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ONE EARTH, ONE FAMILY,
ONE FUTURE, WRITES PM

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AUSTRALIA CALLS FOR US TO
DROP WIKILEAKS CHARGES

MONEY 10

SENSEX HITS 63K MARK; NIFTY
ENDS AT FRESH LIFETIME HIGH

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Drugs worth ₹478 cr seized on Gujarat Assembly poll eve

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

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

27.21 crores. Going by the seizure chart as on November 29, 2022 which marks total seizures of Rs 290.24 crores, there is a massive jump in the amount of seizures which is 10.66 times of seizures in 2017.

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

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

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

Similarly, seizures in Himachal Pradesh assembly elections, where polling concluded on November 12, saw more than five-fold increase over figures of 2017 assembly elections. As compared to Rs 9.03 crores worth of seizures in 2017 Assembly Elections, the seizures in 2022 rose to Rs 57.24 crores.

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

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

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

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

Somebody has to speak up, says defiant Lapid

Kashmir Files has fascist features, jury shared my views: Nadav

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

AAP may not even open account in Gujarat: Shah

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

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

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

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



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

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

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

undertaken an aggressive campaign in Modi's home State.

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

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

China warns USA not to interfere in ties with India

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

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI / WASHINGTON

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

stand-off from harming other areas of its bilateral relationship with India. The report was presented to the Congress late on Tuesday.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

China objects to Indo-US exercise

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

Bilkis Bano moves SC against remission to rape convicts

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

CAPSULE

CHINA'S EX-PRESIDENT JIANG ZEMIN DEAD

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

TERROR GROUP ISIS SAYS LEADER QURASHI KILLED

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

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

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

ment said.

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

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

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

Rainbow items allowed at stadiums: FIFA

AP ■ DOHA

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

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

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

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



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

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

Wales and Iran will not

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

Rs 3 cr, 1 acre land for Kulta dharmasala in Puri

Also, similar provisions for Meher Bhawan in BBSR

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Wednesday sanctioned allotment of Rs 3 crore and one acre of land for construction of a dharmasala (lodge) in Puri town for the people of Kulta community.

The dharmasala will come up at the sanctioned patch of land located in Sunamuhna Mouza.

Lakhs of devotees from the community visit the pilgrim town every year for darshan of Lord Jagannath. A delegation of the Odisha Kulta Samaj comprising members from Boudh, Subarnapur,

Sambalpur and Brajrajnagar had on November 28 met the CM at his residence here and requested him to allot a land in Puri for a dharmasala for them.

The delegation said that Odisha Kulta Samaj has been playing a key role in establishment of Jagannath temples and promotion of Jagannath culture in villages dominated by the Kulta community in the State.

Accepting their request, Patnaik had directed the Puri Collector to identify land and ensure the project's completion in a year.

Similarly, The CM granted one acre land at Chandrasekharapur in Bhubaneswar and Rs 3 crore for construction of a 'Swabhaba Kabi Gangadhar

'Provide job, edu quota to Kultas' Srikant urges CM

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Former Union Minister Srikant Jena has hailed the decision of the State Government to donate 1 acre land and Rs 3 crore for construction of a Dharmasala for the Kulta Samaj in Puri.

However, Jena urged CM Naveen Patnaik to sort out various farming related problems of the Kulta community and provide reservation in employment and education for the community. He also urged similar boons for the other communities which are socially and educationally backward.

Meher Bhawan' in memory of the legendary poet. On November 28, a delegation of the Nikhil Utkal Odisha Meher (Bhulia) Samaj had met the CM over the issue. The Bhawan would provide accommodation to the Bhulia students and patients from far-

off places coming to Bhubaneswar for studies and treatments.

The CM has directed forming a committee under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary for organising the death centenary of the poet in 2024.

In city Crackdown on illegal vehicle parking

Violators to be fined Rs 500

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The haphazard parking of vehicles on the roads in the capital city, besides causing traffic jams, has become a nuisance for the commuters. So, the Commissionerate police have decided to crack down on the menace.

Vehicles parked on congested stretches of roads in the city would now be towed and fine would be imposed on the owner.

The police have taken a decision to regulate parking and ensure smooth vehicular movement.

Citizens have been advised

not to park vehicles on predominantly congested stretches of road. They have been asked to park their vehicles at designated parking spaces or park it away from main road.

The violation would attract a fine of Rs 500.

The rule would be implemented stringently particularly on the stretches from the IDBI Bank Square to Veterinary College, National Highway-16 via Empire Hotel, Alok Bharti Building to Saheed Nagar Durga Puja Mandap on the Janpath, Kalyan Jewellers on Janpath to Charka Medical Store via Sparsh Hospital and Trupti Service Station on Janpath to Saheed Nagar entry point.

In Cuttack

Kingpin of mobile snatching racket held

Targeted people taking selfies on trains

PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Government Railway Police (GRP) on Wednesday arrested the kingpin of a gang in Cuttack allegedly involved in snatching and stealing mobile phones from passengers in moving trains. Police also seized 16 mobile phones from his possession.

The arrested accused was identified as Binod Behera of Behera Sahi here.

The modus operandi of Behera and his gang members was they used to target passengers taking selfies in

moving trains near Khan Nagar rail over-bridge and Jobra over-bridge.

When they saw people clicking selfies in the passing trains, they would hit them with a stick. As the cell phones would fall from their hands, these gang members would pick them up and flee from the spot. Later, they would dispose of the stolen mobile phones for Rs 2,000 to Rs 3,000. "Snatching cases were a major concern for the Railways. The miscreants used to target and steal mostly mobile phones and laptops. We formed a special team. Based on inputs, we nabbed Behera," said a GRP senior official.

3 new routes for Mo Bus



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT) on Wednesday introduced three new routes of Mo Bus. The service will commence on these fresh routes from Thursday (December 1).

The routes are Baramunda-Naray railway station (via Nandankanan, OMFED Dairy), Bhubaneswar railway

station-Taraboi (via Khordha Bypass, IIT) and Biju Patnaik Park, Cuttack-Puri Bus Stand.

The decision was taken in view of the increasing public demand, the CRUT said. Apart from this, plying of Mo Bus on route no. 71 (Baramunda-Konark) will resume from Thursday on the occasion of Konark Festival. Similarly, route no. 25 has been extended up to Rangamatia.

Cong heavyweights campaign in Padampur



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Congress intensified its campaigning for the Padampur by-poll on Wednesday with many heavyweight leaders joining rallies and urging voters to support party candidate Satyabhusan Sahu, a three-time MLA. PCC president

Sarat Patnaik, former PCC president Jayadev Jena, MLA Suresh Routray, former Ministers Jagannath Patnaik and Geneswar Behera, Mahila Congress leader Bandita Parida, Rajani Kumar Mohanty, Amiya Pandab, Bismay Mohapatra, Prakash Mishra, Narayan Jena, State Kishan Morcha president

Amiya Patnaik, party's last Bargarh MP nominee Pradip Debata, DCC president Nihar Mahananda, Nipan Das, Bankanidhi Behera, former MLA Bhujabal Majhi among others held road shows in various villages and towns.

The PCC president said BJP and BJD are not with the common people. The youths

are frustrated due to growing unemployment. Women are unsafe. The Governments of the BJP and BJD at the Centre and State have completely failed to solve the perennial problems of farmers. Satyabhusan personally visited home to home and appealed to support him.

In Jaipur

Jilted lover hacks girl's bro to death

Injures father; locals torch truck of accused

PNS ■ JAIPUR

Tension ran high in Kaliapani in Jaipur district after a jilted lover hacked a girl's brother to death and critically injured her father

after they opposed his activities on Tuesday night.

The accused Santanu Samal attacked the girl's brother Jitendra Mahapata and her father Santosh with a sharp weapon. The girl's brother died in the attack while her father was admitted to hospital in a critical condition. Later, irate villagers overpowered Samal

and severely thrashed him before handing him over to the police.

According to sources, the accused was in love with Jitendra's sister. However, her family opposed this as Samal was already married. In a bid to take revenge for the rejection, Samal attacked the father and son duo with a

sharp-edged weapon. They were rushed to Sukunda Community Health Centre where Jitendra succumbed to the injuries. In retaliation, locals demolished Smala's house and set his truck on fire. Police reached the spot and tried to pacify the villagers. The accused was taken into custody.

Lawyers clash with police in Sambalpur

Judges fail to reach court premises

PNS ■ SAMBALPUR

Tension ran high at Kacheri Chhak in Sambalpur city as agitating lawyers clashed with police on Wednesday.

The lawyers were staging a demonstration demanding establishment of a permanent Bench of the Orissa High Court in Sambalpur, during which police uprooted tents camped by the agitators. A faceoff situation ensued between the lawyers and police over the matter.

Several judges couldn't reach the court premises due to protest by lawyers and returned home.

The lawyers also resorted to



picketing at various Government offices in the city.

Notably, the Supreme Court has directed the Bar Council of India (BCI) to suspend the licences of the agitating lawyers. The apex court had also directed for arrangements by police to prevent lawyers from obstructing the working of courts.

The top court issued the direction on an application filed by the Registrar General of the Orissa High Court saying the bar associations' strike in several districts has seriously hampered the judicial work in all the subordinate courts.

Earlier, the Sambalpur District Bar Association had said that around 1,600 lawyers will surrender their licences if one of them is suspended.

INBRIEF

DIGITAL RUPEE PILOT PROJECT IN BBSR FROM TODAY

Bhubaneswar: The first pilot project of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for retail digital Rupee (ea,-R) would be launched in four cities, including Bhubaneswar, on Thursday (December). The other cities are Mumbai, New Delhi and Bengaluru. The project would cover select locations in Closed User Group (CUG) consisting of customers and merchants. Reports said the ea,-R would be in the form of a digital token that represents legal tender and would be issued in the same denominations that paper currency and coins are issued. It would be distributed through banks. Eight banks are chosen for phase-wise participation in the project.

KIIT CONFERRED KHEL PROTSAHAN PURUSKAR

Bhubaneswar: The Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) on Wednesday was conferred the Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar 2022. The award was given away by President Droupadi Murmu to KIIT and KISS founder Dr Achyuta Samanta. Expressing his gratitude to the President and the Government of India for bestowing KIIT with the honour, Dr Samanta said the award has been given in recognition of the KIIT's sustained focus towards the development of sports since its inception.



