhansk.

Russia's grinding eastern offensive succeeded in capturing almost all of Luhansk during the summer. Donetsk eluded the same fate, and the Russian military in recent weeks has poured manpower and resources around Bakhmut in an attempt to encircle the city, analysts and Ukrainian officials have said.

After Ukrainian forces recaptured the southern city of

the battle heated up around Bakhmut, demonstrating Putin's desire for visible gains following weeks of clear setbacks in Ukraine. Taking Bakhmut would rupture Ukraine's supply lines and open a route for Russian forces to press on toward Kramatorsk and Sloviansk, key Ukrainian

and Sloviansk, key Ukrainian strongholds in Donetsk.

Russia has battered Bakhmut with rockets for more than half of the year. A ground assault accelerated after its troops forced Ukrainians to withdraw from Lubasek in withdraw from Luhansk in July. But some analysts have questioned Russia's strategic ogic in relentless pursuit to take Bakhmut and surrounding areas that also came under intense shelling in past weeks, and where Ukrainian officials reported that some residents were living in damp base-

America: Russia, Iran moving towards full defence 'partnership'



AP WASHINGTON

The Biden administration is ■ accusing Russia of moving to provide advanced military assistance to Iran, including air defense systems, helicopters and fighter jets, part of deepening cooperation between the two nations as Tehran provides drones to support Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine.

White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby on Friday cited U.S. Intelligence assessments for the allegations, saying Russia was offering Iran "an unprecedented level of military and technical support that is transforming their relationship into a full-fledged defense partner-

were considering standing up a drone assembly line in Russia for the Ukraine conflict, while Russia was training Iranian pilots on the Sukhoi Su-35 fighter and Iran could receive deliveries of the plane within

the year.
"These fighter planes will significantly strengthen Iran's air force relative to its regional neighbors," Kirby said.

The U.S. Allegations are part of a deliberate effort by the U.S. To drive global isolation of Russia, in this case targeted at Arab nations who have looked to contain Iran's regional malevolence and who have not taken a strong stance against Russia's invasion of

Ukraine Earlier this year, the Biden administration accused Saudi Arabia of siding with Russia in the conflict by shepherding cuts by the OPEC+ cartel to boost the price of oil, crucial to funding Moscow's war effort. Saudi Arabia and Iran have been on opposite sides of a yearslong proxy war in Yemen.

Kirby said the arms transfers were in violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions and that the U.S. Would be "using the tools at our disposal to expose and disrupt these activities." Concerns about the "deepening and a burgeoning defense partnership" between Russia and Iran come as the Biden administration has repeatedly accused Iran of assisting Russia with its invasion of Ukraine.
The administration says

Iran sold hundreds of attack drones to Russian over the summer. Kirby on Friday reiterated the administration's belief that Iran is considering the sale of hundreds of ballisacknowledged that the U.S. Doesn't have "perfect visibility into Iranian thinking on why the deal hasn't been consum-

The White House says Russia has also turned to North Korea for artillery as the ninemonth war grinds on. The White House has repeatedly sought to spotlight Russia's reliance on Iran and North Korea, another broadly isolated nation on the international stage, for support as it prosecutes its war against Ukraine.

The Biden administration recently unveiled sanctions against Iranian firms and entities involved in the transfer of Iranian drones to Russia for use in Ukraine. It all comes as the administration has condemned the Islamic republic's violent squelching of protests that erupted throughout Iran after the September death of 22year-old Mahsa Amini while she was held by the morality

Bangladesh's Opposition party holds massive anti-Govt rally

Demands resignation of PM Sheikh Hasina

PTI ■ DHAKA

Tens of thousands of supporters of Bangladesh's main Opposition party BNP on Saturday held a "grand rally" in the capital here demanding Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's resignation and fresh elections. Seven lawmakers of the

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) announced their resignations to protest against the government led by Hasina. Dhaka's Golapbagh area, the venue of the rally, was under heavy security surveillance. The party activists chanted

'Sheikh Ĥasina is a vote thief' as the party leaders addressed the rally eastern part of the capital Dhaka city. Residents of the capital, including office-goers,



faced difficulties and many were seen waiting for public transport on the road since morning. Activists say the rally could attract 1 million people.

The ruling Awami League activists also staged several progovernment processions. Seven BNP lawmakers announced their resignation at the rally. "We had joined the Parliament in line with the party's decision but now there is no difference between staying or quitting...We have already emailed our resignations (to parliament secretariat)," BNP lawmaker Rumin Farhana told the rally.

She called the incumbent government an "autocratic" one and alleged it came to power by "rigging the polls", torturing the Opposition party leaders, carrying out forced disappearances, extra-judicial killings, and engaging in corruption.

Japan's Parliament enacts law to help Unification Church donation victims

Tapan's parliament on Saturday enacted a law to restrict malicious donation solicitations by religious and other groups, which mainly targets the Unification Church, whose fundraising tactics and cozy ties with the governing party caused public outrage.

The South Korean-based religious group's decades-long ties with Japan's governing Liberal Democratic Party surfaced after the July assassination of former leader Shinzo

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, whose support ratings tumbled, sought to calm public fury over his handling of the scandal and has replaced three Cabinet ministers - one over his church ties, another over a capital punishment gaffe and a third over political funding problems. The new law,

approved at this year's closing parliamentary session, allows believers, other donors and their families to seek the return of their money and prohibits religious groups and other organizations from soliciting funds by coercion, threats or linking donations to spiritual salvation. Kishida, who has heard former adherents' expe-

rience, described their sufferings as "ghastly" and praised the law as a bipartisan effort to help the victims and their families. The law's passage was one of Kishida's top priorities that also include Japan's new national security strategy and defense policy to achieve a substantial buildup of its military over the next five years.



Pro-democracy media tycoon jailed for five years in Hong Kong

AP ■ HONG KONG

Atenced a pro-democracy media tycoon to five years and nine months in prison on Saturday over two fraud charges linked to lease violations, the latest of a series of cases against prominent activists that critics say are aimed at crushing dissent in the

Jimmy Lai, who was arrested during a crackdown on the city's pro-democracy movement following widespread protests in 2019 and under the National Security Law imposed by Beijing, was also fined 2 million Hong Kong dollars (USD 257,000).

His media company, Next Digital, published the nowdefunct pro-democracy newspaper Apple Daily.

The publication was forced to close following the arrests of its top executives, editors and journalists last year. In October, Lai was found guilty of fraud for subletting part of the office space to a secretarial firm,



Democracy advocate Jimmy Lai, center leaves Hong Kong's Court of Final Appeal in Hong Kong on Feb. 9, 2021. Lai was sentenced to five years and nine months in prison over two fraud charges linked to lease violations in Hong Kong on Saturday, the latest of a series of cases against activists that critics say are aimed at snuffing out dissidents in city

which was also controlled by him, between 2016 and 2020. The second fraud count was for letting the same firm use the media outlet's office space in an alleged breach of lease agreements from 1998 to 2015.

The court at that time ruled the moves had violated lease agreements with the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corp.

such as eliminating the "don't ask, don't tell" rule that pre-

vented gay people from serving

openly in the military, but

stopped short of embracing

marriage equality.

US bans Lanka military officer for Human Rights violations

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The US has imposed sanc-**⊥** tions on yet another Sri Lankan military officer for human rights abuses in their accountability for corruption and human rights abuses around the world.

Marking Human Rights Day on Friday, the US state department, in a statement named Prabath Bulathwatte, the former head of a clandestine Sri Lankan Army platoon known as the Tripoli Platoon, for "gross violation" of human rights and "degrading treatment" of a Sri Lankan jour-

"Pursuant to section 7031(c) the Department of designating State Bulathwatte for his involvement in a gross violation of human rights, namely torture and/or cruel inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of Sri Lankan journalist, Keith Noyahr in May 2008", the statement said.

It said all property and interests in property of individuals or entities in the US or under the control of the US are blocked, and they and their



immediate family members are made ineligible for entry to

Last year, the US state department similarly listed two Sri Lankan soldiers, Chandana Hettiarachchi, Navy officer, and Sunil Ratnayake, a staff sergeant of the Sri Lanka Army holding them accountable for gross violations of human rights.

In 2020, the US State Department similarly sanctioned Sri Lanka's current chief of defence staff Gen Shavendra Silva, and former Commander of the Sri Lanka Army, on allegations of war crimes committed during the final phase of the armed conflict with the LTTE in 2009.

Explainer: What's at stake in Turkey's new Syria escalation

ern Syria, Kurdish forces and international players are trying to gauge whether Ankara's threats of a ground invasion are

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has repeatedly warned of a new land incursion to drive Kurdish groups away from the Turkish-Syrian border, following a deadly Nov. 13 bombing in Istanbul. Turkish authorities blamed the attack on the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, and on the Syria-based People's Protection Units, or YPG. Both have denied

involvement. On Nov. 20, Ankara launched a barrage of airstrikes, killing dozens, including civilians as well as Kurdish fighters and Syrian government troops. Human Rights Watch has warned that the strikes are exacerbating a humanitarian crisis by disrupting power, fuel and aid.

In the most recent devel-

Foreign Minister Sergei A fter weeks of deadly Vershinin flew to Turkey this

> Here's a look at what various foreign powers and groups embroiled in the Syria conflict stand to gain or lose:

Turkey sees the Kurdish forces along its border with Syria as a threat and has launched three major military incursions since 2016, taking control of large swaths of ter-

Érdogan hopes to relocate many of the 3.6 million Syrian refugees in Turkey to northern Syria and has begun building housing units there. The plan could address growing anti-refugee sentiment in Turkey and bolster Erdogan's support ahead of next year's elections, while diluting historically Kurdish-majority areas by resettling non-Kurdish Syrian refugees there.

Erdogan has also touted olans to create a 30-kilometer (19-mile) security corridor in areas currently under Kurdish

Biden called gay marriage 'inevitable' and soon it'll be law

with President Barack Obama.

He had made some changes,

AP ■ WASHINGTON,

decade ago, then-Vice APresident Joe Biden shocked the political world and preempted his boss by suddenly declaring his support for gay marriage on national television. But not everyone was surprised.

A small group had attended a private fundraiser with Biden weeks earlier in Los Angeles, where he disclosed not only his approval but his firm conclusion about a positive

future for same-sex marriage. He predicted, "Things are changing so rapidly, it's going to become a political liability in the near term for someone to

say, I oppose gay marriage."

"Mark my words. And my job — our job — is to keep this momentum rolling to the inevitable."The day that Biden



He plans on Tuesday to sign is anxious to safeguard legal changes from a backlash on the legislation, passed by bipartisan majorities in Congress, to proright that has used incendiary tect gay unions — even if the Supreme Court should revisit rhetoric, particularly against transgender people. The politics were far difits ruling supporting a nationwide right of same-sex couples ferent a decade ago, when gay to marry. Biden's signature rights activists were frustrated

will burnish his legacy as a

champion of equality at a time

As Obama's vice president, Biden shared the same stance. So there was some tension in April 2012 when Biden attended the fundraiser at the Los Angeles home of a married gay couple and their children. Chad Griffin, an activist

who had also helped organize the event, decided to ask Biden about it.
"When you came in

tonight, you met Michael and Sonny and their two beautiful kids," he said to Biden. "And I wonder if you can just sort of talk in a frank, honest way about your own personal views as it relates to marriage equality." Biden responded, "All you got to do is look in the eyes of those kids. And no one can wonder, no one can wonder whether or not they are cared for and nurtured and loved and reinforced. And folks, what's happening is, everybody is beginning to see it." Just over two weeks later,

Biden was on NBC's "Meet the Press," and host David Gregory asked whether he supported gay marriage. Biden said the issue came

down to "will you be loyal to the person you love? And that's what people are finding out is what all marriages, at their root, are about, whether they're marriages of lesbians, or gay men, or heterosexuals.

Biden said the president, not him, "sets the policies." But he said gay couples should have "all the civil rights, all the civil liberties.

France to make condoms free for anyone under 25, says Macron

 $F^{
m rance}$ will make condoms free in pharmacies for anyone up to age 25 in the new year, President Emmanuel Macron announced on Friday.

