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NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 21, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3



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Hospitals struggle as Covid rips through China

Epidemiologist warns over 60% of Chinese, 10% of Earth's population likely to get infected in next 3 mths

AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI / BEIJING

Covid cases in China have started surging at an alarming rate forcing the Xi Jinping-led Government to rush to create hospitals. The authorities eased the stringent curbs under the stringent 'Zero Covid policy' a couple of weeks ago.

China on Tuesday said only Covid-19 deaths from "respiratory failures" will be included in the official death toll, as the country witnessed a massive spike in infections fuelled by new variants of the Omicron strain.

At such a time, epidemiologist and health economist Eric Feigl-Ding has said that China and the rest of the world are about to spiral back into the pandemic wave in the next three months that is likely to see deaths likely in the millions.

He has warned that over 60 per cent of the Chinese and 10 per cent of Earth's population are likely to get infected over the next 90 days.

Eric Feigl-Ding, an epidemiologist and health economist, in a series of tweets on Monday, said the situation in China was alarming that the country was underreporting the deaths due to Covid. He said deaths are likely in the millions in the next three months.

Eric is the Chief of the Covid Task Force at the New England Complex Systems Institute, co-founder of the World Health Network, and the

Chief Health Economist for Microclinic International.

Sharing a video of a hospital, where bodies can be seen, he claimed the dead bodies were piling up in a single night. He said the summary of the CCP's current Covid goal is: "Let whoever needs to be infected - infected, let whoever needs to die - die. Early infections, early deaths, early peak, early resumption of production."

The expert said doubling time for the infection cases in China may not be days anymore, it is now possibly 'hours'. He also said that R-naught - a value that represents the number of people a single infected person can transmit the disease to - is hard to calculate if the doubling rate is less than a day.

"Because it's hard to PCR test that fast. The point is China and the World is in deep trouble," he said.

Meanwhile, the massive surge in Covid numbers has overwhelmed the healthcare infrastructure in China, which on Tuesday said only Covid-19 deaths from "respiratory failures" will be included in the official death toll.

Beijing, which is hit by the BF.7 variant of the Omicron strain, has announced five more deaths in addition to the two on Monday, the first official fatalities since the stringent anti-virus controls earlier this month.

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Hospitals in China have seen a major surge in Covid cases in the last few days.

File photo

Zero curbs policy may cost China 1 mn lives: HK study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Unregulated lifting of Covid-19 restrictions might cause the death of nearly 1 million people in China, a recent study by a team of researchers in Hong Kong has said, adding that explosive growth of infection rates in China could also lead to mutations of the virus.

Titled 'Modelling the adjustment of Covid-19 response and exit from dynamic zero-Covid in China', the study notes that a reopening that sees a high R rate — the basic reproduction number for the virus — would "result in a large number of infections that could potentially accelerate mutation, selection and evolu-

tion of SARS-CoV-2 viruses."

SARS-CoV-2 is the Coronavirus that causes Covid. It's no longer possible to determine China's R rate after the Government stopped releasing numbers of new asymptomatic cases, said the study which is co-authored by Kathy Leung, Gabriel M Leung, and Joseph Wu. Gabriel Leung is the former dean of medicine at the University of Hong Kong.

The researchers warned that the surge of disease burden posed by reopening in December 2022 – January 2023 would likely overload many local health systems across the country.

However, they said that the combined effect of vaccination, antiviral treatment and

PHSMs could substantially reduce Covid-19 morbidity and mortality as China transits from dynamic-zero to normality.

"Planning for such a nationwide, coordinated reopening should be an urgent priority as part of the global exit from the acute phase of the Covid-19 pandemic," said the study. As part of efforts to return to normalcy and out of concern for a potential wider outbreak once controls are loosened, China started enforcing a more lenient version of its strict "zero Covid" policy.

Just the day after restrictions were lifted, the nation reported 21,165 new coronavirus cases.

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India on alert as Covid cases surge globally

Centre asks UTs, States to step up genome sequencing of positive samples

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a sudden spurt in Covid-19 cases in various pockets of South Korea, Brazil, Japan, China and the US, the Centre on Tuesday urged all States and Union Territories (UT) to ensure genome sequencing of positive samples to keep track of emerging variants. The Government, however, assured that as far as India is concerned, it is extensively immunised with effective vaccines, especially the adult population.

In a letter to States and UTs, Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan said genome sequencing will enable timely detection of newer variants, if any, circulating in the country and will facilitate undertaking of requisite public health measures.

He underlined that India with its focus on the five-fold strategy of test-track-treat-vaccination and adherence to Covid-appropriate behaviour has been able to restrict the transmission of the Coronavirus and is having around 1,200 cases on a week-



India is on the alert too after the Covid surge in neighbouring China. File photo

ly basis. The public health challenge of Covid-19 still persists around the world with around 35 lakh cases reported weekly, Bhushan pointed out in the backdrop of reports of China witnessing a huge surge in cases following zero-restriction policy.

In his letter, he also referred to the operational guidelines for revised surveillance strategy in context of Covid-19 issued by the Ministry in June this year. It calls for early detection, isolation, testing, and timely management of suspected and confirmed cases to detect and contain outbreaks of new SARS-CoV-2 variants.

"Therefore, monitoring the trends of existing variants is of crucial importance," he said, adding, "In view of the sudden spurt of cases being witnessed in Japan, United States of America, Republic of Korea, Brazil and China, it is essential

to gear up the whole genome sequencing of positive case samples to track the variants through Indian SARS-CoV-2 Genomics Consortium (INSACOG) network"

Bhushan went on to ask the States and UTs to send the samples of positive cases on a daily basis to the designated INSACOG Genome Laboratories that are mapped to States and UTs.

Talking to a news agency, Chairman of the Covid-19 Working Group, advisory committee on immunisation (NTAGI) NK Arora assured that there was no such imminent threat in India.

"There is no need to panic and the situation is under control in India," he said, reacting to questions about the burst of Covid cases in China after Beijing's recent decision to lift strict lockdown measures.

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'YouTube supported 7.5L jobs in India in 2021'

Online video platform contributed ₹10K cr to GDP: Study

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Online video platform YouTube's ecosystem has contributed over ₹10,000 crore to India's GDP and supported more than 7.5 lakh full-time equivalent jobs in the country, according to a report.

In India, over 4,500 channels had over 10 lakh subscribers and the number of YouTube channels in India making ₹1 lakh or more in their annual revenue increased by over 60 per cent year-over-year in 2021, the YouTube Impact Report based on analysis by Oxford Economics said.

"YouTube's creative ecosystem contributed over ₹10,000 crore and supported more than



7,50,000 full-time equivalent jobs in the Indian economy in 2021. That economic impact shows up in four ways, through direct, indirect, induced, and catalytic impacts," the report said.

YouTube recorded over 30 billion views in 2021 on just health condition videos and has decided to onboard healthcare institutions like Narayana Health, Manipal Hospitals, Medanta, and Shalby Multi-Specialty Hospitals to create and amplify credible content,

covering more than 100 medical conditions, YouTube said in a blog. Oxford Economics surveyed 4,021 YouTube users, 5,633 creators of all sizes, and 523 businesses to analyse the impact of YouTube in 2021.

According to the report, one of every two users currently working uses YouTube to help him or her develop skills to further their career and 45 per cent of users who are seeking a new job use YouTube to help them develop skills to get a job.

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₹2.6 cr Railway job fraud

TN job seekers made to count trains at New Delhi station for month

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Under the nose of top Railway functionaries in Delhi, a major employment racket flourished between June and July this year at the New Delhi Railway Station. The victims of these well-organised rackets were 28 unsuspecting men from Tamil Nadu who were recruited in the Railways and deployed at different platforms of the New Delhi Railway Station every day for eight hours for a month to count the arrival and departure of trains and their coaches.

Acting as Railway officials, the scamsters told the men this was part of their training for positions of travel ticket examiner (TTE), traffic assistants and clerks. Each of them paid amounts ranging between ₹2 lakh and ₹24 lakh to get the jobs in the Railways, according

to a complaint filed with the Delhi Police's Economic Offences Wing (EOW).

For one-month training which took place between June and July, the victims were duped of ₹2.67 crore by a group of fraudsters, according to the complaint lodged by 78-year-old M Subbusamy.

Railway Ministry Additional Director General for Media and Communication, Yogesh Bawjea, said the Railway Board has been regularly issuing advisories and alerting the common people against such fraudulent practices.

"Youngsters should be very careful while dealing with such elements and they should always contact the Railway officials concerned in such situations so that they get to the bottom of the truth as early as possible and save their hard-earned money," Bawjea said.

Subbusamy, an ex-serviceman, had put the victims in touch with the alleged fraudsters, but he has claimed that he was unaware that the entire thing was a scam and he too had fallen for their trap.

"Each candidate paid money ranging from ₹2 lakh to

₹24 lakh to Subbusamy who further paid these to a person named Vikas Rana. Rana posed as a deputy director in the Northern Railway office in Delhi," 25-year-old Snehil Kumar, a victim from Madurai, said. Most of the victims are graduates with backgrounds in engineering and technical education.

"Though the training amount varied for various positions such as travel ticket examiners, traffic assistants or clerks, everyone underwent the same training, ie, counting trains at stations," he added.

Speaking to PTI from his hometown in Virudhunagar district in Tamil Nadu, Subbusamy said, "Since my retirement, I have been helping unemployed youths of our locality to find a suitable job without any monetary interest."

In the FIR, he has alleged that he met a person named Sivaraman, a resident of Coimbatore, in one of the MP quarters in Delhi. Sivaraman claimed to be very closely associated with MPs and Ministers and offered to facilitate employment in the Railways for the unemployed in lieu of monetary gains. Contd on Page 2

Kharge's dog & mouse jibe against BJP rocks RS



Congress MP Mallikarjun Kharge speaks in the Rajya Sabha during the ongoing Winter Session of Parliament, in New Delhi, Tuesday.

PTI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Rajya Sabha on Tuesday witnessed massive furor over Congress president and Leader of Opposition M Mallikarjun Kharge's remarks on Monday questioning the role of the BJP in the freedom struggle. The ruling party demanded an apology from him but he did not relent and repeated his allegation. The BJP and Congress sparred over the issue in the morning session of the Upper House with Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar often urging members

from both the sides to maintain decorum. The bone of contention was a remark made by Kharge in Alwar during a rally in connection with the Bharat Jodo Yatra wherein he said that while the Congress stood for the country and helped attain Independence after its leaders made supreme sacrifices, "not even a dog of the BJP was lost" for the country. He also alleged that the BJP Government "talks like a lion but acts like a mouse" as it did not take on China for incursions along the border. Continued on Page 2

CAPSULE

HARVEY WEINSTEIN FOUND GUILTY OF RAPE

Los Angeles: Disgraced US movie titan Harvey Weinstein was convicted of the rape and sexual assault of a woman a decade ago, in what prosecutors said was part of his "reign of terror" over aspiring young actresses in Hollywood. The "Pulp Fiction" producer, faces up to 24 years in jail, in addition to a sentence he is serving.

PARL WINTER SESSION MAY END ON DEC 23

New Delhi: The Winter Session of Parliament is likely to conclude on December 23, a week ahead of schedule. The session began on December 7 and was originally scheduled to end on December 29.

Dense fog shrouds north India

6 dead, 40 hurt in UP, Hry accidents; narrow escape for Dushyant Chautala

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/LUCKNOW

Biting cold gripped north India on Tuesday while dense fog caused several accidents, leaving six people dead and 40 injured in Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Haryana. The biting cold also forced schools in Punjab to change timings.

Haryana Deputy Chief Minister Dushyant Chautala's car met with an accident near Agroha on the Hisar-Sirsa Highway late on Monday due



Policemen inspect the accident site as several vehicles collided with each other due to heavy fog on the Bulandshahr-Aligarh road, in Bulandshahr on Tuesday.

PTI

to the dense fog. He was travelling from Hisar to Sirsa. A pilot vehicle in the cavalcade of Chautala collided with another vehicle near Agroha village. A security personnel with the Deputy CM was injured in the incident, while the deputy CM escaped unharmed. Taking

note of the dense fog and accidents due to it, the UP Government on Tuesday evening stopped plying of State roadways buses at night from 8 PM to 8 AM (or till the fog clears), due to the dense fog posing a risk.

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Power food millet savoured in power corridor

Millet lunch for PM, Prez, top netas was hosted in Parliament by Agri Min Tomar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The 'power food' millet was on the luncheon table in Parliament on Tuesday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the top political leadership of the country savouring it together. In a meeting of the BJP's Parliamentary Party in the morning, Modi asked BJP MPs to promote millets and use millet items in the meetings they host. Later, he attended a



Vice-President Dhankhar, Prime Minister Modi, Defence Minister Singh, Congress MP Kharge and others at a millet lunch hosted in Parliament to mark 'Millet Year 2023', in New Delhi, on Tuesday.

PTI

millet lunch in the afternoon hosted by Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Tomar to mark 'Millet Year 2023'.

Sitting alongside Modi were Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, Rajya Sabha Chairman

Jagdeep Dhankar, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, and former Prime Minister HD Devegowda.

"As we prepare to mark

2023 as the International Year of Millets, attended a sumptuous lunch in Parliament where millet dishes were served. Good to see participation from across party lines", Modi later tweeted.

Talking about the lunch, Minister of State for Agriculture Shobha Karandlaje said, "We prepared delicacies including roti and sweets made out of Jwar, bajra and ragi for which chefs were specially brought in from Karnataka. I was delighted to see the Prime Minister really enjoyed his meal here."

The delicacies served included khichdi made out of millet, Ragi Dosa, Ragi Roti, Jowar roti, Haldi sabji, bajra, Churma.

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NCR-PULSE

SOCIAL WELFARE MIN INSPECTS ASHA KIRAN HOMES

New Delhi: Social Welfare Minister Raaj Kumar Anand on Tuesday inspected Asha Kiran Homes located in Rohini and interacted with specially-abled children and took stock of their health and education. Anand said, "We will keep coming here continuously and make it better with the efforts of everyone. This center of ours is very good. It can be given a 10 out of 10 ratings, no doubt about it. We will study three centers thoroughly and fix them to make them better."



ASSOCHAM ORGANISES WEBINAR ON AIR POLLUTION

New Delhi: The ASSOCHAM, a business chamber on Tuesday organized a webinar on "Air Pollution and Smog – Health and Prevention" in a bid to create awareness and disseminate knowledge about taking care of air pollution and smog, to lead a healthier, happier, and prosperous life. Anil Rajput Chairperson, ASSOCHAM CSR Council said, "poor air quality or air pollution has been a constant and deeply concerning matter. Therefore, a no-regret strategy containing all possible preventive measures is imperative to address this global public health emergency."

Upper speed limit of Noida-Greater Noida expressway fixed at 75 kmph


STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In view of reduced visibility due to increasing fog, the upper speed limit on the Noida-Greater Noida Expressway has now been fixed at 75 km per hour from 100 km per hour.

As per a senior official, the upper speed of vehicles has also been capped at 65 km per hour on some other routes in Noida, and motorists violating the speed limit order will face legal action or penalty or both.

The nearly 25-km long six-lane high speed expressway connects Noida and Greater Noida in Gautam Buddh Nagar district, adjoining Delhi, and sees thousands of vehicles daily.

According to the state-



ment, the upper speed limit on the Noida– Greater Noida Expressway has been capped at 75 km per hour while it has been fixed at 65 km per hour on key roads like MP1, MP2, MP 3, DSC, 75-metre wide.

The decision was taken during a joint meeting of Noida Traffic Police, Noida Authority's Traffic Cell. In view of extreme cold and fog at present, the officials have decided to fix speed limit for the safe-

Maha Opposition accuses Govt of Corruption

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra chief minister Eknath Shinde found himself in the dock on Tuesday, as the Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) – comprising the Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress – demanded his resignation over the allotment of Rs 83 crore worth land meant for slum dwellers politicians and influential people others at throwaway rates.

While the Opposition forced a noisy adjournment in the State Legislative Council for the day over the alleged corruption in the land allotment scam, leaders and legislators belonging to the Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress staged a demonstration demanding the chief minister's resignation over the issue.

The State Legislature in Nagpur where the winter session is currently on-- reverberated to a vociferous clamour by the Opposition leaders for the chief minister's resignation over the land allotment in the wake of an order passed by the Nagpur bench of the Bombay High Court directing the Maharashtra government to maintain a status quo on a decision taken by Shinde – when he was the Urban Development Minister in the previous MVA government, directing the Nagpur Improvement Trust (NIT) to give away land acquired for housing scheme for slum dwellers to 16 private



individuals for a throw-away price.

The second day of the winter session of the State legislature began on a noisy note, as the Opposition leaders, including the leader of the Opposition in the State Assembly Ajit Pawar of the NCP, Congress leaders Prithviraj Chavan, Nana Patole, Balasaheb Thorat and Shiv Sena leader Aditya Thackeray staged a demonstration at the entrance of the state legislature, demanding the chief minister over the land allotment issue.

The MVA leaders raised slogans like '50 khokhe, Absolutely Ok' (a slang for Rs 50 crore); accusing the Shinde government of being corrupt and demanded the CM's resig-

nation. Expressing solidarity with the Marathi-speaking people on the Maharashtra-Karnataka border villages, they also criticised the "ineffective" manner in which the Shinde-Fadnavis government had handled the border row issue.

Interacting with the media, former chief minister and Shiv Sena (UBT) Uddhav Thackeray – who is currently in Nagpur – also rooted for the resignation of Shinde over the land allotment issue. "While staying the land allotment decision, the high court has observed that the state government has interfered in the issue when the matter was sub judice. "Shinde is the minister of the Urban Development Department (UDD) that allotted the land to



private individuals. Now that the state government will have to file its affidavit in the matter before the high court, Shinde – being the minister of the UDD – will definitely have a say in the matter. "In the past whenever allegations were made, the ministers concerned had resigned from their posts. Even

if the allotment had been as per law, then why did the high court stay the decision? When the high court has itself said that the minister had interfered in the matter. That being the case, the minister concerned (Shinde) has no moral right to continue in office till judgement comes out in the case'.

Delhi Govt approves of revamping roads for world-class safety

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With an aim to develop world-class safer roads across the national capital, the Delhi Government on Monday approved several projects including revamping of Shankar Road etc, worth Rs 3.86 crores.

The Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia gave approval to a project, for the beautification and development of Shankar Road under South West division. This project will give a new look to the road between Pusa chowk and Shankar Chowk, on the Shankar Road stretch.

Speaking about the projects, Sisodia said, "To ensure to make the safer roads, we are getting the roads of the capital assessed by experts from universities to prepare blue-prints



for strengthening of roads and to make them safe." Following the findings of the assessment of roads, Public Works Department (PWD) is using the advanced technologies for the streetscaping of roads."

Informing about the facilities which will be developed during streetscaping, Sisodia said that projects including Tiling of roads, Development of green area around the road, Open sitting area, Cycling tracks, Designer LED lights, Public utility centers and Fountains and sandstone artworks will be developed by the PWD.

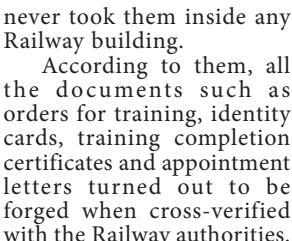
₹2.6 cr Railway job...

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Subbusamy further alleged that Sivaraman asked him to come to Delhi along with job seekers. "Initially, I came with three job seekers and when the news of their job training spread in their villages in and around Madurai, 25 more candidates joined in," Subbusamy said.

According to the FIR, after paying the money as facilitation charges, these prospective candidates were called for a medical examination at the Railway Central Hospital, Connaught Place, and then for document verification at the office of the Junior Engineer, Northern Railway, Shankar Market, New Delhi on various dates.

Victims say Rana always used to meet them outside for collection of money and



never took them inside any Railway building.

According to them, all the documents such as orders for training, identity cards, training completion certificates and appointment letters turned out to be forged when cross-verified with the Railway authorities.

"After document verification, Rana and Dubey, one of his associates, took all the candidates to Baroda House for issuing study material and kit and also issued them forged/fabricated orders for training, which obviously we realised very late, only sometime back, when we attempted to verify its authenticity," Subbusamy alleged in the FIR.

The EOW in its preliminary investigation found that it was a job scam and further investigation is going on.

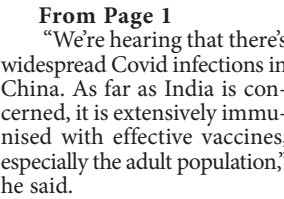
India on alert as Covid...

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"We're hearing that there's widespread Covid infections in China. As far as India is concerned, it is extensively immunised with effective vaccines, especially the adult population," he said.

Arora added that data from INSACOG — a pan-India body under the Health Ministry that studies and monitors genome sequencing – has shown that almost all sub-variants of Omicron in the world were found in India.

"There are not many sub-variants which aren't circulating here. It is important to keep a close vigil on the Chinese situation but there is no need to panic as the situation is in control," Arora added.



Power food millet savoured in...

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The sweet delicacies included bajra Kheer bajra cake amongst others.

Earlier in the BJP parliamentary party meeting, the Prime Minister noted that the UN has declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets on his government's request as he called for making the bouquet of grains high on nutrition as a popular choice of food for people.

Making millets, grown by most small farmers in the country, popular amounts to serving the country, Modi told BJP MPs, according to Union minister Pralhad Joshi who briefed reporters.

With tens of thousands of foreign delegates expected to attend a large number of meetings associated with the G-20, now being chaired by India, Modi said millets will be on the menu and said these can be used in 'anganwadis', schools,



homes and government meetings as well.

Asking MPs to promote power food millet items in meetings they host, the Prime Minister also asks leaders to also promote good health with sports. Modi asked BJP members to organize sports meets with special focus on Indian games like kabaddi.

As over 85 per cent of Indian farmers falling in the category of small farmers grow millets in large numbers, a rise in the consumption of these grains will help them financially, the Prime Minister noted in the BJP Parliamentary party meeting.

India is the largest producer of millets in the world and the government is creating special zones in the states to increase its production. Coarse Millets have nutritional value many times higher than the polished grains which are largely consumed in modern times

Kharge's dog & mouse jibe against...

From Page 1

He also said that the BJP was running away from a debate on the issue in Parliament.

Rejecting BJP's demand for an apology in RS, Kharge said he made these remarks outside parliament and question of apology did not arise at all.

He also said Congress leaders including Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi sacrificed their lives to uphold the unity of the nation and the BJP had no credentials to demand an apology from him.

Leader of the House Piyush Goyal said, "Yesterday, Opposition leader Mallikarjun Kharge used foul language in his speech at Alwar. He made baseless remarks and tried to keep untruth before the nation. I strongly condemn it and demand an apology from him."

He further said after the country's Independence



Mahatma Gandhi had said the Congress should be disbanded, and Kharge's behaviour shows what the Father of the Nation had said was true. "Kharge does not even know how to give a speech. Till he apologises, he has no right to stay in the House," Goyal added.