BMC GARBAGE TRUCK KILLS WOMAN IN CITY

Bhubaneswar: A woman died after being hit by a garbage-laden truck of the BMC near the VSS Nagar dumping yard in the city on Wednesday. Another person was also injured in the mishap. The deceased was identified as Sukanti Nayak. Sukanti and her relative were on their way by a motorcycle to a nearby market when the truck hit the bike, killing her on the spot.

UCDA ELECTS OFFICE-BEARERS

Bhubaneswar: The Utkal Chemists' & Druggists' Association (UCDA) on Tuesday conducted its triennial elections for the years 2022-2025 in Brahmapur under the supervision of election officer Nirmal Kumar Mishra. P Satyanarayan was elected as president securing 159 votes beating his nearest rival Deabrata Das by 66 votes, Prasanta Mohapatra was elected as general secretary defeating his nearest rival PK Jena by 40 votes. As many as 252 executive members participated in the elections. The UCDA also held its 51st annual function and general body meeting. National president JS Sindhe and general secretary Rajiv Singhal joined as guests.



Farmers' issues

BJP to gherao Assembly on Dec 2

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The BJP would gherao the Assembly on December 2 to protest the State Government's apathy towards farmers. Despite 13 days of the party's Satyagraha before the Assembly demanding justice to farmers and repeated demand by BJP MLAs for discussion on the farmers' issues in the House, the BJD Government has not paid any heed. The Chief Minister is not coming to the Assembly,

alleged BJP State secretary Prithviraj Harichandan.

Former MP Rudranarayan Pany alleged that while farmers are fighting for their dues across the State, the State Government is staying least concerned. The farmers would be the cause behind the downfall of the BJD Government, he warned.

Among others, Opposition Chief Whip Mohan Majhi, Bhaskar Madhei, Sanatan Bijuli and Naba Charan Majhi addressed the farmers.

Award for Covid health workers in recruitment

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

During the Covid-19 pandemic, thousands of short-term healthcare workers like nursing officers, pharmacists, radiographers, laboratory technicians and MPHWS (M/F) were engaged by the Government in District Headquarters Hospitals and Medical College Hospitals/ Covid-Care Centres.

Considering their contributions, the Government, under the direction of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, has now

framed "Odisha grant of weightage in marks in the recruitment examinations in favour of short-term Covid-19 healthcare workers Rules-2022".

Health Secretary Shalini Pandit said that as per the Rules, the healthcare workers who were engaged for a minimum period of three months would be allowed weightage of 5% extra marks in the next recruitment examination to be conducted by the OSSSC to their posts. This would be a onetime measure.

Surjit Bhujabal

1st Odia as DG of GST Intelligence

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Odia-born IRS officer Surjit Bhujabal recently assumed charge as the head the Directorate General of GST Intelligence (DGGI), an apex intelligence organisation functioning under the Central Board of Indirect Taxes & Customs, Department of Revenue, Ministry of Finance.

He is the first Odia officer to be entrusted with the task of collection, collation and dissemination of intelligence relating to evasion of Goods

and Services Tax (GST) and duties of Central Excise and Service Tax on an all India basis.

The DGGI became a full-fledged directorate in 1983 headed by a Director. In 1988, the directorate was upgraded to Directorate General under a Director General. It is the apex body for manifold tasks of tackling duty evasion.

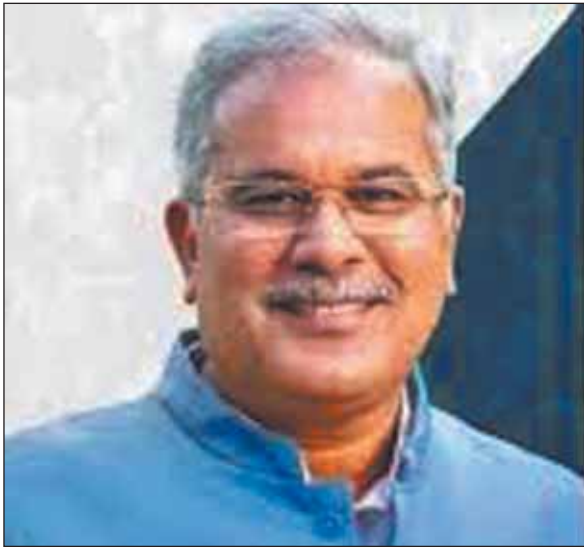
Surjit Bhujabal is the son of former Odisha Chief Secretary Raj Kishore Bhujabal and son-in-law of retired IPS officer Kulamani Deo.

Modi's portrait with 'rapist' insult to PM, says Baghel

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Wednesday said the BJP was insulting Prime Minister Narendra Modi by using his portrait in posters along with candidate Brahmanand Netam, an accused in the molestation of a minor tribal girl.

"The photograph of Modi with a rape accused is an insult to the Indian Prime Minister and the country will not tolerate it," he tweeted.



"The photograph of Modi with a rape accused is an insult to the Indian Prime Minister and the country will not tolerate it," Baghel tweeted.

Baghel appealed the voters in Bhanupratappur

assembly constituency to vote for Congress candidate Savitri Mandavi to save the dignity of the Prime Minister.

Reacting, BJP leader and former Chief Minister Raman Singh said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had insulted Chhattisgarh by making Baghel the Chief Minister though he was charge-sheeted in a morphed sex CD case.

"Sensing a possible defeat in Bhanupratappur, Baghel is now attempting to encash the popularity of Modiji", Singh said.

Four more hospitals of Chhattisgarh get NQAS certification

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare on Wednesday awarded the National Quality Assurance Standard (NQAS) Certificate to four more government hospitals in Chhattisgarh.

These include two hospitals in Dhamtari district (Gedara and Gadadih Sub Health and Wellness Centre), the Aheri Sub Health and Wellness Centre at Durg and the Rambhata Urban Primary Health Centre in Raigarh.

The evaluation is based on 12 standard quality

These include two hospitals in Dhamtari district (Gedara and Gadadih Sub Health and Wellness Centre), the Aheri Sub Health and Wellness Centre at Durg and the Rambhata Urban Primary Health Centre in Raigarh

parameters mainly service delivery, patient satisfaction, clinical services, inputs, infection control, support services,

management and outputs.

The Gadadih Centre scored 94 percent marks, the Gedara and Rambhata Centre got 90 percent and the Aheri Centre 87 percent marks in the evaluation.

So far 61 government hospitals in Chhattisgarh have got the National Quality Assurance Standard Certificate.

These include 10 district hospitals, seven community health centres, 26 primary health centres, 13 urban primary health centres and five sub health centres.

The objective of the certification is to strengthen the facilities of the hospitals and provide quality health care to the public.

Private sector fish research center comes up in C'garh

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

A private sector Fish Research Centre, called the Aqua Genetic Centre, has been established in Rampur village in Baloda Bazar-Bhatapara district of Chhattisgarh. Thai scientists are providing technical assistance.

On Wednesday, Dr Suvarna C, Chief Executive, National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB), inspected the facilities.

She inaugurated a large private fish feed centre with a production capacity of 100 tonnes per day in village Baikoni in the Simga development block.

She also met women groups and farmers involved in fisheries, an official communication said on



Wednesday.

The Aqua Genetic Centre is a joint venture of M Hatchery of Raipur and Manit Group of Thailand.

Spread over 100 acres, the centre is engaged in research on genetics of fish as well as production of tilapia fish seed. The farmers

will be trained in the latest techniques of fish farming.

She inspected the fish farming done by cage culture method in closed mines by the Kherwari women self-help group. Twelve cages have been prepared by the group for fish farming.

She also visited a unit in

village Pikridih in Raipur district. Farmer Anju Mishra is rearing Tilapia and horn fish.

Dr Suvarna said the state is implementing the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana in a better mode. This is the reason the state has won two national awards.

Baghel predicts Cong victory in by-election

STAFF REPORTER ■
KANKER

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Wednesday urged the voters of the Bhanupratappur assembly constituency to vote for Manoj Mandavi's widow Savitri Mandavi and predicted a Congress victory.

Addressing a public meeting at Bhanupratappur, Baghel claimed that the Congress was in the electoral battlefield on the development plank and people would vote for the Congress so that it can pursue its policies. Banking on the sympathy vote, Baghel said each voter should make Savitri Mandavi victorious in order to pay homage to Manoj



Mandavi, who represented the seat.

A Congress victory will

be a fitting reply to those indulging in "scandals", he said, in an obvious reference

to the BJP. And he predicted a Congress win the elections to be held on December 5.

AIDS awareness fortnight from today

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh State AIDS Control Society on Wednesday felicitated 50 individuals and institutions working in the HIV/AIDS sector on eve of World AIDS Day (December 1).

Meanwhile, the National Health Mission will organize an AIDS awareness fortnight from December 1 to 15.

Health Services Director Bhim Singh said there was a need to be sensitive towards the HIV/AIDS patients. They should be treated with equality and respect.

There is a need to actively follow the HIV/AIDS Act 2017 for



protecting the rights of the HIV patients, an official communication said.

National Health Mission Director Bhoskar Vilas Sandeepan appealed to all pregnant women to

undergo HIV tests.

Dr Raman Kataria of Jan Swasthya Sahyog Ganiyari (Bilaspur), CRPF Battalion Sukma's Dr R Anil Kumar, Tarun Rathore of Food

Department, Mayank Singh Balco Vedanta, Shashi Bhushan Kannauje of Gundadhar College Kondagaon, Yeshwant Yadav of the Transport Department and others

"There is a need to actively follow the HIV/AIDS Act 2017 for protecting the rights of the HIV patients"

were felicitated for their contribution to blood donation and for working with HIV/AIDS patients.



A fortnight-long recruitment drive 'Agniveer' for the Army will start in Durg on December 1. Arrangements for lodging and boarding of the aspirants have been done by the district administration. Collector Pushpendra Meena on Wednesday inspected the arrangements.

Pioneer Photo

Mega campaign for paddy straw donation from today

STAFF REPORTER ■
SARANGARH

In the wake of appeals from Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, farmers across Chhattisgarh have come forward to donate paddy straw.

Under the direction of Collector of Sarangarh-Bilaigarh, Dr Fariha Alam Siddiqui, a mega campaign for paddy stubble donation will be launched for all



Gauthans in the district on December 1.

Paddy harvesting is underway at a rapid pace in the district. Keeping this in view, a campaign is being run by the government to encourage farmers to donate the paddy straw left after harvesting instead of burning it.

It is explained to the farmers that burning paddy stubble harms the environment and the soil quality.

बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा
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(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of Baroda under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice to the following borrowers / guarantors calling upon the Borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the respective notices within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The under mentioned Borrower / Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub - section (4) of section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 and under section 14 of the Act of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002 .

S. N.	Branch Name/Ph.No.	Name of Borrower / Guarantor	Description of Property	Demand Notice Date, Amount & Symbolic / Physical Possession Date
01	Gudhiyari Branch, Raipur 9752099535	Mr Suresh Nagpal & Mrs Kiran Nagpal	All that part and parcel of the Residential Unit/Flat No.B-502 (B-501 as per municipal corporation map) on 5th Floor of Block-B of multistoried building "Green Glory", super built up area of 1000 sq.ft situated at diverted residential land KH No. -1211/22-23, 1320/21-22, 1216/19-20, 1217/19-20, 1218/31-32, (part), according to govt. land record situated at Kh.No. 1211/22-23, Shankar Nagar, Khamardihi, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Ward No.- 28, PH No.110, RIC Raipur-1, Tehsil and District - Raipur, C.G. in the name of Mrs. Kiran Nagpal. The property bounded by: North- Commercial Shop, South- Flat No. B-501, East: Colony Road, West - Passage.	08.09.2022 Rs. 26,94,694.37 + interest + other charges 29.11.2022 Symbolic Possession

The Borrowers / Guarantors / Mortgagees in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the above mentioned property and any dealings with the properties will be subject to the charge of Bank of Baroda for above mentioned amount interest and other charges thereon.

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Date: 30.11.2022, Place: Raipur, Chhattisgarh

Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda

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Pak drones major challenge: BSF DG

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

JKSSB job scam: 20 booked, 14 places raided



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

People's health affected by hospitals, medical stores run by fake pharmacists: SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has said that running hospitals, dispensaries and medical stores in the absence of any registered pharmacist or by fake unregistered chemists will ultimately affect the health of citizens.

A bench of justices MR Shah and MM Sundresh set aside a Patna High Court order passed on a plea by pharmacist Mukesh Kumar seeking direction to authorities concerned to not allow any person other than a registered pharmacist to compound, prepare, mix or dispense any medicine on the prescription of any medical practitioner. The bench said that without going into details of the grievances raised, the high court had disposed of the writ petition in a "most casual manner" by taking note of the fact



that the Bihar State Pharmacy Council has submitted that the fact-finding committee was constituted and they forwarded its report to the state government.

"The high court has disposed of the said public interest litigation - writ petition by observing that the appellant, after verifying each case individually may invite the attention to such illegality either to the Bihar State Pharmacy Council or the State of Bihar," the bench said.

'Plants of GM Mustard must be uprooted for environment'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The seeds of GM mustard have started germinating after their environmental release and before the plants start flowering in few weeks they must be uprooted to prevent the environment from getting irreversibly contaminated, campaigners against genetically modified crops told the Supreme Court on Wednesday.

The Genetic Engineering Appraisal Committee (GEAC) under the Union environment ministry approved the environmental release of transgenic mustard hybrid DMH-11 and the parental lines containing barnase, barstar and bar genes to be used for developing new hybrids.

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE | AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI | UNITED NATIONS

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinate also took a

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

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

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

ICG holds meet to deal with oil spills in coastal areas

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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



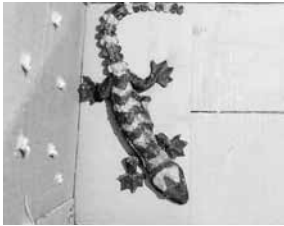
Indian Navy personnel during a rehearsal at the Gateway of India for the Navy Day celebrations in Mumbai on Wednesday

5 arrested after rare tokay gecko lizard, cough syrup seized in Bihar

PTI ■ PURNEA

Five people were arrested after a rare tokay gecko lizard and intoxicating cough syrups were seized from a medical store in Bihar's Purnea district on Wednesday, police said.

Acting on a tip-off, the store in Baisi division was raided and the items were seized, said acting Superintendent of Police Surendra Kumar Saroj. "The owner of the shop managed to flee from the spot. Based on information gathered during the search, an alleged smuggler and his four associ-



ates were arrested in the case," he said.

Police, however, refused to reveal the identity of those arrested.

"The grey market value of the lizard would be around Rs 1.5 crore. Forest officials were informed about it. The Forest

Department will also initiate legal proceedings against the suspected smugglers," the officer said.

Tokay geckos are listed in Schedule III of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972 as highly endangered.

It is suspected that the accused brought the lizard from West Bengal and they were planning to take it to Delhi, said Aditya Kumar, the Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) of Baisi.

The seized cough syrups, 50 packs, were laced with the intoxicating banned substance codeine, he said.

Events galore as India to chair G-20

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

next year, sources said here on Wednesday.

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

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

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

1, 2022, and November 30, 2023.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

IN SHORT

R-DAY: BSF WOMEN CAMEL CONTINGENT TO TAKE PART

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

EX-BABU APPROACHES EC OVER SHAH'S REMARK

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

'REGISTER AS COMPANY TO BROADCAST LOCAL NEWS'

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

DEF MIN EXTENDS PENSION PAYMENT

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

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

788 candidates in election race

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

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

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



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

PTI Photo

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Take strict action against 'sponsored' opinion polls, Cong urges EC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

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

A delegation of Congress leaders led by AICC legal cell head Vivek Tankha met the Election Commission and apprised the poll body of the "violations by media". The opposition party urged the EC to take action against news

channels violating directions issued by it in respect of programmes related to the dissemination of election results.

They alleged that the media channels were predicting the poll outcome in a bid to influence the voters and this was a serious issue.

Tankha also claimed that they have information concerning the "safety of the ballot boxes" and urged the Commission to ensure there is no tampering. The Congress said it has observed that certain news channels have been publishing/publicising programmes related to the dissemination of results for the 2022 Gujarat Legislative

Assembly. "These programmes are publishing 'opinion polls' favouring one particular party over the other.

The programmes and their result prediction about the prospects of the various political parties in the Gujarat elections clearly aim to influence the electors of the constituencies going to polls," the memorandum said.

"The Commission must enforce what it commands. We request this Commission to utilise its powers under Article 324 of Constitution of India to address issue by passing immediate directions to news channels," memorandum also said. The Congress leaders urged

the EC to act with urgency as these violations undermine the sanctity of electoral laws and the authority of the Commission. "We all went to Election Commission and told it that level playing field is being disturbed by the media. Ahead of polling tomorrow, they are giving results methodically, as if result has come beforehand," Tankha said. He said the exit polls are banned and predictions are banned, but still this is being done. "There is no fear of Election Commission. The EC was worried about this issue and has assured us it will look into it as it was a serious matter.

952 illegal appointments so far in schools, CBI tells HC

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Yogi: Muzaffarnagar safe, peaceful because of BJP Govt in State

PNS ■ KHATAULI/LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Wednesday that Muzaffarnagar was safe and peaceful today only because of the presence of the Bharatiya Janata Party Government in Uttar Pradesh, and warned people against Samajwadi Party and Rashtriya Lok Dal combine's conspiracy to create a "Taliban rule" in the State.

"Farmers could not go to their lands as their tubewell connections were disconnected, machines were stolen and their throats slit. Besides, girls could not go to school and women to markets because of safety issues.

And people were forced to flee Kairana and Kandala during SP and RLD rule. People can never forget the cruelty meted out to Sachin and Gaurav during SP's rule", Yogi remarked.

Urging people not to allow professional criminals of SP to enter the realms of power and to vote for the BJP in much larger numbers, while campaigning for BJP candidate Rajkumari Saini, wife of former BJP MLA Vikram Saini, Yogi said that the "Kawal ka bawal" was a curse of SP, adding that strictness was necessary to restore rule of law in UP and that was what his government did after taking over — "dealing with such elements in the language they understood the best".

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that strangely RLD that stood for farmers' interest and never supported criminals during late Chaudhary Charan Singh's time also became SP's partner in crime later on, serving as "daal mein tadka" even though farmers never received a fair deal during the SP government.

The chief minister added: "Vikram Singh Saini lost his membership not because of some family issue but because of trying to protect Muzaffarnagar's dignity and self-respect. It was a politically motivated and fabricated case." Yogi pointed out that the double-engine government of



the BJP in UP was following the mantra of 'Sabka Saath aur Sabka Vikas' to benefit the entire population, irrespective of caste or creed, with the development taking place and was extending the benefits of government welfare schemes to everyone without discriminating against, or appeasing anyone.

"We provided the benefits of Prime Minister Awas Yojana and Chief Minister Awas Yojana to every poor, toilets to every needy, in addition to electricity connections under Saubhagya Yojana and gas cylinders under Ujjwala Yojana to crores of deserving people. We are also providing an annual pension of Rs 12,000 to the elderly, to destitute women and widows and the differently-abled", he added.

Yogi said: "It's a land of religion and sends the message of peace. But when religion is in crisis, it has revolted also. Kanwar yatra, which could not take place during SP rule, was being taken out with much fanfare now and would be even grander once Gang Nahar is allowed to be built by the Forest department. Khatauli also boasts of having the biggest sugar mill today."

"Ram temple is being built in Ayodhya while Kashi and Mathura have been renovated and beautified. Mahendra Pratap Singh University is being built in Aligarh whereas Dhyanchand Sports University is also being constructed," he added.

Meanwhile, Yogi Adityanath thanked independent candidates Ravindra and Pradeep Thakur as well as Chaudhary Yashveer Singh, Abhishek Chaudhary, Bhopal Singh Gurjar for announcing their support for the BJP candidate.

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann on Wednesday brought a bunch of 25,000 "zero" electricity bills from his state and added the people of Gujarat will get similar bills if Aam Aadmi Party is voted to power in the Assembly polls.

Providing free electricity up to 300 units per month is one of the main election "guarantees" of AAP in Gujarat.

Voting for 182 Assembly seats will be held in two phases on December 1 and 5. The counting of votes will be taken up on December 8. The campaigning for the first phase ended on Tuesday evening.



Addressing a press conference here, Mann said the zero electricity bills were received by 61 lakh out of the 75 lakh households in Punjab, which is a testimony of AAP's commitment that it walks the talk.

"I have brought 25,000 zero electricity bills with the names and addresses which you can

Youth arrested in Budaun for insulting national flag

9 arrested for illegal religious conversion

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A youth was arrested for allegedly insulting the national flag and cleaning his face with it in Budaun district, police said on Wednesday.

A purported video of the act had earlier surfaced on social media and caught local people's eye and they reported the matter to the police.