The move comes as the government says sexually transmitted diseases are on the rise among young people, and as this year's exceptional inflation is cutting especially deeply into the budgets of France's poorest.

Girls and women 25 and under already can get free birth control in France as part of government efforts to ensure that young people of all incomes can prevent unwanted pregnancy. Existing measures don't apply to men, how-



ever, or specifically address access for transgender or nonbinary people. Macron had said Thursday that condoms would be free in pharmacies for anyone 18-25 starting January 1. But after a French TV presenter and others challenged him on social networks on Friday over why the condom measure did not include minors, the president agreed to expand the program."Let's do

that he shot from the sidelines of a summit in Spain. He later tweeted: "A lot of minors also have sex ... They need to protect themselves too."

Macron, who was France's youngest-ever president when he was first elected in 2017 at age 39, also promised stepped-up efforts to prevent and test for HIV and other sexually transmitted viruses.

France's state health care system covers some birth control costs but not all, and doctor appointments for lowincome patients often require long waits. Abortions in France are available free for everyone. Several other European countries offer free or subsidized

'MoCA looks at reducing peak hour flights to manage congestion at IGIA'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Civil Aviation is discussing with domestic airlines ways to address overall congestion at the Delhi airport, including the possibility of reducing the number of flights operated during peak hours, according to officials.

On Saturday, senior ministry officials visited the Terminal 3 (T3) of the Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGIA) here to inspect passenger movements and baggage checkpoints, among other aspects, the officials said. IGIA, also the country's

largest airport, has three terminals -- T1, T2 and T3. All international flights and some domestic services operate

The officials said discussions are also going on with airlines to reduce the number of flights during peak hours at the three terminals.

The effort is to have 14 flights at T3, 11 in T2 and 8 in TI during these hours, they added.

Specific details could not be immediately ascertained. Generally, peak hours are

in the morning and evening.
In the last two days, the



ministry officials said DIAL has taken various steps, such as having additional traffic martial at the departure forecourt of T3 to avoid vehicular congestion.

Besides, dedicated people have been deployed at the entry gates to help passengers. The officials said an addi-

tional X-ray machine has been installed at T3 domestic and more manpower has been deployed in the ATRS (Automatic Tray Retrieval

System) area to help passengers with tray preparation and congestion management.

Awareness posters have also been put at the entry gates to make sure that passengers are ready with boarding cards. IGIA, which is operated by

the Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL), handles around 1,200 flights daily. On December 7, civil aviation minister Ivotiraditya

During the meeting, various initiatives, including plans for peak hour capacity based on passenger processing Scindia held a detailed discapacity at each airport, were cussion with heads of all major

Indian airports, CISF and immigration officials on

capacities deployed. The dis-

cussion was also on the capac-

ities required at every point to

process domestic and inter-

national passengers smoothly

through the peak travel sea-

Govt to hold apprenticeship fair for youth in 197 districts from tomorrow

he Government will hold Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Mela on Monday (December 12) across 197 locations in 25 states and Union territories, in line with its vision to boost career oppor-tunities for youth under Skill India Mission.

Several local businesses have been invited to be a part of the mela to provide local youth with the opportunity to shape their careers through apprenticeship training. The event will witness the participation of various companies from different sectors, the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship said in a

Participating companies will have the chance to meet potential apprentices on a single platform and choose applicants on the spot and provide them with an opportunity to be a part of their organisations, it

Candidates who have passed Class 5 to Class 12 and have skill training certificates, or ITI Diploma holders or graduates can apply during this apprenticeship mela.

The candidates must carry three copies of their resume, three copies of all the mark sheets and certificates, photo

ID (Aadhaar card/driving licence etc) and three passportsize photographs to the respective venues.

Individuals can register for the mela by visiting www.Apprenticeshipindia.Gov. In/and to find the mela's nearest location.

Through this fair, the candidates will also earn National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET)-recognised certifications, improving their

employability rate after the training session, the ministry

"India has often been compared to other developed economies in terms of apprenticeship opportunities for the youth of today. To bridge this gap, we are trying our best to make apprenticeship opportunities reachable to trainees and students," Atul Kumar Tiwari, Secretary, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, said

He informed that the major purpose of this programme is to encourage companies to hire more apprentices, while also assisting employers in discovering the right talent and developing their potential via training and

practical experience. "It is also critical to embed apprenticeship in the educational ecosystem besides building credible pathways from apprenticeship to higher education. With our continuous efforts, our goal is to raise apprenticeship opportunities in India to 10 lakhs by 2022end, and to 60 lakhs by 2026, the secretary said.

Apprenticeship melas are hosted in the country every month, wherein selected individuals receive a monthly stipend in accordance with government criteria for gaining

Apprenticeship is considered the most sustainable model of skill development, and it has been getting a big boost under Skill India Mission.

The government is striving to train 1 million youth per annum through apprenticeship training and to fulfil this mission, PMNAM is being used as a platform to increase the participation of establishments and students.

BMW expects sales momentum to continue next yr; lines up 8 launches

With 2022 turning out to be the best ever year in terms of sales, luxury carmaker BMW India expects volume to remain robust in 2023 as well as it looks to drive in multiple products, including electric sedan i7.

The carmaker, which sells products under BMW and Mini brands in the car segment and bikes under BMW Motorrad, is all set to introduce eight products over the next eight weeks in the country.

"For us, we believe it (sales momentum) will carry on for sure. We got fantastic products coming next year as well. We are starting with eight big launches with three being super big products, so I am very confident. We will grow in a very strong way in 2023 as well," BMW Group India President Vikram Pawah told PTI in an interaction. He was replying to a query whether the company would be able to maintain sales growth next year as well.

Pawah noted that the domestic car market is witnessing a positive phase and

"People are looking at buying cars they have always dreamt of..Families are looking at driving (for) holidays..So all this will help carry forward the momentum," he

There were some economic chal-



lenges in terms of inflation and rising interest rates but those could be overcome with new products and the traction that is already there in the market, Pawah noted.

Elaborating on the current year, he said: "In the car division if we look at both BMW and Mini brands, we are growing by around 40 per cent year-on-year already defining year for us as we have already crossed the best ever sales number."

BMW India had sold 10,405 cars in 2018, its best yearly sales performance till

The company dispatched 8,236 BMW and 640 Mini units last year. Pawah noted

that BMW has one of the best electric vehicle portfolios in the country right now and the company will further add products

We will add to that range over the next eight weeks. It will include the i7 as well early next year," Pawah said.

BMW has already started with the products on Saturday. The company introduced the new M340i xDrive priced at Rs 69.2 lakh (ex-showroom). It also launched an electrified sports utility vehicle XM tagged at Rs 2.6 crore. Besides, the company launched the S 1000 RR superbike with three trims priced up to Rs 24.45 lakh.

PTI JAMMU

V-Guard to acquire Sunflame Enterprises for ₹660 crore

IANS KOCHI

Kochi-based V-Guard Industries (V-Guard) on Saturday announced the signing of definitive agreements for acquiring 100 per cent stake in Sunflame Enterprises Private Ltd. (SEPL) for Rs 660 The all-cash deal is

expected to close by mid of January 2023, said a top V-Guard official and it would be funded through a mix of internal accruals and debt. The acquisition is in line with V-Guard's strategy to

become a significant player in the domestic Kitchen Appliances segment. The Sunflame brand has a pan India presence with a

strong brand recall. product development capabilities and the recently established state-of-the-art integrated manufacturing facility provide the perfect opportunity for V-Guard to scale up

its Kitchen Appliances busi-

Jammu-based organisations apply



synergy benefits.

Mithun Chittilappilly, Managing Director, V-Guard, said Sunflame is an iconic brand etched in the memories of Indian households and is expected to provide significant thrust to V-Guard's plans to become a leading Indian Kitchen Appliances player.

Director, SEPL said that having started this journey in 1984, they have come a long way since then. V-Guard, a name synonymous with trust, is the right organization to take this legacy forward.

BUSINESS BRIEF

ESAF SMALL FIN BANK OPENS ASSET HUB AT BHOPAL Bhopal: ESAF Small Finance Bank has opened at Bhopal its second Asset Hub, a specialised loan processing and sanctioning unit which will cover all the branches in Bhopal and other nearby cities. Inaugurating the hub, ESAF Small Finance Bank Chairman P R Ravi Mohan said: "The launch of the Asset Hub was part of the bank's initiative to decentralise the decision making process for credit sanctioning and to extend the benefit of collective involvement and exposure the bank offers to different segments of the society. The new Hub will facilitate quicker sanctions of loans and will enhance customer experience." The bank's Executive Vice Presidents George Thomas and Hemant Tamta also graced the occasion

RAYMOND REALTY SETS BENCHMARK IN REAL ESTATE New Delhi: Raymond Realty marked a momentous milestone to celebrate

the completion of TenX habitat towers, the maiden project of the group's real estate venture. The first three towers in the project have been completed 24 months ahead of RERA timelines. This aspirational project envisaged to elevate the benchmark of living standards in Thane was launched in 2019 and designed by renowned architect Hafeez Contractor TenX Habitat are currently the tallest towers in Thane skyline of 42 floors comprising of 10 towers. A first few buyers were handed over the keys to their exquisite flats by Gautam Hari Singhania, Chairman and Managing Director, Raymond Group, during the event,

DIVYA KALA SHAKTI PROGRAMME INAUGURATED IN DELHI

New Delhi: Minister of Social Justice & Empowerment Dr Virendra Kumar inaugurated the "Divya Kala Shakti" programme at Rang Bhawan Auditorium, Akashwani Bhawan, Delhi on Saturday, Various non-Govt organisations working in disability department witnessed the extraordinary performances by the Divyang children and youth at the

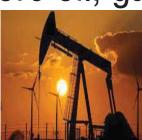
cultural event. The performances were presented by children and youth with disabilities ranging from physical, visual, hearing, intellectual, Autism to multiple disabilities and dwarfism

Guyana opens bidding on 14 new offshore oil, gas blocks

Guyana on Friday opened bidding on 14 new off-shore oil and gas blocks, hoping to capitalise on interest in lucrative fields that are expected to make the South American nation a major oil producer.

Guyana is home to one of the largest oil discoveries in the last decade. In 2019, two years after the find was announced, Exxon Mobil lifted the first batch of oil from the seabed off Guyana's coast. A consortium led by Exxon has since successfully drilled more than 30 wells near the blocks that are currently being auctioned. President Irfan Ali said

the bidding period will run



from Friday to May of next year to give companies time to study the blocks.

Companies through April 14 after paying a USD 20,000 fee to log into a virtual data room that provides information about the offshore area. Bids must be sent in by mid-April and results and awards made by the end of May

Zydus gets USFDA nod

for two generic drugs

"This, of course, will follow negotiations and evaluation of the bids that we received during this bidding round," Ali said in a live Facebook post. Guyana's Cabinet has

repeatedly said it will work to ensure that the country gets the best deal for what is widely regarded as its last remaining and revenue-producing eco-

nomic patrimony-oil and gas. Criticism about the current arrangements with the consortium, which also includes Hess Corporation and China's CNOOC, the production sharing agreement and tax free incentives have received persistent attacks from all quarters of Guyanese society.

To ensure protection in the domestic and global markets, organisations have applied for a geographical indicator (GI) tag for eight dif-ferent traditional items from

This was revealed at a round table meeting -- A way forward for GIs of Jammu and Kashmir -- at the University of Jammu for assessing the distinctiveness of the Union territory's native and traditional items.

various districts of the Jammu

region, according to officials.

The organisation have applied for GI tags of 8 different products, including Chikri wood products of the Thanamandi belt of the Rajouri district, Sulai Honey of the Ramban district, Kalari of the Udhampur district, Anardana of the Ramban district, Gucchi of the Doda district, Rajmash of Bhadarwah and Pashmina of Bhaderwah.