As the members from both the sides engaged in a slanging match, Bhanekar asked Goyal to control his members adding he does not "appreciate such unruly scenes and chaotic behaviour" in the House.

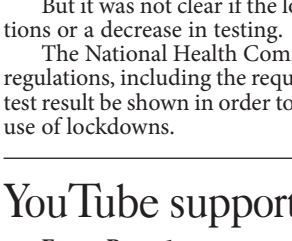
As unruly scenes persisted, the Chairman also urged the members not to set a bad example.

"We are setting a very bad example. This kind of conduct gives a bad name...Even the observations of the chair that are wholesome are indigestible. What a painful scenario we are having. Trust me, 135 crore people are laughing at us. They

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But it was not clear if the lower figure reflected fewer infections or a decrease in testing.

The National Health Commission loosened anti-pandemic regulations, including the requirement that a recent COVID-19 test result be shown in order to enter most public places and the use of lockdowns.



took over 38,000 km land from India during their regime. He also claimed the Congress insulted B R Ambedkar and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Slamming Kharge, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said, "We strongly condemn the statement made by Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge in Rajasthan yesterday. It's an Italian Congress which is running today. It is being said that he is a rubber stamp president."

Law minister Kiren Rijiju termed the comments as 'distasteful', 'unfortunate' and 'uncalled' for and said, "I can't believe that Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge could stoop so low and use such objectionable remarks. He should understand his responsibilities as a leader of a political party. We're not enemies, we're rivals. It's distasteful, unfortunate and uncalled for."

Zero curbs policy may cost...

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The National Health Commission loosened anti-pandemic regulations, including the requirement that a recent COVID-19 test result be shown in order to enter most public places and the use of lockdowns.



YouTube supported 7.5L jobs in...

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"As a global resource, educators, students, and parents are increasingly recognising YouTube as a beneficial supplement to traditional learning. 83 per cent of parents who use YouTube (or YouTube Kids for children under 13) agree that YouTube makes learning more fun for their children. 76 per cent of teachers who use YouTube agree that YouTube helps students learn," the report said.

The report said women often turn to YouTube to learn things that will enhance their everyday lives, whether it's prac-

tical skills like changing a tyre, concepts of personal finance, motivational advice, or helpful professional skills that will help them monetise their hobbies, pursue a career, or build a business. It found that 77 per cent of female users agree that YouTube is a helpful platform for lifelong learning. 56 per cent of female users agree that YouTube helps them learn skills that help them in their everyday life. 90 per cent of female creators agree that YouTube helps them share their passions and ideas and 88 per cent of female creators agree that YouTube helps them be creative, according to the report.

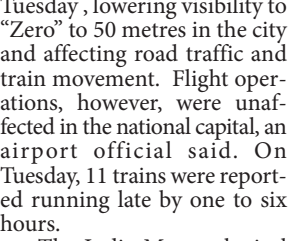
Dense fog shrouds north...

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The top officials –regional and assistant regional managers will be on duty at bus stations from 8 pm to 12 am to monitor fog conditions.

Authorities have reduced the maximum speed limit on Noida expressway from 100 ton 75 due to dense fog.

Dense to very dense fog engulfed Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh. Dense fog also took Delhi in its grip on



Tuesday, lowering visibility to "Zero" to 50 metres in the city and affecting road traffic and train movement. Flight operations, however, were unaffected in the national capital, an airport official said.

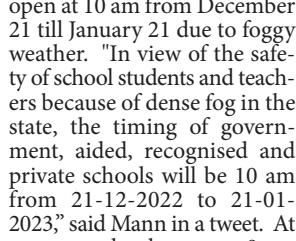
On Tuesday, 11 trains were reported running late by one to six hours.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a 'yellow' alert for Delhi from December 20-23, which is a warning to 'be aware' on

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account of a forecast for moderate to dense fog. Delhi recorded a minimum temperature of 6.3 degrees Celsius at the Safdarjung Observatory this morning. People were seen warming up near bonfires. The IMD said that minimum and maximum temperatures are expected to be lowered in the next few days in north west India.

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann announced that all schools in the state will



open at 10 am from December 21 till January 21 due to foggy weather. "In view of the safety of school students and teachers because of dense fog in the state, the timing of government, aided, recognised and private schools will be 10 am from 21-12-2022 to 21-01-2023," said Mann in a tweet. At present, schools start at 9 am and close at 3 pm.

The IMD said that due to dry north/northwesterly winds from Himalayas over plains of

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Patna, Gaya and Kolkata (500m). People were seen warming up near bonfires. A tweet from Delhi Airport's official Twitter account informed that Low Visibility Procedures have been in progress at the Delhi Airport since midnight. "All flight operations are presently normal," it said.

Two persons were killed and 24 injured in separate accidents amid low visibility due to dense fog in different districts of Uttar Pradesh. In



Kaushambi, Nitish (25) was travelling with his friend on a motorcycle when their two-wheeler hit a stationary truck near Sayara overbridge on the Prayagraj-Kanpur road around 9 am due to low visibility. Eight people were injured in Sitapur when their van hit a stationary truck due to low visibility, police said, adding four passengers were grievously injured in the accident that occurred near Kalli village under the Misrikh police sta-



छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल

पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला-रायपुर (छ.ग.)

// सर्व संबंधित को सूचना //

भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय की ई.आई.ए. अधिसूचना दिनांक 14.09.2006 (यथा संशोधित) के अंतर्गत सर्व संबंधित को सूचित किया जाता है कि मेसर्स व्ही.ए.ए. इस्पात प्राइवेट लिमिटेड, ग्राम-मुड़ुपार एवं रमपुरा, तहसील - नवागढ़, जिला बेमेतरा (छ.ग.) में Greenfield project for production of Sponge Iron 2,31,000 TPA, Mild Steel Billets 2,32,848 TPA, Rolled Steel Products through Hot Charging and through Reheating Furnace - 2,25,863 TPA (1,71,144 TPA through Hot Charging & 54,719 TPA through Billet Reheating Furnace), Captive Power Plant - 25 MW (16 MW through WHRB and 9 MW through AFBG), Silico Manganese - 36,000 TPA and/or Ferro Manganese - 46,000 TPA and/or Ferro Silico - 20,000 TPA and/or Pig Iron - 63,000 TPA from 9 MVA x 2 Nos SAF and Fly Ash Bricks- 36,700 TPA के पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति हेतु लोक सुनवाई दिनांक 22.12.2022 को समय प्रातः 11:00 बजे स्थान- ग्राम मुड़ुपार स्थित भूमि खसरा नम्बर-384, 385, 156, 155/2, 155/6, 158/2, 162/3, 396 / 1, 396/3, ग्राम-मुड़ुपार, तहसील - नवागढ़, जिला-बेमेतरा (छ.ग.) में नियत की गई थी। जिसे संयुक्त जिला कार्यालय एवं कलेक्ट्रेट, बेमेतरा के ज्ञापन क्रमांक 280 / सि.सू./ 2022 बेमेतरा, दिनांक 20.12.2022 के द्वारा अपरिहार्य प्रशासनिक कारणों से स्थगित किया गया है।

सदस्य सचिव

छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल,

पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर (छ.ग.)

Hospitals struggle as Covid rips through...

From Page 1

According to health officials, Chinese cities are currently hit by the highly transmissible Omicron strains mainly BA.5.2 and BE.7.

Meanwhile, Beijing is experiencing a massive wave of the BE.7 Omicron virus.

According to one estimate, over 70 per cent of Beijing's population has been hit by the virus, which confined millions of people to their homes.

Those who contracted the virus included scores of Beijing-based diplomats, their families as well as journalists besides a vast number of the city's population.



For days together Beijing wore a deserted look with less traffic on city roads.

The striking feature of the crisis is that China has lost count of the cases as it stopped public testing for nearly two weeks.

As a result, people are forced to buy self-testing antigen kits which are now being sold in black at exorbitant prices.

Hospitals in Beijing are facing staff shortages and an influx of patients since the policy U-turn, the Post report said.

Many residents in the capital are struggling to get med-

icines, with long queues at hospitals and a spike in the calls for ambulances.

With confusion about the government's handling of the virus, there is a growing concern about how to protect millions of China's elderly people, the majority of whom have not been vaccinated.

The elderly, aged 65 and above, exceed 200 million people, accounting for 14.2 per cent of the Chinese population as of the end of 2021, the state-run Global Times newspaper reported.

Data showed elderly people who have underlying diseases and complications such as

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Recover ₹97cr from AAP for ‘political ads’, LG directs CS

Saxena says ruling AAP violated orders of SC, Delhi HC

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Tuesday directed the Chief Secretary to recover Rs 97 crore from the ruling Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) for political advertisements it published as Government advertisements in 2016.

The LG cited the ruling party violated the orders of the Supreme Court, Delhi HC order of 2016 and the Committee on Content Regulation in Government Advertising's (CCRGa) order of 2016.

The Delhi Government's Directorate of Information and Publicity (DIP), acting on a 2016 directive from a Committee on Content Regulation in Government Advertising set up by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, had notified that Rs 97.14 crore (Rs 97,14,69,137) had been spent or booked on account of "non-conforming advertisements", they said.

The DIP in 2017 directed the AAP to pay over Rs 42.26 crore to the state exchequer immediately and directly pay the pending amount of Rs 54.87 crore to the advertising agencies or publications concerned within 30 days.

"However, even after the lapse of five years and eight months, the AAP has not complied with the DIP order. This is serious as public money, despite a specific order, has not been deposited by the party to the state exchequer.

Such defiance of a legitimate order by a registered political party is not only contemptuous of the judiciary, but also does not augur well for the health of good governance," the source added.

According to the Raj Niwas note, 54.87 crore for advertisements published, were still pending disbursal. "Accordingly, DIP, vide letter dated March 30, 2017, directed the Convener of Aam Aadmi Party, a registered



political party with Election Commission of India to pay Rs.42.26 crore to the State Exchequer immediately and directly pay the pending amount of Rs. 54.87 crore to the concerned agencies within 30 days.

It is emphasized that, these payments were on account of advertisements published in violation of Supreme Court's guidelines," it added.

"From records, it is also revealed that a Society viz. 'Shabdarth' has been functioning as a monopolistic agency to control all advertisements of the Government of National Territory of Delhi.

In the Cabinet note circulated in this regard, the goal for creating this Society was to gamer saving to the Exchequer by getting back 10 per cent of the 15 per cent commission being paid to Advertisement Agency, since Shabdarth would only charge at the rate of 5 per cent for meeting its expenses," it stated.

"Directorate of Vigilance hat also mentioned that some of the files, viz. 'Rajasthan Patrika v/s Shabdarth and Ours'; 'Shared Advertisement V/s Directorate of Information and Publicity'; 'Talk to AKM' in which payments were released arc musing.

"There is an apprehension about certain vested interests being served, by way of these files going missing. In the event missing files are not traced," the note said.

"FIR should be registered by the Secretary, Department of Information and Publicity and

action should be initiated against those responsible, as per extant Rules. Simultaneously, all measures must be put in place to ensure that all remaining files, relating to the instant case, are taken into safe custody forthwith," it further added.

As per the Supreme Court order dated September 16, 2016, in this regard, "The CCRGa has unanimously come to the conclusion that the Government of NCT of Delhi has violated the guidelines issued by the Supreme Court of India in six of the nine 'areas listed by the complainant Ajay Maken."

"The Committee further directs the Govt. of NCT of Delhi to get the entire expenditure so incurred on the category of advertisements reimbursed to the State exchequer from the Aam Aadmi Party," the order further stated.

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEWDELHI

The Delhi BJP on Tuesday attacked the AAP over Lt Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena directing the chief secretary to recover Rs 97 crore from the ruling party for "political advertisements".

Addressing a press conference, Leader of Opposition in the Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri along with MP Manoj Tiwari and Harish Khurana alleged an "advertisement scam" in the city government and demanded a CBI inquiry into it.

The BJP also said that the Kejriwal government broke the rules while spending the people's money for its own publicity. "We see an advertisement scam here, and demand a CBI inquiry into it. We will approach the LG in this regard," he said. Bidhuri also claimed that the amount



Delhi BJP acting president Virendra Sachdeva, along with MP Manoj Tiwari and LOP Ramvir Bidhuri, address a Press conference in New Delhi on Tuesday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

to be recovered from the ruling party in Delhi would rise to Rs 400 crore. Bidhuri claimed that on the request of the BJP, the L-G has asked the Director Vigilance to investigate the matter following which Saxena directed the Chief Secretary to recover this amount. "In 2015, the Supreme

Court had constituted a committee to prepare guidelines for advertisements for all governments in a similar matter. In 2016, this committee, whose name was Committee of Content Regulation in Government Advertising (CCRGa), issued guidelines. The same committee found

that the Delhi government had violated the guidelines in advertisements worth about Rs 97 crore 15 lakhs," LoP said. "Accordingly, the L-G directed that this amount should be recovered from the AAP. The Aam Aadmi Party also went to the court against this order but did not get any relief," LoP added.

Terming the AAP government a 'propaganda - based government', state BJP Working president Virendra Sachdeva said that the work of the Kejriwal government is only visible on advertisement in papers instead of ground.

"It is very unfortunate that despite using the taxpayer's money for the development of the city, the Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is spending it to shine his face. Misusing government resources for their own good is in the nature of the AAP government," said

Sachdeva. Criticizing Kejriwal for calling the order of L-G another 'love letter', Sachdeva said that the CM is calling the order of the Lieutenant Governor as another love letter to reduce the seriousness of the matter, but the truth is that this is not a love letter, it is a white paper of their corruption.

However, the Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri alleged that the AAP government has carried out an "advertisement scam" and demanded a CBI inquiry into the matter.

BJP MP Manoj Tiwari said that Kejriwal did the work of shining his face with the government exchequer money but after the spending limit was reached as per the instructions by CCRGa, set up by the Supreme Court, he did not deposit the amount instead kept spending it like water.

LG passing illegal orders: AAP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEWDELHI

The AAP on Tuesday hit back at Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena for his direction to Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar to recover Rs 97 crore spent on advertisements in alleged violation of Supreme Court guidelines, saying the LG didn't have the power to issue the order. The party has alleged that the LG had "no clue" and was "dancing on the directions of the BJP".

AAP chief spokesperson Saurabh Bharadwaj said the order was designed to pull down the party which recently qualified to be notified as a national party and stressed that the attempt won't succeed. Addressing the media, Bharadwaj termed the LG's direction a 'new love letter' and questioned his intentions



behind such a frivolous order. "AAP has become a national party...BJP and LG can try harder but AAP will stand tall and will not allow anyone stop the good works being done in Delhi," said Bharadwaj.

"LG has no power to pass such orders. Following the directions of BJP he is trying to create trouble for the people of Delhi and is trying to stop work. We have said this earlier as well that as we get closer to Valentine's Day, the number of letters from the LG would increase," he said. "The LG is



passing illegal orders without any jurisdiction, his diktat has no value in the eyes of law. Saxena is asking how Delhi Government's advertisements are being published outside the city, while BJP ruled states have given advertisements worth about 22,000 crores in other states.

Raj Niwas is giving arguments like BJP spokespersons," said Bharadwaj. Criticising the BJP, Bharadwaj also questioned that the saffron party governments in states spent 22,000 crores on advertisements, why

doesn't JP Nadda step forward and tell when they will return that amount to the exchequer? "BJP has lost sleep since the AAP became a national party, and now they are fighting against the people of Delhi.

The saffron party is trying to harass and punish the people of the national Capital for supporting honest politics," Bharadwaj said.

"After facing a defeat in the municipal election in Delhi, the BJP has started obstructing the tenders of medicines for the mohalla clinics, the funds to provide salaries to doctors in government hospitals were not released by the Central Government, the pension that senior citizens and the disabled in Delhi receive has also been affected, the funds that are given to the Delhi Jal Board have been held up by over six months," Bharadwaj alleged.

Congress leader Maken welcomes Saxena's order

New Delhi: Senior Congress leader and former Union Minister Ajay Maken on Tuesday welcomed Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena's decision to recover Rs 97 crore from AAP for political advertisements it published in the guise of Government advertisements saying, the issue was raised by him five years ago.

Maken said he wrote to the Lieutenant Governor on October 4 and he had approached court five years ago over the matter. "I was the first one to raise this issue and also filed a complaint with the Committee on Content Regulation in Government Advertising (CCRGa). We also approached courts then. I wrote a letter on October 4 this



year to the LG and glad that he took this decision," he said.

In 2016, a complaint was filed by the senior Congress leader with the CCRGa, set up by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, over the issue. The CCRGa had then directed the AAP-led Delhi government to reimburse the state exchequer the costs incurred on the advertisements from the party. SR

House panel summons officers for not giving salaries, stopping tests at Mohalla Clinics



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Vidhan Sabha's Petitions committee on Tuesday summoned the Principal Secretaries of the Health and Finance Departments, Amit Singla and Ashish Chandra Verma respectively, to record their testimonies for blocking salaries of employees and stopping lab

tests at Mohalla Clinics. Giving details about the matter, AAP Leader Saurabh Bharadwaj said that during the proceedings of the committee, it came to light that when the health department sent its file to the finance department for disbursal of salaries, the finance department asked for certain documents which were never asked for earlier. "For this meeting,

we summoned some senior government officers. Among them, Verma, a 1994-batch officer and Singla, who is a 2003-batch IAS officer were present. We also summoned Sanjeev Jain, Rawat, Nutan (DG Health) and Dr Shelly Kabra, the project coordinator of Mohalla Clinics, to give their statements on the matter," told Bharadwaj.

"During the meeting, the committee was informed that the finance department asked for some documents before disbursing the salaries, and these are documents that were never asked before the disbursement of salaries until now.

They asked for certain Cabinet decisions and other amendments in the government documents," AAP leader

claimed. "Accordingly, the health department officials have told this under the oath. The members of the committee believe that this was done with the deliberate intention to delay the salaries of these doctors and nursing staff.

We believe that Verma was also involved in taking this decision. What came as a bigger surprise to us all was the fact that the health department had an unspent amount of Rs 70 crore with it, and while only Rs 13 crore was required to provide the salaries of their staff members, they decided to not use this money," he said.

"We also found out that the Verma had put certain conditions on the health department due to which they were not allowed to use this unspent money of theirs," he stated.



Commuters ply on the road amid low visibility due to dense smog on a cold winter morning in New Delhi on Tuesday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer



Indian Navy contingent rehearses for the forthcoming Republic Day parade at Kartavya Path in New Delhi on Tuesday

PTI Photo

City court seeks ED's response over Jacqueline plea to go abroad

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A city court has sought a response from the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to a plea by Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez, accused in a Rs 200 crore money laundering case also involving alleged conman Sukesh Chandrashekar, seeking permission to travel to Bahrain to visit her mother.

Special Judge Shailendra Malik issued notice to the anti-money laundering probe agency returnable by December 22 when it will hear the fresh plea of Fernandez who wants to visit Bahrain from December 23 to January 5. Chandrasekhar, who is accused of conniving people of Rs 200 crore, on Tuesday reiterated that he gave "Rs 60 crore to the Aam Aadmi Party".

The court has also allowed the ED to take possession of 26 cars attached from actress Leena Maria Paul, in this case.



Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez leaves from Patiala House Court after appearing in a money laundering case linked to alleged conman Sukesh Chandrashekar in New Delhi on Tuesday



Conman Sukesh Chandrashekar leaves from Patiala House Court after appearing in connection with a money laundering case in New Delhi on Tuesday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

A video of him giving the statement to the media has gone viral on social media. Sukesh appeared before Delhi's Patiala House court to record the statement. While he was being taken back from the court, reporters tried to ask him questions. One was the question about alleged money being given to AAP. Sukesh

said he gave Rs 60 crores. "I have given everything in writing," he told reporters. He did not reply to any other questions, including how the transactions happened. Sukesh's counsel Anant Malik spoke to media and said a high-powered committee in court took his statement and a probe into matter should be done.

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As the temperature in the Anational Capital is dipping, Delhi's peak power demand this winter season can clock up to 5,500 MW, registering a new record in the city.

According to the sources in Discoms, the SLDC data shows that the Capital's peak power demand this winter can go upto 5500 MW, surpassing the peak winter demand of the last couple of years.

"Last year, it had peaked at 5104 MW and 5021 in 2020. The peak winter power demand in BSES Rajdani Power Limited (BRPL) and BSES Yamuna Power Limited (BYPL) areas had reached 2140 MW and 1122 MW respectively during last winter," they said. "This year, it is expected to reach 2289 MW and 1159 MW for BRPL and BYPL respectively," they claimed.

The sources further said that ensuring reliable supply in any season is as much the



function of proper power arrangements as also accurate demand forecast and robust distribution network. On all these aspects, BSES discoms are geared to ensure adequate power availability for its around 47 lakh consumers or around 2 crore residents during the winter months.

Informing about the measures taken to meet the expected power demand in the city, a senior Discoms official said the back-bone of BSES' power supply arrangements during the winter-months includes long-term agreements from power-plants; including Hydro and Delhi based gas fuelled generating stations. Additionally, BSES is also receiving 840 MW of solar

power from Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI), 439 MW of wind power, 25 MW from Waste-to-Energy. It is also being helped by 127 MW plus of roof-top solar power installed on rooftops in South, West, East and Central Delhi," he said.

He said that apart from these, BSES discoms are using avenues like "Banking," "Power Exchange" and ensuring sufficient "Spinning Reserves" to dispose of surplus power as well as ensuring reliable power supply, as also making arrangements to get power during summer months.

In case of any unforeseeable contingency, BSES discoms will buy short-term power from the exchange which is available at economical rates. Adding to these efforts are the advanced load-forecasting statistical and modelling techniques, which are helping the discom accurately forecast the power demand, a senior Discoms official said.

Run 'anti-open burning special drive' for next 10 days, says Rai

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a bid to control the rising pollution in the national Capital, the Delhi Government has formed 611 teams of the concerned officials under its 'Anti Open Burning Special Campaign' to stop the incidents of open burning in the city. It also appealed to all the agencies and Resident Welfare Association (RWAs) of the Capital to provide heaters to their employees and guards on night duty.

Environment Minister Gopal Rai directed department officials to run 'Anti Open Burning Special Campaign' for the next 10 days in view of increasing pollution in the city.

"Under campaign, 611 teams of Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC), Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Revenue, Department of Irrigation and Flood Control and other departments will take action on ground," Rai said. SR

"Staying at ground zero, all the teams will ensure that there is no open burning anywhere in the capital and if incidents of burning are found, action will be taken by the teams against the concerned people. Special responsibility has been given to concerned departments and agencies for this campaign," Rai stated.

The Environment Minister said that these teams will monitor the situation day and night. They will patrol continuously even at night to control incidents of garbage burning.

"The Delhi Government has succeeded in reducing pollution with the cooperation of the people and it is running several campaigns to reduce pollution," he added.