Shahrulkh, a resident of Dhel village in Zarif Nagar, was booked for insulting the national flag and sent to jail. Additional Superintendent of Police (Rural) Siddharth Verma said.

In the video, Shahrulkh is allegedly seen cleaning his face with the national flag and then trampling the flag under his foot.

Meanwhile, in yet another major crackdown, nine people were arrested by police in Azamgarh for allegedly trying to illegally convert Hindus to Christianity under the garb of exorcism.

The nine accused were arrested from Azamgarh's Saraimere neighbourhood. Police said that they got a tip-off from a Bajrang Dal member and raided a house in the Ambekdar Nagar colony. Upon searching the house, police found religious books inside the house and detained around a dozen people. Later,



among the 12 detained people, nine were arrested by police. The police also said that the nine arrested accused had been booked for carrying out illegal conversions.

It may be mentioned that on Monday, the Supreme Court observed that there cannot be any forced religious conversions. Justice Shah was hearing an affidavit filed by the Centre regarding legislation against forced religious conversion.

However, due to paucity of time, the hearing could not be completed and it has been adjourned to December 5. Advocate Sanjay Hegde opposed the public interest litigation (PIL) and said that the petitioner had a political face. Advocate Hegde said, "He had earlier filed the same petition in the Delhi High Court and both times it was withdrawn. This is a political interest litigation."

To this, Justice Shah replied and asked, "Do you mean to say that we must allow forced conversion?"

Following this Justice Shah observed that there cannot be any forced religious conversion. The Centre told Supreme Court that legislation against forced religious conversion was necessary to protect vulnerable sections of society, including socially and economically backward classes.

Awareness events to decrease damage during disasters: Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Timely training of personnel, rescue measures and awareness programmes implemented and conducted with right intent, dedication and concerted efforts can bring down the impact of damage caused by disasters to the least, said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday.

Addressing the two-day 3rd Regional Conference on Disaster Management, organised under the aegis of National Disaster Management Authority, Yogi Adityanath said, "Strict vigilance and prior awareness are essential to control the impact of disasters. Timely training of personnel and rescue measures implemented and conducted with right intent only can bring down the impact of damage caused by disasters."

Emphasising the inclusion of disaster management and road safety in school curriculum, the chief minister said that if people knew what precautions they should take during floods, earthquakes, lightning, and fire mishaps, the loss of lives and property can be prevented.

On the occasion, Yogi also called for implementing an 'Early Warning System' to control deaths due to lightning strikes, particularly in Mirzapur and Sonbadra districts.

While appreciating the role of Aapda Mitras in the prevention of disasters, the chief minister also stressed on involving gram panchayats in this work and increasing the number of Aapda Mitras.

A 'flood atlas' developed by National Remote Sensing Centre (NRSC), Hyderabad was also unveiled by the chief minister on the occasion.

In the inaugural session of the two-day conference, referring to the three types of calamities

(adi daivik, adi bhautik and adi dahik) mentioned in Bhartiya Manisha, the chief minister also discussed the efforts being made by the state government in relation to all three.

Referring to the special geographical conditions of Uttar Pradesh, the chief minister also apprised everyone about the ongoing efforts for a permanent solution to curb floods, which have been causing huge loss of life and property in the state every year.

The chief minister said that till a few years ago, 38 districts of UP were affected by floods every year and today their number had been reduced to only four districts.

Sharing the efforts behind this success, the chief minister said that when the government was formed in 2017, he received a file of Rs 100 crore related to Elgin Bridge regarding flood protection. Such a huge amount was spent at one place every year.

In such a situation, he himself inspected the site and decided to channelise the river by dredging it. As a result, Bahraich, Gonda and Barabanki were saved from floods, and instead of spending Rs100 crore, only Rs 5 crore was spent.

Expressing the need to stop road accidents, the chief minister said, "Nearly 30,000 people die due to road accidents. This needs to stop. Awareness must be raised."

Extending best wishes for the two-day regional conference, the chief minister said that there were nine such states of North India which were frequently affected by disasters and to minimise these, this two-day event organised in UP, a state with the largest population of the country, would prove to be very important.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Nicely placed

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

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



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

PICTALK



Taj Mahal with the setting sun, in Agra.

PTI

Covid protests in China

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

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

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

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'One Earth, One Family, One Future'

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

The previous 17 Presidencies of the G20 delivered significant results - for ensuring macro-economic stability, rationalising international taxation, relieving debt-burden on countries, among many other outcomes. We will benefit from these achievements, and build further upon them.

However, as India assumes this important mantle, I ask myself - can the G20 go further still? Can we catalyse a fundamental mindset shift, to benefit humanity as a whole?

I believe we can.

Our mindsets are shaped by our circumstances. Through all of history, humanity lived in scarcity. We fought for limited resources, because our survival depended on denying them to others. Confrontation and competition - between ideas, ideologies and identities - became the norm.

Unfortunately, we remain trapped in the same zero-sum mindset even today. We see it when countries fight over territory or resources. We see it when supplies of essential goods are weaponised. We see it when vaccines are hoarded by a few, even as billions remain vulnerable.

Some may argue that confrontation and greed are just human nature. I disagree. If humans were inherently selfish, what would explain the lasting appeal of so many spiritual traditions that advocate the fundamental one-ness of us all?

One such tradition, popular in India, sees all living beings, and even inanimate things, as composed of the same five basic elements - the panchatvaof earth, water, fire, air and space. Harmony among these elements - within us and between us - is essential for our physical, social and environmental well-being.

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

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

Today, we have the means to



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

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

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

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

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

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

Today, India is the fastest



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



NARENDRA MODI

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

APPOINTMENT OF JUDGES

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

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

Dr Jai Prakash Gupta | Ambala

SEVEN SIXES IN AN OVER

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

Peace in Gujarat



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

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

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

CK Ramaniam | Mumbai

SC DOESN'T WANT MORE JUDGES

Sir — On Tuesday, November 29 the

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

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

Haridasan Rajan | Kozhikode

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

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

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUNDBITE

Diamond business-

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



Delhi CM
— Arvind Kejriwal



US Secretary of State
— Antony Blinken

The people on this

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



Actor
— Will Smith



English skipper
— Ben Stokes

The Congress in

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



Congress leader
— Jairam Ramesh

FIRST COLUMN

GENDER STEREOTYPES MUST BE QUESTIONED

This is how incidents like Shraddha murder can be checked



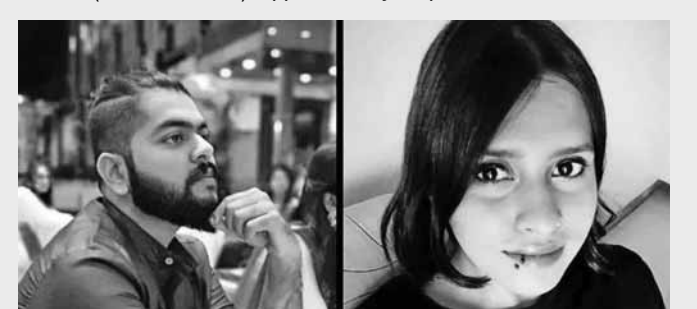
RUCHI **SAINI**

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

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

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

Unsurprisingly, none of these claims stand their ground when verified. According to the latest round of the National Family Health Survey in India (NFHS 2019-21), approximately 30 per cent of married Indian



women faced domestic and sexual violence, and no significant difference was observed in violence reported by Hindu and non-Hindu married women. Additionally, out of the respondents who reported experiencing physical abuse, the vast majority belonged to poor and uneducated backgrounds. Clearly, being married or less educated does not protect women from violent crimes in India, and neither does the perpetrators' religious affiliation.

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

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

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

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

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

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

G20 can create value chains led by farmers



BINOD **ANAND**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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



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

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

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

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

This yearlong diplomatic festival through G20 is going to bring

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

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

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

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

The farmers' collectives would be the ones which ultimately gain

more benefit from these negotiations, instead of the fragmented farmers. Linking farmers' collectives to the overseas market is also relevant as agro value chains are buyer-driven. We have an army of FPOs/cooperatives which are organised, coordinated, and can control the activities that reach the global consumer market through their core competencies of local products which have huge demand.

Therefore, in the context of a GVC, with support of G-20 negotiations our collectives may become the ones who define the “rules of the game” and appropriate the largest shares of the gains derived from agricultural production with collaborative effort of state and civil society.

Economic activity of these collectives is gaining a lot of public interest; for that the United Nations General Assembly declared 2023 as the International Year of Millets. Farmers-led GVC will serve as a means for linking local producers from developing countries to international markets. However, it is relevant to discuss the opportunities and challenges that come across this engagement, to analyze if it is beneficial for small farmers, lead firms or even public institutions. Many countries are intending to embrace a wide and diverse range of stakeholders in their design.

It is early to determine how widespread this will be. It is also not yet clear how inclusive this process will turn out to be. The participation of the relevant civil society actors may normally be vital to enable the farmers' collective voices to be fully expressed and heard. This takes thought and planning of this momentous period to rejig the phrase “the Wonder that was the farming system of India.”

Ensuring a clean world is best business investment

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



KAMAL **NARAYAN OMER**

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

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

(The author is CEO, IHW Council)

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

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

than never.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ukraine welcomes arms offers, no word on Patriot missiles

AP ■ BUCHAREST

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Patriots.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

EU seeks specialised court to investigate Russia war crimes

AP ■ BRUSSELS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



makers in London.

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

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

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

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

She estimated the damage to Ukraine at 600 billion euros.

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

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

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

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

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



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

AP ■ BUCHAREST

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

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

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

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

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

The parliaments of Turkey and Hungary have yet to ratify

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

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

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

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

The minister of Sweden and Finland sounded more upbeat.

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

Russia says nuclear talks with US delayed amid differences

AP ■ MOSCOW

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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To be known to all that my client, SMT. KUDRAT JAHAN, W/o LATE ABDUL RASHID, R/o H.NO.84/133, SHALIMAR BAGH, DELHI-110088 has applied for conversion of the aforesaid plot from lease hold to free hold vide File No.F.16 (1568) 75/ LAB*in DDA.The original documents i.e. Possession letter of the above said plot has been lost. An NCR/LR NO.10265 32/2022 dated 28.11.2022 to this effect has been lodged in P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi. Any person (s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above Address/Phone No. 8368196003 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objection with respect to this property can personally inform or write to Deputy Director (Residential) or Director (Land), DDA, Vikas Sadan, New Delhi

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

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

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

All contractors who intend to participate in the e-auctions conducted through E-Auction Leasing module of IREPS should fulfil following mandatory requirements before they can submit their bids:

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No. : 23AC/393/E-Auction/2022
Dated : 29.11.2022



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E-TENDER NOTICE
E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firm for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: www.noidaauthorityonline.com & <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/amendments & corrigendum etc.