"We have got 8 applica-tions for GI-tagging of some products from the Jammu region. We will be reviewing them. Our aim is to meet local artisans, local cultivators and farmers (who make these products)... We will be educated on it closely," controller general of patents, designs and trademarks, department of promotion of industry and internal Trade (DPIIT) Prof

Unnat Pandit told PTI He further said that



another aim was to hold a round table meeting to do brainstorming sessions on the products, which can be GItagged and how can we make universities partners in the GItagging campaign.

of mentors towards creating an entrepreneurial environment.

for training and empowering the faculty towards mentoring and creating an entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Pandit further said that experiential learning can offer useful insights to the youth of the nation and create a roadmap for them to explore several entrepreneurial oppor-

and initiatives undertaken by UOJSPVF, University of Jammu, towards promoting an entrepreneurial culture in the region. Amit Khajuria, Assistant

handicraft officer, is batting strongly for GI-tagging of Chikri wood products produced in the Thanamandi belt of the Rajouri district. Similarly, Rahul Rathore of Ramban has showcased

'Sulai Honey' for GI-tag before the review team and said that it is also called van-tulsi honey. "It is the world's best honey. It was presented to the

British queen during an official visit," he said. Abha Rishi, CEO, AIC-BIMTECH, in her address deliberated upon the need for

inculcating a clear vision in the students aligned towards their professional goals. She mentioned that the right mentorship, guidance and a complementing team

WTO rules against Trump's steel and aluminum tariffs

World ■ Organisation has rejected the 2018 import taxes that then-President Donald Trump imposed on foreign steel and aluminum, saying they violated global trade rules.

Trump's tariffs of 25% on foreign steel and 10% on aluminum outraged America's long-standing allies, including the European Union and Japan, because he relied on a littleused provision of U.S. Trade law to declare their steel and aluminum a threat to U.S.

National security. China and other trading partners challenged the tariffs

at the 164-nation WTO. In a ruling issued Friday, the WTO said it was "not persuaded" that the United States faced "an emergency in inter-national relations" that would justify the tariffs.

Friday's decision, however, will likely have little real-world impact. If the United States appeals the ruling, it will go nowhere. That's because the WTO's Appellate Body hasn't functioned for three years, ever since the U.S. Blocked the appointment of new judges to the panel. And the Biden administration already reached agreements with the EU, Japan and the United Kingdom to essentially drop the tariffs and



their own retaliatory tariffs agianst the United States. Still, the Biden administration criticized Friday's WTO

'The United States strongly rejects the flawed interpre-

tation and conclusions," said Adam Hodge, spokesman for the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. "The United States has held the clear and unequivocal position, for over 70 years, that issues of national security cannot be reviewed in WTO dispute settlement." The WTO, he said, "has no authority to second-guess" the national security decisions of member countries.

Biden's trade team has attempted to find a balance between mending fences with U.S. Allies angry over Trump's "America First" trade policies, and keeping tariffs that are popular with many U.S. Steel and aluminum producers and

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Zydus Lifesciences on Saturday said it has received approval from the US health regulator to market Silodosin capsules, used in treating

benign prostatic hyperplasia, in The company has also received final approval from the Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) to market Pregabalin capsules in multiple strengths, the



Ahmedabad-based drug maker said in a statement.

Silodosin capsules are indicated to treat signs and symptoms of an enlarged prostate gland, also known as benign enlargement of the prostate (benign prostatic hyperplasia

Pregabalin capsules are indicated to treat pain caused by nerve damage due to dia-betes or to treat shingles (herpes zoster) infection. It is also used to treat nerve pain caused by spinal cord injury and pain people with fibromyalgia. As per IQVIA data,

Silodosin capsules and Pregabalin capsules had annual sales of USD 14 million and USD 242 million, respectively in the US market.

Pandit in his inaugural address focused on the significance of entrepreneurship in India and the expanding role

He emphasised the need

tunities and tap their potential. He appreciated the efforts

together can support young entrepreneurs to shape their

MESSI'S DREAM STILL ALIVE

rgentina will face Croatia in the World Cup semi-finals after beating the Netherlands 4-3 on penalties following a thrilling 2-2 extra-time draw on a night of high World Cup drama.

Argentina goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez was the hero in the shootout after the South Americans let a two-goal lead slip in the final minutes of normal time after Lionel Messi had put them on the brink of the last four.

Wout Weghorst scored two dramatic late goals, the second from a remarkably inventive freekick in the 11th minute of stoppage time, as the Netherlands fought back with seven minutes of normal time remaining to force extra-time.

Argentine had looked well set to reach the last four after Messi conjured up a brilliant assist for Nahuel Molina and a clinical goal from the penalty spot. Just hours after Brazil and Neymar crashed out of the tournament on penalties to the Croats, Argentina survived to keep South American interest in the competition. **ADVERTISING**

The Lusail Stadium felt like home for Argentina with at least three quarters of the 88,235 crowd backing the South American team and only a smattering of orange shirts in the crowd.

But all were treated to a thrilling late night drama that finally reached its conclusion just before 1 a.m. local time.

After a cagey start, Messi produced a moment of inspiration, ten minutes before the interval, to create the opener for his team.

Offering no clues of his intent, he split open the Dutch defence with a sublime reverse pass bet-



ween Daley Blind and Virgil van Dijk into the path of Nahuel Molina who timed his run perfectly and slotted home with the outside of his foot.

Dutch coach Luis van Gaal responded at the break by making a double change, bringing Teun Koopmeiners and Steven Berghuis on into midfield in place of Bergwijn and Marten De Roon.

But while the Dutch saw plenty of the ball their play remained too predictable and guileless.

FREE-KICK GENIUS

The momentum was with the Argentines and it was no surprise when they extended their lead in the 73rd minute after Denzel Dumphries tripped Marcos Acuna in the box and Messi made no mistake from the spot, burying the ball in the corner.

The Dutch, though, were not about to go out with a whimper -- pulling a goal back, seven minutes from the end, with an angled glancing header from Weghorst

from a Berghuis cross from deep. Ten minutes of added time

raised Dutch hopes and — tempers with a couple of mass confontations - and they moved Van Dijk up front and pumped balls int the

Deep into added time, one of those high balls, led to a free-kick just outside the area.

Koopmeiners feigned an expected shot before instead, to everyone's surprise, playing a short pass into Weghorst, who twisted

past Enzo Fernandez and poked home the equaliser.

The wild celebrations over, the game went into extra-time and curiously became becalmed, only sparking back into life late in the second period.

Lautaro Martinez saw a powerful goalbound shot deflected off Van Djik and then another deflected effort, from Fernandez, flew just over the bar.

Lautaro then forced a diving save out of Noppert and Messi

Messi slams referee after Argentina win on penalties **AFP** DOHA

ionel Messi said referee Antonio Mateu Lahoz should not have officiated Argentina's tempestuous shootout victory over the Netherlands in the World Cup quarter-finals at Lusail Stadium.

Argentina won on penalties early on Saturday after a dramatic 2-2 draw in which Dutch substitute Wout Weghorst scored twice late on, including a last-gasp equaliser from a short free-kick awarded when German Pezzella shoved over Weghorst.

"After they got the draw I felt a lot of anger," said Messi. "I don't want to talk about the referee, because they immediately reprimand you or sanction you, but I think people saw what hap-

"FIFA has to review that, it can't give a referee like that a match of this importance, when they're not up to the task."

He added: "We didn't have a great game, and

then the referee sent it to extra time. He was always against us. In the last play, it was not a foul." **ADVERTISING** Mateu Lahoz showed 16 yellow cards in total, with Netherlands wing-back Denzel Dumfries sent off after the penalty shootout for a second book-

ing. Messi had scored his fourth goal of the tournament from the spot in the 73rd minute after an earlier assist for Nahuel Molina's opener. Goalkeeper Emiliano Martinez was the hero, saving the Netherlands' first two penalties before

Lautaro Martinez struck the winning kick. "We didn't want extra time or penalties," said Messi. "We suffered too much because of how everything happened, but it is the quarter-finals

of a World Cup. "We knew how to suffer when it was our turn,

but we got through to the semi-finals. It's beautiful, something impressive."

to leave, says United boss

Manchester United manager Erik ten Hag said Friday that Cristiano Ronaldo never told him he wanted to leave Old Trafford. United parted ways with

the Portuguese star after the veteran forward gave an explosive TV interview in which he said he felt had no respect for Ten Hag. "I think it was quite clear

after the interview that he had to leave. I think we didn't have to discuss it," Ten Hag told the Manchester Evening News "I wanted him to stay

from the first moment until now. He wanted to leave, it was quite clear. And when a player definitely doesn't want to be in this club then he has to go, clear.
"The interview I think, as

a club, you can't accept. There will be consequences. To make that step he knew the consequences. Before he never told me he wanted to leave.

Ten Hag, speaking at United's winter training camp in Spain, claimed the 37-



vear-old, currently playing for Portugal at the World Cup, had even hinted at his desire to remain at the club before the season started.

"Until that moment he never told me 'I want to leave'," added the United

"In the summer, we had one talk. He came in and said 'I will tell you in seven days if back and said 'I want to stay' Until that moment (the interview), I never heard any-

thing."

The Portugal star made his name in his first spell at Old Trafford, developing from a raw but prodigiously gifted teenager into one of the world's deadliest forwards. He won three Premier

League titles and the Champions League at United but left in 2009 after six years for Real Madrid, where he became the club's greatest goalscorer, winning the Champions League four more

Ronaldo spent three vears at Iuventus from 2018 before a sensational return to Manchester last vear

Ronaldo never told me he wanted Livakovic cements Croatia hero status with Brazil KO

screwed a shot wide and only the

post kept out a long-range drive

Martinez dived to his right to save.

Messi followed and made no mis-

take before Martinez saved again

back for the Dutch as, even despite

a miss from Fernandez, Argentina

held on to win the shoot-out and

After all that, it was penalties.

Van Dijk was up first and

This time there was no way

from Fernandez.

from Berghuis.

Croatia goalkeeper Dominik Livakovic cemented his hero status with a stunning display to help his team knock out fivetime champions Brazil on Friday and reach the World Cup semi-

The stopper had already won hearts back home after making three penalty saves shootout, which set his team on a collision course with favourites Brazil. He produced a string of brilliant saves on Friday to keep Brazil's attackers at bay and ensure Croatia reached extra time with the match goalless. The game eventually fin-

ished 1-1, with Bruno Petkovic cancelling out Neymar's brilliant solo opener in the dying minutes of extra time. The stage was set again for

Livakovic and he did not disappoint, denying Rodrygo from the spot to help Croatia triumph 4-2 on penalties. ADVERTISING

During the match Livakovic denied Brazil talisman Nevmar on a number of occasions, produced a sublime reaction stop from Lucas Paqueta and even



had to make a smart save to stop defender Josko Gvardiol putting through his own net.

The 27-year-old made 10 saves against the Selecao, who were favourites to win the World Cup, on another historic night for Croatian football. **'KING LIVI'**

Livakovic, who plays for Dinamo Zagreb, had already earned the tag "King Livi" in his homeland after his heroics against Japan, and his legend only grew at the Education City Stadium.

"We know if it comes to penalties we have the edge on our side," said Croatia defender Borna Sosa. "He's shown many, many times through his

career he's a magnificent goal-

"He gives us a lot of confidence because against a team like Brazil they will always have chances, because you cannot contain these kind of players.

'To win against Brazil you need to have this kind of luck a little bit, and a goalkeeper on the maximum level that we had

today.' Livakovic was on the bench four years ago in Russia, when Croatia finished runners-up to France, watching on as first-choice Danijel Subasic became

a hero himself. Subasic helped Croatia win shootouts against Denmark and Russia on the way to the final.

sational performance Tite's men would have cantered to a win. Livakovic showed impressive reactions to keep out a

Croatia were typically resi-

lient in Doha on Friday but

without their goalkeeper's sen-

deflected Neymar free-kick near the end of the first half but as Brazil turned up the heat after the break, he began to truly shine.

with his foot to foil Neymar at the near post and clawed away a Paqueta effort from pointblank range. "There were a couple of sit-

uations that Brazil created owing to quality and speed," said coach "He was the difference at

crucial moments that saved us and did what he was supposed to do, and gave us confidence.