Rai also appealed to all the residents to register a complaint on 'Green Delhi' application in case of any incident of open burning so that the incident of open burning reaches the department in the least possible time and department can take action against them.

‘Place drug addicts in rehab centres, not jails’

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha members on Tuesday demanded that the Government build more rehabilitation centres for drug addicts instead of sending them to jail. They also sought the construction of more sports complexes to keep youngsters away from substance abuse.

The debate during the Calling Attention on drug abuse often witnessed accusations between political parties on the Punjab situation and the recent hooch tragedy in Bihar. Home Minister Amit Shah will reply on Wednesday.

Participating in a short-duration discussion in the Lok Sabha on the drug-abuse problem in India and steps taken by the Government to control it, members cutting across party lines demanded that the Centre adopt a Covid-like strategy to wean the youth away from drug abuse.

"Drugs have even entered schools. No one feels safe here. People are leaving the state and going abroad because of the drug menace," Akali Dal member Harsimrat Kaur Badal said. Badal's snide remarks on Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann were



expunged by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla. She blamed the ruling AAP for the rise in drug abuse in Punjab. She alleged that the future of Punjab's youth was being ruined because Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann himself was "driving the state while drunk".

Congress member Gurjeet Singh Aujla demanded stricter law enforcement to check drug abuse and also highlighted newer routes such as Gujarat used by traffickers. "Jails are a breeding ground for drugs. It is better that small criminals and first offenders be sent to juvenile or correctional institutions rather than jails," he said.

The DMK's Veeraswamy Kalanidhi demanded that drug addicts be placed in rehabilitation centres and not jails. He urged the Government to set up more rehabilitation centres

— at least one in every parliamentary constituency. Trinamool member Kalyan Banerjee demanded stringent steps by the government to stop drug smuggling. Banerjee said successive Governments had failed to deal with the drug menace or educate the children against substance abuse.

The BJP's Satyapal Singh, a former IPS officer, urged the Government to focus on moral education in school curricula and encourage a culture of sports to pull children away from addiction.

He said rehabilitation centres for addicts should be supervised and demanded monitoring of the darknet and cryptocurrency. YSR Congress leader PV Midhun Reddy demanded that the government adopt strategies similar to those implemented during the

COVID-19 pandemic to crack down on drug abuse. NCP member Supriya Sule underlined the need to de-stigmatise drug abuse and mental health. She said when actors Sanjay Dutt and Deepika Padukone spoke publicly about their struggles with drug addiction and depression, respectively, it helped many people speak out about such issues.

Kunwar Danish Ali of the BSP said the whole House should be united to save younger generations from drugs. "We need to focus on where drugs are coming from. Without loopholes in the system, drugs will not reach the youth."

"In the last few months, reports have come that drugs worth thousands of crores have been seized at ports. Gujarat was named... I know what the Minister would say, he'll say earlier it was not seized," said Ali.

Congress member Hibi Eden said controlling the drug menace should be on the agenda of the upcoming G20 summit. The Lok Janshakti Party's Prince Raj also mentioned the recent hooch tragedy in Bihar. "Our Chief Minister said those who drink alcohol will die; this is an anti-Dalit statement," he

6 L cyber crime complaints registered on Govt portal since 2019: MoS Home

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister of State for Home Ajay Kumar Mishra on Tuesday said six lakh complaints of cyber crime have been registered at the Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System since its inception in 2019.

The Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System, under the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C), has been launched for immediate reporting of financial frauds and to stop siphoning off funds by fraudsters. The toll-free helpline number '1930' has been operationalised for assistance in lodging online cyber complaints, Mishra said.

"Since the inception of Citizen Financial Cyber Fraud Reporting and Management System, more than six lakh complaints have been registered till December 12, 2022, and in more than 1.11 lakh complaints, so far, financial amount of more than Rs 188 crore have been saved," Mishra told the Lok Sabha during Question Hour.

The Minister said the States and Union Territories are primarily responsible for the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of crimes including cyber crimes through their Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs).

The LEAs take legal action as per the provisions of the law against persons involved in cyber crime. The Central Government supplements the initiatives of the States and Union Territories through advisories and financial assistance under various schemes for their capacity building, he said.

Mishra said the I4C has been set up to deal with all types of cyber crime in the country in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. The National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (www.Cybercrime.Gov.In) was launched on August 30, 2019,

Naxal violence reduced by 77%, Lok Sabha told

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The incidents of Naxal violence have reduced by 77 per cent from the high of 2,213 in 2010 to 509 in 2021, Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai said in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday.

Similarly, resultant deaths (civilians and security forces) have reduced by 85 per cent from the high of 1,005 in 2010 to 147 in 2021, Rai said, adding that the declining trend continues in 2022.

"Steaddfast implementation of the national policy has resulted in consistent decline in violence in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas. Incidents of LWE violence have reduced by 77 per cent from the high of 2,213 in 2010 to 509 in 2021," he said

replying to a written question.

The Minister said geographical spread of the violence has also significantly reduced and only 191 police stations of 46 districts reported LWE related violence in 2021 as compared to high of 465 police stations of 96 districts in 2010.

He said decline in geographical spread is also reflected in the reduced number of districts covered under Security Related Expenditure (SRE) scheme and the number of SRE districts reduced from 126 to 90 in April, 2018 and further to 70 in July, 2021.

Similarly, Rai said the number of districts contributing approximately 90 per cent of the LWE violence, categorised as most LWE affected districts, came down to 30 from 35 in 2018 and further to 25 in 2021.

as a part of the I4C, to enable people to report incidents of cyber crimes with a special focus on cyber crimes against women and children.

"Cybercrime incidents reported on this portal, their conversion into FIRs and subsequent action thereon are handled by the state and UT LEAs concerned as per the provisions of the law," he said. Mishra said more than 27,900 police officers from States and Union Territories are registered and over 7,300 certificates issued through the portal.

The Union Home Ministry has provided financial assistance to States and Union Territories under the Cyber Crime Prevention against Women and Children (CCPWC) scheme for their

capacity building such as setting up of cyber forensic-cum-training laboratories, capacity building and hiring of junior cyber consultants, he informed the Lok Sabha. He said cyber forensic-cum-training laboratories have been commissioned in 30 States and Union Territories.

These are Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Odisha, Sikkim, Telangana, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Goa, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Punjab, Tripura, Puducherry, Chandigarh, Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Delhi and Jharkhand.

NHRC only visits Opp-ruled States: Opp parties

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Issues ranging from illegal and rampant sale of acid through online platforms, agitation in Allahabad University and slump in industrial production figured prominently on Tuesday in the Rajya Sabha.

The entire Opposition walked out at the end of the morning session on Tuesday alleging that the National

Human Rights Commission (NHRC) only visits Opposition ruled States for investigations while skipping BJP-governed Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat.

Dola Sen (TMC), while making her Zero Hour submission, said it is unfortunate the NHRC is visiting Bihar and goes to Bengal, but does not visit Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat. Sen then announced a walkout of the TMC from the House. Other opposition parties too followed. Earlier, Manoj Jha (RJD) too wanted to raise the issue, but could not.

Raising the issue of easy availability of acid in the back-draw of recent attack on a teenage girl in West Delhi, Fauzia Khan (NCP) said majority of such attacks were against young women.

On December 14, a 17-year-old girl was attacked while on way to her school resulting in serious injuries. Three men, including her neighbour, have been arrested in the case.

Khan said majority of the reported cases of acid attacks are against young women and most of them who turn down a proposal for marriage, or refuse to enter into a relationship or with-



draw from a relationship. "Despite the existence of laws the crime of acid attacks continued unabated. The reason is that acids can be procured easily as

there is laxness on part of implementation of regulations. It is the implementation that is important. There is high prevalence of illegal sale of acid," she said.

NCERT to bring balanced perspective of all genders in new curriculum

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A Parliamentary committee on the Reforms in Content and Design of School Textbooks Committee has recommended the NCERT to work towards bringing a balanced perspective of all genders in the new National Curriculum Framework (NCF) and in its textbooks.

The panel had earlier recommended that the under-representation of women and girls in school textbooks or them being depicted only in traditional roles, a thorough analysis from the view point of gender bias and stereotypes should be undertaken by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT). The report of the Reforms in Content and Design of School Textbooks

Committee on the action taken by the government on its recommendations and observations was tabled in Parliament on Monday. It also said efforts should be made to make content portrayal and visual depiction gender inclusive.

"The committee has been informed that the NCERT has taken note of all the issues raised by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Education, Women, Children,

Youth and Sports and will contribute adequately to bringing in a balanced perspective of all the gender in the NCF syllabus and all the textbooks which will be developed as a follow-up of NCFs. The process of development of NCFs has already been initiated by the NCERT," it said.

Earlier, the panel had also recommended that textbooks should have greater portrayal of women in new and emerging

professions as role models with a focus on their contributions and pathway of achieving the same. This will help in instilling self-esteem and self-confidence among all, particularly girls, it had said.

"While examining the textbooks, other issues like environment sensitivity, human values, issues of children with special needs etc. Can also be looked up for adequate inclusion in the School textbooks,"

IN SHORT

SC REBUKES UP OVER DELAY IN FILING PLEA



New Delhi: The Supreme Court has rebuked the Uttar Pradesh government over an inordinate delay of 1,173 days in filing a petition against a judgement of the Allahabad High Court and that too with "incorrect particulars", saying a State litigation cannot be taken "so casually". While rejecting the plea with a cost of Rs 1 lakh, the apex court said it has no doubt that such matters are filed in a "cursory manner" so the petitions are dismissed.

COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES BILL SENT TO JOINT PANEL

New Delhi: A bill which seeks to amend the law on multi-state cooperative societies was on Tuesday referred to the joint committee of Parliament, with Home Minister Amit Shah saying 21 members will be from Lok Sabha and 10 from Rajya Sabha. The Committee would be submitting its report to Lok Sabha in the first week of the second part of the Budget session (which usually begins in March), Shah said in the lower house. The 21 members from Lok Sabha who would be part of the joint committee include Kanimozhi Karunanidhi (DMK), Kalyan Banerjee (TMC), Chandra Prakash Joshi (BJP), and Manish Tewari (Congress).

'POOR FACILITIES FOR DIVYANGS IN PARLIAMENT'

New Delhi: Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor on Tuesday highlighted the "poorly equipped" facilities for people with disabilities as he came to Parliament in a wheelchair after he sprained his left foot last week. "When you need to enter Parliament in a wheelchair, there's only one entrance with a ramp, at door 9, a good four minute trip (with the assistance of helpers) to the Lok Sabha. This temporary disability has taught me how poorly equipped we are to support people with disabilities," Tharoor said in a tweet.

PICHAİ CALLS ON EAM JAISHANKAR

New Delhi: India's digital transformation and global strategic developments figured prominently in a meeting on Tuesday between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and Google and Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai. On Monday, Pichai said Google is building voice and text search for over 100 Indian languages and will spend USD 75 million to support women-led startups in the country.

RULE 267 TO FOLLOW ON MERIT: DHANKHAR TO OPP

New Delhi: Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on Tuesday assured the opposition parties that he would not hesitate to suspend the scheduled business of the House under Rule 267 even on a daily basis if the notices qualify on merit. In the same breath Dhankhar, however, asserted that he would not invoke the rule even once during his entire tenure if notices are devoid of merit.

'CREATE SEPARATE MIN FOR PILGRIMAGE SITES'

New Delhi: The Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) on Tuesday demanded the creation of a separate ministry for the development of pilgrimage sites across the country. The affiliate of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) also demanded such a ministry in every state. Addressing a press conference, VHP central working president Alok Kumar stressed the need for creating a new ministry for pilgrimage sites, saying they cannot be developed like tourist destinations as they are "way different in nature".

18.19L GRIEVANCES RECEIVED IN JAN, NOV

New Delhi: Over 18.19 lakh public grievances were received during January and November this year against central and state government departments, according to an official statement issued on Tuesday. The average grievance disposal time of central ministries and departments has improved from 32 days in 2021 to 27 days in 2022, it said.

PUBLIC NOTICE
To be known to all that my clients, Smt. Nirupama Singh & Sh. Sheesh Pal Singh, owners of UG Flat No. 85-B, First Floor, Pocket-K, Sheikh Sarai Phase-II, New Delhi have applied for conversion of the aforesaid property from lease hold to free hold VIDE DDA FILE NO.F35(265) 85/B in DDA. The original documents i.e. POSSESSION LETTER AND NOC TO WATER AND ELECTRIC of the above said property has been lost. An NCR/LR NO.108957/6/2022 dated 16.12.2022 to this effect has been lodged in R.S. Crime Branch, Delhi. Any person claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above Address/Phone No. 9891892112 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objection with respect to this property, can personally inform or write to Deputy Director (LAB) Housing or Director (Housing), DDA, Vikas Sadan, New Delhi.

FORM NO.5
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road,
Near Hanuman Setu Mandir,
Lucknow-226007
(Ares of Jurisdiction-Part of
Uttar Pradesh)
Summons for Filing & Appearance
by Plication
O.A.No. 866/2022
Date. 02/12/2022
(Summons to defendand under
section 19(3) of the Recovery
of Debts due to Banks and
Financial Institutions Act, 1993
read with Rules 12 and 13 of
the Debts Recovery Tribunal
(Procedure Rules, 1993)
ICICI BANK LTD.Applicant
VERSUS
ASHISH RAJKUMAR GUPTA
AND OTHERSDefendants
To,
Defendants:-
1. ASHISH RAJKUMAR GUPTA
S/o RISHIKESH RAJKUMAR
GUPTA
R/o Tower-12 Gh-7, Crossing
Republic Nh-24
Ghaziabad-201010, U.P.
Also at:
3A 113 3rd Floor, Tower Big Sky,
Golf view Apartment Sector-1,
Pocket-D suhart Golf City,
Sultanpur Road, Lucknow-
226030, U.P.
2. JAI PRAKASH TIWARI
R/o Tower-12 Gh-7, Crossing
Republic Nh-24 Ghaziabad-
201010, U.P.
Also at:
3A 113 3rd Floor, Tower Big Sky,
Golf view Apartment Sector-1,
Pocket-D suhart Golf City,
Sultanpur Road, Lucknow-
226030, U.P.
3. TULSIANI CONSTRUCTIONS
AND DEVELOPERS.
Branch Office at: T.C.-34/V-2,
Cyber Tower 1st Floor, Vibhuti
Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow-
226010

In the above noted application, you are required to file in Paper Book form in two sets along with documents and affidavits (if any), personally or through your duly the authorized agent or legal practitioner in this Tribunal, after serving copy of the same on the applicant or his counsel/duly authorized agent after publication of the summons, and thereafter to appear before the Tribunal on 24/02/2023 at 10.30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decide in your absence.
Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal
Lucknow

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE
ICICI Bank | Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005
Whereas
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.
As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Vinod Hans/ Shipra Hans/ LBDEL00004132346	Property No-39, First Floor Without Roof Rights, Sector-25, Pocket-02, Rohini Residential Scheme, Rohini, Delhi/ December 16, 2022	July 30, 2022 Rs. 39,83,706/-	Delhi/ NCR
2.	Matta Pasupathi/ Matta Dharma Kumari/ LBDEL00002875136	Flat No B 9, First And Second Floor, The Kakateeya Co Operative Group Housing Society Ltd, Built On Plot No 86, Kakateeya Apartment, I P Extn, Patparganj, Delhi/ December 15, 2022	August 31, 2022/ Rs. 76,37,082/-	Delhi/ NCR

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.
Date : December 21, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE
ICICI Bank | Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005
Whereas
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Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Girish Kumar Punamiya / Madhavi Punamiya / LBMUM00003030777	B- 302, 3rd Floor, V VIP Homes- Merideain B, Plot No- GC-03K/ Gh-03, Sector No. 16C, Greater Noida West, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Noida, Uttar Pradesh- 201307/ December 17, 2022	February 20, 2020 Rs. 19,83,545/-	Delhi
2.	Manju Bala Yadav / Ranju Bala Yadav / LBDEL00004903860 / LBDEL00004932648	Plot No. 285, Ground Floor, Without Roof Rights, Pocket 4, Sector- 25, Rohini, Rohini Residential Scheme, Delhi- 110085/ December 17, 2022	July 30, 2022 Rs. 36,30,195/-	Delhi

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.
Date : December 21, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

3 YouTube channels spread false, sensational claims: Centre

New Delhi: Three YouTube channels together having nearly 33 lakh subscribers and their videos watched over 30 crore times have been found to be spreading fake news about Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and key institutions, the Centre said on Tuesday.

An official statement said three YouTube channels – News Headlines, Sarkari Update and Aaj Tak Live – were using thumbnails and images of TV news channels and their news anchors to mislead viewers into believing that the news shared by them was authentic.

BJP condemns Kharge's jibe

New Delhi: Getting back at the Congress on its president Mallikarjun Kharge's jibe that while his party helped the country get independence, the ruling party did not lose even a "dog" for the nation, the BJP on Tuesday claimed that the present Congress is not the "original" one but "Italian Congress".

"This is not the original Congress. We all know how it treated leaders like Subhas Chandra Bose, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Sardar Patel who were in the original Congress. This is an Italian Congress led by some other people," Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi told reporters here in an apparent reference

to the opposition party's president Sonia Gandhi's country of birth. Joshi strongly condemned Kharge's comments and claimed that the opposition party was wrong in claiming the legacy of freedom movement as Mahatma Gandhi had said after independence that Congress should be disbanded. "This is a bogus Congress full of bogus leaders. Their president is a rubber stamp," Joshi alleged, targeting Kharge. At a rally in Rajasthan on Monday, Kharge claimed that while Congress stood for the country and helped attain Independence after its leaders gave supreme sacrifices, "not even a dog of BJP was lost" for the country.

PNS

Better coordination could have averted Mukroh clash: Sangma

PTI ■ SHILLONG

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma on Tuesday said the violence in Mukroh village near Assam border, that left six people dead, could have been averted had all agencies of the two State Governments kept "proper coordination and communication".

The chief minister said that he and his Assam counterpart were in touch with each other to prevent recurrence of such incidents.

Violence had broken out at the Assam-Meghalaya border in the early hours of November 22 after a truck allegedly laden with illegally felled timber was intercepted by forest guards from Assam.

Six people, including a forest guard, were gunned down amid the clashes.

"Whatever factors and situations that led to this (Mukroh) violence, if proper coordination and communication was maintained by all agencies of both the govern-

ments, I am sure it (border violence) could have been averted," Sangma told PTI on the sidelines of a programme here.

"Henceforth, proper coordination and communications should be maintained at all levels to prevent such incidents from taking place," he said.

Mukroh village is located in Meghalaya's West Jaintia Hills bordering Karbi Anglong district of Assam.

"I am keeping in constant touch with the Assam chief minister. We have spoken to each other and we will continue to do so in the following weeks to ensure that coordination is maintained at all levels," Sangma said.

On the allegation that the Assam Forest department has resumed repairing the beat office, the chief minister said he will seek a report on this.

A beat office of the Assam Forest department was destroyed by a mob on November 22 following the death of six people.

The chief minister also said that at least 30 personnel of the



Meghalaya Police have been posted at the border outpost at Mukroh.

The Meghalaya government has formed a Special Investigation Team to probe the incident of violence at Mukroh.

At least two major incidents of violence were reported along the disputed Assam-Meghalaya border in the last 12 years.

The first one was at Langpih in West Khasi Hills district where four civilians were shot dead by Assam Police in 2010.

Meanwhile, the two states have also initiated the second phase of border talks for resolving the remaining six areas of difference which include -

Langpih in West Khasi Hills District, Borduar, Nongwah-Mawtamur, Deshdoomreah, Block-II in Ri Bhoi district and Block-I, Psiar-Khanduli in West Jaintia Hills district.

On March 29, the chief ministers of Meghalaya and Assam had signed an MoU in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah for resolving six areas of difference.

The areas of difference which were resolved after the MoU was inked include Tarabari (4.69 sq km), Gizang (13.53 sq km), Hahim (3.51 sq km), Boklapara (1.57 sq kms), Khanapara-Pilangkata (2.29 sq km) and Ratacherra (11.20 sq km).

Cong asks Centre when it will stop 'legitimising' Chinese aggression by 'referring to differences in perception'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Stepping up its attack against the Centre over the handling of the border issue with China, the Congress on Tuesday sought to know from the Centre as to when will India as a nation stop legitimising Chinese aggression by referring to 'differences in perception' rather than asserting our claim.

Congress' strong attack came a day after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in Lok Sabha on Monday strongly objected to the use of the term "pitai" (beating) by former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi while referring to the India-China clash in Tawang, asserting that our soldiers have stood their ground in Yangtse in Arunachal Pradesh and they should be "appreciated and honoured".

In a statement, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said, "Why have we not been more aggressive and made counter-intrusions to compel the Chinese to withdraw as we did in 1986 and



2013...When will we stop legitimising Chinese aggression by referring to 'differences in perception' rather than asserting our claim?"

The Opposition party also asked the External Affairs Minister when will he unequivocally declare that the "restoration of the pre-2020 status quo at the border is our objective".

In his response to Jaishankar's comments, Ramesh also said the party agrees with the minister's view that our jawans should be

'respected, honoured and appreciated' as they stand strong against our adversaries.

"Was it this respect that led PM Modi to say 'Na wahaan koi humari seema mein ghus aaya hai aur na hi koi ghusa hua hai' (neither anyone has crossed our border nor is anyone inside our territory) after 20 of our soldiers gave up their lives defending our borders on 19 June 2020?" he asserted.

The external affairs minister claims that relations with China are 'not normal', then why have we never called the Chinese Ambassador and issued a demarche as is done with the Pakistan High Commissioner, Ramesh asked.

"Why is our trade dependence on China at a record high with imports at USD 95 billion in 2021-22 and the trade deficit at USD 74 billion? Why did our troops conduct military exercises with Chinese troops at Russia's Vostok-22 exercise in September 2022," the Congress leader questioned.

Reacting to Jaishankar's remarks at a conclave on Monday that the Indian Army

will not let China change the status quo along the LAC "unilaterally", Ramesh asked, has the status quo not been altered by Chinese troops 18 km deep in Depsang for the last two years.

"Is it not altered by the fact that our troops are unable to access 1,000 sq km of territory in eastern Ladakh that they earlier patrolled? Is it not altered by the fact that we have agreed to buffer zones that prevent our patrols from going to areas they previously could go to? When will the EAM unequivocally declare that restoration of the pre-2020 status quo is our objective?" Ramesh said.

The EAM said "we are pressuring China," Ramesh pointed out, and asked why the government has a purely reactive stance. "Why did we withdraw from our advantageous position in the Kailash range without ensuring full restoration of the pre-2020 status quo? Why have we not been more aggressive and made counter-intrusions to compel the Chinese to withdraw as we did in 1986 and 2013?" he said.