A) Fresh-Tender Work:			
S.No.	Jobs. No.	Name of the Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
1.	47/DGM/SM (WC-10)/ET/22-23	Barbed wore Fencing Work (P/F Large Warming Boards at Different Location in Doob Area of Work Circle -10) Noida	50.27
2.	49/DGM/SM(WC-10)/ET/22-23	D/o & M/o village (Kayalap of Primary School Village Kondli & Junior High School Village-Momnatha), Noida	69.64
3.	50/DGM/SM (WC-10)/ET 22-23	M/o & D/o Village (Renovation / Operation Kayakalp of Primary School & Junior High School in Village-Kambakhs Pur, Primary School Gulawali & Dairy Paidito Ki) Noida	31.27
4	51/DGM/SM (WC-10)/ET 22-23	D/o Sector 156 (C/o Service Road in Between Sector-155 & 156 Balance Service Road), Noida	60.86
5	52/DGM/SM (WC-10)/ET 22-23	D/o & M/o Village Kayakalp of Primary & Junior High School Village-Jhatta) Noida	47.84
6	53/DGM/SM (WC-10)/ET 22-23	D/o & M/o Village Kayakalp of Primary & Junior High School Village-Baduli) Noida	58.86
7	55/DGM/SM (WC-10)/ET 22-23	D/o Sector -149 & 150 (C/o Drain & Road for 5% abadi Plot of Village-Kondli), Noida	88.87
8	38/DGM/SM (WC-3)/ET 22-23	M/o & Building (M/o Primary School and Senior Secondary School in village Sadarpur under Operation Kayakalp), Noida	48.53

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 14.12.2022 up to 5.00 PM. Pre- qualification shall be opened/downloaded on dated 15.12.2022 at 11.00 AM.

B) Re-Tender Work			
S.No.	Jobs. No.	Name of the Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
9	27/GM/SM(WC-10)/ET/2022-23	P/F Signage Board for internal Gali in Village-Jhatta, Bauli, Kondli, Samastipur, Momnathal and Nalagarh), Noida	62.45
10.	34/PGM/SM (WC-10)/ET/2022-23	D/o & M/o Noida-Gr. Noida Expressway (Repair and Painting of Jhatta & Mohiyapur Underpass of Noida-Greater Noida Expressway) Noida	38.12

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated 07.12.2022 up to 5.00 PM. Pre- qualification shall be opened/downloaded on dated 08.12.2022 at 11.00 AM.

Dy. General Manager, Noida

CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA

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

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD/KARACHI

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

scene.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



Taliban: 10 killed in bombing of Afghan religious school

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

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

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

There was no immediate claim of responsibility. But the

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

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

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

AP ■ BEIJING

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

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

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

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



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

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

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



Landmark same-sex marriage Bill wins Senate passage

AP ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

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

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

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

Australia steps up calls for US to drop WikiLeaks charges

AP ■ CANBERRA

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform to the public at large that **Mrs. Meera Devi** who is owner of the Residential Property Portion admeasuring 30 sq.yds. (15'x18') out of 60 sq. yds. Part of Plot no.51, Mustaki no. 31, Kila no. 71(2-13) & 8(6-0), situated at Mauja Sehatur, Tehsil and District Faridabad, Haryana; having purchased the same from Mr. Mukesh Verma vide Sale Deed dated 03.09.2015, vide Document No.9559, registered with the office of Sub-Registrar-Faridabad, registered on 03.09.2015 and same to be finance & mortgage by **Vastu Housing Finance Corporation Limited**. To comply the requirements of BANK/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any Person having any type of claim /right /title /interest / creating mortgage over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections, within 7 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien etc.

Lucern Legal LLP
269, Rama House, Ground Floor, Masjid Moh. Subhash, Phase, Delhi-110034 or e-mail at 9967071729@lucernlegal.com
Contact# 011-40046316

Public Notice

This is to inform general public that Mrs. Harbans Kaur is the owner of Residential plot bearing no. 10/13 (part), Land area measuring 100 sq. yds., part of Kharsa no. 764, situated at Village Chandrawali alias Shandara in the abadi of Subhash Gali /Main Viaswas Road, Vishwas Nagar, Shandara, Delhi vide sale deed dated 12.05.2020, Doc. No. 5393. Above said owner has misplaced the 1. Original sale deed dated 24.09.1996 executed by Mr. Balram as GPA of Mrs. Phoo Kali in favour of Mrs. Ram Chandel in respect of said property and Original Registered Family GPA dated 22.03.2004 executed by Mrs. Ram Chandel in favour of Mr. Sunder Singh in respect of said property. Anyone who find the above said documents shall handover the same to the Manager of Mrs. Axis Finance Limited having its office at 84/5 W.E.A. 1st Flat Gunderwa Road Karol Bagh, New Delhi - 110005. Above said owner is intending to sell the said property to Mr. Satya Narain Bhutani and further Mr. Satya Narain Bhutani is availing loan on above said property from Mrs. Axis Finance Limited by mortgaging the said property. In case anyone has any objection regarding mortgage of the said property, the same may be raised within 7 days of this publication to Mr. Muneesh Dhawan/ Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Vertas North, Unit no 307, 9th Floor, G2/11, Tower, (B-30), NCTA, Subhash, Phase, Delhi-110034 or e-mail at 9967071729@lucernlegal.com

Oath Keepers' Rhodes guilty of Jan 6 seditious conspiracy

AP ■ WASHINGTON

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

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

The verdict marks a signif-



PUBLIC NOTICE

The general public is informed that the cars with the following car numbers which have completed their life Petrol Cars 15 Years Diesel Cars 10 Years. The MCD drive was confiscated by Pine View Technology Pvt Ltd and has not been claimed by anyone till now. All these vehicle owners are informed to come to the company's office and claim the scrap value of the vehicle. Otherwise, all these vehicles will be scrapped in the next three days.

DL7SW7891,	DL7SAQ6286,	DL7S25407,
DL5SR6120,	HR5109428,	DL6SV1396,
DL4SAD0625,	DL13SA0306,	DI22322,
DL7SA72710,	GJ6CH7539,	DL5SE4247,
DL5SV98334,	DL3SAQ8357,	DL5SW2112,
DBK4791,	HY0907,	DL7SAR4528,
DL5SV4702,	UP15F5373,	DL6SV5423,
BR1Q1979,	DL7SN6629,	DL7SAD5472,
DL7SAU6037,	DL6SV7289,	DL3ST3668,
DL5SV4516,	DL6SS2425,	DL7SX4010,
CH5ND43626,	DL7SAM3716,	DL6SAD9277,
DL7AF1095,	DL6SF8677,	DL6SE7166,
DL5SR9637,	DL5SP7776,	DL6SL4641,
NOREG68,	DL8SJ2598,	DL6SS9229,
DL6SG6931,	DL7SAM4320,	DL6E8217,
DL4SK0202,	DL7SW1245,	PB3SD9319,
DL7SAU1812,	DL7SAD8221,	DL6SV9228,
DL10C0472,	UP15V4237,	DL6SV5774,
DL7SA6805,	DL6SV6783,	DL7SAD7607,
DL6SU8066,	DL6SV5835,	DL7SAD4043,
DL3SAA2680,	DL5SR5565,	DL7SU1656,
UP11E4537,	DL6SV2762,	DL7SAQ3851,
DL6SS8444,	DL8SO0630,	DL7SAN8343,
DL5SS0594,	GJ1BM6607,	DL5SW5473,
DL1SL0536,	MH2OR8735,	DL7SG2154,
DL7SA6680,	DL7SAG2568,	DL3SA25319,
CH5ND-02L21,	DL7SAG2395,	DL4SP3984,
C23182,	DL7SV5799,	DL7SAY0146,
DL5SR3448,	DL6SK6427,	DL6SJ0995,
DL4SBN9241,	DL5SP6222,	DL7SAD9894,
DL4SBJ0828,	DL3SW3476,	DL7SAD9082,
DL5ST6996,	DL7SAE7933,	DL6SAA1722,
DL3S0572,	DL6SV6090,	DL7SAR9668,
DL7SA3976,	DI93009,	DL7SAK5520,
DBW6949,	DL7SAD264,	DL4SAB1539,
DL5SR6204,	DL7ST0581,	HR3SA1028,
DL5SW3423,	DL7SSL1572,	DL4SBE4226,
UP8154732,	DL1SR4231,	DL4SBE4231,
DL5SR6197,	DL5SR7484,	DL4SAF1282,
DL5ST2520,	DL6SAB526,	DL3SAG3938,
DL4SAH5133,	DL7SAR6748,	RJ14SE8468,
GJ6EG62731,	DL7SA0523,	DL4SBA0475,
DL4SX1920,	DL6SK1720,	DL4SV2325,
DL3S21329,	DL6ST7289,	DL4SW5850,
DL7SAD8849,	DL6SV7388,	DL4SAP1994,
DL4SBA0792,	DL5SX2607,	DL4SZ7663,
CH5ND,	DL5SU0481,	DL4SZ5809,
1052565,	UP14AD3440,	DL1CL3949,
CH5ND-06FB,	DL6SB0577,	DL7SW1629,
DL6B463,	DL7SW0901,	DL71443,
DL5SS1237,	DI04189,	DL3SAK0870,
DL5SS9106,	DL7SF6823,	UP70AA2968,
DL5ST1666,	DL7SO2090,	DL7SAY5125,
DL5SM7993,	DL7S2389,	UHT1521,
DL6SR8130,	DL7SX6874,	DL6SX3301,
CH03X7779,	DL7SR9418,	DL7SE7258,
DL4SAJ3266,	DL7SG0239,	DL3SAK9365,
PB11K3893,	DL7SAB3468,	DL3SAZ5235,
PB11F2787,	NOREG71,	DL7SAD6347,
DL8SAC4278,	DL4CS6388,	DL7SZ9655,
DL7SA0871,	DL6SD7390,	DL5SP0586,
DL5SM9281,	HR3SA7674,	DL7SAR4774,
UP13H4738,	NOREG72,	DL7SAD4769,
DL7SAK0569,	DL7ST9642,	DL4SAM1021,
HR26AJ6228,	UP85C4244,	DL8SAC1782,
DL7SV7630,	DL7SS6438,	DL6SV0848,
DL7SZ8994,	DL8SAC1606,	DL4SAB1959,
DDP4300,	DL7SAD7264,	DL7SBA1734,
DL7SW9415,	DL7SAK1496,	DL4SP4327,
DL7SAQ4281,	DL7SAJ9148,	DL7SAB4575,
DL7SAQ0984,	DL4SA3394,	DL7SAR8356,
DL9SS3002,	DL7SAB7890,	AP28AG3703,
DL3SAP9965,	DL7SAB8280,	HR23F0070,
UP14AE7308,	DL7SAY4640,	HR70C6552,
NOREG69,	DL6SX7380,	DL4CAG9549,
CH5ND,	ENGND0DH-	DL4CAG9028,
1052565,	BKH28897,	
DL6SL3433,	DL9SP2436,	DL8CNA5917,
DL3SO1468,	DL7SZ4087,	HR26BV1945,
DL2SG5240,	DL8SAJ0308,	DL7CH1154,
DL7SAD1123,	DIU9698,	DL4CAE6115,

Tokyo court: Lack of law for same-sex union unconstitutional

AP ■ TOKYO

Japan's lack of law to protect the rights of same-sex couples to marry and become families violates the constitution, the Tokyo District Court ruled Wednesday in a closely watched case in a country still largely bound by traditional gender roles and family values.