They were afraid he would deny them again — he made the difference throughout the whole

match. When Livakovic was young, his idol was Iker Casillas, who won the 2010 World Cup with

Spain. Now he and Croatia are only two matches away from emulating the feat.

Neymar says 'no guarantee' he will play for Brazil again

 $B^{\text{razil star Neymar hinted he}}_{\text{might quit international}}$ football on Friday, saying he could not "100 percent" guarantee he would play for the national team again. Speaking after his side's

World Cup quarter-final defeat in Qatar, the Paris Saint-Germain superstar suggested he could step away. "I am not closing any doors on the national team but I am

also not guaranteeing 100 percent that I will return," said an

emotional Neymar, 30. "I need to think a bit more about this, about what is the right thing for me and for the

national team.' Neymar equalled Pele's record tally of 77 goals for Brazil with a brilliant strike on Friday but Bruno Petkovic levelled

with minutes remaining. The Brazilian did not take a penalty in the shootout. Rodrygo's effort was saved by Dominik Livakovic and Marquinhos hit the post, while Croatia scored all four of their efforts to win the shootout 4-2.



Four years ago in Russia Neymar and Brazil suffered elimination at the same stage at the hands of Belgium. In 2014 the Selecao were humiliated 7-1 in the semi-finals by Germany Cup," said Neymar. "It is difficult

the game with an injury. "It is an awful feeling, I think

this is a worse feeling than what

happened at the last World

moment. "We fought and I am proud of my teammates, proud of the

and take penalties."

character they showed to step up

he was stepping down after the match.

"It is a painful defeat but I go in peace," he said. "It is the end

Tite bows out as Brazil coach after 'painful' World Cup exit charge Tite said: "In time I will Brazil took the lead through

T ite confirmed that it was the "end of a cycle" for him as coach of Brazil after the favourites were dumped out of the World Cup in the quarterfinals on penalties by Croatia on Friday.

The 61-year-old, who has been in charge since 2016, had previously made it no secret that he would leave the position after the tournament in Qatar, regardless of the outcome.

"It is a painful defeat but I go in peace. It is the end of a cycle," he told reporters after Brazil's dramatic exit from the competition at Doha's Education City Stadium.

"I already said that a year and a half ago. I didn't come here to win and then turn around and say I was going to stay. People who know me know that.

After a goalless 90 minutes,

Neymar midway through extra time only for Bruno Petkovic to equalise for Croatia in the 117th minute.

That meant penalties, and Rodrygo's first kick for Brazil was saved by Croatia's man of

the match Dominik Livakovic. With Croatia scoring four penalties, Marquinhos had to convert when he stepped up for

Brazil, only to hit the post. Tite had already overseen a quarter-final exit at the hands of Belgium at the last World

Cup in Russia four years ago. In between, Brazil won the Copa America on home soil in 2019 but then lost the final of that tournament as hosts to

The Brazilian Football Confederation has previously said it will not choose its next coach until January

Argentina last year.

Asked to assess his time in

be able to respond better. "I am not in a position now

to evaluate all the work we have done, but as time goes by you will be able to make that assess-

"I don't have the capacity to do that now after we have been eliminated.

Meanwhile, Tite was asked why Neymar did not step up to take Brazil's fourth penalty instead of Marquinhos when they had to score just to stay alive in the shoot-out.

"Because he takes the fifth and decisive penalty," he explained.

"The player with the most quality and the right mentality steps up when there is the most pressure."

Neymar never got the chance to take a penalty, having earlier equalled Pele's record of 77 goals for the Brazilian

INDIA SALVAGE PRIDE IN FINAL ODI

shan Kishan was an epitome of insane power-hitting as his record-breaking fastest double hundred provided a healing touch in India's crushing 227-run consolation victory over Bangladesh in the inconsequential third ODI here on Saturday.

Despite the record margin of

victory — biggest by any team against Bangladesh, the 1-2 series defeat will certainly rankle the Indian team as both matches slipped away from its grasp after being in pole position.
Virat Kohli (113) struck his

44th ODI hundred. The century came Kohli's way after nearly 40 months of barren spell but it was easily overshadowed by Kishan's blitzkrieg as his 210 off 131 balls formed the cornerstone of India's mammoth total of 409 for 8 after back-to-back inept batting performances.

His innings had 24 boundaries and 10 sixes and double hundred came off only 126 balls.

The total was always going to be insurmountable and Bangladesh were never in contention as they were bowled out for 182 in 34 overs with all the Indian bowlers being amongst wickets.

Axar Patel (2/22), Shardul Thakur (3/30), Umran Malik (2/43), Mohammed Siraj (1/27) and Kuldeep Yadav (1/53) never really allowed the home team batters to dominate as they shared the spoils among themselves.

Kishan's blistering innings and the intent he showed while catching Bangladesh attack by the scruff of its neck would definitely put the team management under pressure to take some tough calls as it moves into the World Cup year. In fact, such



was his domination that Rohit Sharma's world record ODI score of 264 was in danger of being history.

"I got out with 15 (14.1) overs left. I could have got 300 also," Kishan told official broadcasters during the innings break. Apart from Rohit's three double tons, the two other Indian batters to achieve the feat are maestro Sachin Tendulkar and

Virender Sehwag.

name between such legends. The Kishan batted in T20 mode as wicket was too good to bat on. My intent was very clear -- if the ball is there, I'll go for it," he revealed about his strategy.

Having completed his maid-"I am blessed to hear my en ODI century in 85 balls,

records kept on tumbling. That 156 of his runs came in sixes and boundaries tells a lot about the relentless assault he unleashed on the Bangladeshi bowlers.

The short balls were pulled,

the ones with width were cut

fiercely.

The West Indies' Chris Gayle held the previous record with his 138-ball double ton against Zimbabwe in 2015. After touching the three-figure mark, Kishan raced to next 100 runs in just 41

Kohli was also at his sublime best en route to his 72nd international century as the duo bossed the innings with a 290-run partnership off just 190 balls.

"I was batting with Virat bhai, and he was spot on with which bowlers I needed to select (to target). I was on 95 and wanted to bring up the hundred with a six but he calmed me down, saying it was my first hundred, get it in singles as it's your first," he

Having scored his maiden T20I hundred earlier this year against Afghanistan in the Asia Cup, Kohli recorded his first ODI ton since August, 2019.

In a reminder of the famous six off Haris Rauf in the T20 World Cup, he picked a back-ofa-length delivery from Ebadot Hossain for a six to reach his century in 86 balls. Once both were gone, India managed just 70 runs in the last 10 overs while losing five wickets.

Having already conceded the three-match series after losing the first two ODIs following ordinary batting, India under KL Rahul brought in Kishan to open with the struggling Shikhar Dhawan.

Their opening partnership lasted 4.1 overs as Mehidy Hasan trapped Dhawan lbw for three. The off-spinner nearly had Kohli when he drove straight to short mid-wicket, but skipper Litton Das dropped him on six.

Could have got to 300: Ishan

PTI ■ CHATTOGRAM

 Γ he diminutive Ishan Kishan was delighted to score the fastest double hundred in ODI cricket history but rued about missing out on a golden opportunity to become the first triple centurion in the format.

Playing only his 10th ODI, the 24-year-old displayed fearless batting as he shattered Chris Gayle's record of fastest (138 balls) double century in the format when he took just 126 balls to the milestone. India posted a huge 409 for eight. He was out for 210 in the 36th over of the Indian

"I got out with 15 (14.1) overs left. I could have got 300 also," Kishan told the broadcasters SonyLiv' at the innings break. The Jharkhand left-hander became the fourth

batter to score a double hundred.

Indian skipper Rohit Sharma has scored it thrice including his highest ODI score of 264 while Sachin Tendulkar and Virender Sehwag have scored

"I am blessed to hear my name between such legends. The wicket was too good to bat on. My intent was very clear — if the ball is there, I'll go for it," he revealed about his strategy.

His record-breaking knock came in the company of Virat Kohli and Kishan credited the star

Îndia batter to "calm him down" when he was approaching his maiden century. "I was batting with Virat bhai, and he was spot on with which bowlers I needed to select [to tar-

get].I was on 95 and wanted to bring up the hundred with a six but he calmed me down, saying it was my first hundred, get it in singles as it's your first," he said.

Kishan is very close to Suryakumar Yadav, who has told him to bat before the start of the game. "I had a chat with Surya bhai — he said when

you bat before the game, you see the ball well. I didn't take too much pressure on myself. Just wanted to make use of the opportunity," Kishan said.



Unadkat picked for India Tests matches after 12 yrs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Veteran left-arm pacer Jaydev Unadkat has received a callup to the Indian Test squad for the upcoming series in Bangladesh as a replacement for the injured Mohammed Shami.

Unadkat, who is coming off an impressive performance in his team Saurashtra's Vijay Hazare Trophy win recently, is currently in Rajkot and waiting to complete his visa formalities. after which he will join the Test squad in Chattogram.

A BCCI source confirmed the development to PTI.

Shami was ruled out of the series due to a hand injury.

India is set to play two Tests in Bangladesh. The 31year-old Unadkat played his lone Test in 2010, against South Africa in Centurion. Since then, he has played seven ODIs and 10 T20 Internationals.

The Saurashtra skipper was the highest wicket-taker in the Vijay Hazare Trophy, with 19 scalps in 10 games. In all, he has picked 353 wickets in 96 firstclass matches.

Besides Shami, the touring Indian team had been struggling with injures to players such as skipper Rohit Sharma, youngsters Kuldeep Sen and Deepak Chahar who were earlier ruled out of the ODIs.

Brook and Duckett put England on top against Pakistan

AP ■ MULTAN

 $E_{\text{another difficult target for}}^{\text{ngland is well placed to set}}$ Pakistan on a turning wicket in the second test despite spinner Abrar Ahmed completing a 10-wicket haul on his debut on

Half centuries by Harry Brook (74 not out) and Ben Duckett (79) led England to 202-5 - an overall lead of 281 runs on Day Two after Pakistan had crumbled for 202 in the first ses-

The bespectacled Ahmed, 24, bagged 7-114 to limit England's aggressive batters to Pakistan collapsed by losing seven wickets for 37 runs. Ahmed then took 3-81 in

England's second innings - and

also ran out Zak Crawley with a direct throw - to become the second Pakistani to claim a 10wicket haul on his test debut. Duckett followed his first innings half-century with another gritty knock before he

was clean bowled by Ahmed in

the last session off a delivery which kept low and skidded through. Brook continued a rich vein of form, following his belligerent 153 and 87 in the first test with an unbeaten half century as England looked to challenge Pakistan again after successful-

the opening test. Duckett had a couple of close calls against Ahmed as England played out two relatively quiet sessions with the bat.

ly defending a target of 343 in

Babar Azam dropped a regulation catch off Duckett at short midwicket before the left-



Ahmed earlier bowled Will Jacks for 4 with a googly in his first over, while Abdullah Shafique snapped up a brilliant low one-handed catch at short leg when Joe Root went for a sweep on 21.

Pakistan's batters stumbled against the left-arm spin of Jack Leach and impressive reverse swing bowling by all three England fast bowlers before Faheem Ashraf and Ahmed added 23 for the last wicket. Leach struck three times on

Day Two and Root picked up two wickets in an over as Pakistan's lower order collapsed once Ollie Robinson bowled captain Babar with his second ball of the day.

Leach removed Saud Shakeel (63), Mohammad Rizwan and Mohammad Nawaz to finish with 4-98 while Root took 2-23 as most of the batters fell to poor shots.

Resuming on 107-2, Babar and Shakeel took the score to 142 inside the first half-hour.

made a half-century on his debut in the first test at Rawalpindi, survived a run-out when he charged down the wicket but Crawley became unbalanced and threw wide.

It was Robinson who ignited the slump which saw Pakistan losing seven wickets for 37.

Babar, who had completed his half century on Day One, was on 75 when he was outsmarted by the tall fast bowler's reverse swing and the ball tailed into him to crash into his stumps and end a 91-run stand.

England then tied down Rizwan for 27 balls before he finally got his first runs with a cover drive against Mark Wood.