Puducherry, Lakshadweep, Goa best performers in social progress index



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Puducherry, Lakshadweep and Goa have emerged as best-performing among all States and Union Territories in the Social Progress Index (SPI), while Jharkhand and Bihar as worst, according to a report mandated by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM).

The report titled 'Social Progress Index: States and Districts of India' released by EAC-PM Chairman Bibek Debroy further said that Aizawl (Mizoram), Solan (Himachal Pradesh) and Shimla (Himachal Pradesh) have

emerged as the top three best-performing districts.

The report has been prepared by the Institute for Competitiveness and the Social Progress Imperative and was mandated by the EAC-PM.

According to the report, Puducherry has the highest SPI score of 65.99 in the country, attributable to its remarkable performance across components like personal freedom and choice, shelter, and water and sanitation.

Lakshadweep and Goa closely follow it with scores of 65.89 and 65.53, respectively, it added.

As per the report,

Jharkhand and Bihar scored the lowest, 43.95 and 44.47, respectively.

The report ranks 36 states/Union Territories and 707 districts of India based on their performance across various social progress indicators in terms of access to education, healthcare, water and sanitation, exercising personal freedom and choice, ensuring shelter, personal safety and quality environment for people.

It pointed out that only 27 out of 112 districts under the Aspirational District Programme (ADP) have scored above the national average on the Social Progress Index.

Joint team of security forces gun down 3 LeT terrorists in Shopian

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

A joint team of security forces gunned down three Lashkar-e- Tayyeba (LeT) terrorists in Munj Marg area of Shopian early Tuesday morning.

One of the three terrorists eliminated in the anti terrorist operation was chiefly responsible for the killing of Kashmiri pandit Puran Krishan Bhat in Choudhary Gund area of Shopian on October 15, 2022.

Since January 2022, around 185 terrorists have been eliminated across Jammu and Kashmir. A total number of 56 foreign terrorists have been gunned down while around 89 local terrorists have been neutralised in these anti-terrorist operations.

According to Jammu and Kashmir police, the terrorists eliminated during the operation have been identified as Mohd Lateef Lone resident of Check Kachidoora Shopian, Umer Nazir Bhat resident of Check Ban Dialgam Anantnag and Danish Hussain Kakroo of Old Town Baramulla.

As per police records, all the killed terrorists were categorized terrorists and



involved in several terror crime cases including attacks on Police/SFs and civilian atrocities.

According to police records, the killed terrorist Latif Ahmad was involved in killing of a Kashmiri Pandit Puran Krishan Bhat. While as, the killed terrorist Umer Nazir was involved in several terror crime cases including killing of Till Bahadur Thapa of Nepal.

According to a police spokesman, the operation was launched on the basis of specific input about the presence of terrorists in Munj Marg area of Shopian.

"During the joint cordon and search operation as the joint search party approached towards the suspected spot,

ULB polls: SP yet to begin screening of candidates

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Even as the Bharatiya Janata Party and Bahujan Samaj Party have started the process of selecting candidates for the urban local body polls in Uttar Pradesh, the Samajwadi Party is yet to begin the screening exercise as it is waiting for the Allahabad High Court's ruling on a bunch of petitions challenging the reservation of seats in municipal bodies for the other backward class (OBC).

The Lucknow bench of the High Court on Tuesday extended its interim stay order restraining the State Election Commission (SEC) from issuing notification for the urban local body elections till December 21.

One of the challenges being faced by the Samajwadi Party in shortlisting its candidates is the absence of its state and district organisational units which played a crucial role in filtering the applications. Following the party's defeat in the bypolls to Rampur and Azamgarh Lok Sabha seats in June last, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav had dissolved its nation-

al, state and district executive committees, including its youth, trader and women wings.

Only party's UP chief Naresh Uttam Patel retained his post. With no local units in place, the party has now constituted a committee in each district for screening the applicants. This committee comprises the outgoing district president, local party MLAs, former MLAs, former MPs and the president of assembly constituencies.

"This committee has the power to take decisions on the selection of candidates only for nagar panchayats. For nagar palikas and nagar nigams, the party's state and national leadership will take the decision," a district working president said.

"If there is no consensus on one name in nagar panchayats, a panel of three names will be sent to the party state headquarters for taking the final call," he added. For the applicants, the party has sent a proforma in each district to collect applications from candidates. In the proforma, a candidate has to confirm that he is an active member and has taken lifetime membership of the party.

Kolkata continues to celebrate Argentina victory in WC

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Messi's men seem to have driven the City of Joy berserk. Even after two days of Argentina lifting the World Cup humbling an equally competitive France festivities do not seem to end in Bengal.

Thanks to some liberal patronage provided by the Trinamool Congress brass down to the grassroots levels. The reason: Both share the same colour --- Blue and White.

The verve is so unending that even vendors of sweets and chawalhas (tea stall owners) have offered specially designed sweets and subsidised hot drinks in that order.

The famous rasogollas --- for which Bengal won the GI status not so long ago --- have decked up in blue and white.

Says BK Maity a shop owner in South Kolkata, "I have sold a thousand pieces in the past 24 hours." Anima Masi a tea seller at Bowbazar is selling her first 50 cups for free while another fellow tea vendor Sunita peddled free cups on Monday.

When asked to comment on the largesse she says, "this will up my business in the coming days as I will get publicity."

Sunita had sold about two hundred cups of tea in two hours on Sunday evening when two thousand people had gathered in front of a giant screen raised by local organisers at Tridhara Sanmilani Club in South Kolkata.



Similar arrangements were seen through out the state, thanks to some indulgent patronage by ruling party leaders ahead of the next year's panchayat elections.

Not only the Bengal capital or for that matter lesser cities like Asansol, Siliguri or Burdwan but remote villages like Haldipara in Nadia district and Bhaluka in Malda witnessed even women in large numbers collecting in front of giant screens to watch the Messi-Mbappe duel in Qatar.

Cut to the corridors of power in Bengal. As in Tagore's own State everything is cooked with a Tadka (spice) of politics the ruling Trinamool Congress leaders are still not sure whether a victory for Blue-and-White would fetch some extra points in the coming panchayat polls.

Some lesser leaders have already gone to town with the message that the God continues to be kind on the Blue --- Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's favourite colour that is used in all State functions.

"It is not for nothing that Didi with a broken leg won in 2021 Assembly elections and Messi won with his left leg worked wonders in Qatar.

Indian Navy receives 5th Scorpene class submarine



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Boosting its operational prowess to guard the strategically important Indian Ocean region, the Indian Navy on Tuesday received the fifth Scorpene-class submarine Vagir ahead of its planned commissioning next month. The induction of the submarine, built under Project-75, is set to bolster the Indian Navy's combat capability.

India has been focusing on shoring up its maritime capability with a focus on the Indian Ocean in the backdrop of concerns over China's growing forays into the region.

Project-75 includes the indigenous construction of six submarines of Scorpene design. The submarines are being constructed at Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in Mumbai in collaboration with the Naval Group of France.

"Launched on Nov 12, 2020, Vagir commenced the sea trials from February 1 and it is a matter of great pride that she has completed all major trials including the weapon and sensor trials in the shortest time in comparison to the earlier submarines," Navy Spokesperson Commander Vivek Madhwal said here on Tuesday.

Have no desire for any post in party: Shivpal



PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Shivpal Yadav, who recently emerged his Progressive Samajwadi Party-Lohia with the Samajwadi Party, has said that he has no longing for any post in the party and that he will remain its loyal soldier for life. Shivpal Singh had on Monday visited Kunda, the assembly constituency of independent MLA Raja Bhaiyya.

"I have no desire for any post; position is not a big deal for me. Whether I get any post or not, I will work for the Samajwadi Party for life and this is my final decision," he said. However, he added that he would shoulder the responsibility given to him as he wanted to strengthen the organisation. He also praised his nephew and the Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav, saying Akhilesh is efficiently performing his duties as the leader of opposition in UP Assembly.

Shivpal, who was earlier known for his conciliatory stance towards the Yogi Adityanath government, has now started attacking the BJP. Taking on the BJP government in UP, Shivpal said the leaders are being harassed by fake cases and being sent to jail.

FORM NO.5
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road,
Near Hanuman Setu Mandir,
Lucknow- 226007
(Ares of Jurisdiction- Part of
Uttar Pradesh)
Summons for filing &
Appearance by Publication
O.A.No. 868/2022
Date. 02/12/2022
(Summons to defendant under
section 19(3) of the Recovery
of Debts due to Banks and
Financial Institutions Act, 1993
read with Rules 12 and 13 of
the Debts Recovery Tribunal
(Procedure Rules, 1993)
ICICI BANK LTD.Applicant
Versus
NAGUR SAHEB SHEIK AND
OTHERSDefendants
To.
Defendants:-
1. NAGUR SAHEB SHEIK S/O
PEER SAHEB
R/o D No. 9-160, Behind Bus
Stand, Koderu Road, Maruteru
Post, West Godavari-534122, A.P.
Also at :
Flat No. 4C 113, 13th Floor,
Tower-1, Golf View Apartment
Kh No. 33,35,36,44, Pocket D,
Village-Devama, Pargana-
Bijnor, Tehsil And District-
Lucknow- 226204, U.P.
2. SHEIKH PAYANI BABY W/o
NAGUR SAHEB SHEIKH
R/o 92, Pocket-A/4, Kalkaji
Extension, New Delhi- 110019
3. ARPITA RAY D/o GAUTAM
RAY
R/o 92, Pocket- A/4, Kalkaji
Extension, New Delhi- 110019
4. TULSIJANI CONSTRUCTIONS
AND DEVELOPERS.
Branch Office at: T.C.-34/V-2,
Cyber Tower, 1st Floor, Vibhuti
Khand, Gomti Nagar, Lucknow-
226010
In the above noted application, you
are required to file in Paper Book
form in two sets along with
documents and affidavits (if any),
personally or through your duly
the authorized agent or legal
practitioner in this Tribunal, after
serving copy of the same on the
applicant or his counsel/duly
authorized agent after publication
of the summons, and thereafter to
appear before the Tribunal on
24/02/2023 at 10:30 A.M. failing
which the application shall be
heard and decide in your absence.
Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal,
Lucknow

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	M/s. Rangriti Apparels, Mr. Sumit Kumar, Mr. Sumit Kumar, Mr. Sumit Kumar, G/F Plot In Kh No. 919-923, LPV- 2821, Kapashera, Near Iswar, Delhi - 110037. A/c No:-033205006203	H. No. -123, 2nd Floor (Without Roof Right), H-Block, Vikas Puri, New Delhi- 110018	15-Nov-2022 Rs. 2,97,37,808/-	03-Nov-2022
2.	M/s. Shyam Sunder Ashok Kumar & Co., Mr. Manoj Kumar Patodia (Partner), Manoj Kumar Patodia, Manoj Kumar Patodia, 3988, Naya Bazar, Central Delhi, DELHI-1 10006. A/c No:-031605002400	Property No. 2/35, Block 2, Roop Nagar, Delhi - 110007	15-Nov-2022 Rs.1,61,40,404.73/-	03-Nov-2022
3.	M/s. Om Prakash Mittal Promoters & Builders Pvt Ltd, Sanjay Mittal (Director), Sanjay Mittal, Shruti Mittal, Sanjay Mittal, D- 72, Ashok Vihar, Phase 1, Delhi-110072. A/c No:-1146505000665	Plot No 122 Block D, South City 1, Gurgaon, Haryana -122001	15-Nov-2022 Rs. 82,37,681/-	03-Nov-2022
4.	M/s. Om Prakash Mittal Promoters & Builders Pvt Ltd, Sanjay Mittal (Director), Sanjay Mittal, Shruti Mittal, Sanjay Mittal, D- 72, Ashok Vihar, Phase 1, Delhi-110072. A/c No:-1146505000006	Plot No 122 Block D, South City 1, Gurgaon, Haryana -122001	15-Nov-2022 Rs. 10,91,531.22/-	01-Nov-2022
5.	Adreek Media Private Limited, Yuvraj Agarwal, Manasi Agarwal, Yuvraj Agarwal, Jai Shiv Kumar Agarwal, Yuvraj Agarwal. No-63 Vinayak Apartments, C-58/1 Ntpc Officer, Sasl Sectr 62, Noida-201301. A/c No:-777705001246	Unit No 63 - First Floor Block B Plot No C-58/1 Vinayak Apartment Ntpc Officer, Sasl Sectr 62 Noida - 201301	03-Nov-2022 Rs. 75,70,951.46/-	04-Oct-2022
6.	Adreek Media Private Limited, Yuvraj Agarwal, Manasi Agarwal, Yuvraj Agarwal, Jai Shiv Kumar Agarwal, Yuvraj Agarwal. No-63 Vinayak Apartments, C-58/1 Ntpc Officer, Sasl Sectr 62, Noida-201301. A/c No:- 033155000013	Unit No 63 - First Floor Block B Plot No C-58/1 Vinayak Apartment Ntpc Officer, Sasl Sectr 62 Noida - 201301	03-Nov-2022 Rs. 9,69,572.69/-	01-Oct-2022
7.	M/s. Mahavira Enterprises, Sangeeta Agarwal, Mr. Vikash Agarwal, Mr. Mahabir Prasad Agarwal, Mr. Mahabir Prasad Agarwal, 2215/5 2nd Floor, Chah Indira, Bhagirathi Palace, Chandni Chowk, Delhi-110001. A/c No:- 135305500435	House No. 93D, Third Floor, Ayodhya Apartment, Plot No. 30/2, Sector-13, Rohini, New Delhi, 110085	22-Nov-2022 Rs. 56,39,073.24/-	05-Nov-2022
8.	Prashant Zippers, Prashant Jain (Proprietor), Prashant Jain, Surinder Kumar Jain, 1269, Vardhman Plaza, City Narela, Delhi, North West Delhi, Delhi-110040. A/c No:- 401905000113	Plot No 33, Ff Pocket G-17, Sec 15, Rohini, Delhi North Delhi - 110085	15-Nov-2022 Rs. 49,60,478.6/-	03-Oct-2022
9.	Prashant Zippers, Prashant Jain (Proprietor), Prashant Jain, Surinder Kumar Jain, 1269, Vardhman Plaza, City Narela, Delhi, North West Delhi, Delhi-110040. A/c No:-401955000010	Plot No 33, Ff Pocket G-17, Sec 15, Rohini, Delhi North Delhi - 110085	15-Nov-2022 Rs. 6,51,768.24/-	03-Oct-2022
10.	M/s. Sanjeev Fruit Agency, Vinod Kumar Sharma (Partner), Vinod Kumar Sharma (Partner), Vinod Kumar Sharma (Partner), C - 595, New Subzi Mandi Azadpur, Delhi-110033. A/c No:- 042305000845	House No.98, Block-F, Pocket-1, Sector-11, Rohini, Delhi, 110085	15-Nov-2022 Rs. 30,62,046.16/-	03-Nov-2022
11.	M/s. Vasu Construction, Dilip Kumar Patel-Proprietor, Dilip Kumar Patel- Proprietor, Dilip Kumar Patel, B-92C, Madangir Village, South Delhi, Delhi-110062. A/c No:-071405500666	Ce-322, Block-C, Golf Link-1, Plot No.8, Greater Noida, Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P., 201307	17-Nov-2022 Rs. 18,73,532/-	03-Nov-2022

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : December 21, 2022

Place : Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

No lessons learnt

Indian rulers fought each other when British came, our leaders are fighting as China bares its fangs

Children in India are taught in schools that the country was repeatedly enslaved by invaders, be it the Turks, Mughals, or the British, because of the lack of unity among natives, especially the rulers. Even as the powerful enemies eyed India for conquest, Indian kings kept fighting each other. The ongoing slugfest between the Government and the Opposition reminds us of that unfortunate fact about our past. As the nineteenth century French author and journalist Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr said, “The more things change, the more they stay the same.” At least in India. Almost everyone in India—indeed in the world—that knows that China, the world’s most powerful rogue state, wants to pin down India in every possible manner. From weaponising the infamous Belt and Road Initiative to triggering flare-ups on the border, it has been doing everything to harass and hurt us. And what, pray, are our political masters doing? Are they closing ranks to take on the malevolent dragon? Not in the least. At a time when they should be burying their differences and joining hands to put up a united front, they are fighting each other. Just like their forebears, our rulers are using China’s aggression as a pretext to fire salvos at each other. The more things change...

Like any other day, Parliament was rocked on Tuesday with the Bharatiya Janata Party demanding an apology from the Congress over controversial remarks by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge. Speaking at Rahul Gandhi’s Bharat Jodo Yatra at Alwar in Rajasthan, Kharge had said that the grand old party won independence for the country and later its leaders like Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi sacrificed their lives. “Has even your dog at home died for the country? Still, they [BJP leaders] claim to be patriots and if we say something we are termed as deshdrohi [anti-nationals].” Kharge also expressed displeasure that the Government did not allow a discussion in Parliament on the border clash with China in which several Indian soldiers were injured, albeit none seriously. While the Congress president has a point, that the Government should not curb debate and discussion over the attack, he did not cover himself in glory by the dog remark. This is not the kind of phraseology a senior politician should be employing to make a point. On their part, the Government and BJP leaders too seem more interested in taking potshots at the GOP rather than endeavouring to unite the entire political class over the subject. Sixty years ago, we fought a war against China, and got a bloody nose and wounded pride. Today, China is much stronger than it was in 1962. But the Government seems more interested in exposing the supposed shenanigans of the Congress. It raked up the issue of alleged Chinese donations to the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. If any impropriety, let alone treason, is involved why aren’t the offended behind bars? It looks like our leaders have learnt nothing from history.

PICTALK



A sadhu offers prayers near the 8th century rock image of Hindu God Shiva, in Unakoti, Agartala.

PTI

Football frenzy

Football fever truly gripped India and fans went crazy when their favourite Argentina won the cup

Call it a change of taste, the impact of the internet, the effect of globalization, or what have you, this time around the football fever truly gripped the country. It almost reached a feverish pitch in the two states of Kerala and West Bengal. Honestly speaking football is the poor cousin of cricket in India and we don’t even get to enter the world cup. But the fanbase of football stars is immense in India, Ronaldo and Messi are almost household names here. A lot of TV sets broke when Brazil lost. But Brazil’s loss was Argentina’s gain. The country had two colours for a while, Blue and White in stripes. And Argentina’s win has been truly elating for the football fans in the country. Sensing the mood of the people the prime minister and Rahul Gandhi also tweeted their joy at Argentina’s win.

Kerala, West Bengal and Goa have been traditionally football hubs where football has been big. Of the three Kerala and West Bengal have been traditional bastions of communists. The first democratically elected government in the world was formed in Kerala. The craze for Lionel Messi was unparalleled in Kerala where a 10-meter statue of football star Lionel Messi was installed and people painted their houses in white and blue stripes. Why such a frenzy for the foreign team which Kerala called “our team”. Maybe people of this communist state identify with the people’s struggle there and their long fight for justice and liberty. By the way, Argentina happens to be the revolutionary leader of Che Guevara! Messi and Che both symbolize the will to fight and an indomitable spirit that refuses to say never say die. A similar frenzy gripped Kolkata where football is akin to religion. The city of Kolkata has had a football club since 1872, the first in the country. After Argentina qualified for the World Cup, the streets erupted in cheering and celebration that continued after the final. Now that the world cup is over and Indian football fans are elated with the Argentinian win and Deepika Padukone’s presence in the stadium the cricket fever would return after the sabbatical. Though Indian fans would miss Messi who retires albeit a little early but then they can cherish for the rest of their life that they saw him play the world cup and lift it. Perhaps India has a connect with some South American countries on the far end of the globe. And it is a game of football that bridges the space divide.



The Chinese have a game plan on LAC

The Chinese intrusions are only rising year after year. The Govt must prepare for any eventuality and should not take border skirmishes lightly



BRIENDER SINGH PANWAR

The recent stand-off between the Indian and Chinese armies in Tawang needs to be seen in the strategic political and cultural significance of the 3,488 km LAC area running all along the Himalayan ridgeline which is undemarcated. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the perception of where the LAC runs varies by several km at certain places and troops of either side patrol in these disputed sections. The two countries signed an agreement in January 2012 to establish a “Working mechanism for consultation and coordination on Indo-China Affairs”. The main objective of this agreement was to address issues and diffuse situations that may arise in border areas and affect peace and tranquility. However, the repeated clashes between the two armies over the years indicated that this agreement was not successful.

According to a report, China made at least 300 attempts at infiltration inside the Indian side from 2005 to 2015 whereas during the period of 2015 to 2020 such attempts increased to 600.

Considering Tawang, there are three “agreed areas” of differing Indian and Chinese perceptions of the LAC. The site of the recent confrontation, Yangtse, which is about 25 Km from Tawang town, North of the Lungroo grazing ground, is one of those areas. Consequently, it has been the site of regular physical contact between the Indian and Chinese armies, especially as the high ground is on the Indian side, giving it a commanding view of the Chinese side. In order to understand the ground realities and the problem of confrontation between the two countries, we need to explore the history of the region. Historically, Tawang was under the control of Tibet for a long time. Tibet and British India signed an agreement in the 1914 Simla Conference to delineate their common boundary in the Assam Himalaya region which was called the MacMohan Line. According to this agree-



ment, Tibet relinquished several hundred square miles of its territory, including Tawang to the British. Since the British were unable to get China’s acceptance, the Tibetans regarded the “Mac-Mohanline” invalid and Tawang continued to be administered by Tibet. Tawang was important to the Tibetans due to the Tawang Monastery. In 1938, the British made a move to assert sovereignty over Tawang by sending a military which was met with strong resistance from the Tibetan government. After the outbreak of war between China and Japan, the government of Assam undertook a number of ‘Forward Policy’ measures to tighten its hold on the Northeastern Frontier Agency (NEFA) area which was later recognized as Arunachal Pradesh. The situation took a decisive turn in 1950 when Tibet lost its autonomy and was incorporated into the newly established People’s Republic of



CHINA MADE AT LEAST 300 ATTEMPTS AT INFILTRATION INSIDE THE INDIAN SIDE FROM 2005 TO 2015 WHEREAS FROM 2015 TO 2020 SUCH ATTEMPTS INCREASED TO 600.

China. In February 1951, India took control of the remainder of the Tawang tract from the Tibetans, removing the Tibetan administration. This move was warmly welcomed by the native population. During the 1962 Sino-India war, Tawang briefly fell under Chinese control, but China voluntarily withdrew its troops at the end of the war and Tawang returned to the Indian administration. But, since then, China has not relinquished its claim on most of Arunachal Pradesh including Tawang.