The court, however, said the government's lack of legislative action is not illegal and threw out plaintiffs' compensation demands of 1 million yen (\$7,215) each.

Still, the ruling was a partial victory for LGBTQ couples.

There is no rationality to justify the absence of legal protection for same-sex couples and "it is in a state of violation" of the Article 24 of the Japanese Constitution, the court said. Same-sex couples should



enjoy the same legal protection as heterosexual couples through marriage, it said.

The plaintiffs and their lawyers welcomed the ruling as "ground breaking" and urged the government to promptly take steps to enact a law to mitigate the problem.

"I was glad that the ruling acknowledged we have a right to be families," plaintiff Chizuka Oe told a news conference, adding that her partner of more than 20 years "is my invaluable family no matter what anyone says."

Egyptians call on British Museum to return Rosetta stone

AP ■ CAIRO

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

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



empire in 1801.

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

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

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

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

NORTHERN RAILWAY

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

Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system

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

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

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

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NORTHERN RAILWAY

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

1. NIT No	GSU/DLI/04/22-23 Dated : 28.11.2022
2. Name of work with its location	Linking of P-way track including installation and dismantling of turnouts in running as well as non running track ordinary track, insertion of glued joints, making of sand humps, supplying, leading and stacking of Pway ballast including putting into track, leading of all Pway material including rails and ordinary/turnout PSC concrete sleepers with short and long lead, construction and extension of platforms including vacuum dewatered flooring, road work and pathway with precast interlocking pavers blocks, E/Work in cutting and filling including of CSL at OS Stations naming MOY, SHDM, DHZM, NLKR and BHD in DUK Section of Delhi Division.
3. Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 65743761.03
4. Earnest Money	Rs. 478700
5. Completion period of work	8 Months
6. Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender	Upto 15.00 hrs on 20.12.2022 Opening of tender at 15.00 hrs. on 20.12.2022.
7. Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender from can be purchased etc.	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

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

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

For & on behalf of President of India

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R.O. No.: 875 e-TENDER NOTICE Date: 30.11.2022

Office of the (Executive Engineer (E&M), Joshiyara Barrage, invites online bids from interested parties. Brief summary of tender is given below :
Tender No.NCB/17/EE(E&M)/MB-II/Barrage/2022-23
Name of work/supply/services etc.: Design, Manufacturing, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Trassrack panels & one no. Hydraulically Operated Movable Trash Rack Cleaning Machine (TRCM) to safely handle rake capacity of 2.0 Tonne as well as log grappler capacity of 2.0 Tonne including dismantling of existing Trash rack panels & TRCM at Joshiyara Barrage, Uttarakashi, Uttarakhand, India
Estimated cost /RS. 13,06,93,867/- including Taxes
Date of availability of bid document on website: 03.12.2022 16:00 hrs
Last date for submission of bids on website: 16.01.2023 16:00 hrs
For fuller & further details, kindly visit e-procurement portal <http://uktenders.gov.in>
Executive Engineer

MAHARISHI MARKANDESHWAR UNIVERSITY

KUMARHATTI-SOLAN (HP), 173-229
(Established under HP Govt. Act No.22 of 2010 and approved U/S 22 of the UGC Act, 1956)

ADMISSION NOTICE-MD/MS (2022-23)

Applications are invited for admission to the Stray Vacancy Round counseling (NRI and MQ Seats) for MD/MS course for the session 2022-23 in MM Medical College & Hospital, Kumarhatti, Solan a constituent Institute of Maharishi Markandeshwar University, Solan. Application Form is available on the University website (www.mmusolan.org). Last date of receiving duly filled up application form along with DD of Rs. 2000 in the name of MMCH&H, Kumarhatti-Solan (HP) is 01.12.2022 upto 4:00 PM positively in the Principal office of the Medical College. Physical counselling shall be held for vacant NRI seats on 02.12.2022 from 9:00 AM and for Management quota seats from 10:00 AM onwards in the Principal Office.

REGISTRAR

Ph. : 01792-268224, Fax: 268221
Website: www.mmusolan.org | Email : info@mmusolan.org

NORTHERN RAILWAY

E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr. Divisional Electrical Engineer/Traction Distribution, DRM's Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi for & on behalf of President of India, invites open e-tender under single packet system for the under noted work:

1	Name of Work with its location	PART A	Design, supply, erection, testing & commissioning of 25 Kv OHE modification work in connection with "DFCCIL connectivity with IR Khataulali Station of Delhi Division"

Kirit Parikh panel submits gas report

Suggests pricing freedom beginning Jan 2026

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A government-appointed gas Aprice review panel, led by Kirit Parikh on Wednesday submitted its report to the government, recommending a floor and ceiling price for legacy fields and complete pricing freedom starting January 1, 2026.

A fixed band of pricing for gas from legacy fields, which makes up for two-thirds of all natural gas produced in the country, would ensure a predictable pricing regime for producers and at the same time moderate prices of CNG and piped cooking gas which has shot up by 70 per cent since last year on the back of a surge in input cost.

The panel has suggested linking the price of gas produced by state-owned firms from fields given to them on a nomination basis to imported crude oil prices rather than benchmarking them to gas rates in international markets, Parikh said, adding the rates thus arrived would be subject to a floor and ceiling.

State producers Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd (OIL) will be paid a price linked to imported oil but it will have a minimum or floor price of USD 4 per million British thermal unit and a cap or ceiling price of USD 6.5.

This compares to the current rate of USD 8.57 derived from a formula linked to the price prevailing in gas-surplus nations.

The ceiling rate for this gas



from legacy or old fields, called APM gas, will be increased by USD 0.5 per mmBtu annually, he said. "From January 1, 2027, we have suggested market-determined pricing of APM gas."

The panel was in favour of not tinkering with the existing pricing formula for fields in difficult geology such as KG-D6 of Reliance Industries and bp plc.

Currently, fields in deepsea or in high-temperature, high-pressure zones are governed by a different formula that includes an element of imported LNG cost but the same is also subject to a ceiling. The ceiling for these fields currently is USD 12.46.

"Such producers have marketing and pricing freedom which is constrained by an upper bound fixed by the government. We have suggested continuing with the cap for three years and giving total pricing freedom from January 1, 2026, by removing the cap," he said.

The panel also suggested including natural gas in the one-nation-one-tax regime of GST by subsuming excise duty charged by the central government and varying rates of VAT

levied by state governments.

"We recognise that states have concerns and we are starting a process to build consensus for including gas in the goods and services tax (GST) regime," he said.

To address state concern of loss of revenue, the panel was in favour of setting up a mechanism similar to the compensation cess regime that made good for any revenue loss that states incurred by way of giving their right to levy VAT and other taxes on goods and services in first five years of implementation of GST regime from July 1, 2017.

Also, the panel was in favour of moderation in rates of excise duty.

The committee was tasked with suggesting a "fair price to the end-consumer" while ensuring a "market-oriented, transparent and reliable pricing regime for India's long-term vision for ensuring a gas-based economy".

"Our mandate was to suggest a regime that would help raise domestic production to help meet the goal of 15 per cent of energy coming from gas by 2030. And at the same time, provide fair price to consumers," he said.

Sensex hits 63k mark; Nifty ends at fresh lifetime high

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark BSE Sensex settled above the 63,000-level for the first time on Wednesday, extending its winning momentum to seventh day amid a largely positive trend in global markets and continuous foreign fund inflows. The 30-share barometer rallied 417.81 points or 0.67 per cent to settle at 63,099.65, its fresh record closing high. During the day, the benchmark jumped 621.17 points or 0.99 per cent to 63,303.01, its lifetime intra-day peak. The broader NSE Nifty advanced 140.30 points or 0.75 per cent to end at 18,758.35, its fresh record closing high.

Among the Sensex pack, Mahindra & Mahindra, UltraTech Cement, Power Grid, Hindustan Unilever, Bharti Airtel, Asian Paints, Tata Steel and Titan were major



gainers. IndusInd Bank, State Bank of India, HCL Technologies and ITC were among the laggards.

"Domestic market continued its quest for gains, boosted by FII inflows. However, markets will be sensitive to the Fed Chair's remarks later in the day, as investors are expecting a moderation in the pace of rate hikes. An in-line comment will help to sustain the rally while loosening COVID-19 restrictions in China is providing relief to global markets,"

said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 1.06 per cent and smallcap index climbed 0.61 per cent.

All sectoral indices ended in the green, with utilities rallying 2.52 per cent, power jumped 2.35 per cent, metal (1.96 per cent), auto (1.74 per cent), commodities (1.62 per cent), realty (1.54 per cent), telecommunication (1.44 per cent) and consumer discretionary (1.25 per cent).

Mcap of BSE-listed firms at all-time high of ₹288.50 lakh crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms reached an all-time high of Rs 288.50 lakh crore on Wednesday amid an ongoing rally in equities, as the benchmark Sensex settled above 63,000-level for the first time ever.

The 30-share BSE barometer climbed 417.81 points or 0.67 per cent to settle at 63,099.65, its fresh record closing high. During the day, the

benchmark jumped 621.17 points or 0.99 per cent to 63,303.01, its lifetime intra-day peak.