Shakeel got frustrated and tried to break the shackles before he holed out to wide mid-on to give Leach his 100th test

Rizwan labored for 43 balls for his 10 runs before being bowled by Leach off a delivery which turned sharply away from



Boland's 3 wickets put Aus in control against WI

AP ADELAIDE

 $P_{\text{took three wickets in an}}^{\text{ace bowler Scott Boland}}$ over on Saturday to put Australia in command of the second cricket test against West Indies.

Australia bowled out West Indies for 214 on Day 3 before declaring its second innings on 199-6 early in the last session. setting the visitors a target of 497 to win with more than two days remaining in the daynight match at the Adelaide

Boland (3-9) then entered the attack in the sixth over and snared three second-innings wickets without conceding a run to have the tourists reeling

He took a wicket with his

first ball, having skipper Kraigg Brathwaite (3) caught behind with a delivery that straightened.

Boland also trapped Shamarh Brooks (0) lbw with a delivery that moved back off the seam two balls later and had Jermaine Blackwood (0) caught low at gully by Cameron Green.

Left-arm paceman Mitchell Starc (1-11) picked up an unex-pected wicket when Tagenarine Chanderpaul, after scoring a watchful 17 from 28 balls, feathered a catch down the legside to wicketkeeper Alex Carey.

It was given not out by the on-field umpire but the Australians reviewed, despite Starc and Carey seemingly not convinced there was an edge, and got the reward as West Indies slipped to 21-4 in the 9th

Devon Thomas and Jason Holder each scored eight to help West Indies reach 38-4 at stumps.

It was an eventful day, with West Indies resuming on 102-4 and losing two wickets before adding a run as they quickly surrendered a first-innings lead

Great hope Chanderpaul (47) was run out off the fourth ball of the day when he prodded into space, took off, turned around and was caught short by

a Starc direct hit. Nathan Lyon finished with 3-57 while Starc ended up with 2-48 after having Holder caught behind for a duck and dismissing Roston Chase off a hook shot

I never thought I would become IOA president: Usha

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

"Tnever thought I would one day Lbecome IOA president," track and field legend PT Usha said after she was elected as the first woman head of the Indian Olympic Association on

Saturday. Usha, 58, was officially elected for the top post during the polls, heralding in a new chapter in Indian sports

administration. "In my whole life I had lived just 13 years without sports. Otherwise I have been living with sports, as an athlete, coach and administrator in different roles," she said while addressing a press conference after

her elevation to the top job. "I had never thought that I would one day become IŎA chief or member of Parliament. This is all because of my sport," she said with her entire executive council members by her side.

Usha took to athletics at a young age of nine while she was studying in class four at a school at Payyoli near her native village in Kozhikode district of Kerala. What followed was a stellar

career during which she won multiple Asian Games gold medals and achieved a fourth place finish in the 1984 Olympics 400m hurdles final. She announced her retirement in

1990, got married and returned to the tracks again in 1994 before finally quitting athletics in 2000.

That initial nine years of her childhood and four years between 1990 and 1994 was the 13 years she was referring to. After 2000, she remained associated with athletics as mentor to promising athletes at her academy -- Usha School of Athletics.

She is currently the chairperson of its junior selection committee. She has also served in national award committees of the government.



"The national federations, the Athletes Commission and SOMs (Sportspersons of Outstanding Merit) pushed me to file nomination papers for the president's post. I am thankful to all of them," said Usha, who is also the first Olympian to head the

"I was earlier not close to IOA and federation (AFI) but now I have come (become IOA chief) because all our sportspersons want to. There are also many sportspersons in the executive committee. I am very happy about that."

She said the IOA will work as a unit and her organisation will be accessible to the federations, athletes and coaches.

"Me and my team, with collective effort, will do our best to work for the betterment of sports in the country. We will take opinions of federations, athletes and coaches and we will work together to bring more medals for our

"Only sportspersons know how tough it is to come from lower levels and win international medals. We will work for the athletes only." Usha, fondly known as the

'Payyoli Express', is being seen as a

candidate of the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, which had nominated her as a Rajya Sabha member in July. She also became the first Olympian and first international

medallist to head the IOA in its 95year-old history, adding another feather to her cap after dominating Indian and Asian athletics for two decades before retiring in 2000 with a bagful of international medals. Usha is the first sportsperson to

have represented the country and also become IOA chief since Maharaja Yadavindra Singh, who played a Test match in 1934. Singh was the third IOA president who held office from 1938 to 1960.

New Delhi, December 11, 2022

The pioneer of the pi

I don't think anybody can be told how to act. I think you can give advice. But you have to find your own way through it





DECODING THE VERDICT

The BJP landslide victory in Gujarat shows that the party could deal with anti-incumbency of any number of years or any pressing issues if the opposition is divided, writes NAVIN UPADHYAY

he outcome of the assembly polls of Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh as well that of Delhi MCD elections have a huge message for all the three winners and losers. For the BJP a historic victory in Gujarat, the predictable loss in Himachal and debacle in Delhi underlines the fact that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal alone cannot overcome the ground realities and anti-incumbency factors in a straight contest where polls are held on localised issues without polarising context.

The outcome of the assembly polls of Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh as well as that of Delhi MCD elections have a huge message for all the three winners and losers.

For the BJP, a historic victory in Gujarat, the predictable loss in Himachal, and the debacle in Delhi underline the fact that Prime Minister Narendra Modi's appeal alone cannot overcome the ground realities and anti-incumbency factors in a straight contest if the opposition can contest the polls on localized issues without allowing a polarising context.

For the Congress, the humiliating route in Gujarat and Delhi and a face-saver in Himachal reemphasize the fact that the grand old party is caught in a quagmire of its own making, and it would be a herculean task for it to remain afloat and flourish again till the leadership showed it has fire in the belly to overcome the gigantic challenge posed by the BJP and the gradual rise of AAP.

For the AAP the victory in Delhi MCD and satisfactory debut in Gujarat are reassertions of its policy of development populism. On the other hand, the failure of Kejriwal's outfit to even open its account shows that the voters seek more than freebies and are reluctant to experiment where they have a clear choice.

Because of the completely diverse issues and nature of the three contests, it would be unwise to read any universal message in their outcome for the 2024 lok sabha polls, but certain things are more than obvious. First, Congress will remain the prime pan-India opposition against the BJP, and AAP has a long way to go before it could even dream of occupying that spot. In fact, notwithstanding its failure to retain the MCD, the BJP has been able to revise its organizational apparatus in Delhi by launching a massive campaign in the municipal corporation elections. In VK Saxena, they have a

Lieutenant Governor who would continue to make life difficult for the AAP government. The AAP will also have to deal with the growing disillusionment of the Muslim votes who played a key role in the emergence of AAP as a powerful force in Delhi. The AAP candidates did win in several Muslimmajority areas in the Delhi MCD polls, but the margins were lower than those recorded two years ago in the assembly polls. Once the Congress puts its house in order, the AAP may find it tough to expand its base just by replicating the Hindutva avatar of the BIP and populism of the yore of the Congress. AAP is also under scrutiny in Punjab and if the party failed to improve its governance in the border state, it will have to brace up for its repercussion in Delhi in the 2025 assembly polls.

On the other hand, Congress has to come to terms with the reality that there is a difference between a political party and an NGO. It's fine to undertake a six-month arduous padyatra across the country, but in the absence of any serious effort to strengthen the organizational structure of the party to aggressively fight any election seatby-seat, ward-by-ward, state-by-state, the party cannot hope to regain its lost ground even among those who are sympathetic to the Grand Old Party. A large chunk of Congress sympathizers has abandoned the party because they are either seething with resentment or despair over the way the Congress leadership, especially Rahul Gandhi, conducted himself before undertaking the Bharat jodo yatra. If the Congress did not revive its moribund organization, then the yatra will be at best remembered as a prolonged jamboree, which will pay no political dividend.

Political experts are amazed why the Congress leadership completely deserted Gujarat as if the party had entered into an understanding with the BJP to give a walkover. Congress has not only been routed in Gujarat, but the way Rahul Gandhi abandoned the state will have its repercussion long after the dust has settled in on the poll outcome. In yet another state, the Congress organization has been destroyed, and in yet another state the Congress has allowed the rise of a challenger to fight for the space of the main opposition. Congress should learn a lesson from Punjab. The way the Kejriwal outfit ambushed the congress in the last assembly polls after finding a foothold in 2016, has a grim message for the

POLITICAL EXPERTS ARE AMAZED WHY THE **CONGRESS LEADERSHIP COMPLETELY DESERTED GUJARAT AS IF THE PARTY** HAD ENTERED INTO AN UNDERSTANDING WITH THE BJP TO GIVE A WALKOVER. **CONGRESS HAS NOT ONLY** BEEN ROUTED IN GUJARAT, **BUT THE WAY RAHUL** GANDHI ABANDONED THE STATE WILL HAVE ITS REPERCUSSION LONG AFTER THE DUST HAS SETTLED IN ON THE POLL OUTCOME. IN YET ANOTHER STATE, THE CONGRESS ORGANIZATION HAS BEEN DESTROYED, AND IN YET ANOTHER STATE THE **CONGRESS HAS ALLOWED** THE RISE OF A CHALLENGER IN AAP FOR THE OPPOSITION SPACE. CONGRESS SHOULD LEARN A LESSON FROM PUNJAB. THE WAY THE **KEJRIWAL OUTFIT** AMBUSHED THE CONGRESS IN THE LAST ASSEMBLY POLLS AFTER FINDING A TOEHOLD IN 2016, HAS A GRIM MESSAGE FOR THE



CONGRESS IN GUJARAT,

How the Congress was routed in Gujarat

SAURASHTRA

The BJP Saurashtra winning 40 of 48 seats, regaining its hold over a region where the Congress held sway in 2017 polls, bagging as many as 28 seats. The Congressy managed to win just 3 seats, a far cry from the 28 seats it won in the 2017 elections. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), in its maiden Gujarat assembly elections, managed to bag 4 seats, one seat more than the Congress' tall

NORTH GUJARAT

Of the total 32 seats of the north Gujarat region, eight went to Congress, 22 to BJP and two seats went to independent candidates. These seats include nine of Banaskantha, three of Sabarkantha, four of Arvalli, four of Patan, seven of Mehsana, and five Assembly seats of Gandhinagar district. In 2017, BJP won 14 seats and Congress 17 seats in north Gujarat. In that election, Dalit leader Jignesh Mevani, who contested as an independent with Congress' support, won from Va Vadagam (SC) seat of Banaskatha district. This time he won from the same seat as a Congress candidate. While the BJP improved its tally

significantly this time, Congress' tally has come down from 17 to 8.

SOUTH GUJARAT

The BJP improved upon its 2017 tally in south Gujarat, winning 33 out of the 35 seats in the region. The Aam Aadmi Party followed, bagging the second spot in 12 seats. Congress managed to win the Vansada reserved seat while AAP won Dediapada, also a reserved seat, in its debut fight. Tribal leader and seven-time MLA Chhotu Vasava lost his Jhagadia seat to BJP's Ritesh Vasava, while BJP clinched five reserved seats from Congress. AAP failed to win in Surat, not winning any of the 16 seats there. BJP won all those seats.

KUTCH

BJP made a clean sweep in the Kutch region, winning all six seats. The Congress, which carried out a silent campaign in rural areas, failed to retain the two seats it won in the 2017 elections. Aam Aadmi Party failed to win any seat but caused enough damage to the Congress, even leading to its defeat in its stronghold Rapar.

There is no denying the fact that the Bharat Jodo yatra has considerably transformed the image of Rahul Gandhi from a reluctant politician to a caring and dedicated footsoldier as well the supreme leader of the Congress. Every party needs a face, and Rahul has certainly acquired the aura that has been projected to help him as a leader who could even be the face of the opposition in 2024. The yatra has also galvanized the cadres and the Congress sympathizers, and now it was up to the Congress leadership to bring in follow-up

For the BJP, the poll outcomes have a subtle message that the party should gear up to face a certain amount of anti-incumbency in the 2024 Lok sabha polls. Even though voters have often shown that they exercise their franchise differently in the state, municipal, and Lok sabha polls, it is universally accepted that price rise, unemployment, and economic challenges are far bigger issues than any other narratives. If the BJP did not face these issues in Gujarat,

measures to cash in on it.

it was because the rise of Narendra Modi, Amit Shah industrialists like Adanis and the domination of officers from Gujarat over bureaucracy have led to the rise of powerful sub-nationalism in the state, which subsumed any other agendas or narratives.

