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BHOPAL, WEDNESDAY JULY 6, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹1.50



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Twitter challenges in HC Govt order to delete posts

Social media giant complies with Govt direction on deadline, but says the order violates freedom of speech

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI/BENGALURU

The US-based social media giant Twitter on Tuesday moved the Karnataka High Court, challenging the Government's orders to take down content under the new IT rules, saying it is an abuse of power by officials. July 4 was the last day for complying with the Union Ministry of Electronics' directions and the company complied with it on the last day and then moved the court.

Twitter has taken legal recourse after the Union Electronics and Information Technology Ministry warned it of penal action if it refused to comply with the directive to take down controversial tweets flagged by the authorities last year in January and April.

According to news agency PTI, Twitter has filed a case in the HC, saying the several directions placed by the Government are allegedly for action against political content



that has been posted by official handles of political parties and blocking of such information is a violation of the freedom of speech guaranteed to citizen users of the platform.

"The content requested to be blocked does not have any apparent proximate relationship to the ground under Section 69A," said the lawyers who had access to Twitter's petition filed in the court.

Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeesh Chandrasekhar in a tweet said all platforms have the right to approach court but they have an unambiguous obligation to comply with laws.

"In India, all, including foreign Internet intermediaries/platforms, have the right to court n judicial review. But equally ALL intermediaries/platforms operating here have an unambiguous obligation to comply with our laws n rules," Chandrasekhar tweeted.



According to the Twitter petition, several blocking orders were issued under Section 69A but failed to demonstrate how the content falls within those grounds or how the said content is violative of Section 69A, said the lawyers. "Twitter has sought judicial review of the blocking orders from the court," they said.

The Government in May had asked Twitter to act on content related to Khalistan and accounts eulogising terrorists in Kashmir. Later in June, the Government asked Twitter to act on around 60 accounts. Twitter has taken action on the request and reported compliance.

On June 26, the microblogging site submitted a separate list of over 80 Twitter accounts and tweets that it blocked based on a request from the Government in 2021.

The request from the Government was to block multiple accounts and some tweets

from the international advocacy group Freedom House, journalists, politicians, and supporters of the farmers' protest.

Meanwhile, in Delhi, reacting to a question, Union IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnav said how to make social media accountable has become a very valid question across the globe. "Self-regulation is a first step in the direction of making social media accountable, followed by industry regulation, and then Government regulations," he said.

"Social media is a very powerful medium. Social media has a big influence on our lives. How to make it accountable has become a very valid question across the globe. All across the globe, countries and societies are moving in the direction of making social media accountable," he said while interacting with media persons on the sideline of a programme.

SC crossed Laxman Rekha with Nupur jibe: Ex-judges

15 HC ex-judges, 77 former babus, 25 veterans urge court to erase 'indelible scar on justice system'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

A group of former judges, bureaucrats and police officers on Tuesday demanded that the Supreme Court recall its observations against suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma, alleging that the court crossed the "Laxman Rekha" while making comments that are an "indelible scar on the justice system of the largest democracy."

The group, comprising 15 High Court judges, 77 ex-all India services officers and 25 veterans, alleged that the "unfortunate" comments are not in sync with the judicial ethos and have sent "shockwaves" in the country and outside.

"In the annals of the judiciary, the unfortunate comments have no parallel and are an indelible scar on the justice system of the largest democracy. Urgent rectification steps are called for as these have potentially serious consequences on democratic values and security



of the country," they said in a signed statement.

The 117 signatories include former Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court Kshiti Vyas, former Kerala High Court judge PN Ravindran, former Gujarat High Court judge SM Soni, former Rajasthan High Court judges RS Rathore and Prashant Agarwal and former Delhi High Court judge SN Dhinra. Former IAS officers Anand Bose, RS Gopalan and S Krishna Kumar, ambassador (retired) Niranjan Desai, former DGPs SP Vaid, former CBI Director M Nageswara Rao and BL Vohra, Lt Gen VK Chaturvedi (retired) and Air Marshall (retired) SP Singh have also signed the statement.

"By no stretch, these observations, which are not part of the judicial order, can be sanctioned on the plank of judicial propriety and fairness. Such outrageous transgressions are without parallel in the annals

of Judiciary," it said.

The Supreme Court had on July 1 come down heavily on Sharma for her controversial comments against Prophet Mohammad, saying her "loose tongue" has "set the entire country on fire" and that she is "single-handedly responsible for what is happening in the country."

Refusing to entertain her plea for clubbing of FIRs lodged in various States against her for the remark, the bench held that the comment was made either for cheap publicity, political agenda or some nefarious activities.

Criticising the observations of Justices Suyakant and JB Pardiwala, the statement said, "We, as concerned citizens, do believe that democracy of any country will remain intact till all the institutions perform their duties as per the constitution. Recent comments by the two judges of the Supreme Court have surpassed

the Laxman Rekha and compelled us to issue an open statement."

These "unfortunate and unprecedented" comments have sent shockwaves in the country and outside, it claimed.

"The observations are too serious to be overlooked if the rule of law, democracy has to sustain and blossom and deserve to be recalled with the stance that soothes minds that care for justice," it added.

Noting that Sharma sought access to the justice system before the highest court, the statement said the court's observations have no connect with the issue raised in the petition and "transgressed in an unprecedented manner all canons of the dispensation of justice."

"She was de facto denied access to judiciary and in the process, there was an outrage on the preamble, spirit and essence of the Constitution of India," it alleged.

In the observations, there is the virtual exoneration of the "dastardly beheading at Udaipur in broad daylight," it claimed. It further said, "Legal fraternity is bound to be surprised and shocked at the observation that an FIR should lead to arrest. The observations on other agencies in the country, without notice to them, are indeed worrisome and alarming." The signatories defended Sharma's plea for clubbing all FIRs against her citing previous orders of the SC.

Rahul backs K'taka HC judge against 'transfer threat'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday targeted the BJP over the statement of a Karnataka High Court judge hearing a matter related to a bribery case that he is being threatened with transfer. Rahul also shared a video of the part of court proceedings during which the judge had said he was threatened with the transfer after his remark against the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) that it had become a "collection centre".

Justice HP Sandesh also said he is unfazed and added, "I will bell the cat, even at the cost of my judgeship."

"A HC judge has been threatened for exposing the BJP's corrupt Government in Karnataka. Institution after institution is being bulldozed by the BJP. Each of us must



stand with those fearlessly doing their duty (sic)," Rahul said on a social media platform.

The Congress has been attacking the BJP Government in Karnataka on the issue of corruption. On Monday, Rahul had demanded the sacking of Chief Minister Basavraj Bommai to ensure a fair investigation in the police recruitment scam.