There have been reports from the China side of large-scale constructions of roads and other infrastructure along the Indian border. Taking note of these developments, in the last few years, India has taken concrete steps to improve the infrastructure on its side of LAC in the Tawang area. The Border Road Organisation (BRO) has constructed a tunnel at Sela Pass which could be

ready by January 2023 and would provide crucial all-weather connectivity between Tezpur in Assam and Tawang. Another 1,500-km Frontier Highway project is coming up which will run from Tawang in the West to Vijaynagar in East Arunachal along the state’s frontier with China. The Indian government is taking all steps to counter the adverse designs of China in this area, but much more needs to be done. Considering the evil designs of China, we need to be well prepared to meet any eventuality in the times to come. The Indian Army and Air Force need to be kept in a state of good preparedness to match the military force of China.

(The writer is a senior journalist and Chairman of the Panwar Group of Institutions, Solan, Himachal Pradesh. The views expressed are personal. This is the second part of a two-part series on Indo-Chinese tussle. concluded)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

INCOME TAX SLAB

Sir — Irrespective of the parties in power at the center, the government is niggardly at increasing the tax benefits to the taxpayers. At present, the tax-free slab is Rs. 2.5 lakh and below and it is Rs.3 lakh and below for senior citizens. There is speculation as seen from the reports that the tax-free income slab will be raised to Rs. 5 lakhs in the 2023 budget to be presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman. Such speculations were seen and heard in the past also. No Finance Minister so far has given any inkling of the tax-free income slab to be raised before presenting the budget. Increased tax-free income slab leaves more money in the hands of people. More money in the hands of people encourages consumption. Raise in consumption stimulates manufacturing activities vigorously. The low rate of Bank interest has already made a big hole in the pockets of people.

A good chunk of revenue in the form of tax comes to the government from the salaried class. The rise in prices of essential commodities and services, low Bank interest rates, and the higher rate of tax-slab have been triggering off demand for wage-hike in government departments and companies. People are meekly submitting to the rise in prices, reduced Bank interest, and increased tax burden. Traders unilaterally increase the prices of their commodities. Labourers demand hefty wages to keep pace with the increase in the cost of living.

An analogy can be drawn about the reservation system. The unreserved category of people does not demand the abolition of the reservation system. On the contrary, community after community have started demanding reservation. Accordingly, price rises and other factors have made people demand an increase in salaries and wages. With this, the government can have the satisfaction of more tax collection and the salaried class, traders, and labourers can have the satisfaction of increased income. The government is already committed to granting enhanced

China is not Pakistan



Kejriwal is making some irrational comments with a view to get public attention. Earlier, he had demanded Lakshmi and Ganesh images on currency notes to ‘help the economy’. Before boycotting something, we should

assess whether we have alternative supply. In the case of China too, we are importing many items from them which are essential and they are the predominant supplier too. Take the case of Integrated Chips and Solar Panels. We can’t make India a manufacturing hub overnight. We wasted a lot of precious time. Our rules and systems are not conducive for attracting investments. Total Indian economy constitutes just the Forex reserve of China. Unlike China, we can conduct surgical strikes against Pakistan. We are investing heavily in religion and expecting miracles to happen. The widening trade gap with China is the collective failure of the entire political dispensation of India including Kejriwal.

Girish R Edathitta | Pathanamthitta

dearness allowance every six months on January 1 and July 1. The government has no reason to say ‘no’ to the demand for wage revision and periodical dearness allowance to offset the ever-increasing cost of living.

KV Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

POLITICS OF HALAL FREE KARNATAKA

Sir — The Congress party is prepared to fight the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) over a new bill set to be introduced in the Karnataka assembly, which has plans to prohibit the sale and circulation of halal meat in shops and restaurants across the state. The winter session of the state assembly is witnessing a strong debate between BJP and Congress is set to take place over a new bill being introduced by the CM Basavaraj Bommai-led government, which is aimed at making Karnataka halal-free which is nothing but politically motivated to divert the attention of the people to cover their failures. According to reports, BJP MLC N Ravikumar has taken up the initiative to ban food certification by any other organizations other than the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), which is aimed at prohibiting the sale of halal meat in the state. The anti-halal bill

in Karnataka will prevent a lot of private outlets from getting a government certificate for the sale of halal meat in the state, which is expected to anger several communities.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

WHAT A GAME!

Sir — What a tremendous match it was! Words cannot describe the beauty of the game. The players of both teams have strained every nerve to win the game. Anyhow fortune favoured Argentina. Thus the long drawn-out wait of the people of Argentina has finally culminated in great ecstasy. The Finale of the World Cup, was quite thrilling, exhilarating, and worth watching. The whole world has been found gripped by football fervor. The FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 has been organised with great pomp and gaiety. Football has been an enchanting and impressive game for centuries. Back home, the present plight of Indian football is quite pathetic. Unfortunately, the over-popularity of cricket has been playing spoilsport on Indian football.

Prabhakaran Vallath | Kozhikode

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

BJP from time to time comes up with Pak, color, and other such strategies to hide their failures.



Samajwadi party chief — Akhilesh Yadav



Twitter chief — Elon Musk

Films like RRR are so popular today. But it’s a regressive film. It looks backward while we should look forward. We just feel whatever we are doing is good because we are part of the mother of democracy — India.



Actor — Ratna Pathak Shah



Cricketer — Suryakumar Yadav

The state government’s performance in the past six months has rattled the Opposition parties which prompted them to take out a rally that failed to gather enough support.




Maharashtra Chief Minister — Eknath Shinde

FIRST COLUMN

GOD’S LOVE IS FOR ONE AND ALL

God is prepared to accept all of us, regardless of our past




AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

No one can love as much as God can; no one has that much capacity. Contrary to the impression that God is very distant, the reality is otherwise. “I am the origin and dissolution of the entire creation.” the Bhagavad-Geeta (7.6)

“This entire world is spread by Me by My unmanifest form.” (9.4) “I am the cause of coming into being of all. From Me everything gets activated.” (10.8) “I am present in the hearts of all. From Me only memory, knowledge and removal of delusion takes place.” God is the basis, “Under My superintendence, the material nature gives birth to the world along with moving and stationary things. And on account of this, the world cycle goes on.” (9.10)

God is not only the source and the basis, but He is very active as Lord Krishna informed Arjuna, “There is neither compulsion of any duty for Me in the three worlds, not there is anything remaining to be obtained by Me and nor there is anything worth getting for Me, still I am engaged in action only.” (3.22) “Having limbs on all sides; having eyes, head and mouth on all sides; having ears on all sides, God is situated in this world pervading all.” (13.13) He is unknown due to being subtle, and situated far away also, and nearby too, it is God only.” (13.5)

God is very keen about our welfare. He has asked us to: “Fix your mind in Me only; engage your intelligence in Me; thus hereafter you will remain in Me only; there is no doubt about this.” (12.8) “Develop My consciousness; become My devotee; make sacrifices for Me; and offer obeisance to Me. You will attain Me only. This I truly promise to you, because you are dear to Me.” (18.65) “In all respects take My shelter only. By My mercy you will achieve supreme peace and the eternal abode.” (18.62)



Dharma is very dear to Him, as was Arjuna. He wanted to make sure that Arjuna became victorious; He had to guide Him all the way. In order to make Arjuna serious about his task, Lord Krishna even showed him His Vishwaroop.

The Lord even gave Arjuna a very important role that of His instrument (‘nimitta’), because what all was to be done was only within God’s powers. Still, He wanted to give his dear Arjuna credit. (11.33) Arjuna is not the only beneficiary. God is prepared to accept all of us, no matter what our past has been; we just have to begin worshipping God with undivided devotion. (9.30) Not only will we achieve lasting peace but will also never perish, i.e. face ‘durgati’. Fears of all kinds will disappear from our psyche. How? Because we have started doing karma-yoga, as instructed by Him. (2.40)

All that I have stated about God’s unlimited love, Lord Krishna has said in the Geeta. He has spoken the word ‘priya’ (dear) five times and very dear once. In the verse #18.65, the Lord even went as far as to assure us of His intention by stating that He was truly promising all these. Lastly, God is even prepared to help in getting what one does not have and provide security of what one has (9.22), if someone becomes a regular practitioner of yoga. Can you imagine anyone loving like this? We will never get even close. So great is our Lord’s love.

(The author is a spiritual teacher)

India should let any party rule in Nepal

India is a natural voice of Global South, a long standing partner in the South Asian neighbourhood



NAVITA SRIKANT

“

NEPAL WAS NOT A PRIORITY FOR CHINA ON THE WHOLE, UNTIL ACTIVITIES OF THE WEST, PRIMARILY OF THE US, GREW INCONGRUOUSLY. CHINA REALISES THAT ITS AND INDIA’S INTERESTS DO NOT IMPEDE ON EACH OTHER IN NEPAL

”

If a pre-election coalition is maintained, UML would not have the numbers to form a government. But speculations are rife for the Congress and UML come together to form Government to provide semblance of political stability.

One can clearly see inhibition on part of Indian stakeholders, as well as the Indian media generally, not just to see an Oli-led government or even to have the UML in a coalition with the Congress. This is a myopic lack of pragmatism, and forgets the fact that it was in the time of the Oli-led Government that key India-Nepal national initiatives were launched. The party supports the idea of Indo-Nepal collaboration in areas of shared interest. It is important to remember that even when India-Nepal relations were strained during the 2015-2017 period, Beijing was not able to leverage in Nepal.

It is important for New Delhi to understand that some of the strained developments during the Oli Government were contextual, and they cannot be seen in isolation. While India is understandably worried about Chinese inroads into Nepal, it needs to remember that India has an upper hand when it comes to political understanding with Nepal’s leadership and even Beijing recognizes the depth of political relations between India and Nepal, while China’s main concern is to limit Tibet-related anti-China activities from Nepali territory, and also it has historically been willing to accept the special dynamic between Kathmandu and Delhi.

(The author is a financial, geopolitical and security analyst)

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

I ADVISE RAHUL GANDHI NOT TO SAY SUCH THINGS. WHEN RAJIV GANDHI WAS PM, THE SMALLER COUNTRIES USED TO THREATEN US. — MADHYA PRADESH CHIEF MINISTER SHIVRAJ SINGH CHAUHAN



CHINA IS PREPARING FOR WAR, NOT FOR AN INCURSION. SEE THEIR PATTERN OF WEAPONS. THE GOVT IS WORKING ON EVENTS, NOT ON STRATEGY. — CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI



Sonrise in South: Modi faces dynasty wall in TN

Udhayanidhi, son of MK Stalin, is now a minister, with DMK workers hailing his induction and cheering him as a future CM



KALYANI SHANKAR

The BJP has weakened the Congress in the past eight years, but can it decimate the growing number of influential regional leaders who will be the primary challengers in the 2024 polls? In July, the BJP vowed to eliminate the family rule in the Hyderabad executive meeting. However, to its dismay, one more dynastic member has become a minister in Tamil Nadu this week. It is Udhayanidhi, son of Chief Minister MK Stalin, who just took over as the Sports Minister.

After much speculation about whether Stalin would elevate his son now or later, he anointed Udhay as a minister on Wednesday. It was a quick promotion for the 45-year-old film star turned politician. Udhay (as he is called) is a third-generation politician from the family of the DMK patriarch late M Karunanidhi. He moved away from the party tradition and often faced flak for perpetuating dynasty politics.

Udhayanidhi began his political career by campaigning for the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. He later toured the state as youth wing secretary, a position Stalin had held. In the 2021 Assembly polls, Udhay won the prestigious Chepak Tiruvallikeni seat held by his grandfather in the past. The DMK received a thumping win in the polls, helping Udhay consolidate his position in the party. Udhay became the first-time MLA and is now a minister. Before Udhay entered the rough and tumble politics, he acted in films and tried his hands at the film distribution business. His Red Giant Movies is a successful name in film production and distribution and has almost a monopoly. Presently, Udhay has won support from four critical sections. Firstly, the DMK workers hail his induction and cheer him as a future chief minister. There were no murmurs from the cadres at his quick elevation.

Secondly, Udhay had a smooth transition, as was seen by how the senior party leaders lined up to take him to his room in the secretariat after the oath-taking. The third is the media. Despite raising some eyebrows at such a quick elevation, Udhay did not face a hostile press.

Fourthly, the general public showed no adverse reaction. Of course, the opposition parties criticised Stalin for bringing in his son quickly. Will Udhay be a plus or minus to Stalin? It all depends on his work. The party and the public would scrutinise Udhay’s every move. For now, he has shown maturity, he should concentrate on his work. He must utilise his advantages and avoid controversies. He could enthuse the youth. Stalin has emerged as a prominent Opposition leader since he took over in 2021. He had a long wait before he became the party chief (only after his father’s death). Several important political events unfolded, especially after the demise of former chief ministers Jaya-lalitha and Karunanidhi in 2016 and 2017, respectively. Stalin could keep his flock together while AIADMK split into four, as Jaya did not name her successor. With no strong opposition against him, Stalin is sailing through smoothly.

Interestingly, national parties are at the forefront of the family rule phenomenon in India. Except for a handful like the communist parties, seven or eight of the 50 relevant parties, the rest practice progeny politics. The BJP is no exception. The BJP’s strategy is to either weaken the regional chieftains or join them as allies, but Congress tops the list.

From Kashmir to Kanya Kumari, many influential dynastic families have sprung up. The Abdullahs and Muftis in Kashmir, the Badals and Captain Amarinder Singh in Punjab, the Rajes and Pilots in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, and the Yadavs in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The Gowdas and Bommais in Karnataka, Karunanidhis and Ramdoss in Tamil Nadu, and the Raos and the Reddys in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh are notable.

Modi has weakened the Congress already. Dealing with the other dynasts would be Modi’s next big project. Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Mizoram, and Rajasthan will hold Assembly elections in 2023. It would be challenging, as these regional chieftains have a proprietorial hold over their strong electorate. The BJP has identified eight or nine prominent political families to deal with.

The BJP needs to be stronger in the South. There are 129 seats from the five Southern states, and BJP has only 29. Currently, it has four MLAs in Tamil Nadu (riding piggyback on the AIADMK) and none in Andhra Pradesh or Kerala. Telangana has three MLAs.

Ironically, while family connections could be an advantage and give an entry, success would depend on each dynastic member. It is a miracle how people vote in and out of the truant political families. They have to prove themselves in the people’s court. Dynasts will only disappear when our young democracy matures. Until then, we have to wait.

(The author is a senior journalist)

Ukraine's Prez visits combat zone, Putin rallies forces

AP ■ KYIV

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on Tuesday visited an eastern city that is a focus of some of the most intense combat of Russia's nearly 10-month war, while Russian President Vladimir Putin praised the "courage and self-denial" of his front-line forces in Ukraine.

Zelenskyy met with military personnel in Bakhmut, the scene of "fierce battles" between Ukraine's defenders and Russia's invading forces, the president's office said. The city, located about 600 kilometers (380 miles) east of Kyiv, has remained in Ukrainian hands, thwarting Moscow's goal of capturing Ukraine's entire Donbas region.

It was not clear how Zelenskyy got to Bakhmut, but his unannounced trip to the combat zone appeared designed to shore up the morale of Ukrainians and to dishearten the Russians trying to encircle the city. The president saluted people's "courage, resilience and strength shown in repelling the enemy attacks."

"Bakhmut Fortress. Our people. Unconquered by the enemy. Who with their bravery prove that we will endure and will not give up what's ours," he wrote on his Telegram channel.

While the Kremlin tries to advance its stalled invasion and Ukrainians burned their furni-



ture to try to stay warm, Putin hailed his country's military and security agencies during a Kremlin ceremony. Among others, he presented awards to the Moscow-appointed heads of four regions of Ukraine that Russia illegally annexed in September.

"Our country has often faced challenges and defended its sovereignty," Putin said. "Now Russia is again facing such challenge. Soldiers, officers and volunteers are showing outstanding examples of courage and self-denial on the front line."

Russia's ground invasion, which began Feb. 24, has lost momentum in recent months. The annexed provinces — Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk and Zaporizhzhia — remain fiercely contested. Capturing

Bakhmut, which is located in Donetsk, would cleave Ukraine's supply lines and open a route for Russian forces to press on toward the cities that are key Ukrainian strongholds in the province.

Mercenaries from the Wagner Group, a shadowy Russian military company, are reported to be leading the charge in Bakhmut. Before Russia's full-scale invasion, Russia-backed separatists had controlled parts of Donetsk and neighboring Luhansk since 2014. The two provinces together make up the Donbas.

The Kremlin released a video address by Putin before Tuesday's award ceremony. In it, he singled out for praise the security staff deployed to the illegally annexed regions of

Ukraine, saying that "people living there, Russian citizens, count on being protected by you."

"Your duty is to do all that is needed to ensure their safety and protection of rights and freedoms," the Russian leader said on the national day commemorating the security agencies' work.

He promised to reinforce units stationed in the annexed areas with more equipment and personnel. The regions are under pressure from a Ukrainian counteroffensive, as well as from Russian attacks on non-occupied cities and towns.

Putin, a KGB veteran, also called on counterintelligence officers to step up efforts to "derail activities by foreign spy agencies and quickly track down traitors, spies and saboteurs."

In Ukraine, the war ground on through wintry weather, with at least five civilians killed and eight wounded between Monday and Tuesday, Zelenskyy's office reported in a morning update. Russian forces attacked nine regions in the country's southeast, it said.

The Ukrainian governor of Donetsk, Pavlo Kyrylenko, said 19 cities and villages in the region were shelled by the Russian army over the past day. The governor of occupied Luhansk, Serhiy Haidai, said the province was on the verge of a humanitarian catastrophe.

Wartime Ukraine is erasing Russian past from public spaces

AP ■ KYIV

On the streets of Kyiv, Fyodor Dostoevsky is on the way out. Andy Warhol is on the way in. Ukraine is accelerating efforts to erase the vestiges of Soviet and Russian influence from its public spaces by pulling down monuments and renaming hundreds of streets to honour its own artists, poets, soldiers, independence leaders and others — including heroes of this year's war.

Following Moscow's invasion on Feb. 24 that has killed or injured untold numbers of civilians and soldiers and pummeled buildings and infrastructure, Ukraine's leaders have shifted a campaign that once focused on dismantling its Communist past into one of "de-Russification."

Streets that honoured revolutionary leader Vladimir Lenin or the Bolshevik Revolution were largely already gone; now Russia, not Soviet legacy, is the enemy. It's part punishment for crimes meted out by Russia, and part affirmation of a national identity by honouring Ukrainian notables who have been mostly overlooked.

Russia, through the Soviet Union, is seen by many in Ukraine as having stamped its domination of its smaller southwestern neighbour for generations, consigning its artists, poets and military heroes to relative obscurity, compared with more famous Russians.



If victors write history, as some say, Ukrainians are doing some rewriting of their own — even as their fate hangs in the balance. Their national identity is having what may be an unprecedented surge, in ways large and small.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has taken to wearing a black T-shirt that says: "I'm Ukrainian."

He is among the many Ukrainians who were born speaking Russian as a first language. Now, they shun it — or at least limit their use of it.

Ukrainian has traditionally been spoken more in the western part of the country — a region that early on shunned Russian and Soviet imagery.

Large parts of northern, eastern and central Ukraine are making that linguistic change. The eastern city of Dnipro on Friday pulled down a bust of Alexander Pushkin — like

Dostoevsky, a giant of 19th century Russian literature.

A strap from a crane was unceremoniously looped under the statue's chin.

This month, Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko announced about 30 more streets in the capital will be rechristened.

Volodymyr Prokopiv, deputy head of the Kyiv City Council, said Ukraine's "de-Communisation" policy since 2015 had been applied in a "soft" way so as not to offend sensitivities among the country's Russian-speaking and even pro-Moscow population.

"With the war, everything changed. Now the Russian lobby is now powerless — in fact, it doesn't exist," Prokopiv said in an interview with The Associated Press in his office overlooking Khreshchatik Street, the capital's main thoroughfare.

"Renaming these streets is

like erasing the propaganda that the Soviet Union imposed on Ukraine."

During the war, the Russians have also sought to stamp their culture and domination in areas they have occupied. Andrew Wilson, a professor at University College London, cautioned about "the dangers in rewriting the periods in history where Ukrainians and Russians did cooperate and build things together: I think the whole point about de-imperialising Russian culture should be to specify where we have previously been blind — often in the West."

Wilson noted that the Ukrainians "are taking a pretty broad-brush approach."

He cited Pushkin, the 19th century Russian writer, who might understandably rankle some Ukrainians.

To them, for example, the Cossacks — a Slavic people in eastern Europe — "mean freedom, whereas Pushkin depicts them as cruel, barbarous, antiquated. And in need of Russian civilization," said Wilson, whose book "The Ukrainians" was recently published in its fifth edition.

In its programme, Kyiv conducted an online survey, and received 280,000 suggestions in a single day, Prokopiv said.

Then, an expert group sifted through the responses, and municipal officials and street residents give a final stamp of approval.

US, Iran clash over Russia using Iran drones in Ukraine

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

The United States and its allies clashed with Iran and its ally Russia over Western claims that Tehran is supplying Moscow with drones that have been attacking Ukraine — and the US accused the UN secretary-general of "yielding to Russian threats" and failing to launch an investigation.

At a contentious Security Council meeting Monday on the resolution endorsing the 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and six major powers, the United States and Iran also accused each other of responsibility for stalled negotiations on the Biden administration rejoining the agreement that former President Donald Trump pulled out of in 2018.

Iran's U.N. Ambassador Amir Saeid Iravani insisted Iran's negotiating team exercised "maximum flexibility" in trying to reach agreement and even introduced an "innovative solution" to the remaining issues to break the impasse. But he claimed the "unrealistic and rigid approach" of the United States led to the current stalled talks on the 2015 agreement, known as the JCPOA.

"Let's make it clear: pres-



sure, intimidation and confrontation are not solutions and will get nowhere," Iravani said.

Iran is ready to resume talks and arrange a ministerial meeting "as soon as possible to declare the JCPOA restoration," Iravani said. "This is achievable if the U.S. Demonstrates genuine political will ... The U.S. Now

has the ball in its court"

Speaking before Iravani, U.S. Deputy Ambassador Robert Wood said "the door to negotiations remains open" for a mutual U.S.-Iranian return to full implementation of the JCPOA. But he said, "Iran's own actions and stances have been responsible for preventing

that outcome."

In September, a deal that all other parties had agreed to was "within reach" and "even Iran prepared to say yes," Wood said, "until at the last minute, Iran made new demands that were extraneous to the JCPOA and that it knew could not be met."

He said Iran's conduct since September — notably its failure to cooperate with the International Atomic Energy Agency, the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog, and the expansion of its nuclear program "for no legitimate civilian purpose" — has reinforced U.S. Skepticism "about Iran's willingness and capability of reaching a deal, and explains why there have been no active negotiations since then."

At the end of the council meeting, Wood asked for the floor to refute Iravani, saying it's

"a fact" that Iran's extraneous demands and rejection of all compromise proposals are the reason why there has not been a return to mutual compliance with the JCPOA.

"So let me just simply say, The ball is not in the U.S. Court," Wood said. "On the contrary, the ball is in Iran's court."