In 2024, the BJP faces major challenges in bigger states such as West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Kerala which account for more than half of the 544-Lok sabha seats. The party is expected to go all out in building the euphoria around the completion of the Ram temple project in 2024 ahead of the Lok sabha polls and hopes that Divine intervention will help it overcome the issue of price rise, unemployment, and economic distress

Much will depend on whether the opposition realizes that they could never defeat the Saffron outfit if they don't join hands.

(The writer is Executive Editor of The Pioneer)

CANCER CARE: BEYOND SURVIVAL

The number of cancer survivors is going up in India as elsewhere due to improved early detection and treatment of the disease. Yet current schemes which are predominantly specialist-led care have failed to adequately address the physical, psychosocial and supportive care needs of survivors of cancer, according to a first-of-its kind analysis based on the results from the latest government report 'Longitudinal Ageing Study in India.' ARCHANA JYOTI reports

hen 59-year-old Rewati Sharma (name changed) began her breast cancer treatment, she couldn't wait for the day she would finish. But now she has completed her treatment, she is trying hard to cope with life as a cancer survivor.

magazine the pioneer

"I go through a range of challenges and emotions like what if cancer relapses. I get worked up easily...Every ache or pain leaves me tizzy. Also, my medical and day-to-day expenses have increased as I have to be cautious what I am eating," shares Revati.

She is not alone in this trau-

she is not alone in this traumatic journey in the country which is home to around 2.1 million cancer survivors, as per various estimates.

Recently, researchers from the International Institute for Population Sciences, Mumbai, in collaboration with Harvard T H Chan School of Public Health (HSPH), USA and the University of Southern California (USC) USA analysed, a first-of-its kind exercise, the health status of at least 65,000 Indian adults over 45 who had survived cancer.

They found that cancer survivors had poor self-rated health, depressive symptoms, functional limitations in their daily life, sleep problems and higher hospitalisations, taking a toll on them, financially, mentally and physically.

The cancer survivors are those individuals who live beyond a cancer diagnosis and its therapy. As the cancer care models are largely focused on diagnostic methods, treatment aspects, cure, and disease failure and survival rates, not much thought has been given to various physical and psychosocial conditions, which require to be identified and attended within the cancer care system.

To assess the situation of the cancer survivors, the authors picked data from the recently released Government's longitudinal ageing study conducted in 2017 and 2018 covering a nationally representative sample of



72,000 people. The survey 'Health status and associated factors of middle-aged and older adult cancer survivors in India: results from the Longitudinal Ageing Study in India 'studied health and financial status of the cancer survivors aged 45 years and above with a sample population of more than 65,500.

The study collected information on work and retirement, self-reported and measured chronic health conditions, health risk factors, and functional health status for middle-aged and older adults.

The authors found that cancer survivors were facing an array of health issues even limitations in activities of daily living even when

visiting the toilet, self-feeding, dressing, grooming, ambulation, and bathing, doing work around the house or garden, managing money, such as paying bills and keeping track of expenses and getting around or finding an address in an unfamiliar place.

'These results can be used to develop education and training programmes for the oncology workforce,' the author of the study T R Dilp, IIPS Mumbai said, asserting that it is must for the Government to work upon an integrated health care system ensuring that survival rate is on the higher side.

A detailed analysis of the data, published in the BMJ Cancer also showed that there were more than 2000 cancer survivors per lakh of population in Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Gujarat, Kerala and the Andaman Nicobar Islands. In Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Meghalaya and Nagaland, there were less than 300 per lakh. The national average was 641 cancer survivors per lakh population.

The proportion of female survivors was higher. Most of the survivors were Hindus, followed by Muslims. There were more cancer survivors among castes that do not face much discrimination.

To avoid fragmented health care after diagnosis or treatment, India requires an improved integrated cancer care pathway, said

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Needs of the cancer survivors often get overlooked in India's cancer control programme that is focused on cancer prevention and screening activities and in provisioning access to optimal treatment for diagnosed cases.
- Cancer care services are not widely accessible across the country, and the survival of patients is also dependent on their place of residence and capacity to seek medical care.
- Despite the increasing percentage of middle-aged and older people living with and beyond cancer, little research has focused on understanding the physical and psychological health and wellbeing of cancer survivors aged 45 years and above.
- Living with and beyond cancer places a burden both on the individuals diagnosed with cancer and the health care system.
- Cancer survivors aged 45 years and above also report higher comorbidity.
 This highlights a need for an integrated care pathway to avoid fragmentation of health and social care by multiple providers that handle various aspects of morbidities other than cancer.
- As many as 10% of the sample was hospitalised in the last 12months, 28% have depressive symptoms, 18% have poor self-reported health, and 13% have sleep problems. The economic gradient of cancer survivors continued to be significant. Cancer survivors are likely to have worked in the past and are currently not working. The cancer survivors have a higher odds of family history of cancer.
- The study population with a family history of cancer are three times more likely to be in the cancer survivors' group. Cancer survivors are significantly likely to be from the highest expenditure quintile and Western India.

the authors Aravinda Meera Guntupalli from Institute of Applied Health Sciences, University of Aberdeen, UK and Y Selvamani and Sara J. Maclennan from School of Public Health, SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai.

Cancer risk has always been higher in older adults and the elderly. The projected increase in the incidence of cancer among older people (defined as aged 65 and above) indicates that this group would represent 60% of global cancer incidence by 2035, the authors noted.

The number of cancer survivors per 1,00,000 population was relatively more in non-indige-

nous groups, people with a history of cancer in their families, those who worked earlier but currently not working and those in the richest quintile categories.

Also, cancer survivors who had their cancer diagnosis in the past 2 years or a cancer-related treatment in the past 2 years have significantly higher odds of poor health status than middle-aged and older adults without a cancer history, it said.

The authors concluded that as

The authors concluded that as middle-aged and older cancer survivors, particularly those who underwent cancer diagnosis or treatment in the past 2 years, are at a significantly higher risk of experiencing poor self-reported

health and other health challenges, there is the need for an integrated healthcare approach.

Though the net survival rates

Though the net survival rates for cancer patients in low and middle-income countries continue to be substantially lower than in high-income countries, there have been slow but substantial improvements in these rates, especially in the case of breast cancer between 1994 and 2004. The study helps the policy makers to improve its understanding of the physical and psychological health and wellbeing of cancer survivors and provide a comprehensive picture of the characteristics of cancer survivors in

Overall, the share of study participants is highest in the 45-54 age group, and females outnum-bered males. Most of the study population resides in rural areas (69%). The majority of the study population belongs to the Hindu religion (82%), followed by Muslims. Only 6% of the middleaged and older participants have completed college or more educa-tion. Nearly half of the study participants are currently engaged in work. More than 5% of the study population reported a family history of cancer. Socio-demographic characteristics of cancer survivors In India, there were 641 cancer survivors per 1,00,000 population aged 45 years above.

Survivor data clearly indicates that the survivor-to-population ratio is higher among groups with a family history of cancer (1842 per 1,00,000) than those without such a history (581 per 1,00,000). Statewise, the density of cancer survivors in the population is higher in Himachal Pradesh, followed by Kerala, which highlights better treatment and care than other states. The lowest was observed in Nagaland, a North-East Indian state.

In this study, the most common types of cancer was endometrium or uterus, followed by breast and stomach cancers. Further, 23% of cancer survivors had not received cancer treatment in the past 2 years.

NEWS BRIEF

LS Speaker Birla flags kidney transplant demand-supply gap



NEW DELHI: Noting that nearly two lakh patients in the country qualify for liver transplant as on date, but lack of infrastructure and organ donations is delaying the treatment, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has called upon the ILBS here to chalk out a roadmap for enhancing treatment of liver diseases including liver transplant. He also favored empowerment of the community to get equitable access to liver related medical management. Birla was speaking at an event held to celebrate 8th Convocation Day Ceremony at the ILBS.

Dr S K Sarin, Director, ILBS said that the institute has conducted over 900 liver and 280 kidney transplants till date. He also shared that ILBS has become empowered with a 5 G facility, probably the first medical institute in the country. A total of 155 candidates were awarded various Degree and Certificate Courses. Delhi LG Vinai Kumar Saxena, State Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar, State Health Secretary Amit Singla were among those who attended the event.

Boy with twisted intestines gets new lease of life after surgery

NEW DELHI: A 14-year-old boy with malrotation, known as twisted intestines, experiencing greenish vomit and excruciating pain due to blockage in the abdomen, has been successfully treated and saved by a team of doctors from Faridabad Sarvodaya Hospital. The malrotation is rarely found in grown-up children and is a congenital anomaly which results from failure of the GI tract to undergo usual counter-clockwise rotation during embry-ologic development. "The child presented himself with fever at the hospital and was diagnosed with typhoid. He had intense abdominal pain, so we suspected malrotation as one of the possibilities. This is a medical condition where the intestines twist upon themselves, leading to blockage. The condition needs emergency surgery once diagnosed," said Dr Anand Gupta, Senior Consultant, Paediatrics. "Malrotation with midgut volvulus is a surgeon's nightmare. The three-hour surgery, called Ladd procedure, involved repositioning the intestine to correct the anomaly. The patient's intestine was straightened out, the Ladd's bands were divided, the small intestine was folded into the right side of the abdomen, and the colon was placed on the left side. Resuming blood supply to the whole intestine through denotation saved the child's life. Quick diagnosis and immediate surgery proved to be game changers," said Dr Shweta Kumari Sharma, Consultant, Pediatric Surgery at the hospital.

Proper nutrition & healthy lifestyle keep knee problems at bay: Dr. Garg

DR. SORABH GARG is a senior consultant in Interventional Pain Management and Palliative care. He is also an Essential Pain Management (EPM) trainer from Faculty of Pain Medicine, Australia. Dr Garg, along with his team, delivers tailor-made treatment protocols as per the best understanding of the pain for the most effective outcome. The HEALTH PIONEER talked to Dr. Garg to understand the knee joint pain which is rampant and almost everyone over 50 suffers from it in some measure. Excerpts:

Joint problems or we can say knee joint problems are rather rampant. Let alone old people, even young people are suffering from it these days. What are the prime reasons behind this?

Poor lifestyle and nutritional deficiency are primarily responsible for this health issue. Remember our great-grandparents never had these issues unless there were some genetic causes like arthritis (Gout, rheumatoid or other) only because of their lifestyle. They were hard workers, walked, or cycled a lot. With good nutrition, they always had a good supply to repair their damaged tissue readily. Nowadays, it is very common to find nutritional and vitamin deficiency.

What is your advice to someone who feels his/her knees are hurting?

Pain in the knee or other ioints is common in day-to-day life and all pains need not require the attention of a doctor. However, if one feels that pain is not subsiding in 48 hours from the time of occurrence then he should certainly meet an expert. Proper investigations and precise diagnosis are the key to the way forward. The motto of the treatment should be preserving function and repairing damages without surgery. Many times surgery gives good relief from pain but



at the cost of accelerated degeneration or loss of functions. Knee replacement is a good pain relief but one can't run or jump or do extreme bending of the knee joint. So, try to avoid these surgeries as much as possible. Anyways, what nature has created could not be replicated by man or science.

What is the line of treatment in case of a knee problem? Is surgery the only solution?

Yes; there are options other than surgeries, but due to lack of availability of latest technologies, awareness and training, most of the orthopedics in India either do not offer or oppose these treatment options. They are widely accepted and offered in western countries like the UK and the US. Depending on injuries, we can always go for the most suitable



regenerative medicine options which have very good potential in handling these issues.

Is there any diet and physiotherapy regime one should follow to minimize joint pain and remain mobile?