Poll officials carry Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and other election material as they leave for the election duty ahead of the first phase of local bodies elections in Bhopal on Tuesday. Pioneer photo

Odisha, UP, AP top givers of Govt's free foodgrains

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Odisha, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh occupied top three places in the ranking of States for the implementation of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), under which the Government provides 5 kgs of foodgrains per person per month at ₹1-3 a kg.

The Centre provides the highly subsidised foodgrains to nearly 80 crore people. The Centre released the "State Ranking Index for NFSA" 2022 on Tuesday. The Index measures the effectiveness of NFSA implementation through operations and initiatives under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS).

Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Piyush Goyal released the "State Ranking Index for NFSA" 2022 during a conference of State Food Ministers on food and nutrition security in India.

In the special category



States (the North Eastern States, Himalayan States, and the Island States), Tripura has obtained the first rank. Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim are at the second and third positions.

The report stated that despite the logistical limitations in these areas, they displayed a high degree of accomplishment in competing with

the general category States as well.

Odisha is at first position with a score of 0.836, followed by Uttar Pradesh (0.797) and Andhra Pradesh (0.794). Gujarat is at fourth place, followed by Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Daman Diu, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Jharkhand.

Noida cops pre-empt Raipur police bid to arrest anchor over fake Rahul video after distress call

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW
DELHI/GHAZIABAD

A massive row erupted over Chhattisgarh Police's attempt to arrest Zee TV news anchor Rohit Ranjan on Tuesday after Noida Police foiled their bid and took Ranjan in their own custody.

Ranjan was booked by the Chhattisgarh Police for playing a doctored clip of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on the channel during his show on July 1. Drama unfolded outside Ranjan's home in Ghaziabad on Tuesday with the police forces of the two States face to face with each other.

According to Noida Police, the Zee News anchor was picked up from his home for questioning on Tuesday morning by a team of Noida Sector 20 police station in connection



with an FIR lodged under IPC 505 (public mischief) on a complaint by his own channel over a doctored video played during his show on July 1.

In Raipur, Senior Superintendent of Police Prashant Agrawal said a case was registered against Ranjan and others of Zee News on Sunday for allegedly promoting enmity between different groups and outraging religious feelings of people based on the complaint of Congress MLA Devendra Yadav.

Yadav said in his complaint that a video in which Rahul described those attacking his Wayanad office as children against whom he had no ill, was "mischievously" used by the TV channel on July 1 to suggest he was forging the killers of Udaipur tailor Kanhaiya Lal.

After Chhattisgarh cops reached out to arrest him, Ranjan reached out to the UP Government and police for help. "Chhattisgarh Police is standing outside my house to arrest me without informing the local police, is it legal?" The Zee News anchor asked and tagged Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and the State's police in the post.

"There is no such rule to inform. Still, now they are informed. The police team has shown you the court's warrant

of arrest. You should cooperate, join in the investigation and put your defence in court," Raipur Police said in response.

Chhattisgarh cops were not able to arrest him but said it had shown him the arrest warrant and sought his cooperation in the probe. The FIR against Ranjan has been filed in Raipur. On July 2, a day after the video was aired, Ranjan apologised during his TV show for "mistakenly" playing Rahul's statement out of context by linking it with the Udaipur murder case. "It was a human error for which our team is apologetic. We apologise for it," he had tweeted in Hindi.

The controversial video was used by several people including BJP leaders to attack Rahul and the Congress party in the wake of the gruesome killing in Udaipur on June 28.

SpiceJet malfunction causes emergency landing in Karachi

Windshield cracks mid-air in airline's another flight

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Two mid-air incidents on a single day occurred involving SpiceJet aircraft on Tuesday. While a SpiceJet B737 flight SG-11 (Delhi-Dubai) was diverted to Karachi due to an indicator light malfunctioning in the morning, another of its aircraft, flying from Kandla in Gujarat, made a priority landing at the Mumbai airport later in the day after its windshield cracked at 23,000 feet altitude.

With the latest malfunction, there have been seven such incidents on SpiceJet air-



Dubai-bound SpiceJet aircraft after its landing at Karachi Airport PTI

craft in the last 17 days. The other incidents include two door warnings, a bird hit, oil leakage from an engine, and a pressurisation problem in addition to Tuesday's malfunction.

Sources said that the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is investigating the two incidents which took place on Tuesday, along with the previous five incidents.

Vaastu guru stabbed to death in K'taka hotel

Hubballi: Self-styled Vastu expert Chandrashekhar Guruji was stabbed to death in a city hotel on Tuesday, police said.

Within hours, two persons — Manjunath Marewad and Mahantesh Sirur — who were allegedly involved in the killing and had fled the scene after committing the brutal murder, were detained at Ramdurg in neighbouring Belagavi district, police added.

"They have been detained and we are bringing them back to Hubballi. Once they are brought in, we will interrogate them," Hubballi-Dharwad Police Commissioner Labhu Ram told PTI.

CCTV footage showed two people, who initially approached him pretending to greet him, repeatedly stabbing him at the reception area of the hotel.

The reason behind the



killing of Guruji of 'Saral Vastu' fame who sustained many stab wounds, is under investigation.

Hailing from Bagalkote, Guruji had started his career as a contractor and later got a job in Mumbai where he settled down. Subsequently, he pursued Vastu business there.

Three days ago, a child in his family had died in Hubballi, for which he had come here to attend a ceremony. Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said all measures would be taken to ensure stringent punishment for the killers of Guruji.

Lord Ram museum should be center of tourist attraction

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that the efforts made by Tulsi Manas Pratishthan to make the youth aware of Lord Ram and his ideals are commendable.

A museum based on an episode between Lord Ram and Manas will be built in the premises of the establishment, which will surely make a mark as an attractive and inspiring place. The museum should be developed in such a way that tourists visiting Bhopal must also visit it.

Giving information about Lord Ram's life, Ayodhya prasang and ideals of Lord Ram and the plan to visit Ayodhya, the birthplace of Lord Ram and the planning to visit Ram Janambhoomi is commendable. All possible coop-



eration will be provided by the state government in the works of the establishment.

Chief Minister Chouhan was presiding over the meeting of the Managing Committee of the establishment today. Chief Minister Chouhan is also the President of this establishment. Chief Minister Chouhan said that visiting the museum would make it easier for the students

to imbibe the teachings of Ram. Necessary financial support will also be provided to the establishment to set up this museum.