Extending its winning momentum to seventh day, the Sensex has rallied 1,954.81 points or 3.19 per cent during this time.

Investors wealth also climbed Rs 7,59,642.89 crore in seven days, taking the market capitalisation (mcap) of BSE-listed firms to Rs 2,88,50,896.03 crore.

Go First inducts 55th A320 neo; to receive engines from P&W soon

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

No-frills airline Go First on Wednesday announced inducting the 55th A320 neo aircraft and also expects to increase the number of flights as it will soon receive serviceable engines from P&W.

Now, the carrier has 60 aircraft, out of which 55 are A320 neos and 5 are A320 ceos.

However, at least 25 planes are on the ground, mainly due to the non-availability of Pratt & Whitney (P&W) engines that power its A320 fleet.

In a release on Wednesday, the airline said it has inducted the 55th A320 neo aircraft.

It has placed firm orders for delivery of 144 Airbus A320 neo aircraft as part of expansion plans.

"Go First has also received confirmation from Pratt and Whitney of delivery of ser-



viceable engines soon and the same will be immediately put into service within December 2022 and will certainly help to cater the growing demand for domestic travel.

"With the induction of many serviceable engines, Go First expects to increase the frequency and number of flights to provide improved connectivity to its passengers and to regain its market share," the release said.

Go First Chairman Varun Berry said he was optimistic on the improvement in the performance of the company with P&W providing engines.

IEX seeks shareholders' nod to buy back shares worth ₹98 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian Energy Exchange (IEX) will seek shareholders' approval through postal ballot to buyback shares worth up to Rs 98 crore.

The board of directors in its meeting on November 25 has approved the cash offer for buyback of equity shares of face value of Rs 1 each at a maximum price of Rs 200 per share for an aggregate amount up to Rs 98 crore.

The IEX has listed a special resolution -- approval for the buyback of equity shares in the postal ballot notice, showed a

BSE filing.

The e-voting will commence on Thursday, December 1, 2022 at 09:00 AM (IST) and will end on Friday, December 30, 2022 at 05:00 PM (IST).

The postal ballot notice is being sent electronically to the members whose names appear in the register of members/list of beneficial owners as on the cut-off date being Friday, November 25, 2022 on their registered e-mail address, it stated.

The notice explained that the board of directors of the company, at its meeting held on November 25, 2022, had



approved a special resolution to buyback fully paid-up equity shares of face value of Rs 1 per share from the members of the company (except promoters, promoter group and persons in control) at a price not exceeding Rs 200 per equity share for an amount of up to Rs 98 crore via open market.

Piramal Capital & Housing Finance
Registered Office Address: Unit No.601, 6th Floor Piramal Amiti Building, Piramal Agastya Corporate Park, Kamani Junction, Opp Fire Station, LBS Marg, Kurla (West), Mumbai- 400 070.
CIN: L65910MH1984PLC032639, Website: www.piramalfinance.com
Branch Address : Dhiraj Baug, Building "A" Ground & 1st Floor, Beside Axis Bank, Opp. Monalisa Building, Agra Road, Hari Niwas Circle, Naupada, Thane (West) – 400 602.

DEMAND NOTICE

Under Section 13(2) of the Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement Of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with Rule 3 (1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002. The undersigned is the Authorised Officer of **Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited (PCHFL) [Formerly known as Dewan Housing Finance Corporation Ltd. (DHFL)]** under Securitisation And Reconstruction Of Financial Assets And Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 (the said Act). In exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) of the said Act and with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorised Officer has issued Demand Notices under Section 13(2) of the said Act, called upon the following Borrower(s) (the "said Borrower(s)"), to repay the amounts mentioned in the respective Demand Notice(s) issued to them that are also given below. In connection with above, notice is hereby given, once again, to the said Borrower(s) to pay to PCHFL, within 60 days from the publication of this Notice, the amounts indicated herein below, together with further interest as detailed in the said Demand Notice(s), from the date(s) mentioned below till the date of payment and/or realization, payable under the loan agreement read with other documents/writings, if any, executed by the said Borrower(s). As security for due repayment of the loan, the following assets have been mortgaged to PCHFL by the said Borrower(s) respectively.

Name of the Borrower(s)/ Guarantor(s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount with NPA date	Property_Address
(LC No.: 1900000016 of Raj Nagar Branch) Jayanti Prasad Sharma (Borrower) Rahul Sharma (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 3397381 /-(₹ Thirty Three lakh Ninety Seven Thousand Three Hundred Eighty One Only) NPA (01-08-2022)	Flat No. 605, 6th Floor Tower- T3, The Aranya Sector-119 Noida Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201301
(LC No.: 24900000139 of Delhi Janakpuri Branch) Sachin Verma (Borrower) Poonam Verma (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 3295830 /-(₹ Thirty Two lakh Ninety Five Thousand Eight Hundred Thirty Only) NPA (04-07-2019)	Flat No. 701, Saventh Floor Tower-Jupiter Alien Court, Plot No: Gh C/3/1, Sec- C-3 Tronica City Loni Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh - 201011
(LC No.: 19500041191 of Delhi - Cp Branch) Ashis Kumar Ghosal (Borrower) Sagarika Ghosal (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 3261259 /-(₹ Thirty Two lakh Sixty Two Thousand One Hundred Fifty Nine Only) NPA (12-11-2021)	Flat No.106, First Floor Tower-A,Oxirih New Delhi Extension Gh-7A,Koyal Endclave Yojana Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh - 201011
(LC No.: 19800041204 of Delhi - Pitampura Branch) Ayush Mitchell (Borrower) Suman Mitchell (Co Borrower 1) Ashm Mitchell (Co Borrower 2)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 3231325 /-(₹ Thirty Two lakh Thirty One Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Five Only) NPA (04-07-2017)	Flat No.604 Sixth Floor Tower Venus The Alien Court Plot No G/H/1 Sector C3 Tronica City Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh - 201005
(LC No.: 20000041966 of Noida -sector 2 Branch) Sunil Kumar Verma (Borrower) Sudha Devi (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 3207187 /-(₹ Thirty Two lakh Seven Thousand One Hundred Eighty Seven Only) NPA (03-11-2018)	A-1502, Block-A 15Th Floor Elegant Vile, Plot No.Gh-06B, Tech Zone-4 Greater Noida West Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201308
(LC No.: 13300000052 of Cannaghat Place Branch) Pooja Setia (Borrower) Rakesh Sharma (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 3162154 /-(₹ Thirty One lakh Sixty Two Thousand One Hundred Fifty Four Only) NPA (04-12-2019)	Flat No.203, Flh-17, Second Floor Gtm Forest & Hills, Gram Mohkhampur Kurah, Dehradun Dehradun Dehradun Uttaranchal - 248001
(LC No.: 2000042953 of Noida -sector 2 Branch) Bindeshwar Prasad (Borrower) Vijay Laxmi (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 3138811 /-(₹ Thirty One lakh Thirty Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Eleven Only) NPA (04-01-2020)	Flat No.-908, 9Th Floor, Tower-Jupiter, The Alien Court, Plot No-Gh-3/1, Sector-C3, Tronica City, Ghaziabad, Up Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh - 201010
(LC No.: 20000041715 of Noida -sector 2 Branch) Hina Shukla (Borrower) Gambhir Singh (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 308517 /-(₹ Thirty lakh Sixty One Thousand Three Hundred Twenty Three Only) NPA (03-11-2018)	Flat No-R-2201, 22Nd Floor,Elegant Vile Plot No. Gh-06B, Techzone-4 Greater Noida West Greater Noida West Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201308
(LC No.: 27900000450 of Greater Noida Branch) Ram Narayan Singh (Borrower) Kavita Singh (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 3023122 /-(₹ Thirty lakh Twenty Three Thousand One Hundred Twenty Two Only) NPA (03-11-2018)	Flat No-Unit No-A-1801,Type-1, Tower-Block-A, 18Th Floor,Elegant Vile Noida Extension Greater Noida Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201306
(LC No.: 24900000248 of Delhi Janakpuri Branch) Brij Kishore (Borrower) Raj Bala (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2961098 /-(₹ Twenty Nine lakh Sixty One Thousand Ninety Eight Only) NPA (04-12-2011)	Flat No- 604, 6Th Floor, Tower- Jupiter Alien Court, Plot No- Gh/1 Tronica City, Sector- C3 Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh - 201010
(LC No.: 19800041236 of Delhi - Pitampura Branch) Deepika Das (Borrower) Sanjay Topka (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2946742 /-(₹ Twenty Nine lakh Forty Six Thousand Seven Hundred Forty Two Only) NPA (05-04-2018)	Flat No 302 Third Floor Tower Jupiter The Alien Court Plot No Gh/1 Sector C3 Tronica City Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh - 201011
(LC No.: 19800041328 of Delhi - Pitampura Branch) Syed Arshad Jamal (Borrower) Jaibun Nisha (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2863467 /-(₹ Twenty Nine lakh Forty Two Thousand One Hundred Forty Two Only) NPA (04-12-2019)	Flat No 2008, 20Th Floor Tower- G, Sector- 1 Mangalya Ophira, Plot No 16 F Greater Noida West Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201301
(LC No.: 20000041712 of Noida -sector 2 Branch) Naveen Chandan (Borrower) Pooja Bawari (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2939652 /-(₹ Twenty Nine lakh Thirty Nine Thousand Six Hundred Fifty Two Only) NPA (08-08-2019)	Elegant Vile, Plot No- G H-06 B Tech Zone-4, Greater Noida (West) Gautam Budh Nagar, U. P Greater Noida West Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201301
(LC No.: 07100001179 of Rewari Branch) Bijender Singh (Borrower) Rita Singh (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2914275 /-(₹ Twenty Nine lakh Fourteen Thousand Two Hundred Seventy Five Only) NPA (04-12-2019)	Apartment No- 108, 1St Floor Tower- B, Grandeur, Vp Spaces Sector- 56, Bhiwadi, Bhiwadi Alwar Bhiwadi Alwar Rajasthan - 301019
(LC No.: 20000041871 of Noida -sector 2 Branch) Bhishu Sahu (Borrower) Sandhya Sahu (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2911346 /-(₹ Twenty Nine lakh Eleven Thousand Three Hundred Forty Six Only) NPA (03-11-2019)	Flat No. 61203, 12Th Floor Mangalya Ophira Plot No-16F, Sec-1 Noida West Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201301
(LC No.: 2740000038 of Bhiwadi Branch) Ashutosh Kumar (Borrower) Dineshwar Prasad Sinha (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2863467 /-(₹ Twenty Eight lakh Sixty Three Thousand Four Hundred Sixty Seven Only) NPA (30-09-2020)	Unit No- 3701, Ground Floor, Block - 'C', Riff The Park Sector- 54, Bhiwadi Bhiwadi Alwar Rajasthan - 301019
(LC No.: 20000041820 of Noida -sector 2 Branch) Jaidoo Sharma (Borrower) Aparna Sharma (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2846625 /-(₹ Twenty Eight lakh Forty Six Thousand Six Hundred Twenty Five Only) NPA (04-10-2019)	No 802 8Th Floor Tower No Tower G , Mangalya Ophira Plot No 16F, Sec 1 Greater Noida West Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201308
(LC No.: 20000042039 of Noida -sector 2 Branch) Daya Shankar Mishra (Borrower) Ranadevi Dayashankar Mishra (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2826177 /-(₹ Twenty Eight lakh Twenty Six Thousand One Hundred Seventy Seven Only) NPA (03-02-2019)	Unit No- G-2102 21St Floor Tower- G Mangalya Ophira Plot No- Gh-16 F , Sector- 1 Greater Noida West Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201301
(LC No.: 27400000607 of Bhiwadi Branch) Ajit Kumar (Borrower) Priyanka Kumari (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2808517 /-(₹ Twenty Eight lakh Eight Thousand Five Hundred Seventeen Only) NPA (30-09-2020)	Unit No. 3603, 5f, Block-C, Riff-The Park, Sec-54 Bhiwadi Alwar Bhiwadi Alwar Rajasthan - 301019
(LC No.: 20000041901 of Noida -sector 2 Branch) Nikhil Kain (Borrower) Sarla Kain (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2787989 /-(₹ Twenty Seven lakh Eighty Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Eighty Nine Only) NPA (03-11-2018)	Flat No-1006,Elegant Vile Plot No-Gh-06B-Tech Zone-4 Greater Noida Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201308
(LC No.: 27400000480 of Gurgaon Branch) Dinesh Singh Negi (Borrower) Radha Bisht (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2581495 /-(₹ Twenty Five lakh Eighty One Thousand Four Hundred Ninety Five Only) NPA (03-02-2018)	Flat No 61203, 12Th Floor Tower C Plot No Gh 3 A Sector 16 C Bulland Elevates Greater Noida West Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201308
(LC No.: 19800041808 of Delhi - Pitampura Branch) Deepak Dabral (Borrower) Sandeep Dabral (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 281399 /-(₹ Twenty Five lakh Eighty One Thousand Three Hundred Ninety Nine Only) NPA (11-03-2022)	3Rd Flr(Back Side Lhs Without Rooftop)Flat No-402, Kh No-86 (0-12)Extended Lal Dora,Sec-23,Village Pochanpur Tehsil Dwarika,New Delhi New Delhi Delhi - 110075
(LC No.: 27400000606 of Bhiwadi Branch) Ajit Kumar (Borrower) Priyanka Kumari (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2443915 /-(₹ Twenty Four lakh Forty Three Thousand Nine Hundred Fifteen Only) NPA (30-09-2020)	Unit No. 3602, Fl. Block - C Riff-The Park, Sec-54 Bhiwadi Alwar Bhiwadi Alwar Rajasthan - 301019
(LC No.: 25600000178 of Karkarduma Noida Branch) Panaj Arora (Borrower) Anil Arora (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2362538 /-(₹ Twenty Three lakh Sixty Two Thousand Five Hundred Eighty One Only) NPA (04-08-2019)	Flat No. C4-2004 Prateek Grand City Situated At 4/Bs-01 & 4/Bs-05, Siddharth Vihar Ghaziabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh - 201010
(LC No.: 19600043133 of Delhi - Safdarjung Branch) Nitin Guttam (Borrower) Manisha Raj (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2318281 /-(₹ Twenty Three lakh Eighteen Thousand Two Hundred Eighty One Only) NPA (10-07-2022)	Plot 11 2Nd Floor Rear Lhs Kh No 89/16 17 24 25 90/4/1 4/2 5/1 5/2 & 6 Rect No 90 Dayal Sar Road Hastal Uttam Nagar New Delhi New Delhi Delhi - 110059
(LC No.: 25600000026 of Karkarduma Noida Branch) Vikas (Borrower) Sonia Bhamri (Co Borrower 1)	04-11-2022 / ₹ 2262712 /-(₹ Twenty Two lakh Sixty Two Thousand Seven Hundred Twelve Only) NPA (30-09-2021)	Flat No 1749 Block F 16Th Floor Gaur Atulyam Plot No G H 01 A Sec Omicron 1 Gautam Budh Nagar Greater Noida Gautambudh Nagar Uttar Pradesh - 201308