Yes, of course a good diet rich in natural proteins (not supplements), vitamins, good fat, and proper physiotherapy are key to good joint health.

What precautions should people with knee problems take? Is Yoga advisable for them?

right way it will surely help

When yoga is done in the

issues, but it depends on many factors. Sometimes asanas have no or negligible effects on knee health. Precautions are key factors in already damaged or degenerated joints where you have to prevent further joint damage or give time to heal damaged knee tissues/injuries.

patients suffering from joint

Many sports persons whose wear and tear is far more than the ordinary persons see their career end abruptly. Is there any hope for them?

career end abruptly. Is there any hope for them? With proper usage of technology, such sportspersons can be

back to track in much shorter time

intervals as compared to standard surgeries. Many places (sports clubs, national teams) across the world have these technologies as an integral part of their injury management program.

You have designed a treatment process which promises a higher success rate. Please tell us about it.

When I was a young doctor, I always felt bad when I had to offer "surgeries only" as the option of treatment for joints, muscle and ligament injuries. With proper training and transfer of technologies, we are now able to treat these injuries in the most natural way with the help of patient's own cells which play in natural repair mechanisms. The best part is there are no side effects as these are natural healing processes, and no or minimal scarring because no tissues are cut (incisions or sutures or any scar inside or on skin) while this healing occurs. We use the patient's own healing cells to repair their own damages.

Downtime is really half as compared to surgical processes and long-term outcomes are at par. Over the period of time, all surgical techniques have emerged as minimally invasive and least destructive ways but major joint interventions are still open surgical procedures; and regenerative medicine is the best minimally invasive options for such patients.



Universal health coverage: India needs big push

Universal health coverage (UHC) is widely discussed worldwide as an essential component of the development agenda. The outbreak of Covid-19 has necessitated the need for universal health coverage as the health systems failed miserably across the globe during those times. Considering the importance of UHC, the United Nations declared December 12 as International Universal Health Coverage Day (UHC Day) in

The United Nations defines UHC as "everyone, everywhere should have access to the health services they need without risk of financial hardship." SDG target 3.8 ("Achieve universal health coverage, including financial risk protection, access to quality essential healthcare services and access to safe, effective, quality and affordable essential medicines and vaccines for all.") also focuses on achieving universal health coverage. UHC can be attained by achieving population coverage, service coverage and financial security.

India is committed to attaining the UHC by 2030. To achieve the UHC goal, the Government of India came up with a rather ambitious health insurance policy Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana, under the Ayushman Bharat scheme launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on September 23, 2018, in Jharkhand. It has been popularised as one of the world's largest health insurance policies and a substantial step towards universal health coverage.

However, health insurance coverage among households from any source stands at 41 per cent (NFHS-5, 2019-21), less than in many developing countries. This coverage stands at a low of 30 per cent and 33 per cent for women and men (aged 15-49) simultaneously. It's not only the low coverage that is of concern but also the equity of distribution that is questionable.

Without achieving equity, we cannot achieve UHC, as the former is the guiding principle of the latter. There is substantial State-wise variation as on the one hand Rajasthan (88%) and Andhra Pradesh (80%)



hand, Bihar (17%) and UP (16%) stand at the bottom in terms of coverage of health insurance. The districts within States are also experiencing

huge variations. One of the important agendas of the UHC is to ensure the reach and coverage of the most marginalised population. The NFHS-5 results paint a different picture for India, where insurance coverage is lowest (36.1%) among households with the lowest wealth quintile. Moreover, the coverage among the minorities such as Muslims and Sikhs also falls behind the Hindus.

Another vital pillar of UHC is financial protection, ensuring that health services should not lead to financial

NFHS revealed that the average out-of-pocket expenditure (OOPE) per delivery in a public health facility is ₹2,916, which in the case of urban and rural stands at ₹3,385 and ₹2,770 simultaneously. This figure is an improvement over NFHS-4, but we should also keep in mind that we are witnessing these numbers even though we have a scheme like Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram, which offers free delivery along with the incentives of ₹1,400 to women delivering in a public health-care

Further, let's explore the situation at the State level. The results of NFHS are rather alarming as the OOPE for most of the North-eastern Meghalaya and Nagaland) and even for bigger States (except for Odisha, West Bengal, and Rajasthan) have risen between NFHS 4 and NFHS 5. Given the above scenario, it seems an arduous task to achieve the goal set by National Health Policy 2017 to reduce the OOPE. Although the NFHS-5 does not consider PMJAY implementation, recent studies showed that like the earlier health insurance policies, the PMJAY is also not free from inclusion and exclusion errors where we are witnessing the inclusion of ineligible households and exclusion of eligible house-

The availability of services is also a crucial part of UHC. In terms of hospital empanelthe total empanelled hospitals, 56 per cent were in the public sector, and 40 per cent were in the private for-profit sector. Most of the hospital empanelment is in the States where the State has previous experience implementing publicly funded health insurance schemes (Joseph, J, D Hari Sankar and Nambiar, D, 2021).

Therefore the policy implementation in terms of hospital empanelment is facing concentration towards the states like Karnataka, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh. The specialities provided by the empanelled hospital also vary hugely. Most hospitals are able to provide very limited specialities, leaving a major chunk of the pop-

India has shown growth in several health indicators. Growth in health indicators such as Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) and Infant Mortality Rate (IMR), achieving the target of Total Fertility Rate (TFR) and polio-free India are some of the crucial landmarks that became a reality. Although when you are looking towards the goal of universalisation of health, fundamental changes need to be

affected. The most important step in this direction should be the enhancement of health expenditure as a percentage of GDP, which currently stands lower than most of the developing nations. Strengthening the pri-

another area of development that needs special attention. In this direction, the establishment of the health and wellness centres under the Ayushman Bharat scheme was proposed in 2018, but the growth in this regard is questionable.

A big push in the health sector is the need of the hour, in the absence of which the health and wellness centres will end up in deplorable conditions similar to the current primary health centres and sub-centres. India needs to make significant progress before making this initiative the imitable one in the world.

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One of the important agendas of universal health coverage is to ensure the reach and coverage of the most marginalised population. However, the NFHS-5 results paint a different picture for India, where insurance coverage is lowest among households with the lowest wealth quintile. Moreover, the coverage among the minorities such as Muslims and Sikhs falls behind the Hindus



PRATAP C MOHANTY



MILIND K YADAV

PERSPECTIVE -

Tell the truth and shame the devil

The fact that Hindus were killed and driven out of Muslim majority **Kashmir in 1989/90** is well documented. Despite all, The Kashmir Files was pooh-poohed by the liberal media and their agents like Nadav Lapid. Does it mean that truth cannot be shown any longer if it is politically counterproductive



MARIA WIRTH

Tn connection with the recent focus $oldsymbol{1}$ on "The Kashmir Files", it was stated that "the movie is part of the culture wars" and that its "real purpose" of the film was to promote the BJP's agenda. The BJP agenda, so it is implied, is to create a Hindu rashtra.

It made me wonder who the players in the "culture wars" are and why a dominant Hindu culture is usually projected as the worst possible scenario by the wrongly called "liberal" media. The same media seems to endorse the non-Hindu cultures. The so-called "liberal" media condones even harsh dehumanising blasphemy laws in numerous Muslim nations and China's inhuman crackdown on the Uyghur Muslims.

So why do the media and leftists vehemently oppose the Hindu culture? They insinuate that minorities (read Muslims and Christians) will suffer in a Hindu nation.

This is a flawed reasoning, because India has an excellent track record of treating minorities respectfully; while minorities like Jews, Parsis and Tibetans have faced persecution in many other countries. For example, in Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, not along religious minorities including Hindus, other minority Muslim sects too have faced the societal and legal discriminations.

The fact that Hindus were killed and driven out of Muslim majority Kashmir in 1989/90 is well documented. They were given three options: "convert, leave or get killed". To show that they meant it, gruesome murders of Hindus were committed. The Kashmiri Muslims who didn't



Kashmiri Pandits had to sacrifice their lives at the hands of the same Islamist forces.

Strangely, the tragedy didn't make the headline then and now the tragic history is maligned with accusation like "vulgar propaganda". India and the world soon forgot those brutally killed and the 400,000 refugees who fled Kashmir at that time. Instead, the world hears (and most believe) that the Indian Army brutally oppresses the Muslims in

But then, in March 2022, India was reminded of it. "The Kashmir Files" movie came out which truthfully depicted the abominable historical facts. Each scene was based on documents. Of course, violence needed to be shown, but the movie didn't overly focus on the brutalities. It also talked about the history of Kashmir, that even 800 years ago it was the intellectual capital of India. The profound philosophy of Kashmir Shaivism flourished there

support the ethnic cleansing of until some 700 years ago when the region turned Muslim-majority.

The movie was a great success. For the first time, people in India and abroad realised the magnitude of the injustice done to Kashmiri Hindus. Obviously, this made the usual counter-narrative that the Muslims of Kashmir are brutally oppressed by the Indian state and deserve the support of the UN and the world com-

Then came the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) festival and the Israeli head of the jury, Nadav Lapid, became the saviour for the "liberal" media. Lapid stubbornly insisted on his right to make political comments. He kept calling the movie "vulgar propaganda". He could have criticised the movie on parameters of the film making, but rather he choose to make the politically correct statement for the "liberal" media.

Propaganda means that reality is twisted to influence opinions. The reality was not twisted in the movie,

truthful to reality. So why did the IFFI jury chair call it propaganda? That he read out his statement, it is clear that it was a planned move. However, when *The Kashmir Files*' producer Vivek Agnihotri challenged him to show any one scene in the film that seems to be propaganda and he will quit film-making, Lapid kept on parrot-

ing his earlier statement. Does it mean that truth cannot be shown any longer? Incidentally, Hindus never get this velvet-glove treatment. After Nirbhaya was gangraped, the whole world condemned the 'patriarchal Hindu culture which results in rapes'.

Or remember the rape of a nun in Kolkata? The Church immediately suspected "Hindu fundamentalists" wrongly, as it turned out. Was

there an apology? Why this unequal treatment? The reason may be that it all is part of the culture wars. When the narrative of the oppressed Muslims in Kashmir got a dent due to the movie, a remedy popped up in the form of Nadav Lapid's comment: When the jury of the most prestigious Indian film festival considers the Kashmir Files as vulgar propaganda, the movie all of a sudden looks bad. People would feel they were fooled. "Oh, it was only propaganda to defame Muslims. How bad of those mean Hindus," would be the natural reaction of people who are not well informed, and sadly the majority of people are not well

informed. This may be the reason why

on the contrary. It was exemplarily Lapid sticks to his unreasonable comments so fiercely, in spite of the Israeli ambassador reprimanding him and expressing sorry for the lie

peddled by his fellow countryman. The sides are uneven. India is the only surviving ancient culture. All others, like Incas, Mayas, Aztecs, Greeks, Egypt, Mesopotamia or China, have been destroyed either by Christianity, Islam or Communism in relatively short time.

Yet Indian culture still stands and the fight against it has been on since many centuries. Big parts of Greater India have fallen, and life is painful for the few remaining Hindus there.

But why is there so much effort to get rid of the Hindu culture? Moreover, it is a culture which has contributed immensely to world civilisation in many fields, which however is hardly acknowledged. Even today, after all the loot and destruction, India still has some 40 million manuscripts according to Bibek Debroy. Further, the ancient

temples hold incredible mysteries. The reason may be that the Vedic insights about our true nature are a danger for the powers-that-be. They would lose the power to control people by dictating what is the truth and demanding blind belief in unverifiable dogmas, if people came to know about their divine essence.

The Hindu tradition encourages a genuine enquiry into truth. Hints are given, for example in the Mahavakyas of the Upanishads. "Ayam Atma Brahma", means the consciousness in you (Atman) is the same as in the one great Brahman, similarly as the water in a wave is the

same as the water in the ocean. The wave is not the ocean, but the essence is the same in all waves and all are encompassed by the ocean, and when the wave loses its form,

nothing of substance is lost. When in the 18th century, German philosophers read translations of the Upanishads, they praised Vedic knowledge to the sky, and compared it negatively with their own religious tradition. Ever since, the Church lost power, even though it staunchly maligns Hinduism. I, for example, heard already in primary school about "untouchables" in Hinduism. Yet I came to know about the horrific Jewish holocaust by our own German people only in

The opposition to the Hindu side is fierce. Hindus are maliciously called all kinds of names - extremists, fascists, rapists, even terrorists, or cow-piss drinkers, often by persons who have no idea what Hindu Dharma is all about.