Working President of the establishment Raghunandan Sharma, informed that the knowledge of Ramcharit Manas is being disseminated for the spread of harmony in the society. Efforts are being

made for the promotion of Tulsi Manas in the educational centers and the deprived sections of the society. The competition is being conducted in collaboration with the Department of School Education and Culture, to assess the knowledge level of the students.

Teaching of Sunderkand in Hindi subject has been started in the first year classes of graduation level in the colleges of the state. The process of including chapters related to Ramcharit Manas and Ayodhya episode in the syllabus is also in progress. Workshops are being organized by the establishment with the help of education officers at the divisional level.

The process of granting approval by the Government of India for the establishment of Ram Museum in Tulsi Manas

Pratishthan is underway. For this cooperation is expected from the state government.

Chief Minister Chouhan was presented a copy of Tulsi Manas Bharti and Swarna Jayanti issue of monthly magazine of the establishment. The convener of the establishment, Rajendra Sharma proposed the vote of thanks. Kailash Joshi, Secretary of the Foundation, Prabhudayal Mishra, Editor-in-Chief of Tulsi Manas Bharti, Members Vijaydutt Shridhar, Ramesh Sharma, Kamlesh Jaimini, Mahesh Saxena, Madhav Singh Dangi, Sushila Shukla etc. were present.

Chief Minister Chouhan paid obeisance by garlanding the statue of Goswami Tulsi Das ji at Tulsi Manas Pratishthan. He also inaugurated the newly built Pt Ramkinkar Upadhyay Library and Research Center.



Poll officials carry Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and other election material as they leave for the election duty ahead of the first phase of local bodies elections in Bhopal on Tuesday. Pioneer photo

Gandhi Nagar police arrest 23-year-old youth for killing his sister-in-law

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Gandhinagar police have arrested 23-year-old murder accused who killed his sister-in-law at Pratap Ward on Sunday; accused was annoyed over suspicion by the deceased.

On Sunday Gandhi Nagar police received information of a woman near Gandhi Nagar drain, who had murdered and body was covered by leaves.

In the investigation deceased was identified as Shabana, a resident of Gandhi Nagar and she was murdered by her brother-in-law Sheikh Asif with whom she used to live in a live-in relationship. After a preliminary investigation,



a case under section 302,201 of the IPC was registered.

In view of the seriousness of the matter, a reward of Rs 10,000 was announced by the Deputy Commissioner of Police, Zone-4 on the accused Sheikh Asif. A team was formed and started an investigation.

During the investigation police found that there was a dispute between Shabana and Asif regarding Asif's character, in which Asif strangled Shabana to death with a dupatta and with the aim of

hiding the dead body dumped it near drain and escaped the spot.

The accused was with a friend near Gairatganj, police arrested the accused from Gairatganj and came to the police station and inquired about the crime, the accused accepted to commit his crime.

Walmi park is now available for people to visit

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

MP Water and Land Management Institute (WALMI) the Ecological Oxygen Park of the Water and Land Management Institute is available for the people to visit and at the same time, a one-day 'Adventure Trekking' has been organised on July 15.

To join adventure trekking, offline registration can be done by visiting WALMI office (near Kaliasot Dam). Online registration can also be done through WALMI's official website www.mpwalmi.org and official social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter and Instagram). The fees for the students for joining the trekking has been fixed at Rs 30 and for others Rs 55.

Valmi has developed



Ecological Oxygen Park to bring common people closer to nature. Where oxygen is also present in large quantities along with clean air. There are countless plants of many

species, which have been developed by Valmi as Biodiversity Heritage.

Climate Change Center at Ecological Oxygen Park, Center of Excellence in Water Management, Organic Farming, Irrigation Methods, Plantation, Flora Fauna, Miyawaki/Valmiyaki Techniques related to intensive forest formation. Can be viewed here.

Apart from these, models of education, livelihoods from biodiversity, vertical gardens, children's gardens, word watching, gene banks and how to make compost can also be seen.

In the 'Adventure Trek' organized at Valmi Campus and Ecological Oxygen Park, trekkers would come to know

about Nano Watershed and dense forest developed through swastika construction method. How one can increase the capacity of groundwater through nano watershed. The resources being tried by Valmi in this regard will be explained by the subject expert in detail.

Detailed information would be given on how a dense forest can be created on a vacant land. Along with this, how many species of plants have been planted by making swastika shapes in Valmi Forest. In order to maintain the fertility of the land, the technology developed by Valmi will be told to the common people.

In this way, they can also contribute to preventing disasters like climate change by planting saplings in the vacant land around their house.

Covid tally reaches over 10.44 lakh in MP

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The COVID-19 tally in Madhya Pradesh reached 10,44,917 on Tuesday after the detection of 98 cases, while the death toll increased by one to touch 10,744, a health official said.

The positivity rate, or cases detected per 100 tests, stood at 1.8 per cent, he added.

The recovery count increased by 81 to touch 10,33,429, leaving the state with 744 active cases, the official informed.

With 5,215 samples examined during the day, the number of coronavirus tests in MP went up to 2,95,36,136, he added.

A government release said 12,06,18,537 COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered so far in the state, including 31,979 on Tuesday.



Vehicular traffic was badly disrupted as Government employees arrived for their election duty to collect Electronic Voting Machines and other election material ahead of the first phase of State Panchayat elections, at Lal parade ground in Bhopal on Tuesday. Pioneer photo

New children's books collection arrives at Swami Vivekanand Library

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The New Children's Books Collection is put on display at the Swami Vivekananda Library.

Books like 'Jarnimo Stilton's New Book The Super Cup Face Off' at Junior Books and the Latest Books from the 121 Panchatantra Tales Series. This new collection of 25 books is put on display.

Swami Vivekananda Library Manager Yatish Bhatel told that the specialty of this collection is this. All these books will be put on the display of the library at 11 am and these new children's books can also be reserved by the members of the library in these books.

Many such titles are new in this collection of New Children's Books in Swami Vivekananda Library which have been included in this collection.

Swami Vivekananda Library Taking care of its junior members, this collection is being brought to Swami Vivekananda Library to increase interest towards books.

Manager Yatish Bhatel told that Holiday Stories Author Ruskin Bond, Comics, Roald Dahl, The Ghost Road Author Cheris Kotter and other books are being included in this col-



lection. Similarly, children should also be encouraged to read books from childhood. This time a very attractive series is being launched in the library.

Other books like Dead End in Novel, Crispin the Cross of Lead, Out of the Dust Author Kareen Bhag, The Graveyard Book, How to Catch a Star Author Oliver Jeffers, The Way Back Home author Oliver Jeffers, The Heart and the Bottle author Oliver Jeffers, Lost and Found Author Oliver Jeffers and The Rabbit Listed Author Kari Doerrfeld are on display.