Britain's U.N. Ambassador Barbara Woodward, whose country remains a party to the JCPOA, told the council Iran's nuclear escalation is making "progress on a nuclear deal much more difficult."

"Today, Iran's total enriched uranium stockpile exceeds JCPOA limits by at least 18 times, and it continues to produce highly enriched uranium, which is unprecedented for a state without a nuclear weapons program," she said.



Putin in Belarus, eyeing next steps in Ukraine war

AP ■ KYIV

Russian President Vladimir Putin made a rare trip to Moscow's ally Belarus as his forces pursued their campaign to bombard Ukraine from the air amid a broad battlefield stalemate almost 10 months into the war.

Putin's visit to Minsk on Monday came hours after Russia's latest drone attack on Ukraine. Moscow has been targeting Ukraine's power grid since October as part of a strategy to deprive the country of heat and power during winter.

His brief trip could herald more military support for the Kremlin war effort, after Belarus provided Russia with a launching pad for the invasion of Ukraine last February.

Putin said he and Belarus President Alexander Lukashenko discussed forming "a single defense space" in the region but rejected claims that Moscow was poised to swallow its neighbor.

"Russia isn't interested in any kind of merger, it's not feasible," Putin said.

Putin said that he supported Lukashenko's proposal to train the crews of Belarusian warplanes that already have been modified for using special warheads — a reference to nuclear weapons.

Earlier this year, Russia and Belarus have announced a plan to modernize Belarusian aircraft to make them nuclear-capable. Lukashenko said Belarusian crews have been training with Russia to operate those planes modified to carry nuclear weapons. Lukashenko thanked Putin for providing his military with Iskander short range missiles and S-400 air defense systems. He also said the countries agreed to continue hold joint military exercises.

Belarus is believed to have Soviet-era weapons stockpiles that could be useful for Moscow. No tsunami was expected, the Humboldt County Sheriff's Office tweeted.

Caroline Tietes, a resident of Ferndale, tweeted video in her darkened home of toppled furniture and smashed dishes.

tions and the supply of Western air defense systems to Ukrainian forces.

Sitting beside Lukashenko, Putin emphasized their close military-technical ties. He said they include not only mutual supplies of equipment but also joint work in high-tech military industries.

Analysts say the Kremlin might be seeking some kind of Belarusian military support for its Ukraine operations. But the winter weather and Russia's depleted resources mean any big Russian attack probably won't come soon, according to the Institute for the Study of War, a think tank in Washington.

"The capacity of the Russian military, even reinforced by elements of the Belarusian armed forces, to prepare and conduct effective large-scale mechanized offensive operations in the next few months remains questionable," it said in an assessment published Sunday.

It concluded that "it is unlikely that Lukashenko will commit the Belarusian military (which would also have to be re-equipped) to the invasion of Ukraine."

In Ukraine, multiple explosive drones attacked the capital before dawn. The attack came three days after what Ukrainian officials described as one of Russia's biggest assaults on Kyiv since the war started.

Russia launched 23 self-exploding drones over Kyiv while the city slept, but Ukrainian forces shot down 18 of them, the Kyiv city administration said on Telegram. No major casualties were reported from the attack, although the Ukrainian president's office said the war killed at least three civilians and wounded 11 elsewhere in the country between Sunday and Monday.

The drone barrage caused emergency power outages in 11 central and eastern regions, including the capital region, authorities said.

Monday was St. Nicholas Day, which marks the start of the Christmas holidays in Ukraine and is when children typically receive their first gifts hidden under pillows.

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UN chief hopes war in Ukraine will end in 2023

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations chief expressed strong hopes that the Ukraine war will end in 2023 and on other global hotspots condemned the Iranian government's crackdown on demonstrators, urged all countries to fight terrorist threats from the extreme right and called on the international community to tell Israel's new right-wing government that "there is no alternative to the two-state solution."

In a wide-ranging end-of-year news conference on Monday, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he sees no prospect of talks to end the war in Ukraine in the immediate future and expects the already escalating military conflict to continue. But he called for everything possible to be done to halt the most devastating conflict in Europe since World War II by the end of 2023 -- which he strongly hopes will happen. On other issues, Guterres urged Afghanistan's Taliban rulers to include all ethnic groups in the government, restore girls' rights to education

at all levels and women's rights to work, and to stop all terrorist activity on its territory. And he reiterated the U.N.'s determination to pursue the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, saying the international community must also pursue this goal which "is fundamental for peace and security in east Asia and in the world."

The secretary-general also had some advice for the managers of all social media platforms including Twitter: You have a responsibility to preserve freedom of the press and at the same time ensure that hate speech and extremist views, including of neo-Nazis and white supremacists, don't find their way onto your platforms. Looking back at 2022, Guterres said "there may be plenty of reasons for despair" - geopolitical divides that have made solving global problems difficult if not impossible, a cost-of-living crisis, growing inequalities with most of the world's poorest countries "staring down the abyss of insolvency and default," with debt service payments skyrocketing by 35%, the largest increase in decades.

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US flies bombers, stealth jets as Kim's sister threatens

AP ■ SEOUL

The United States flew nuclear-capable bombers and advanced stealth jets near the Korean Peninsula for joint drills with South Korean warplane on Tuesday, as the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un derided doubts about her country's military and threatened a full-range intercontinental ballistic missile test.

The deployment of the U.S. B-52 bombers and the F-22 stealth fighter jets was part of an agreement to protect South Korea with all available means, including nuclear, South Korea's Defence Ministry said.

The drills, which also included F-35 and F-15 fighter jets from South Korea, took place in the waters southwest of

Jeju island, the ministry said. The U.S. F-22 jets were deployed in South Korea for the first time in four years and will stay throughout this week for training with South Korean forces, it said.

The drills were held after North Korea claimed to have launched rockets to test its first spy satellite under development, and tested a solid-fueled motor to be used on a more mobile intercontinental ballistic missile in the past several days.

North Korea already has performed a record number of missile tests as a warning over the previous U.S.-South Korea military drills that it views as an invasion rehearsal. There are concerns it may react to the latest aerial training by the allies with a new round of missile tests.

Earlier Tuesday, Kim's sister,

Kim Yo Jong, used a slew of derivative terms — such as "malicious disparaging," "rubbish" and "dog barking" — when she dismissed the outside assessments that cast doubt on its developmental spy satellite and long-range missiles. North Korea said its rocket launches Sunday were tests of its first military reconnaissance satellite and released two low-resolution photos of South Korean cities as viewed from space.

Some civilian experts in South Korea and elsewhere said the photos were too crude for a surveillance purpose and that the launches were likely a cover for North Korea's missile technology. South Korea's military maintained North Korea fired two medium-range ballistic missiles.

"Didn't they think their



assessments are too inadequate and imprudent as they commented on our satellite devel-

opment capability and related preparations only with two photos that we've published in our

newspaper," Kim Yo Jong, a senior ruling Workers' Party official, said in a statement carried in state media.

A spy satellite was among several high-tech weapons systems that Kim Jong Un said last year that North Korea needed to better deal with U.S.-led military threats. Other weapons Kim wants to develop are multi-warhead missiles, solid-fueled long-range missiles, underwater-launched nuclear missiles, nuclear-powered submarines and hypersonic missiles.

His sister also dismissed the South Korean government's assessment that North Korea still has key remaining technological hurdles to overcome for functioning ICBMs that can reach the U.S. Mainland — such as the ability to protect its warheads from the harsh conditions of

atmospheric reentry.

Kim Yo Jong questioned how North Korea could have received data from warheads until they landed at targeted areas in the ocean in previous launches if the country truly lacked reentry technology.

"I think it's better for them to stop talking nonsense, behave carefully and think twice," she said.

Whether North Korea has a reliable arsenal of nuclear-armed missiles is a source of debate. But North Korea has repeatedly argued its tests of missiles capable of reaching the U.S. And its allies have confirmed warheads can survive atmospheric reentry and other challenges.

All of North Korea's ICBM tests have been performed at a steep angle to avoid neighboring countries. Some experts have

said without the standard-trajectory launch of ICBMs, the reliability of North Korean weapons cannot be guaranteed.

Touching upon those doubts, Kim Yo Jong suggested North Korea might fire an ICBM at a normal trajectory, a launch that could be considered as a much bigger provocation to the U.S. As the weapon would fly toward the Pacific Ocean.

"I can clear up their doubt about it. They will immediately recognize it in case we launch an ICBM in the way of real angle firing straight off," Kim Yo Jong said.

Kim, whose official title is a vice department director at the Central Committee of the Workers' Party, is considered as the North's most influential official after her brother, according to South Korea's spy service.

Trump's tax returns to be discussed by congressional panel



AP ■ WASHINGTON

The Democratic-controlled House Ways and Means Committee is expected to vote Tuesday on whether to publicly release years of Donald Trump's tax returns, which the former president has long tried to shield.

Committee Chairman Richard Neal, D-Mass., has kept a close hold on the panel's actions, including whether the panel will meet in a public or private session. And if lawmakers move forward with plans to release the returns, it's unclear how quickly that would happen.

But after a years-long battle that ultimately resulted in the Supreme Court clearing the way last month for the Treasury Department to send the returns to Congress, Democrats are under pressure to act aggressively.

The committee received six years of tax returns for Trump and some of his businesses. And with just two weeks left until Republicans formally take control of the House, Tuesday's meeting could be the last opportunity for Democrats to disclose whatever information they have gleaned.

Trump has long had a complicated relationship with his personal income taxes.

As a presidential candidate in 2016, he broke decades of precedent by refusing to release his tax forms to the public. He bragged during a presidential debate that year that he was "smart" because he paid no federal taxes and later claimed he wouldn't personally benefit from

the 2017 tax cuts he signed into law that favoured people with extreme wealth, asking Americans to simply take him at his word.

Tax records would have been a useful metric for judging his success in business. The image of a savvy businessman was key to a political brand honed during his years as a tabloid magnet and star of "The Apprentice" television show. They also could reveal any financial obligations — including foreign debts — that could influence how he governed.

But Americans were largely in the dark about Trump's relationship with the IRS until October 2018 and September 2020, when The New York Times published two separate series based on leaked tax records.

The Pulitzer Prize-winning 2018 articles showed how Trump received a modern equivalent of at least USD 413 million from his father's real estate holdings, with much of that money coming from what the Times called "tax dodges" in the 1990s.

Trump sued the Times and his niece, Mary Trump, in 2021 for providing the records to the newspaper. In November, Mary Trump asked an appeals court to overturn a judge's decision to reject her claims that her uncle and two of his siblings defrauded her of millions of dollars in a 2001 family settlement.

The 2020 articles showed that Trump paid just USD 750 in federal income taxes in 2017 and 2018. Trump paid no income taxes at all in 10 of the past 15 years because he generally lost more money than he made.

The articles exposed deep inequities in the US tax code as Trump, a reputed multi-billionaire, paid little in federal income taxes. IRS figures indicate that the average tax filer paid roughly USD 12,200 in 2017, about 16 times more than the former president paid.



Possibility of enlarging UNSC seriously on table: UN chief

PTI ■ UNITED NATIONS

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said that the possibility of enlarging the Security Council is now "seriously on the table" but expressed pessimism that the right of veto would be put into question.

Guterres made the remarks while speaking to reporters during his annual end-of-year conference in New York on Monday. He was responding to a question on UN Security Council reform to make the powerful world body more fit for purpose to deal with crises such as the Ukraine war.

"The central questions are related to the composition of the Security Council and to the right of veto. Now this is a matter for member states, the Secretariat has no influence in these negotiations," Guterres said.

"I think that the during our General Assembly session in September, for the first time, I heard from the United States and from Russia clearly the indication that they were in favour of an enlargement of the number of permanent members of the Security Council," he said.

He added that there was a proposal from France and UK some time ago for some restrictions in the use of the right of veto. "But I remain pessimistic about the possibility of the right of veto to be seriously put into question," he said.

The UN chief added that reform of the Security Council needs two-thirds of the votes of the General Assembly plus the five positive votes of the permanent members of the Security Council - China, France, Russia, UK and the US.

N Korea threatens strong military step against Japan

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korea threatened Tuesday to take a "resolute and decisive military step" against Japan while it slammed Tokyo's adoption of a national security strategy as an attempt to turn the country into "an offensive military giant."

The North's statement came four days after Japan announced a security strategy that includes a counterstrike capability against enemy targets and doubles its military spending to gain a more offensive footing against threats from China and North Korea.

The North's Foreign Ministry said in a statement that Japan's push to acquire counterstrike capability has nothing to do with self-defence but is a clear attempt to acquire "preemptive attack capability meant to launch strikes on other countries' territories."

"Japan's foolish attempt to satiate its black-hearted greed — the building up of its military invasion capability under the pretext of (North Korea's) legitimate exercise of the right to self-defence — cannot be justified and tolerated," an unidentified ministry spokesperson said in a statement carried by state media.

The statement accused the United States of supporting and instigating the Japanese military ambitions and undermining regional peace.

It said that such U.S. Moves are forcing North Korea to work hard to complete its plans to develop new strategic weapons to thwart enemy attempts to invade it.

The statement said North Korea wants to make sure it can take "a resolute and decisive military step" to protect its sovereignty and national interests in the wake of the complexity of regional secu-



riety caused by the Japanese strategy.

"Our country will continue to take actions to show how much we are concerned and displeased with Japan's unjust, greedy attempt to realise its wild ambitions," the statement said.

Like in some other Asian countries, anti-Japanese sentiments still run deep in

Nepal PM Deuba faces stiff challenge from Thapa for Nepali CPP leader post

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal Prime Minister and the ruling Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba will face-off against General Secretary Gagan Kumar Thapa for the post of its parliamentary party (PP) leader election on Wednesday, party officials said.

The election assumes considerable political significance as the PP leader could possibly lead the next government after the Nepali Congress emerged as the single-largest party in the general elections held on November 20.

The party has won 89 seats — 57 in the first past the post-election system and 32 in the proportional representation election system — in the House of Representatives in the recently-concluded general elections.

The three-member election committee comprising Joint General Secretary Bishma Raj Angdemba as coordinator and central members Pushpa Bhusal and Prakash Rasaili 'Snehi' as members were formed in the meeting of the Nepali Congress Central Working Committee on Sunday to elect the PP leader on December 21.

Senior party leader Ram



Chandra Paudel proposed Deuba's nomination and was seconded by Purna Bahadur Khadka.

Dr Shekhar Koirala proposed General Secretary Thapa's nomination, which was supported by Bishwa Prakash Sharma, Pradeep Paudel and Dhanraj Gurung.

Parliamentary party elections will be held on Wednesday from 8 am to 10 am, according to My Republica newspaper.

As per the statutes of the Nepali Congress, one should get 51 per cent of votes to be elected PP leader of the party.

Although Thapa, 45, is popular among the youth cadres of the party, Deuba, 76, com-

mands majority support across party lines, sources said.

Meanwhile, the oath-taking ceremony of newly elected members of the House of Representatives (HoR) in the general election will be held on December 22, sources in the parliamentary secretariat said on Monday.

In the 275-member House of Representatives, 165 were elected through direct voting, while the remaining 110 were elected through the proportional electoral system.

Elections to the HoR and seven provincial assemblies were held to end the prolonged political instability that has plagued the Himalayan nation.

Pak forces storm counter terror centre, kill 'all ultras'

PTI ■ PESHAWAR/ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Army's special forces on Tuesday stormed a counter-terrorism centre in the restive Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa province and killed "all the terrorists" who had taken hostages after negotiations between the government and the Taliban militants failed to resolve the nearly two-day long standoff.

Defence Minister Khawaja Asif confirmed that "all the terrorists" of the banned Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) who had taken hostages at a Counter-Terrorism Depart-ment centre in Bannu were killed in an operation conducted by the Pakistan Army.

The government tried to negotiate with the militants to end the hostage crisis but after failed efforts, commandos from the Pakistan Army's Special Services Group (SSG) stormed the compound.

"This operation was initiated on December 20 at 12:30pm by the Special Service Group and all terrorists were killed," Asif said while speaking on the floor of the National Assembly.

He said that 33 terrorists were under arrest at the CTD compound and one of them had managed to snatch a gun from an employee after hitting him in



the head with a brick.

The defence minister said that two commandos were killed while over a dozen injured during the operation.

Asif also said that all hostages had been released but didn't provide their number. Earlier, police sources had said that about two dozen officials had been made hostages. He said that the entire CTD compound was cleared by 2:30pm.

Earlier, officials said that all the terrorists were killed in the operation that lasted for 15 minutes. Footage aired on TV on Tuesday showed plumes of smoke rising in the air from the CTD compound.

The standoff began on Sunday when an arrested TTP militant, who was being inter-

rogated at the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) police station inside the Bannu Cantonment, snatched an AK-47 from the police and opened fire. He then freed other wanted militants being held at the building and together they took control of the compound. They also took several policemen as hostages.

The TTP demanded safe passage for its militants either to South or North Waziristan tribal districts.

The situation in Bannu remained tense on Tuesday as police and security agencies asked residents to remain indoors. A security alert was issued earlier and all schools and colleges in the Bannu district remained closed on Tuesday.

AP ■ BEIRUT

American forces conducted three raids in eastern Syria and arrested six Islamic State group militants, U.S. Central Command said Tuesday.

In their statement, U.S. Central Command said the raids were conducted over the preceding 48 hours, and identified one of the detained militants as "al-Zubaydi," a "Syria Province Senior Official" of the group who they say was involved in planning and facilitating attacks in Syria.

Britain-based opposition war monitor the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said two of the three raids took place in the Deir el-Zour and Hassakeh regions, adding that Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces were also involved.

They identified four of the detained as Turkmen weapons dealers affiliated with the militant group. Two SDF fighters were wounded in one raid.

"The capture of these ISIS operatives will disrupt the terrorist organisation's ability to further plot and carry out destabilising attacks," U.S. Army Gen. Michael "Erik" Kurilla said in the statement.

There are some 900 U.S.



Troops in Syria supporting Kurdish-led forces in the fight against the militant group.

They have frequently targeted IS militants mostly in parts of northeastern Syria under Kurdish control.

The SDF on Monday said they had detained a IS militant who managed cells in eastern Syria.

Syria has been mired in a bloody civil war since 2011 that has drawn in regional and global powers.

Syrian President Bashar Assad has mostly regained control of the country, but parts of its north remain under the control of rebels, as well as Turkish and Syrian Kurdish forces.

Palestinians call for strike after prisoner dies of cancer


AP ■ JERUSALEM

Palestinian factions called for a general strike in the occupied West Bank and urged Palestinians to confront Israeli troops on Tuesday after a Palestinian prisoner died of lung cancer.

Nasser Abu Hamid, 50, a former leader of the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigade, the armed wing of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas's Fatah party, was sentenced to seven life sentences in 2002 for involvement in the deaths of seven Israelis during the second Palestinian Intifada, or uprising against Israel's occupation in the early 2000s. Palestinian officials had called for his release as his health deteriorated in recent months.

Abu Hamid's death came as one of the deadliest years in Israeli-Palestinian fighting in recent decades draws to a close, with the prospects of negotiating a two-state solution and ending Israel's open-ended military rule over the Palestinians increasingly remote.

PUBLIC NOTICE		PUBLIC NOTICE	
Notice, Information to All. I, Shashi, W/o Gurubaksh Singh, R/o H. No. 447, Pocket-00, Block-A, Sector 2, Rohini, Delhi-110085, being the first legal heir of the aforesaid residential property, having been purchased by my husband, have now disowned our daughter Ms. Sneha Talwar, now known as Mrs. Sneha Chitkara w/o. Rahul Chitkara, from all her rights, title and interest in the aforementioned property for all future purposes.		My client Kamal Kishore Arora S/o Late Jugal Kishore Arora, R/o 107-D, Pocket-F, Mayur Vihar Phase-2, Delhi-110091, has severed all relations with his son Gaurav Arora due to disobedience and has debarred him from his entire immovable/ moveable properties. Anybody dealing with them, will do so at own risks. My client shall not be responsible for any kind of them in future.	
Kaushal Kishore (Advocate)		SD/- HARVINDER SINGH (ADVOCATE)	




कार्यालय अधिशासी अभियन्ता, अनुसूचण खण्ड, उत्तराखण्ड

उत्तराखण्ड जल संस्थान

तेल नं.-1, तरुण विहार, मोघरोवाला रोड, देहरादून-248001

Phone/Fax No.: 0135-2671940, E-mail : eemdujs@rediffmail.com



फांक: 4163/ई-निविदा सूचना/2022-23 ई-निविदा संशोधन दिनांक: 19.12.2022

इस कार्यालय पत्रांक सं.-4010/ई-निविदा सूचना/2022-23 दिनांक 09.12.2022 से जल जीवन मिशन कार्यक्रम के अन्तर्गत निम्न पेयजल योजनाओं के कार्यों हेतु आमंत्रित ई-निविदाओं की तिथियों में अपरिहार्य कारणों से निम्नानुसार संशोधन किया जाता है।