Yet, Hindus have become more awaken about their Dharma which was in a subtle way portrayed as inferior to the Abrahamic religions - that is most plural in nature and believes in various facets of truth. And many Hindus have now become vocal and proud about it. This is not appreciated by those who want to eliminate the last surviving ancient Dharma that considers the whole world as one family: Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.

(The writer is a German author and blogger who is a follower of Sanatan Dharma)







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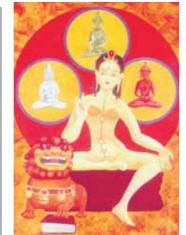




ARIES March 21-April 19

Balance is very important in terms of health. Energy therapy targeted at balancing your chakras or your body/mind/spirit is very effective and beneficial to your health right now. Your health is probably in better shape than you think. The week has a mix of good and negative energy at work. You are both mentally and physically fast. Your adaptability and enhanced talents would inspire you to excel. If you utilize your efforts for something significant and avoid trivial arguments, this might be a moment of startling personal progress. It might be a difficult period in your relationship. It is possible that your sweetheart is going through a difficult period that has nothing to do with your relationship but requires

Lucky number 6 | Lucky colour Purple



LEO July 23-Aug 22

Your health is still strong, and you have the energy of a child. Your mental energy is also enhanced, and you are involved in ethical behaviour, encouragement, or intellectual matters. The spirit of learning, discovery, and mental pursuits of all kinds pervades your whole environment. Use your thoughts and appreciate the pleasures of the brain at such moments. You may have more alternatives at work than you thought feasible. If you're seeking for job, be confident that you have the means and skill set to locate it. On a more personal level, you may be dealing with a relationship issue and attempting to do the right thing. Because you are unclear of what is best for you to do. Know that you have the solutions within you. Now is not the time to be daring.

Lucky number 13 | Lucky colour Brown Lucky day Saturday



SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

This week, focus on your health. If you have a serious illness, get a second or third opinion. If you are experiencing non-specific symptoms, educate yourself as much as possible before making any decisions. By constantly pursuing fresh sources of information and insight, you can enhance your spiritual awareness and practise. Your job expectations are bigger and carry more weight than your merit. Dreams and big objectives are beneficial in life, but don't anticipate the Moon right now. So be grounded and realistic. Relationships must be balanced during this time. You may have various romantic options. Be clear and specific about what you want in a relationship, and carefully weigh your options. For longterm relationships, you must occasionally make desirable adjustments in yourself.

Lucky number 17 | Lucky colour Green Lucky day Saturday



TAURUS April 20-May 20

This week, worry and tension may bother you and create minor health issues. Sleeplessness and excessive analysis of the circumstance may occur. It is recommended that you live a healthy lifestyle so that you have adequate time to care for your body, mind, and spirit. You're doing well professionally. Throughout the week, you will feel generally upbeat. Certain financial gains are indicated in business. This is the moment to expect the least and achieve the most. You are likely to contact someone you care about or admire. Relationships will be redefined because of your efforts. You may be caught up in the excitement and promise more than you can

Lucky number 15 | Lucky colour Sky Blue Lucky day Thursday



VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

This week, others around you admire you and your efforts, and they recognise the high quality of your job. Keep doing what you're doing because you're on the correct track. There is no need to scrap anything and start over. Your health is likely to improve, but this is not due to a miracle; rather, it is due to your determination, commitment, and disciplined attitude to life. You set an excellent example for people to follow at work. It is a terrific moment to address business issues in which you may take pride. It is a wonderful time for love. Your partner is extremely protective of you. It's no surprise that he/she would go to great lengths to combat people who would abuse you or cause friction between you.

Lucky number 11 | Lucky colour Beige Lucky day Saunday



CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

You discover that everything is fine up to a certain point. This week you have good health, nice food, and wonderful amusement. Prosperity, development, and pleasure are all suggested. Several vivid flashes of vital spiritual understanding are expected at this period Your persistence and disciplined attitude to life are what keep you strong and healthy. You make a name for yourself wherever you go, whether in business or on the job. This is the time when your collaboration is recognised and appreciated. Your leadership traits, as well as your potential, are being evaluated. This week. you are likely to do something admirable in the realm of relationships. Things go well for the person you have set your heart on.

Lucky number 12 | Lucky colour Peach **Lucky day** Tuesday



GEMINI May 21-June 20

This week, despite the chaos, you transmit brilliant energy. Your health and sense of well-being should be excellent. If you have the opportunity, take some time off and simply enjoy life. If you look back, you'll see that your attitude has been more optimistic recently as well. This can have a direct impact on how effectively your body operates for you. In business, you may encounter setbacks or financial losses. Things might not be as fruitful as you imagined. Workplace troubles may cause you to be concerned about your financial stability. Because of the stagnation in growth, you may desire to change occupations. Personal relationships may or may not be enlightening. You need to assess your mindset and recognise when things will start to improve.

Lucky number 19 | Lucky colour White



LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

This week, remember to 'live in the moment and seize the day.' You will exude a lot of positive energy and attitude. You must spread your positive attitude to others around you who are down or in need of it. A genetic illness that runs in your family is beyond your control in any case and worrying about it will make no difference. Your finances are likely to improve because of your work and savvy investments. This is not the time to speculate. Take sensible chances, but don't get too carried away. You should liven up your personal life. Examine your look. attitude. and lifestyle. Bring some excitement or changes to your lifestyle.

Lucky number 20 | Lucky colour Mauve Lucky day Monday



AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Bring balance to your job and family life, as well as your body and mind. You have a vivid imagination and spend a lot of time daydreaming and making up stories. This week, your desires and passions may rise, making you a weak person. Your productivity may suffer. On the job front, things will continue to go in the direction you prefer, providing you with plenty of opportunities and optimism for the future. Prepare to be surprised. A significant project may be allocated to you; a high level of responsibility makes you popular among your peers. You may work for the cause and gain a lot of satisfaction. In terms of love, this week does not look promising. You may be emotionally wounded and shattered. Love relationships might be so depressing that you decide to isolate yourself.

Lucky number 3 | Lucky colour Pink Lucky day Sunday



CANCER June 21-July 22

Because you are full of childlike enthusiasm and like having fun, don't let your desire for fun cause you to neglect the genuine thing that may come your way today. You may be prone to mishaps, so stay in the now and avoid taking unnecessary risks. Though you general health is expected to improve, precautions should be taken. You are polite, courteous, and eager to accept responsibility for your actions at work, but in a sensitive, generous way. This is the moment to appreciate the peaceful strength that comes from giving loving energy to others. There may be a conflict at home, or family members may have assumptions and charges that you are unlikely to resolve. Those who are envious of you will be unable to disparage you despite their best attempts.

Lucky number 8 Lucky colour Magenta **Lucky day** Friday



SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

To effectively enhance your health, you may need to set aside time and space to focus on yourself first. If you are constantly putting everyone else ahead of yourself and your needs, as a result your health may suffer. Everything must be in balance. You are just as important as everyone else. This week is fantastic for inspiration and creative thoughts, which will be fueled further by friends you will likely meet shortly. Some old acquaintance or college mate presents a parallel opportunity to devote time, skill, or money in something you've always wanted to pursue. You are feeling fortunate. Your gentle romantic feelings and wishes have been met. If you have been in a long-term committed relationship, it is possible that it may deeper

Lucky number 18 | Lucky colour Silver Lucky day Wednesday



PISCES Feb 19-March 20

In terms of health, this week should be fantastic. If you are awaiting test results, they are most likely to be excellent. You'll feel relaxed, relieved, and motivated. Take excellent care of yourself. Others require your wisdom and happiness. Allow it to shine Almost out of nowhere, you may notice that things are going a lot better at work. A powerful individual is ikely to back you up. This is an excellent moment to request a raise. Overall, your work/career situation is improving. This is a terrific week for professional development. Now is the time to expect significant job advancement followed by cash advantages. This week is also beneficial to your personal life. You will be blessed with wonderful health, charisma, and personality. Celebrations and joy are on the way.

ucky number 14 | Lucky colour Green

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ll about life is how we relate to the self, those around, and the envi-**∠** ronment", said J Krishnamurty. For, we are a part of a unified organism, set into an interdependent mechanism, where no individual has a reality independent of the whole. That makes it a compulsive need to complement and supplement each other's efforts to together carry on the cycle of life – be it in the family unit or society at large. All this would be possible only when all existences are in perfect harmony.

The irony, however, is that we are all born unique. Each of us reflects varying mindsets - beliefs, perceptions, habit tendencies, desire trends, and virtues - coming as they may as karmic carryover from the past. The world, thus, turns out to be a natural breeding ground for conflict of thoughts and interests. That calls for a lesson in the conduct rules of life. The first training evidently begins in the family where a child is taught to respect elders and listen to their command. This way, we try to create a sense of order in the family. But how long will this arithmetical chain of command work? As the children grow, their sense of independence begins gaining ground. With time, their individuality

- mind-trends - come into full play. They begin exerting themselves and wish to go about their own way when they start arguing when objected. Normally, we pass it off as generational gap. But what needs to be appreciated that if suppressed forcefully, either the children become rebellious, or their thinking ability takes a downturn. What further plays spoil sport is one's Ahamkara - the sense of 'I', which keeps reflecting all through life.

Ahamkara often proves limiting. It binds the scope of vision to individualistic desires, beliefs, and perceptions. It doesn't let you look beyond for a reality check or listen to other's counsel. It takes a toll on inter-personal-relationship skill. You start reacting impulsively on instinctive judgment. At works, you normally keep Ahamkara consciously in check, as you are aware that you may have to take its fall. At home, however, you take others for granted. Your inherent habit tendencies begin outplaying unhindered when the sense of reasons takes a backstage. It doesn't let you care for other's sensibilities and concerns. Consequently, familial peace takes a hit. Of late, domestic disturbance have been more in evidence than before.

Address your mental limitations for a harmonious life



That makes it incumbent upon us to first have a look into one's own self, is what J Krishnmurti means by relating to the self. It will be interesting to note that mind is a versatile instrument, which allows you with the scope to reflect upon itself, applying which, you can identify your own fault lines. Acknowledge them and then address them through fresh educative inputs. Here again, ahamkara tricks you. It doesn't let you dispassionately acknowledge own infirmities. It makes you mistakenly believe as if that would be your identity. When faced with an unseemly situation, instead of looking into one's own mistakes, it will make you blame others, often leading to unnecessary ruckus. Here astrology comes handy as an effective diagnostic tool. Through a look at individual energy signature (planetary placements), it reads your personality traits with a fair amount of precision. For, energy knows no bias. Recently somebody going through

disturbed family life sought my guidance: "Sir, for more than two years now, my wife has made my life difficult. Why such a sudden change? Earlier, we managed considerably well. Kindly guide." Nothing has changed in so far as her temperament is concerned. She seems to be stubborn as her lagna, its lord Sun and mind signifying Moon are placed in fixed signs. Debilitated Moon conjunct Mars makes her temperamental - my way or highway would be her attitude. Moon placed adverse Saturn and Venus speaks of her negative mindset, a nagging attitude, and habitually suspicious. Also, she would be too much touchy and sensitive, who may get over exercised even on trivial issues. When provoked, her sense of reason takes a back seat, as would Mercury illdisposed off to Neptune mean. But benevolent Jupiter in the lagna made her keep these inherent tendencies in check for quite long. No sooner Moon dasha began, her health would have gone bad. For, Moon occupies the nakshatra owned by Saturn, the 6th lord. Possibly, she would be having hormonal imbalance, which adversely affects the state of mind, when she lost her sense of alert to keep discriminatory abilities in active mode. Seek medical help, and the situation may improve.

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