Children's membership is available in the library so that children can issue books. Family members can also issue these books.

Scan a QR code, get your life insurance policy serviced

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

To empower more customers to self-service their needs with immediate closure, Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance, one of India's leading private life insurers, has launched QR Code Enabled Services. This industry-first initiative is simple and safe, and provides customers access to 15 popular services on their phone. All the customer has to do is scan the QR Code available in the Company's branches and self-service their life insurance policy.

Rajesh Krishnan, Chief - Operations & Customer Experience, said, "Our customers are evolving and it's our endeavor to continue to delight them with simple and secure service offerings. With this industry-first initiative, now they have a branch-on-their-palm with the QR-Code Enabled service. It will not only reduce their wait time but also give them an easy and pleasant experience when they self-service their requests. We will continue to invest in expanding our service options to ensure customers experience only gets better with us."

Soldier's efforts showcased in movie 'Frontiers of Freedom' screened

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

When a soldier give his villagers a motive towards a change and this small step changes their entire life. A movie 'Frontiers of Freedom' was screened at Shaurya Smarak, showcasing an effort of a soldier.

The movie was screened here on Tuesday. The movie was screened at the open air auditorium of Shaurya Samrak under the regular series of film screenings.

The movie basically showcases the efforts of a soldier to bring a change of betterment at his village.

As the soldiers protects and guards the country from outside dangers, while returning to their homes it is realised that a war is to be sorted in their villages too.

A jawan, just returned from the front to his village, realises that the war has not made any impact on the villagers.

The film shows the efforts put in by this jawan to impress the villagers that though ceasefire has been declared, the job of



defence.

The soldier brought a change in his village by running a cleanliness drive. He encouraged the villagers to keep their surroundings clean, and it was not less than a fight.

The soldiers continued to encourage villagers and also spreading awareness about the same.

When he had to return to the front, he almost changed the scenario of the village. It was a commendable job.



Theater artist Ashok Bulani speaks at a programme Rang Choupal at Dushyant Kumar Memorial Museum of Manuscript in Bhopal on Tuesday. Pioneer photo

New batches of EFPM and EFPMG open at IIM Indore

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

IIM Indore welcomed the new batches of the Executive Fellow Programme in Management (EFPM - 12th Batch) and Executive Fellow Programme in Management & Governance (EFPMG - 2nd Batch) on Monday.

The batches were inaugurated by Prof Himanshu Rai, director, IIM Indore. Lt. Gen. Devendra Pratap Pandey, Commandant - AWC, was the Chief Guest for the occasion.

Prof Abhishek Mishra, Chair - FPM; and Prof Biswanath Swain & Prof Ajit Phadnis, Faculty, IIM Indore, and Col. Gaurav Rathaur, Army War College, were also present.

In his inaugural address, Prof. Rai spoke about the significant role of a business school in nation-building and how academicians and research scholars can contribute to the same.

Earlier business schools focused merely on creating, advancing, and disseminating knowledge. However, with enor-

mous learning sources available today, including the internet, we as educationists need to curate knowledge. He said that we need to practice what we preach, implement the theoretical learnings we impart to the students, and also focus on solving real-life problems."

He said that IIM Indore, with its collaborations with the government and administrative bodies in the nation, has been proactive in finding solutions and contributing to strengthening the traffic.

Three years' RI to five engineers of Housing Board and two contractors in economic offence case

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Five employees of Madhya Pradesh Housing Board and two contractors were sentenced to imprisonment for 3 years, imposed a fine of Rs 2000, in addition government employees were also booked under Prevention of Corruption Act by Special judge (anti corruption) Rajiv K Paul Bhopal.

In the special case of police station EOW, R. Goudse (Assistant Engineer), MK Kayumi (Deputy Engineer), MC Trivedi (Deputy Engineer), M Qa Khan (Deputy Engineer), RC Karada (Deputy Engineer) were

sentenced under section 120B, 420, 467, 468, 471 of the IPC and Section 13(2) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, each accused will be punished with rigorous imprisonment for 3 years and a fine of Rs 2000.

The contractors Prakash Mirchandani, Harminder Singh Suri were punished under section 420, 467, 468, 471 120B of the IPC with rigorous imprisonment of 3 years in each section and fine of Rs 2000.

On behalf of the government Hemlata Kushwaha, Special Public Prosecutor/ Assistant District Prosecuting Officer presented the case.

In the construction work of Subhash Nagar Bhopal Abhiruchi Parisar complex under Madhya Pradesh Housing Board project, the officers nd employees of Madhya Pradesh Housing Board and contractors coluded to make poor construction work by estimating the measurements contrary to the manual and on the basis of forged documents, made inappropriate payment to the contractors. Due to which the government suffered financial loss, a complaint was made in EOW against the officers and employees of Madhya Pradesh Housing Board.

After investigation, the First Information Report

was registered and later it was found that corruption was done.

Presenting the charge sheet against the accused in the court, in which the accused Nirmal Singh Suri (contractor) had died during the trial. The court, agreeing with the arguments of the prosecution, said the accused YR Goudse (Assistant Engineer), M.K. Kayumi (Deputy Engineer), MC Trivedi (Deputy Engineer), M Qa Khan (Deputy Engineer), RC Karada (Deputy Engineer), Prakash Mirchandani (Contractor), Harminder Singh Suri (Contractor) were punished with the above punishment.

Bhuvnesh Patel suffers cardiac arrest

Bhopal: Bhuvnesh Patel, husband of Congress mayoral candidate Vibha Patel, has been admitted to a private hospital in Bhopal a day before the civic polls. He was complaining of chest pain. It is noteworthy that the municipal elections are to be held in Bhopal on Wednesday.

Patel was rushed to the hospital after suffering chest pain, where his condition is said to be stable. A team of doctors is investigating his case. Bhuvnesh is an officer in the Energy Department.

According to doctors, he has been diagnosed with Ventricular Trachycardia. Cardiologist Dr Skand Trivedi has confirmed to the media that Patel is being treated with Electric Shock Therapy (D-fibrillator).



Poll officials check Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and other election material distributed to them before leaving for the election duty ahead of the first phase of local bodies elections in Bhopal on Tuesday. Pioneer photo

Police solved 13-year-old girl's murder case, CCTV footage helped in arrest

PNS ■ UJJAIN

The police have arrested a man who murdered 13-year-old minor girl at Khedavada village of Bhatpachalana, said Superintendent of Police Satyendra Kumar Shukla during a press conference.

He said that, after finding minor girl alone in the house, the accused tried to rape but when he failed he strangled her to death.