If the said Borrowers shall fail to make payment to PCHFL as aforesaid, PCHFL shall proceed against the above secured assets under Section 13(4) of the Act and the applicable Rules, entirely at the risks of the said Borrowers as to the costs and consequences. The said Borrowers are prohibited under the Act from transferring the aforesaid assets, whether by way of sale, lease or otherwise without the prior written consent of PCHFL. Any person who contravenes or abets contravention of the provisions of the said Act or Rules made there under, shall be liable for imprisonment and/or penalty as provided under the Act.

Date : 01-12-2022
Place : Delhi

Sd/-
(Authorised Officer)
Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited

Govt envisions doubling MSME sector's contribution to India's economy: Minister

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government envisages doubling the contribution of India's micro, small and medium enterprises sector to the economy by realising its full potential, Union Minister Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma said on Wednesday.

The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector contributes one-third to India's gross domestic product (GDP).

The Minister of State for MSME said the Ministry is working towards this objective by resolving bottlenecks.

"Our vision is to double the contribution of MSME sector to India's economy by realising



its full potential. We will resolve internal bottlenecks towards this objective," Verma said while addressing the Global MSME Summit here.

The Global MSME Summit is being organised by CII in partnership with the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises to promote the visibility of Indian MSMEs and encourage international market linkages.

NMDC hikes lump ore, fines prices by ₹300 per tonne

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned NMDC on Wednesday hiked the prices of iron ore lumps and fines by Rs 300 per tonne with immediate effect.

The announcement from the country's largest iron ore miner has come days after the government removed duty on the exports of the mineral.

The price for a tonne of lump ore or high-grade iron ore having Fe (iron) content 65.53 per cent and above has been fixed at Rs 4,100. While the rate of fines or inferior



grade ore with 64 per cent and less Fe content has been increased to Rs 2,910 per tonne, NMDC said in a BSE filing.

The prices are effective Nov 30, 2022, and exclude royalty, district mineral fund (DMF), National Mineral Exploration Trust (DMET), cess, forest permit fee, and other taxes, the company said.

9th session of 'Inspiring Next Gen Talent'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The ninth session of the "Inspiring Next Gen Talent" has been conducted by the Parampara Family Business Institute (PFB) in collaboration with the GMR Varalakshmi Foundation (GMRVF) aiming to benefit participants with the knowledge and wisdom the engagement of the next generation in robust family governance and the importance of storytelling which includes researching the history of their family and business allowing the next generation to feel that they are playing their part in the history of Family Business.

"Today's family business leaders and the next-gen family members must engage in

regular conversations on family's contributions, legacy, identity, values, and vision. The seniors need to be relentless, creative, and patient to effectively communicate with the next-gen for building awareness, infusing pride, and exciting and inspiring them to be responsible owners. The next-gen need to feel the urge and deep sense of responsibility to be the torch bearers of tomorrow," deliberated Sougata Ray, while addressing the event.

Prasad Kumar concluded that the Intergenerational co-creation of a desirable future is of strategic importance in a family business. Trusting relationships and meaningful communication across generations are strategic ingredients of the family business.

Belgium will have to push for the win as a draw would leave them needing Morocco to lose heavily to Canada in order for the Belgians to go through. Morocco, like Croatia, can secure their place in the knockout phase by avoiding defeat.

NEW ZEALAND WIN ODI SERIES AGAINST INDIA

PTI ■ CHRISTCHURCH

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Indian openers began to break free towards the end of

powerplay.

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

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

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

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

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

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

A lot of positives came from this ODI series: Shastri

PTI ■ CHRISTCHURCH

India may have lost the rain-marred ODI series in New Zealand but former coach Ravi Shastri feels the visitors can still take a lot of positives from the three outings in Shubman Gill's batting and Umran Malik's bowling.

"I think a lot of positives came from this one-day series. Shreyas Iyer getting runs in a couple of matches, willing to stay there and willing to go through the tough period. Suryakumar of course has the potential, has the talent, and he will deliver," Shastri said during Prime Video's post-match coverage.

Opening up on the young Indian players in the current squad, he added, "Washington Sundar, I thought was very good. And even Umran Malik, I like the way he bowled.



There's potential there. If he can persevere, it will be very good.

"All around, there was very positive Shubman Gill at the start of the innings. These conditions are tough, you don't get these conditions often, and you don't travel to New Zealand that often.

"So I think for young cricketers to come here and get this kind of exposure is excellent. The weather and the ground dimensions need to be taken into account."

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



PTI ■ CHRISTCHURCH

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

Dhawan also asked Sanju Samson to wait for his chances.

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

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

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

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

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

home ODIs versus South Africa last month. The Kerala stumper got out after making 36 in the first ODI in Auckland.

Dhawan said it's "not difficult" to be in the captain's shoes while making tricky choices, such as picking Pant over Samson.

"Of course, Sanju Samson has been doing really well in whatever opportunity he got.

"But sometimes you got to wait for your chances, because the other player has done well and we know based on his (Pant's) skill that he's a match-winner. So you need to back him when he's not doing well."

Jointly addressing the media, New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson said it's a challenge to play a team like India, which is blessed with so much talent.

"The Indian team and the country is blessed with so much talent that sometimes you are faced with challenges that you have to weigh out different options," Williamson said.

"It's sometimes tough, it's a challenge, but one of those things. As a leader you are part of some decision-making, you try to move forward as a collective unit."

IYER, GILL RISE IN ODI RANKINGS

PTI ■ DUBAI

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

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

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

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

Latham scored a stunning century in the series opener.

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

Virus strikes England on eve of 1st Pak Test

AP ■ RAWALPINDI

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

"It's such a monumental tour and important series for so



Labuschagne hits 154 as Oz take control

AP ■ PERTH

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

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

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

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

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

Labuschagne.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sharath Kamal bestowed with Khel Ratna

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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



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

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