निविदा क्र.सं.	विकास खण्ड	कार्य विवरण	धरोहर धनराशि (रु.में)	निविदा का मूल्य (रु.में)	कार्य पूर्ण करने की अवधि
1	2	3	4	5	6
1	विकास नगर	माजरी पेयजल योजना में नलकूप अधिष्ठापन, उर्ध्व जलाशय निर्माण, राईजिंग मेन पाईप लाईन बिछाने एवं पम्पिंग प्लांट सामग्री की आपूर्ति अधिष्ठापन एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य।	254250.00	₹4000 +GST	12 माह
2	विकास नगर	कटापन्थर पेयजल योजना में नलकूप अधिष्ठापन, उर्ध्व जलाशय निर्माण, राईजिंग मेन पाईप लाईन बिछाने एवं पम्पिंग प्लांट सामग्री की आपूर्ति अधिष्ठापन एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य।	230300.00	₹4000 +GST	12 माह
3	डोईवाला	मोहनमन्दर बड़कली पेयजल योजना में नलकूप अधिष्ठापन, सतही जलाशय निर्माण, राईजिंग मेन पाईप लाईन बिछाने एवं पम्पिंग प्लांट सामग्री की आपूर्ति अधिष्ठापन कार्य।	187100.00	₹4000 +GST	12 माह
4	विकास नगर	आदुवाला पेयजल योजना में नलकूप अधिष्ठापन, उर्ध्व जलाशय निर्माण, राईजिंग मेन, वितरण पाईप लाईन बिछाने विद्युत संयंत्र सामग्री की आपूर्ति अधिष्ठापन एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य।	270350.00	₹4000 +GST	09 माह
5	विकास नगर	बादलवाला पेयजल योजना में नलकूप अधिष्ठापन, उर्ध्व जलाशय निर्माण, राईजिंग मेन, वितरण पाईप लाईन बिछाने, विद्युत संयंत्र सामग्री की आपूर्ति अधिष्ठापन एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य।	306000.00	₹4000 +GST	09 माह
6	विकास नगर	चंदपुर खुर्द पेयजल योजना में नलकूप अधिष्ठापन, उर्ध्व जलाशय निर्माण, राईजिंग मेन, वितरण पाईप लाईन बिछाने, विद्युत संयंत्र सामग्री की आपूर्ति अधिष्ठापन एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य।	287450.00	₹4000 +GST	09 माह
7	विकास नगर	कुन्ना एवं कुन्नाग्रान्द पेयजल योजना में नलकूप अधिष्ठापन, उर्ध्व जलाशय निर्माण, राईजिंग मेन, पाईप लाईन बिछाने, पम्पिंग प्लांट की आपूर्ति अधिष्ठापन एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य।	259300.00	₹4000 +GST	09 माह
8	रायपुर	धारकोट पेयजल योजना में सतही जलाशय निर्माण, राईजिंग मेन, वितरण पाईप लाईन बिछाने, पम्पिंग प्लांट सामग्री की आपूर्ति अधिष्ठापन एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य।	156000	₹4000 +GST	06 माह
9	रायपुर	धनौला पेयजल योजना में स्रोत संवर्धन, सतही जलाशय निर्माण, गुरुत्व मेन, वितरण पाईप लाईन बिछाने एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य।	182850.00	₹4000 +GST	09 माह
10.	रायपुर	सन्गावि पेयजल योजना में स्रोत संवर्धन, सतही जलाशय निर्माण, गुरुत्व मेन, वितरण पाईप लाईन बिछाने एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य।	143200.00	₹4000 +GST	09 माह
11.	सहस्रपुर	पुरोहितवाला पेयजल योजना में स्रोत संवर्धन, सतही जलाशय निर्माण, गुरुत्व मेन, वितरण पाईप लाईन बिछाने एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य।	115460.00	₹4000 +GST	06 माह
12.	डोईवाला	खाण्ड रायवाला पेयजल योजना में वितरण पाईप लाईन बिछाने विद्युत कार्य सम्बन्धित संयंत्र की आपूर्ति अधिष्ठापन एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य।	107450.00	₹4000 +GST	09 माह
13.	सहस्रपुर	अब्दुल्लापुर पेयजल योजना में उर्ध्व जलाशय मरम्मत नलकूप विकास पाईप लाईन बिछाने एवं पम्पिंग प्लांट सामग्री की आपूर्ति अधिष्ठापन एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य।	217800.00	₹4000 +GST	09 माह
14.	डोईवाला	खैरीवाला पेयजल योजना में उर्ध्व जलाशय मरम्मत पाईप लाईन बिछाने, पम्पिंग प्लांट की सामग्री की आपूर्ति अधिष्ठापन एवं तत्सम्बन्धी कार्य।	137000.00	₹4000 +GST	09 माह

निविदा समय साग्री (मुख्य तिथियाँ) निम्नवत् हैं:

क्र.सं.	विवरण	अनुसूची
1	ऑनलाईन प्रकाशन की तिथि	23.12.2022 at 11:00 Hrs
2	निविदा प्रपत्र डाउनलोड करने की तिथि	23.12.2022 at 11:00 Hrs
3	प्री-बिड मीटिंग	26.12.2022 at 11:00 Hrs
4	बिड ऑनलाईन जमा करने की प्रारम्भ तिथि	31.12.2022 at 11:00 Hrs
5	बिड ऑनलाईन जमा करने की अन्तिम तिथि	06.01.2023 up to 17:00 Hrs
6	ऑफ लाईन रूप से जमा किये जाने वाले प्रपत्र (निविदा प्रपत्र हेतु निर्धारित शुल्क, बिड सिखोरीटी, स्टॉप पेपर एवं अन्य सम्बन्धित दस्तावेज)	06.01.2023 upto 17:00 Hrs
7	बिड खोलने की तिथि	07.01.2023 at 11:00 Hrs

शेष नियम एवं शर्तें निविदा के अनुसार यथावत रहेंगे।

“जल संयंत्र-जीवन संयंत्र”

राजेन्द्र पाल
अधिशासी अभियन्ता

EPFO added 12.94 L net subscribers in October

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retirement fund body EPFO added 12.94 lakh subscribers on a net basis in October 2022, the labour ministry said on Tuesday.

The ministry in a statement said that around 2,282 new establishments have started complying for the first time under the Employees' Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 ensuring social security cover to their employees.

A year-on-year comparison of payroll data reflects an increase of 21,026 in net membership in October 2022, it stated.

Of the total 12.94 lakh members added during the month, around 7.28 lakh new members have been covered under the social security cover of the EPFO for the first time, the provisional payroll data of Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) showed.

Among the new members, the highest number was registered for the age group of 18-21 years with 2.19 lakh members. This was followed by the age group of 22-25 years with 1.97 lakh members. Out of the total new members who joined, approximately 57.25 per cent

are from the age group of 18-25 years of age.

During the month, approximately 5.66 lakh net members exited but rejoined the EPFO by changing their jobs within the establishments covered by EPFO and opted to transfer their funds from the previous PF account to the current account instead of opting for final settlement.

Gender-wise analysis of payroll data indicates that the enrolment of net female members has been 2.63 lakh in October 2022. Out of this, 1.91 lakh females have joined EPFO for the first time which is around 72.73 per cent of net female member addition during the month, it stated.

State-wise payroll figures highlight that a month-on-month growing trend in net member addition was observed in states of Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand etc.

In terms of net payroll addition during the month, the top five states constituted around 60.15 per cent of the total net payroll addition among all age groups. The states of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Delhi & Haryana have added approximately 7.78 lakh net members during the month.



The classification of industry-wise payroll data indicates that mainly two categories i.e. 'Expert services' (consisting of manpower agencies, private security agencies and small contractors etc.) and 'Trading-Commercial establishments' constitute 48 per cent of total member addition during the month.

Comparing industry-wise data with that of the previous month, higher enrolments have been noticed in industries namely, 'Newspaper Establishments', 'Sugar', 'Rice milling', etc.

The payroll data is provisional since the data generation is a continuous exercise, as updating employee records is a continuous process.

The previous data hence gets updated every month.

From the month of April 2018, EPFO has been releasing payroll data covering the period from October 2017 onwards.

In monthly payroll data, the count of members joining EPFO for the first time through Aadhaar validated Universal Account Number (UAN), existing members exiting from coverage of EPFO and those who exited but rejoining as members, is taken to arrive at the net monthly payroll.

The EPFO is committed to extending social security benefits in the form of Provident, Pension and Insurance Funds to the organized workforce of the country covered under the purview of the Employees' Provident Funds & Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952.

EPS-95 pensioners' body gives 15 days notice to Labour Ministry to hike minimum pension to ₹7,500

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The EPS-95 National Agitation Committee has given 15 days notice to the labour ministry for increasing the minimum monthly pension to Rs 7,500 from the existing Rs 1,000 and threatened a nationwide stir if the demand is not met.

The Employees Pension Scheme 1995 or EPS-95 is run by the retirement fund body EPFO, which covers over six crore subscribers and over 75 lakh pensioner beneficiaries.

In a letter to Union Labour Minister Bhupender Yadav on Monday, the committee said there is an increase in the deaths of EPS-95 pensioners

due to very meagre pension amount and lack of medical facilities.

It threatened a nationwide agitation, including blocking rail and roadways and a collective fast onto death if the minimum pension is not hiked within 15 days.

The committee has demanded enhancement of minimum pension from Rs 1,000 to Rs 7,500 along with Dearness Allowance declared at regular intervals.

It has also sought payment of pension on actual salary as per the Supreme Court's verdicts dated October 4, 2016 and November 4, 2022.

The apex court had earlier in November directed the



government to give the option for contributing to the EPS-95 scheme on higher salaries. The present threshold for pensionable salary is Rs 15,000 per month.

The committee also demanded the coverage of EPS-95 to be extended to all other

retired employees who have not been included in the scheme, by making them ex post facto members.

It submitted that enhancement in minimum pension is as per the recommendations of the Koshiyari Committee in 2012-2013.

Govt raises over ₹4 lakh cr via disinvestment since 2014

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government has raised over Rs 4.04 lakh crore through disinvestment and strategic sale of public sector enterprises since the Modi government came into power in 2014, the Finance Ministry said on Tuesday.

Of this, the largest amount totalling over Rs 1.07 lakh crore through offer for sale in 59 cases. This was followed by a stake sale through Exchange Traded Fund (ETF) in 10 tranches, aggregating to Rs 98,949 crore.

Strategic sales in 10 companies, including Air India, yielded Rs 69,412



crore to the exchequer in the last 8 years. Share buyback in 45 cases fetched Rs 45,104 crore.

17 CPSEs were listed since 2014-15, which yielded Rs 50,386 crore. Of this, the initial public offering (IPO) of LIC alone fetched the government Rs 20,516 crore.

The additional market capitalisation of Rs 7.31 lakh crore was achieved through new listings, the ministry said.

Besides, the government has sold its residual stake in Paradeep Phosphate Ltd, IPCL, and Tata Communication for Rs 472 crore, Rs 219 crore and Rs 8,847 crore, respectively.

Waning input cost pressure, rising investments herald upturn in capex cycle: RBI article

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Waning input cost pressures, buoyant corporate sales and rising investments in fixed assets are heralding the beginning of an upturn in the capex cycle in India will contribute to speed up growth momentum in the economy, said an RBI article on Tuesday.

The balance of risks is increasingly tilted towards a darkening global outlook and emerging market economies (EMEs) appear to be more vulnerable, even though incoming data suggest that global inflation may have peaked, said the article titled 'State of the Economy' published in the RBI Bulletin - December 2022 article.

"The near-term growth outlook for the Indian economy is supported by domestic drivers as reflected in trends in high-frequency indicators," it said and added equity markets touched a string of new highs during November buoyed by



strong portfolio flows to India.

Headline inflation moderated by 90 basis points to 5.9 per cent in November driven by a fall in vegetable prices even as core inflation remained steady at 6 per cent.

"Waning input cost pressures, still buoyant corporate sales and turn-up in investments in fixed assets are heralding the beginning of an upturn in the capex cycle in India which will contribute to a speeding up of growth momentum in the Indian economy," it said.

The article has been authored by a team led by RBI Deputy Governor Michael Debabrata Patra. The RBI, however, said that views

expressed in the article are those of the authors and do not represent the views of the central bank.

The article further said that in December, as India engages in setting out its priorities and deliverables under its G20 Presidency, there is a sense that "perhaps her time in the centre of the world's stage has arrived".

As the third largest economy in PPP terms, and the fifth largest in terms of market exchange rates, India accounts for 3.6 per cent of G20 GDP while its share in real (PPP) terms is much higher at 8.2 per cent.

In 2023, India is projected to be among the fastest-growing economies within G20.

"Our priorities under the G20 Presidency encapsulate a vision of unity and interconnectedness," said the article and added they will also reflect the priorities of the global South: One Earth, One Family, One Future.

Sebi decides to gradually phase out share buyback through stock exchange route



PTI ■ MUMBAI

Markets regulator Sebi on Tuesday decided to gradually phase out buyback of shares by companies through the stock exchange route and also approved steps to boost governance at stock exchanges and other market infrastructure institutions.

These were among the proposals approved by Sebi board during its meeting on Tuesday.

Sebi Chairperson Madhabi Puri Buch said the regulator has chosen the tender offer route for share buyback as the

present mode is vulnerable to favouritism."This is a glide path and will lead to the phasing out of the present buyback mode (through stock exchange route)," she told reporters here.

Currently, for share buyback, companies have both the options of stock exchange and tender offer.

Besides, Sebi board has decided to reduce time taken for registration of FPIs to facilitate ease of doing business.

Norms will also be amended to facilitate sustainable finance in the country and curb 'greenwashing'.

Markets recoup most of intra-day losses on fag-end buying

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmarks recovered most of their intra-day losses to close modestly lower on Tuesday amid buying in index majors Reliance Industries and Tata Consultancy Services despite lacklustre global cues.

After tumbling over 700 points intra-day, the 30-share BSE Sensex clawed back lost ground on last minute buying in index heavyweights. It finally ended 103.90 points or 0.17 per cent lower at 61,702.29.

On similar lines, the broader NSE Nifty dipped 35.15 points or 0.19 per cent to end at 18,385.30.

Tata Motors led the Sensex losers' list, dropping 1.75 per cent, followed by Hindustan Unilever, Bharti Airtel, M&M, NTPC, Maruti Suzuki, L&T and HDFC Bank.

In contrast, Tata Consultancy Services, Reliance Industries, UltraTech Cement, IndusInd Bank, Axis Bank



and ICICI Bank were among the prominent winners, climbing up to 1.29 per cent.

The market breadth was negative, with 21 of the 30 components closing in the red.

"The Bank of Japan shocked global markets in a totally unexpected move by raising the upper band limit for the 10-yr yield to 50 bps, which is seen as a step towards

a hawkish policy shift. This has aggravated the sell-off in the global market, which was already risk-averse due to mounting recessionary fears following the Fed's comment.

"In this backdrop, the US GDP numbers expected on Thursday will provide a picture of the strength of the US economy," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

India exported 5.62 L ton of sugar till December 9: AISTA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India has exported 5.62 lakh tonne of sugar so far in the current 2022-23 marketing year that began in October, trade body AISTA said on Tuesday.

In November, the government allowed the export of 60 lakh tonne of sugar in the current (2022-23) marketing year (October-September).

According to the All India Sugar Trade Association (AISTA), the dispatches for exports from sugar mills were at 12.19 lakh tonne, out of which physical shipment completed stood at 5.62 lakh tonne till December 9 of the current marketing year.

A maximum of sugar has



been exported to the UAE, followed by Bangladesh, Indonesia, Somalia and others in the said period, it said in a statement.

About 5.22 lakh tonne of sugar is under loading or waiting for loading, it added.

India exported a record 111 lakh tonnes of sugar in the 2021-22 marketing year.

KFin Technologies IPO subscribed 70% on Day 2 of offer

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The initial public offer of KFin Technologies was subscribed 70 per cent on the second day of subscription on Tuesday.

The initial share-sale received bids for 1,66,01,920 shares against 2,37,75,215 shares on offer, according to NSE data.

The category meant for Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) was fully subscribed, while the portion for Retail Individual Investors (RIIs) received 74 per cent subscription and non-institutional investors 3 per cent.

The Rs 1,500-crore Initial Public Offer (IPO) has a price range of Rs 347-366 a share.

Financial services platform

KFin Technologies has raised Rs 675 crore from anchor investors.

KFin Technologies is majority-owned by funds managed by private equity investor General Atlantic. Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited also owns a 9.98 per cent stake in KFinTech, which it acquired in 2021.

KFinTech is an investor and issuer solutions provider, serving asset managers such as mutual funds, Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs), wealth managers, pension funds and corporate issuers, as well as international clients in Southeast Asia and Hong Kong.

It is the country's largest



investor solutions provider to Indian mutual funds based on the number of Asset Management Company (AMC) clients serviced as of September 2022.

ICICI Securities, Kotak Mahindra Capital Company, J P Morgan India, IIFL Securities and Jefferies India are the managers to the offer.

Larsen and Toubro commits ₹11 cr to support over 100 schools in TN

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Engineering and construction conglomerate, Larsen and Toubro has committed Rs 11 crore to support over 100 schools in Tamil Nadu under the government's 'Namma School' initiative, the company said on Tuesday.

The funds are aimed at benefiting government schools in Chennai, Kancheepuram, Coimbatore, Salem, Namakkal, Tiruvallur, Sivaganga, Tirunelveli, Chengalpatt and Vellore.

To be utilised in the current financial year, the funds would help develop and build on a range of on-going activities including Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics education through its corporate social responsibility pro-



gramme - Engineering Futures. Chief Minister M K Stalin formally rolled out the 'Namma School' initiative on December 19.

"It is an honour to partner with the Tamil Nadu government to take these activities to

fruition and we express our sincere thanks for the opportunity to help the children of government schools in the state and contribute significantly to build a better India," a company spokesperson said in a statement.

Gold gains ₹38; silver declines ₹328

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold price rose Rs 38 to Rs 54,740 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had settled at Rs 54,702 per 10 grams.

Silver, however, declined Rs 328 to Rs 67,984 per kilogram.

"Gold price traded steady after inching lower in the earlier session as along with more rate hike expectations, market participants are also focusing on the China's Covid situation," Navneet Damani, Senior VP - Commodity Research at Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said.

In the international mar-



ket, gold was trading flat at USD 1,794 per ounce while silver was down at USD 23.13 per ounce.

"Gold prices traded steady in the Asian trading hours. Comex Spot Gold prices are trading flat at USD 1,794 per ounce," Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst at HDFC Securities, said.

Office leasing set to rise 52% this year across top 6 cities: Colliers India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Leasing of office space across six major cities is likely to rise 52 per cent to 50.1 million square feet in 2022 on better demand but absorption may fall to 35-38 million square feet next year with corporates being cautious, according to Colliers India.

As per its data, the gross leasing of Grade-A (premium) office space in 2022 is expected to rise 52 per cent to 50.1 million square feet from 33 million square feet last year across six cities -- Bengaluru, Mumbai, Delhi-NCR, Chennai, Hyderabad and Pune.

"Occupiers have been optimistic about their future workplace needs, after a gap of two years, and were snapping up office space across the top Indian cities," Colliers said in a statement.

Among these six cities, office space leasing in Bengaluru is estimated to rise 66 per cent to 16.3 million square feet in 2022 from 9.8 million square feet last year.



Rupee declines 13 paise to 82.75 against dollar



PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated 13 paise to settle at 82.75 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday as investors turned cautious in view of a negative trend in domestic equities and rising crude prices in the global markets.

Besides, renewed forex outflows and a waning appetite for riskier assets also dragged down the local unit, forex dealers said.

However, a sharp decline in the greenback against major rivals overseas restricted the rupee's loss, they added.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened weak at 82.69 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 82.69 and a low of 82.88.

It finally ended at 82.75 against the American currency, a decline of 13 paise over its previous close of 82.62.

On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex ended 103.90 points or 0.17 per cent lower at 61,702.29, while the broader NSE Nifty fell 35.15 points or 0.19 per cent to 18,385.30.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, advanced 0.73 per cent to USD 80.38 per barrel.

HUGE CROWDS WELCOME ARGENTINA TEAM AFTER WC VICTORY

AP ■ BUENOS AIRES

Thousands of fans lined up in the middle of the night to try to get a glimpse of the Argentina soccer team that won one of the greatest World Cup finals of all time ahead what is scheduled to be a day of celebrations in Buenos Aires.

Members of the team, led by captain Lionel Messi, were all smiles as they descended from the plane in Ezeiza, right outside Argentina's capital, shortly before 3 a.m. Tuesday onto a red carpet that had been rolled out for the squad.

Messi was the first player from the plane carrying the World Cup, flanked by coach Lionel Scaloni, who put his arm around the captain as they walked past a sign that read, "Thank you, champions."

The players were welcomed by rock band La Mosca singing "Muchachos," a song that was written by a fan to the tune of an old song by the band and became a popular unofficial anthem for Argentine fans at the World Cup in Qatar. The newly crowned champions of the world boarded an open top bus and several, including Messi, could be seen singing the words to "Muchachos" while they waited for everyone to get on heading to the headquarters of the Argentine Football Association.

The bus moved at a snail's pace as fans, many of whom were waving Argentine flags, swarmed the bus on a highway, eager for a glimpse of the players as law enforcement officers tried to keep them at bay.

The players will sleep at AFA headquarters for a few hours before boarding the bus later Tuesday that will take them to the Obelisk, the iconic Buenos Aires landmark that was a sea of people Sunday afternoon after the team won the country's third World Cup, and its first since 1986.

President Alberto Fernández declared a national holiday Tuesday so the country could celebrate the victory.

The day after the streets of Argentina turned into massive parties following the Sunday victory, many kept a close eye on the flight that brought the players home to celebrate. As the plane got closer to Argentine soil, almost 200,000 people were tracking its path online and news channels gave live coverage of the arrival. In the afternoon, people started arriving at the airport and outside the AFA headquarters in hopes of getting a glimpse of the team.

Many were also already at the Obelisk, seemingly ready to spend the night there to ensure a prime spot for Tuesday's festivities.

Several players posted pho-



tos of the plane ride on social media. Messi held the World Cup on the plane. Nicolás Tagliafico, meanwhile, posted a photo of the World Cup buckled into an airplane seat as if it were just another passenger.

As of early Tuesday morning there were no official plans for Fernández, or any other political leaders, to take part in the celebrations despite earlier rumors that the players would go to Government House, which was offered up for the celebrations, according to Security Minister Aníbal Fernández.

The World Cup and the success of the Messi-led squad has brought much-needed good news for a country that has been

stuck in economic doldrums for years, is suffering one of the world's highest inflation rates and where almost four-in-10 people live in poverty.

Fernández retweeted several messages of congratulations for the World Cup victory from other world leaders, including Russian President Vladimir Putin.

"Thank you for this greeting President Putin," Fernández wrote on Twitter after a telephone call with the Russian leader.

"Let the happiness that today unites Argentina with so many countries in the world serve as an example: Our societies need unity and peace."



Gardner, Harris power-hitting floor India in 5th T20I



PTI ■ MUMBAI

Heather Graham became the second woman cricketer from her country to take a T20 hat-trick as Australia crushed India by 54 runs in the final match to clinch the five-game series 4-1 here on Tuesday.

Graham (4/8 from 2 overs) was the star performer with the ball for Australia as she first dismissed Devika Vaidya and Radha Yadav in the last two deliveries of the 13th over.

She then returned in the final over of the innings to not only claim a hat-trick with the opening ball in the form of Renuka Singh but also picked up the prized scalp of Deepti Sharma (53 off 34) in the final

delivery.

Australian pacer Megan Schutt was the first woman from her country to claim a hat-trick in T20 cricket in 2018.

Sent into bat, Asheigh Gardner (66 not out off 32) and Grace Harris (64 not out off 35) struck explosive unbeaten half-centuries to power Australia to an imposing 196 for four.

The Indian bowlers cut a sorry figure after initial success as Gardner and Harris stitched an attacking unbeaten 129 off just 62 balls to fire Australia to their highest total of the series.

The asking rate was too tall for India as they kept losing wickets at regular intervals to be bowled out for 142.

India started their big chase

with a bang with vice-captain Smriti Mandhana (4) pulling Darcie Brown across the square-leg boundary in the first delivery of the innings.

But Mandhana's stay was short-lived as two balls later she holed out to Grace Harris at forward square leg, looking to flick the ball.

One-down Harleen Deol came all out attacking and struck a boundary through point and gully from her first ball of the innings.

Shafali Verma (13) then got a reprieve in the third over when she was dropped by Harris at point after the batter miscued a shot.

But it was not Shafali's day as she was caught by Annabel

Sutherland off the bowling of Gardner at long-on.

Harleen Deol played a 16-ball 24-run cameo before becoming a victim of an unnecessary run out.