According to the SP, the accused was acquainted with the minor girl and used to come to her house. On the day of the incident, after finding the minor teenager alone in the house, he tried to force her by entering the house, but when the teenager resisted, he strangled her to death with a cloth and hiding the body in the middle of soybean sacks.

He had fled from the spot by covering it. On the

basis of the CCTV footage around the spot, the police identified the accused and took him into custody and after interrogating, he confessed to killing the minor.

It is noteworthy that on Saturday evening in village Khedawada of Bhatpachalana police station area of the district, the body of a minor girl was found in her house in a semi-naked condition.

As soon as the body was recovered, it was clear that the girl had been raped and murdered.

On Saturday morning, the maternal grandfather-mother of the minor resident of Khedawad lodged a missing complaint after girl was not found on their return.

According to SP Satendra Kumar Shukla, this sensational case of murder of a minor teenager will be heard in the fast track court so that the accused can be punished as soon as possible.

Sports also teach the culture of discipline along with physical, intellectual exercise: Tomar

PNS ■ GWALIOR

The torch relay of 44th Chess Olympiad reached Gwalior on Tuesday. The Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare Narendra Singh Tomar received the torch at LNIPE, Union Minister Tomar said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had launched Torch Relay on June 19 with the aim of promoting the game of Chess.

It is a matter of happiness and pride for Madhya Pradesh that the Chess Olympiad torch has reached Gwalior after visiting the major places including Ujjain, Indore, Bhopal and Sanchi.

Union Minister Tomar said that sports is not just for entertainment, they teach us the culture of discipline along with providing physical, intellectual exercise. He said that it is a matter of pleasure that India is getting the opportunity to host the



Chess Olympiad for the first time. In the Olympiad, more than two thousand players from about 187 countries will display their sports skills.

President of Chess Association Adhoc Committee Gurmeet Singh has said that the purpose of Chess Olympiad Torch Relay is to promote Chess. Torch Rally is a gift to India. Never before has such a rally

taken place in the Chess Olympiad.

This rally will originate from India itself in Olympiad to be held in future.

Union Minister Tomar handed over the Chess Olympiad torch to Ojasva Singh, 16 year old famous Chess player of Gwalior. Ojasva will take the torch from LNIPE and visit Gwalior Fort and major places.

Voting in 133 urban bodies today: SEC BP Singh

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

State Election Commissioner Basant Pratap Singh has informed that the first phase of polling in the urban body election-2022 will be held on July 6 from 7 am to 5 pm. All preparations have been completed for peaceful polling. Shri Singh has said that voters should exercise their voting rights without any fear.

Polling teams have reached the designated polling stations. In the first phase, polling will be held in 11 municipal corporations, 36 municipalities and 86 Nagar Parishads in 44 districts. A total of 13 thousand 148 polling stations have been made for this. Of these, 3296 polling stations are sensitive. About 79 thousand

staff and officers have been deployed on duty in the polling parties. About 27 thousand police force has been deployed.

In the first phase, 101 candidates are in the fray for the post of mayor in 11 municipal corporations. There are 2850 posts of corporator in a total of 133 urban bodies. Out of these 42 posts have been elected unopposed. Election is to be held on the remaining 2808 posts. For this 11 thousand 250 candidates are contesting the elections.

In the first phase, there is no voting in any urban body of Barwani, Jhabua, Kargone, Sidhi and Shahdol districts. The tenure of the urban bodies of Mandla, Alirajpur and Dindori districts is yet to be completed. Therefore, elections have not

been announced for the urban bodies of these districts.

In the first phase, one crore 4 lakh 41 thousand 897 voters will be able to exercise their voting rights. Out of these 53 lakh 62 thousand 457 are male voters and 50 lakh 78 thousand 635 are female and 805 other voters.



A vendor selling umbrellas waits for customers at a roadside during monsoon season in Bhopal on Tuesday. Pioneer photo

Happiness meter to be used to make Madhya Pradesh a happy State

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The Happiness Index of the state will be prepared by the end of the year. However, preparations are being made for 5 years

Happiness meter will now be used in Madhya Pradesh in order to develop and make the state happy. Preparations have been completed for the Happiness Index in Madhya Pradesh. Also, how have the state's plans affected the people of the state and how much happiness is there in their lives will also be found out.

For this, now the Happiness Index is being prepared. The state government's schemes will also be assessed through the index.

The Happiness Index of the state will be prepared by the end of the year. However, preparations are being made for this for 5 years. Total Rs 50 lakh has been spent but due to Corona, the work was stalled for two and a half years. However, now once again the preparation for Happiness Index has been completed by Anand Sansthan.

In the matter, CEO Praveen Gangrade, in-charge of the State Anand Sansthan, says that apart from this, the process and Table work has been completed. The questionnaire is also almost ready. In such a situation, training is being done at places like Isha

Foundation, Coimbatore and Art of Living, Bangalore. Along with this, 1.25 lakh people of Madhya Pradesh have been made volunteers. The sampling size is yet to be decided. Soon the work of field survey for Happiness Index will be started.

For this field survey will be started. Where, 5 years ago, Anand Sansthan was announced to prepare Happiness Index to ascertain the happiness of the people of the state. At the same time, the domain has been prepared by IIT Kharagpur for this. The Happiness Index is being studied by the team of IITs.

For this, the work of preparation of questions, data till its compilation is completed, as well as the work of training and field survey can be started after panchayat and urban body elections.

Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd.

Corporate Office: Unit No. 802, Natraj Rustumjee, Western Express Highway and M.V.Road, Andheri (East), Mumbai – 400069
Sagar Branch: 1st Floor, Sakhi Baba Matrix, Makronia Road Sagar-470004,(MP).
Bhopal Branch : 2nd Floor, Alankar Complex, Plot No. 10 & 11, MP Nagar Zone-II Bhopal -462001,(MP).



APPENDIX IV POSSESSION NOTICE (for immovable property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of Aadhar Housing Finance Limited (AHFL) under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, Demand Notice(s) issued by the Authorised Officer of the company to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) mentioned herein below to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower(s) / Guarantor(s) 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 the Section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement rules, 2002. The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets. The borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of AHFL for an amount as mentioned herein under with interest thereon.

S. No	Name of the Borrower(s)/ Co Borrower(s) (Name of the Branch)	Description of Secured Asset (Immovable Property)	Demand Notice Date & Amount	Date of Possession
1.	(App No.00030702 / Sagar Branch) Munshilal Vishwakarma (Borrower), Sarasvati Vishwakarma (Co-Borrower)	All that part & parcel of property bearing, 20 02 Kh No 20 2, P H No 67, Gram Baman Khedilalaji Tori Sant Ravidas Ward , Sagar , Madhya Pradesh , 470002 Boundaries : East: Road, West: House of Vipra, North : House of Jahudin, South : House of Other	15-11-2021 & ₹ 3,98,333/-	02-07-2022
2.	(App No.00027542 / Sagar Branch) Satish Balmiki (Borrower), Tika Bai (Co-Borrower) Kundan Sahu (Guarantor)	All that part & parcel of property bearing, 154 21 Kh No 154 21, P H No 71, Circle Sagar, 2 Gram Rajakhedi Near Railway Line Sagar, Sagar, (M.P.) 470002 Boundaries : East: House Of Prakash Balmiki Road, West: House Of Anguri Ahirwar, North : Road, South: House Of Shabbudayaji Dubey	10-12-2021 & ₹ 2,87,182/-	01-07-2022
3.	(App No.00012773 / Bhopal Branch) Nasim Begum (Borrower), Mohd Usuf Khan (Co-Borrower)	All that part & parcel of property bearing, Khasra No 135 2, P.H.No.77 Tilak Ganj Ward Sagar , Sagar , M.P., 470002 Boundaries : East: Road, West : Road, North : House of Jameel, South : House Of Jahajeer	12-07-2021 & ₹ 5,09,055/-	02-07-2022
4	(App No.00245523 / Bhopal Branch) Vikram Singh Dangli (Borrower), Sahodra Bai (Co-Borrower)	All that part & parcel of property bearing, 193 4 Private Plot No 03 Po. Kh no 193 4 P h no 75 Ward No 18 Sabri Ward Mouja Badtuma, Sagar, (M.P.) 470002 Boundaries : East: Land of Seller, West: Road, North: Plot No 2 Sharda Tiwari, South : Land of Seller	09-08-2021 & ₹ 2,20,020/-	01-07-2022
5	(Combine LC No.02300000933 / Bhopal Branch) Nihal Patel (Borrower), Prem Rani Patel (Co-Borrower) Vikram Singh Ghoshi (Guarantor)	All that part & parcel of property bearing, 92 1 Kh no 92 1 P h no 11 Ward No 02 Shikrishna Nagar Ward Jabalpur Road Near Ram Mandir, Sagar, (M.P.), 470002 Boundaries : East: House of Premrani Patel, West : Road, North: Plot of Premrani Patel, South : Plot of Udanija	09-02-2022 & ₹ 3,50,514/-	01-07-2022
Place : Sagar/ Bhopal Date : 06.07.2022				
Authorised Officer Aadhar Housing Finance Limited				

Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd.

Corporate Office: Unit No. 802, Natraj Rustumjee, Western Express Highway and M.V.Road, Andheri (East), Mumbai – 400069

Guna Branch : P. H. No. 75, Building 1st Floor, in Front of Hero Showroom, Near ICICI Bank, Mahaveerpura, AB Road Guna-473001,(MP). **Authorised officer: Manish Yadav, Contact : 7745978722,**

Bhopal (Old Branch Mandideep) Branch : 2nd Floor, Alankar Complex, Plot No.-10 & 11, MP Nagar Zone-II Bhopal -462001,(MP). **Authorised officer: Gagan Kumar, Contact : 9424485129,**

Vidisha Branch : Shop No.A, 2nd Floor, Gaurav Complex, Ward No.11, Sanchi Road, Opp. Satya Sai Soya, Plant, Vidisha-464001,(MP). **Authorised officer: Sunny Kushwaha, Contact : 9893588852**



PUBLIC NOTICE FOR AUCTION CUM SALE

Pursuant to taking possession of the secured asset mentioned hereunder by the Authorized Officer of Aadhar Housing Finance Limited under the **Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002** for the recovery of amount due from borrower/s, offers are invited by the undersigned in sealed covers for purchase of immovable property, as described hereunder, which is in the physical possession, on 'As Is Where Is Basis', 'As Is What Is Basis' and 'Whatever Is There Is Basis', Particulars of which are given below:-

Sr. No.	Borrower(s) / Co-Borrower(s)/ Guarantor (s)	Demand Notice Date and Amount	Description of the Immovable property	Reserve Price (RP)	Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) (10% of RP)
1	(App No. 00209248/ Guna Branch) Sukhendra Kumar Sharma (Borrower) Kartkeye Sharma (Co-Borrower)	11-06-2021 & ₹ 7,02,802/-	All that part & parcel of the property Bearing, Part of Survey No 291 1 T 2 Plot No E-15 P.H.No 27 Ward No.10 Dream City Colony Bharsula Road Near Resham Udhoyog Kendra, Guna, M.P.-473111. Boundaries : East: Proposed 20 ft. Road, West: Land of Suresh Saini, North: Plot of 14, South: Plot No. 16	₹ 6,40,000/- (Rs. Six Lac Fourty Thousand Only)	₹ 64,000/- (Rs. Sixty Four Thousand Only)
2	(App No. 00147759/ Bhopal (Old Branch Mandideep) Branch) Santosh Barman (Borrower) Mohani Barman (Co-Borrower) Sudhir Barman (Guarantor)	15-04-2021 & ₹ 30,36,143/-	All that part & parcel of property bearing, Plot No.-25 H No-25, Sai Nagar Colony Near Radha Krisan Temple Neelbada Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh-462001. Boundaries : East: Other House, West: Road, North: House of Sharma Plot No.26, South: Plot No.24 Vacant	₹ 22,00,000/- (Rs. Twenty Two Lac Only)	₹ 2,20,000/- (Rs. Two Lac Twenty Thousand Only)
3	(App No. 00199018/ Vidisha Branch) Santosh Ahirwar (Borrower) Pramila Ahirwar (Co-Borrower)	09-08-2021 & ₹ 8,91,470/-	All that part & parcel of property bearing, Plot No.30, Ward No. 26, Radha Krishna Puram Haripura Near Sothiya Road, Vidisha, Vidisha, M.P.-464001. Boundaries : East: Plot No.75, West: Road, North: Plot No 29, South: Land of Bhaiyalal Yadav	₹ 9,10,800/- (Rs. Nine Lac Ten Thousand Eight Hundred Only)	₹ 91,080/- (Rs. Ninety One Thousand Eighty Only)