Things turned bad to worse when skipper Harmanpreet Kaur departed. Introduced into the attack in the ninth over, Annabel Sutherland struck gold with her first delivery, trapping Harmanpreet in front of wicket as the batter failed to gauge the length of the delivery.

Wicketkeeper-batter Richa Ghosh struck two boundaries before perishing and then Heather Graham dismissed Devika Vaidya and Radha Yadav in consecutive deliveries to be in the fray for a hat-trick, which she

completed in the final over of the match.

Earlier, Gardner remained unbeaten on 66 off 32 balls with the help of 11 boundaries and one six, while Harris made 64 not out of 35 balls during which she struck six fours and four hits over the fence.

Richa Ghosh gains 4 places in T20I rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

Fresh from her 19-ball unbeaten 40 in the fourth T20I against Australia, India's wicketkeeper-batter Richa Ghosh has gained four places in the ICC women's T20I ranking for batters to reach 40th position.

India's Deepti Sharma moved up a place to 32nd spot. Australia all-rounder Ashleigh Gardner has made notable progress in the latest weekly update after helping her team score a series-clinching seven-run win in the fourth match against India last Saturday.

Gardner, who was named Player of the Match for scoring 42 runs and grabbing two for 20, has advanced one place to ninth in the list of batters.

Having also taken two for 21 in the preceding match, she has gained nine places to reach 17th in the rankings for bowlers. The 25-year-old is also up one place to fourth among all-rounders.

Australia all-rounder Ellyse Perry has moved up 17 places to 34th after scores of 75 and 72 not out.



Rohit, Saini ruled out of 2nd Test against Bangladesh

PTI ■ MIRPUR

India skipper Rohit Sharma will miss the second Test against Bangladesh, starting here on Thursday, as he has not made a full recovery from a thumb injury.

Rohit had flown back to India to see a specialist after injuring his left thumb while fielding in the second ODI against Bangladesh here on December 7.

He is under the care of the BCCI medical team following his left thumb injury, which he sustained during the second ODI against Bangladesh in Dhaka. Pacer Naveep Saini, who had made a comeback into the Test team, is also out of the game with an abdominal muscle strain.

"The medical team is of the opinion that the injury needs some more time to heal completely before the Indian captain can bat and field with full intensity. He will continue his rehab and will not be available for the second and final Test against Bangladesh."

"Navdeep Saini is also ruled out of the second Test owing to an abdominal muscle strain. The fast bowler will now report to the NCA for further management of his injury," said the

BCCI in a statement.

It is understandable why the management did not want to risk playing Rohit. India have a busy home season lined up with Sri Lanka and New Zealand visiting for a limited overs tour next month and that will be followed by the high-profile Test series against Australia.

Saini's injury does raise a few questions on his fitness. He represented India A in the two games in Bangladesh ahead of the Tests and was deemed fit. He did not play the first Test, though.

Saini's last Test appearance came in Brisbane in January last year when India pulled off a win for the ages.

K L Rahul will continue to lead the side in Rohit's absence with Cheteshwar Pujara being his deputy. India lead the two-Test series 1-0 after a convincing win in Chattogram.

India's updated squad for 2nd Test against Bangladesh: KL Rahul (C), Shubman Gill, Cheteshwar Pujara (VC), Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, Rishabh Pant (WK), KS Bharat (WK), Ravichandran Ashwin, Axar Patel, Kuldeep Yadav, Shardul Thakur, Mohd. Siraj, Umesh Yadav, Abhimanyu Easwaran, Saurabh Kumar, Jaydev Unadkat.

Delhi to host IBA Women's World C'ships from March 15

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The 2023 women's World Boxing Championships will take place from March 15 to 31 here, as India gears up to host the biennial event for the third time in the tournament's history. Since the inception of the tournament in 2001, the prestigious event has taken place twice in India previously in 2006 and 2018, both times in the capital.

Besides this, India has also hosted the Women's Youth World Championships in 2017 in Guwahati. However, India has never conducted the men's world championship.

"The countdown to one of the world's biggest boxing events of 2023 begins now. The World Championships are a testament to Indian boxing's unparalleled credentials and we, at the Boxing Federation of India, are geared up to deliver a spectacular experience."

"With the partnership of the IBA team, we are confident that the World Championships will help boost boxing globally," said Ajay Singh, President of Boxing Federation of India (BFI).

The competition will take place in 12 weight categories — 48 kg, 50 kg, 52 kg, 54 kg, 57 kg, 60 kg, 63 kg, 66 kg, 70 kg, 75 kg, 81 kg and +81 kg — and the registration will open soon.

BFI and IBA will also be working to introduce a historic bout review system at the Championships. Boxing in India has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years. India has been consistently finishing amongst the top five in the recent global and multi-event competitions.

SURYA SMASHES 80-BALL 90 ON FIRST-CLASS RETURN

PTI ■ MUMBAI/GUWAHATI

Suryakumar Yadav made an 80-ball 90 in his first Ranji Trophy game in almost three years while skipper Ajinkya Rahane and Yashasvi Jaiswal struck fine hundreds to take Mumbai to 457 for three against Hyderabad on day one of the Group B contest here.

Surya, who has arguably been the best batter in white-ball cricket over the past 12 months, approached the red-ball game with the same aggressive intent that he is known for in the shorter formats. His knock comprised 15 fours and a six.

The stylish batter has time and again expressed his desire to play Test cricket for India. He last played a first-class game way back in February 2020.

Jaiswal continued his rich vein of form with a sublime 162 off 195 balls while Rahane was batting on 139 at stumps.

Prithvi Shaw was out for 19 after Hyderabad opted to field at the BKC ground.

SHOREY'S TON

Opener Dhruv Shorey struck his eighth first-class hundred to steer Delhi to 271 for seven on day one of their fixture against Assam.

Assam removed Shorey's partner Anuj Rawat early after opting to field first.

Shorey remained unbeaten on 139 off 216 balls before bad light forced an early stumps with 81 overs bowled on the day.

Delhi's young captain Yash Dhull made 22 off 56 balls while Vaibhav Rawal came up with a valuable 43 off 71 balls. Senior batter Nitish Rana was out first ball.

Delhi, who lost their tournament opener to Maharashtra, fielded a depleted unit in the absence of injured pacers Ishant Sharma and Mayank Yadav. They were forced to field three debutants in Harshit Rana, Pranshu Vijayran and spinner Hrithik Shokeen.

Senior pacer Navdeep Saini, who suffered an abdominal muscle strain while being part of the Indian team in Bangladesh, is unlikely to be fit in time for Delhi's next game.

PATIDAR, AKASH HELP MP

Indore: Sandeep Sharma snapped five wickets but Rajat Patidar and Akshat Raghuvanshi hit twin fifties as defending champions Madhya Pradesh recovered to 289 for 7 against Chandigarh on the opening day of their Elite Group 'D' match.



Electing to bat, openers Yash Dubey (44, 50 balls, 6 fours) and Himanshu Mantri (12) provided Madhya Pradesh a solid start, adding 63 runs for the first wicket.

However, Sandeep jolted the MP innings, picking up the wickets of Mantri and Dubey in quick succession.

Patidar (88, 116 balls, 16 fours), one of the stars of MP's maiden Ranji triumph, steadied the innings in the company of Raghuvanshi (65 not out, 167 balls, 5 fours, 1 six), putting on 94 runs for the fifth wicket.

The duo kept the Chandigarh bowlers at bay in a stand that lasted 154 deliveries even as Sandeep kept pegging away.

Sandeep, who has featured in two T20 Internationals for the country, then struck a vital blow by cleaning up Patidar.

Raghuvanshi then got together with Anubhav Agarwal (25) and added 67 runs for the seventh wicket before the latter fell LBW to Sandeep off the last ball of the day. In another match in the group, Punjab hit back after being bowled out for 162 in 48.1 overs to reduce Railways to 77 for 7 at stumps at Karnail Singh stadium in New Delhi.

ANUSTUP'S 159 LIFTS BENGAL AGAINST HIMACHAL

Kolkata: Veteran Anustup Majumdar stroked his way to an unbeaten 159 and lifted Bengal to 310 for 9 after a poor start against Himachal in their Group A match.

Former champions Bengal were reeling at 44 for five after medium pacer Sidharth Sharma (5/69) struck thrice in the first 10 overs at Eden Gardens.

Rishi Dhawan accounted for Sudip Kumar Gharami, bowling him out for 5, while pacer Kanwar Abhinav got the prized wicket of skipper Manoj Tiwary (3) cheaply as Bengal found themselves in all sorts of trouble in the very first session of the first morning.

Then came the recovery acts, first through a 110-run partnership for the sixth wicket between Majumdar and Shahbaz Ahmed, and then the former's 65-run stand for the eighth wicket with Akash Deep.

Shahbaz Ahmed's contribution was a handy 49 while Akash Deep got himself 34 runs.

At stumps, which was called 12 overs early owing to bad light, number 11 Ishan Porel (6) was giving Majumdar company.

ENGLAND COMPLETE MEMORABLE WHITEWASH

AP ■ KARACHI

Relentless England lineup powered to an eight-wicket win in the third and final cricket Test on Tuesday to complete an historic series sweep in Pakistan.

England started the day needing a further 55 runs for victory and reached 170-2 within 38 minutes to secure its second successive win with more than a day to spare in its first Test tour to Pakistan in 17 years.

It was Pakistan's first ever 3-0 loss in a three-test series on home soil.

Pakistan fell for 216 against 18-year-old rookie Rehan Ahmed (5-48) in the second innings to set England a modest target of 167 for victory.

Ben Duckett resumed on 50 and remained unbeaten on 82 off 78 balls and skipper Ben Stokes signed off his team's dominant Bazball brand of aggressive cricket by finishing 35 not out.

Pakistan spinner Abrar Ahmed could have finished the series with 18 wickets in two Test matches, but Agha Salman couldn't hold onto a difficult chance from Stoke at long-on with England just 19 runs away from a memorable win.

England won the first Test on a flat wicket in Rawalpindi by 74 runs in dimming light on the last day before recording a thrilling 26-run win at Multan on a slow turning track inside four days.



Rehan Ahmed conquered Pakistan's batters in the team's fortress — National Stadium — on Day 3 and England had motored to 112-2 in the final session through aggressive batting of Zak Crawley (41) and Duckett.

It was a just a third loss for Pakistan at the National Stadium in 45 Test matches and first in 15 years. England was the first team to beat Pakistan there in a

Test match in 2000 before South Africa won a Test match here seven years later.

The 3-0 drubbing was also Pakistan's fourth successive Test loss at home after Australia beat them in the final test earlier this year to win the two-Test series 1-0.

Pakistan was kept at bay throughout the last three weeks and unable to find the right combination to counter

England's aggressive gameplan, which began at home this summer and now has seen them winning nine of the last 10 Test matches. England's only loss in that period was against South Africa at Lord's before the Proteas got beaten 2-1 in the series.

England set the tone of a clean sweep in Pakistan when four of its batters smashed centuries on the opening day of the

first Test and the visitors racked up world-record 506-4.

Young Harry Brook filled perfectly in the shoes of injured Jonny Bairstow with three successive Test centuries on tour and amassed 468 runs.

His 111 at Karachi in the first innings fetched England a vital first innings lead of 50 runs before Pakistan capitulated against Ahmed's legspin in the second innings.

Babar rues injuries to pacers after 0-3 defeat

AP ■ KARACHI

Pakistan captain Babar Azam was left to rue injuries to his key fast bowlers after England completed a sweep of their Test series on Tuesday.

"We were unfortunate that our main fast bowlers were not fit," Babar said after England recorded an emphatic eight-wicket win in the third and final Test and handed Pakistan its first 3-0 whitewash in a home test series.

"The new players did perform but couldn't execute the way we wanted. When things were in our hands we had soft dismissals in those times and due to that we couldn't win matches which we should have won."

Pakistan's premier fast bowler Shaheen Afridi was ruled out for the series because of knee injury while Haris Rauf and Naseem Shah also sustained injuries during the first Test which ruled them out for the last two matches.

"Fitness has the main role because if you are not extra fit you cannot compete in all the three formats," Babar said.

"You get two to three days to switch from one format to the other and you have to be mentally ready as well."

Pakistan gave Test caps to seamer Mohammad Ali, who took four wickets in the first Test before he finished wicketless in the second Test and got dropped from the final match. Fast bowler Mohammad



Wasim had a disappointing debut in the final Test and could take only one wicket and that was after Harry Brook had completed his third successive century of England's memorable tour.

"When you don't have the backbone of your bowling, then new bowlers found it difficult to adjust quickly," Babar said.

"The way England played, they did not let us settle down." England scored at a beligerent pace throughout the series that began with a world-record 506-4 on the opening day of the first Test and culminated with 170-2 at better than run-a-ball at Karachi on Tuesday.

Babar said Pakistan's strength was its batting, but in all the three Test matches the middle-order and the lower order crashed against England's pace and spin.

Left-handed Saud Shakeel, who made his Test debut,

couldn't convert his four fifties into big hundreds and Babar also performed in patches.

Pakistan twice came close in the first two Test matches before succumbing under Ben Stokes' aggressive tactics and lost by 74 runs and 26 runs at Rawalpindi and Multan, respectively.

"Our strength was our batting, but we played well in patches and couldn't finish the games," Babar said.

"It's a big disappointment that we couldn't apply ourselves in the series, but we must praise England for the way they played their cricket, we must appreciate that."

Pakistan has just five days to recover from its worst ever loss at home as New Zealand will be arriving for a two-Test series this week, followed by three ODIs. The first Test begins at Karachi from next Monday, followed by the second match in Multan from January 3.



Duckett's selflessness is exactly what we are as a team: Stokes

PTI ■ KARACHI

England captain Ben Stokes believes Ben Duckett's peerless innings in the third Test against Pakistan "absolutely vindicated" the opener's selection in the side and the "selflessness" he showed was something to be proud of.

Duckett scored an unbeaten 82 off 78 balls in the second innings. Stokes and Duckett slammed the 55 runs England needed to complete the chase of 167 on the fourth morning.

On Monday, Duckett and Zak Crawley had smashed an opening partnership of 87 inside 12 overs, giving the tourists a chance to finish the game inside three days.

"We are absolutely vindicated (by Duckett's inclusion in the side). Duckett is very well known in England and now around the world, how well he is against spin and the options that he has."

"I think Zak and Ben complement each other very well,"

Stokes told 'Sky Sports' after the historic win.

Stokes, who has won nine of the 10 Tests he has captained, added that the duo of Duckett and Crawley had set new standards for England coming at the top of the batting order.

"I think the two at the top of the order, they've set the benchmark in every innings (in Pakistan) and they set it last evening (Monday) as well. I give a lot of credit to Zak coming in those conditions, that situation and to go out and play the way he did." The all-rounder, who remained unbeaten on 35, said Duckett was a role model in selflessness.

"The selflessness that he showed last night is exactly what we are as a team. If I had to pinpoint everyone I would be here all day as everyone has stood up at one point in this series and played a match-defining role."

"That is unbelievable to have as a team. It's all well having belief in yourself but when

you have belief in the other 10 guys around you to influence the game it's seriously special," added Stokes.

Teenage leg-spinner Rehan Ahmed's five-for in the second innings has become a hot topic in cricketing circles and Stokes said he was full of "pride" and "pleasure" captaining an 18-year-old.

"It takes you back when you were a kid. He went out there and tried to do what you need to do. But one thing I was very impressed with is the more he got into the game, the more confident he felt in himself."

"Leg spinners are absolute gems to have. They can change the game. We've seen that in that spell last evening. For an 18-year-old to have that ability being nowhere near being a finished product, in my opinion is amazing. He is seriously exciting."

"But we should not get too carried away with it and let him progress in his own way," added Stokes.

Stokes is only going to get better and better: McCullum

PTI ■ KARACHI

England's head coach Brendon McCullum finds it "scary" to think about how good a captain Ben Stokes can become after the team's 3-0 whitewash of Pakistan in the Test series.

The former New Zealand batter, credited with bringing about a radical change in England's approach to playing Test cricket, said the team has performed incredibly well to win the series in Pakistan.

"Ben has had a transformative influence in the year gone by and his work on and off the field is fantastic," McCullum told Sky Sports.

"There's maverick in it and genius in a lot of it," he added.

"He's just got an insatiable appetite to keep moving the game forward, which is super-impressive. But for me, it's the man management, it's the consistency of message, it's the pure passion and drive that he's got to make a significant difference in Test cricket, and English cricket, which is most impressive."

"So I feel incredibly lucky that I've taken over this job when Stokesy has got the reins, and I think he's only going to get better and better and better, which is quite scary."

"Because if he continues to improve and drive this team forward then, with the talent that sits within the dressing room, they will give it a good shake anyway."

Playing down his role in England's transformation, McCullum said Stokes has been magnificent in the series and praised the skipper's ability to get the best out of each team member.

"I think this side is shaping out to be very much in the image of the captain. It is his



mantra," McCullum said.

"He wants to do something significant and leave a legacy and impact on Test cricket and he is getting there," he added.

"I don't do buggler all, to be honest," McCullum joked.

"I just make sure that the guys remain consistent with their own beliefs, and that they all want to be the best version of themselves."

"To be honest, it's a really easy job ... don't tell my bosses. But I'm really enjoying myself, and I couldn't I couldn't have asked for a better opportunity to be honest."

Stokes, at his post-match conference here on Tuesday, said he was very pleased with the outcome of the series.

"It will sink in once we go home for Christmas and New Year. To win three nil out here is something to look back on with pride."

ICC gives below average rating to Gabba pitch

PTI ■ BRISBANE

The International Cricket Council on Tuesday gave a below average rating to the Brisbane pitch after the first Test between Australia and South Africa ended in two days.

Australia won the game by six wickets after South Africa managed 152 and 99 in their two innings. Australia made 218 in their first innings.

ICC match referee Richie Richardson said: "Overall, the Gabba pitch for this Test match was too much in favour of the bowlers. There was extra bounce and occasional excessive seam movement."

"The odd delivery also kept low on the second day, making it very difficult for batters to



build partnerships. I found the pitch to be 'below average' as per the ICC guidelines since it was not an even contest between bat and ball."

Richardson's report has been forwarded to Cricket Australia.

The second Test of the three-match series will be played at MCG from December 26.

Satwik-Chirag achieve career-best No. 5 rank

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian doubles pair of Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty reached a career-best world number five while HS Prannoy regained his place in the top 10 in men's singles in the BWF world rankings issued on Tuesday.

Satwik and Chirag have been on a stellar run this year with two world tour titles at Indian Open Super 500 and French Open Super 750 and also claimed a maiden Gold at the Commonwealth Games and a Bronze at the World Championships.

Their unprecedented success reflected in the ranking as the duo jumped two places to the top five with 75,806 rating

points from 15 tournaments.

Prannoy, too, made gains in the latest ranking as he once again broke into the top 10, grabbing the world number 9 place after starting the year at world number 26.

The 30-year-old from Kerala, who had first cracked the elite bracket in 2016, dished out some memorable performances in the season with seven quarterfinals, two semifinals and a runner-up finish at the Swiss Open. He also shepherded the Indian team to a historic Thomas Cup win in Bangkok but an individual title eluded him. His consistent run, however, was enough to earn him a place in the season-ending BWF World Tour Finals and a nomination for the BWF Player of the year award.

Commonwealth Games champion Lakshya Sen continued to be the best-placed Indian at number seven while former world No. 1 Kidambi Srikanth gained a rung to the 11th position.

Double Olympic medallist P V Sindhu continued to hold on to the number six position in women's singles while the women's doubles combination of Gayatri Gopichand and Treesa Jolly, who had won a Bronze in Birmingham, climbed two places to world number 18.

In mixed doubles, Ishaan Bhatnagar and Tanisha Crasto also jumped three places to reach the 21st spot.

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Warner has no plans to retire from Test cricket, says agent

PTI ■ MELBOURNE

Australian batting stalwart David Warner has no plans to retire from Test cricket, his agent has said following calls from some former players that the cricketer review his stance.

Warner was out for duck and scored three runs in the first Test against South Africa at Brisbane, which the hosts won by six wickets inside two days. He last scored a Test century in January 2020 and prior to the first Test against the Proteas he had scores of 5, 48, 21 and 28 in the four innings this summer.

But Warner's agent, James Erskine, said he didn't believe the opener will quit Test cricket at the conclusion of the three-Test series against the Proteas at Sydney.

"No, it won't be his last Test, I

don't think. It's news to me if that's the case," Erskine was quoted as saying by Sydney Morning Herald on Tuesday. Erskine added Warner had the tour of India and the 2023 Ashes in England in his sights.

Warner will become the 14th Australian to achieve the 100-Test landmark when he plays the Boxing Day Test. His average in 10 Tests this year is less than 21 but Erskine felt runs are round the corner for the 36-year-old.

"I personally think there's runs around the corner for him. We'll just see what happens. The big thing from Davey's (Warner) point of view is that he has three young children."

"If your basic situation is you have got to be away for nine months, or eight months of the year, it is brutal. That will be the decision, I think, depending on



how he ends up.

"He has lots of other interests other than cricket – but there has been no talk about that (retirement)," added Erskine.

Erskine felt Warner was done in by a couple of good deliveries from South African pace bowler Kagiso Rabada in the opening Test at Brisbane.

"He has had a couple of brutal balls (from Rabada). At the end of the day, everyone goes through these quiet spells. You have got to take his career across the board," Erskine said.

"If you talk to all the great players out there, they say he is a great player. We'll just have to see if he bounces back in Melbourne. He is a pretty tough nut, old David. I don't think that (run drought) necessarily worries him," Erskine added.

Inaugural SA20 league to offer ₹33.5 crore prize money

PTI ■ CAPE TOWN

The latest offering in the world of domestic T20 leagues — SA20 — will have a total prize purse of 70 million rand (₹33.5 crore approx), the biggest purse in the history of South African franchise cricket.

The franchise-based tournament, scheduled to be held from Jan 10 till Feb 11 next year, is a six-team affair with all the sides backed by Indian Premier League franchises.

"We have worked hard to offer a rewarding and unprecedented incentive in the first season of SA20. This is a first for South African cricket, we have never had this type of competitive incentive in our domestic cricket and it is a further indication of SA20's ambitions to positively

impact South African cricket," said SA20 league commissioner, Graeme Smith, in a statement on Tuesday.

Six teams — Joburg Super Kings, MI Cape Town, Paarl Royals, Pretoria Capitals, Durban's Supergiants and Sunrisers Eastern Cape — will be represented in the tournament by "world-class players and distinguished coaches and are set to go head-to-head from January 10 at Newlands in Cape Town until the inaugural final on February 11 at the Wanderers in Johannesburg," said the statement.

The inaugural match between MI Cape Town and Paarl Royals will feature Afghanistan spinner Rashid Khan, England's T20 World Cup-winning captain Jos Buttler, South African pace spearhead Kagiso Rabada and David Miller, among others.