- Last Date of Submission of Sealed Bid/ Offer** in the prescribed tender forms along with EMD and KYC is **08-08-2022 within 5:00 PM** at the Branch Office address mentioned herein above. Tenders that are not filled up or tenders received beyond last date will be considered as invalid tender and shall accordingly be rejected. No interest shall be paid on the EMD.
- Date of Opening of the Bid/Offer (Auction Date)** for Property is **06-08-2022** at the above mentioned branch office address at **3:00 PM**. The tender will be opened in the presence of the Authorised Officer.
- The notice is hereby given to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s, to remain present personally at the time of sale and they can bring the intending buyers/purchasers for purchasing the immovable property as described herein above, as per the particulars of Terms and Conditions of Sale.
- This is **30 DAYS SALE NOTICE UNDER SARFAESI ACT, 2002** is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower (s), Co-Borrower (s) and Guarantor (s) that the above described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the Physical Possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of Aadhar Housing Finance Limited (AHFL) Secured Creditor, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" and to the amount due to Aadhar Housing Finance Ltd., in full before the date of sale, auction is liable to be stopped.
- The immovable property will be sold to the highest tenderer. However, the Authorised Officer reserves the absolute discretion to allow inter se bidding, if deemed necessary. The Property as mentioned will not be sold below Reserve Price.
- AHFL is not responsible for any liabilities whatsoever pending upon the property as mentioned above. The Property shall be auctioned on 'As Is Where Is Basis', 'As Is What Is Basis' and 'Whatever Is There Is Basis'.
- The Demand Draft should be made in favor of 'Aadhar Housing Finance Limited' Only.
- The detail terms and conditions of the auction sale are incorporated in the prescribed tender form. Tender forms are available at the above mentioned Branch office. Authorised officer reserve the rights to extend the date of tender or change the terms & conditions of bidding. For further details & other terms & conditions of bidding please visit our branch and website : www.aadharhousing.com

For further details, contact the Authorised Officer, at the abovementioned Office address.
Place : Madhya Pradesh
Date : 05.07.2022

Authorised Officer
Aadhar Housing Finance Limited

ED searches 44 premises of Vivo under PMLA



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday searched at least 44 premises across the country in a money-laundering investigation against Chinese smartphone manufacturer Vivo and related entities.

The searches were carried out under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) at locations in several States including Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Meghalaya and Maharashtra, officials said.

The ED filed a money laundering case after taking cognisance of a recent Delhi Police (Economic Offences

Wing) FIR against a distributor of the agency based in Jammu and Kashmir where it was alleged that a few Chinese shareholders in that company forged their identity documents. The agency suspects this alleged forgery was done to launder illegally generated funds using shell or paper companies and some of these "proceeds of crime" were diverted to evade the scrutiny of Indian tax and enforcement agencies, they said.

The action comes in the wake of Centre's bid to tighten checks on Chinese entities and the continued crackdown on such firms and their linked Indian operatives that are allegedly indulging in serious

financial crimes like money laundering and tax evasion while operating here. The stepped-up scrutiny against the Chinese-backed companies or entities operating in India comes in the backdrop of the military stand-off between the two countries along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh that is on for more than two years now.

In April, the ED ordered the seizure of Rs 5,551 crore worth of deposits of another Chinese smartphone giant Xiaomi India for alleged contravention of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA).

The Income-Tax Department searched Chinese telecom company Huawei in February and it claimed to have found alleged manipulation of account books for reducing taxable income in India by the company.

Premises of a number of these Chinese smartphone companies including Xiaomi, Oppo and Vivo, their distributors and linked associates were raided across the country by the I-T department in December last year and it later claimed to have detected alleged unaccounted income

worth over Rs 6,500 crore due to violation of the Indian tax law and regulations. According

to reports, a number of Chinese entities are linked to the Chinese PLA, posing a threat

ED summons Azam's wife, son in money laundering probe

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has summoned the wife and son of Samajwadi Party leader Azam Khan for questioning in an ongoing money laundering probe against him.

Khan, 73, is also a Samajwadi Party (SP) MLA from Rampur seat in Uttar Pradesh. His son Abdullah Azam Khan, MLA from the Suar Assembly seat in Uttar Pradesh and wife Tazeen Fatma have been asked to depose separately before the ED's regional office in Lucknow this week, officials said.

The agency is seeking to record their statements under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) in the case being probed against Azam Khan, they said. Azam

Khan has already been grilled by the agency in the case when he was lodged in Sitapur jail. Now, he is out on bail. He was released from jail in May after 27 months following the Supreme Court granting him interim bail in a separate forgery case.

The agency had initiated a probe against Khan in 2019 after taking cognisance of at least 26 FIRs filed by the State police against him including allegations that a university run by him in Rampur district of Uttar Pradesh has been raised over a land that has been grabbed from an 'enemy property'.

Khan is the chairman of the Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar Trust which runs three branches of Rampur Public School. He had earlier also served as Urban Development Minister in SP Government.

to the security in the country they operate. Vivo had a 15 per cent market share in the Indian smartphone segment in the first quarter of 2022 with the shipment of 5.5 million devices, according to market research

and analysis firm IDC. According to a Counterpoint research report, Vivo became the top 5G brand in the Rs 10,000-20,000 price bracket segment in the country during March 2022 quarter. A Vivo

India spokesperson said, "Vivo is cooperating with authorities to provide them with all required information. As a responsible corporate, we are committed to be fully compliant with laws."

Mumbai's ex-top cop S Pandey appears before ED in NSE case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Mumbai Police Commissioner Sanjay Pandey appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) here on Tuesday for questioning in a money laundering case linked to the alleged National Stock Exchange (NSE) co-location scam.

The ED recorded Pandey's statement under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after he reached the agency's office in an auto-rickshaw, officials said. The 1986-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer retired from service on June 30. Before his four-month stint as Mumbai Police Commissioner, he served as acting Director General of

Police (DGP) of Maharashtra. The agency questioned him in connection with the functioning and activities of iSec Securities Pvt. Ltd, one of the firms that conducted a security audit of NSE around the time the co-location irregularities allegedly took place, officials said.

The company was incorporated by Pandey in March 2001 and he quit as its director in May 2006. Later, his son and mother took charge of the company.

Pandey, an IIT-Kanpur and Harvard University alumnus, is said to have established the company after he resigned from service. His resignation was not accepted by the State government and he rejoined but was not immedi-

ately given a posting. Through his questioning, the ED is seeking to unravel the mandate, operations and results achieved by the company while it worked with the NSE, they said.

The agency has already recorded former NSE Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer Chitra Ramkrishna's statement in connection with the case.

Presently, Ramkrishna is lodged in Tihar jail. She and former group operating officer Anand Subramanian were arrested by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in March in the NSE co-location scam case. The ED took cognisance of this CBI FIR to initiate money laundering charges against them.

Ukraine war has no impact on under-construction warships in Russia: Navy Vice-Chief

RAHUL DATTA ■ NEW DELHI

The ongoing Ukraine conflict has no impact on the Indian warships now under construction in Russian shipyards, Navy vice chief S N Ghormade said here on Tuesday.

The deal for two Talwar class stealth frigates was inked in 2018 between India and Russia. The first ship was launched for trials in 2021 and named Tushil. Two more warships of this class are now under construction at Goa Shipyard.

Allaying apprehensions of a setback to the ship construction programme due to Ukraine conflict, Ghormade said it has not hampered schedule. He also said an Indian team is stationed in Kaliningrad, Russia to monitor project and assured ships will be delivered to the Navy as per schedule. As regards achieving self-reliance in



defence manufacturing, Ghormade said the plan to build six conventional submarines here is on under Project 75.

On the recent trials of the naval version of French-built Rafale and US-made F-18, he said they were done to prove their capability of operating from aircraft carriers. "Our aim is indigenisation. We have a twin-engine deck-based fighter aircraft plan but it will take some time," the Vice Chief said. The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is also working on a Twin Engine Deck Based Fighter.

India, Iran discuss bilateral issues, Afghan situation

RAHUL DATTA ■ NEW DELHI

India and Iran on Tuesday reviewed the entire spectrum of their bilateral ties and the situation in Afghanistan during the talks between Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra and Deputy Minister for Political Affairs, Ministry for Foreign Affairs Ali Bagheri Kani. During the parleys on the telephone, the two sides discussed various elements of bilateral relations including progress on the Chabahar Port, the ministry of external affairs (MEA) said here.

Kwatra underscored India's commitment to strengthen bilateral cooperation with Iran in addressing shared opportunities and challenges. Both sides also discussed international and regional issues including Afghanistan, the MEA statement said. The telephonic conversation came nearly a month after Iranian foreign minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian visited India. Iran has been a key country for India in the Gulf region. India and Iran have been jointly focusing on improving connectivity between South East Asia and Central Asia.

At a connectivity conference in Tashkent in July last year, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar projected Iran's Chabahar Port as a key regional transit hub including Afghanistan. Located in the Sistan-Balochistan province on the energy-rich Iran's southern coast, the Chabahar port is being developed by India, Iran and Afghanistan to boost connectivity and trade ties. India has been in touch with Iran over the developments in Afghanistan following its takeover by the Taliban on August 15.

Jaishankar lauds PM's Pak policy at DU book launch



Union External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar during a discussion on the book 'Modi@20: Dreams Meet Delivery', at Delhi University in New Delhi on Tuesday

RANJAN DIMRI | PIONEER

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's resolve to not allow cross-border terrorism be normalised has helped in shaping India's Pakistan policy since 2014, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said here on Tuesday. Making this assertion, he also said Modi is perceived

abroad as "quintessentially Indian" and his intuitive feeling for diplomacy has led him to form a connection with foreign countries and their leaders.

Highlighting these facets at a function in Delhi University, Jaishankar read some excerpts from the chapter written by him in the book 'Modi@20: Dreams Meet Delivery'. Jaishankar said, "When I

first met him (PM Modi) in China in 2011, I was the ambassador. Unlike many other chief ministers, he specifically sought political briefing."

"I recall his (Modi's) emphasis that on the issue of terrorism and sovereignty, we needed to make sure that we speak with one voice abroad, especially in China.

"When it comes to terrorism, especially of cross-border nature, he has been crystal clear that he would not allow it to be normalised. This determination has shaped our Pakistan policy since 2014," Jaishankar added.

The minister highlighted that the Prime Minister looms large on the world stage as his policies and initiatives have had an impact. "Peers perceive him as quintessentially Indian and respond accordingly.

His language, metaphor, appearances and mannerism define a persona that a world has come to recognise," he said, reading another paragraph from the book "Prime Minister Modi's intuitive feel-

ing for diplomacy has led him to find connect with foreign countries and their leaders with India," he added. Jaishankar was the chief guest at a special discussion organised by the Delhi University on the book. Speaking about the book, Jaishankar noted that a large part of the book has been written by people outside the government.

"Books are written about prime ministers. That is not unusual....But to have a book where sitting foreign minister and Home Minister (Amit Shah), National Security Advisor (Ajit Doval) have written about the sitting prime minister, that is unusual," he asserted.

Vice-Chancellor Yogesh Singh lauded the prime minister, saying India is lucky to have a leader who commits less and delivers more. Published by Rupa Publications India, 'Modi@20: Dreams Meet Delivery' has contributions from Sudha Murty, Sadhguru, Nandan Nilekani and Amish Tripathi, among others.

Chaiwala among 5 to file papers for Aug 6 V-P poll

New Delhi: Five people, including one who goes by the alias "Ramayani Chaiwala", filed papers on Tuesday, the first day of the nomination process for the August 6 vice-presidential election.

The nomination papers of one candidate were rejected for failing to furnish a mandatory document. July 19 is the last date for filing nominations.

According to the details available with the office of the returning officer, K Padmarajan of Salem district in Tamil Nadu, Pareshkumar Nanubhai Mulani from

Ahmedabad, Hosmath Vijayanand from Bengaluru and Naidugari Rajasekhar Srimukhalingam from Andhra Pradesh have filed their nominations for the vice-presidential polls.

Anand Singh Khushwaha from Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh, who goes by the alias "Ramayani Chaiwala", was also among those who filed nomination papers at the returning officer's office in Parliament. Though Khushwaha's papers were accepted, he did not submit the security deposit of Rs 15,000. PTI

Govt orders clearing of CGHS bills at pvt hospitals

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Waking up from its slumber as private hospitals across the country threatened to stop cashless treatment under the Central Government Group Health Scheme (CGHS), the Government on Tuesday ordered clearing of bills within a month.

Sources in the Union Health Ministry said that Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has reviewed the issue of outstanding CGHS dues of around Rs 1,400 crore and ordered officials to clear those within a month. According to officials, there are

complaints of over 11 lakh bills pending for the last few months, forcing many empanelled hospitals to discontinue cashless treatment of the CGHS beneficiaries. At the three-hour-long review meeting on Monday, Mandaviya ordered the health secretary, the CGHS director and the CEO of the National Health Authority to present a detailed report on the matter and the solutions to it, the official said. He instructed them to clear nine lakh pending CGHS bills within 15 days and repay all pending dues within a month. The Health Minister also ordered officials to increase the number of claim clearance officers immediately to clear the

pendency. Under the scheme, thousands of small, medium and large hospitals are empanelled, majority of which have not received payments since last July. While the Max Group has dues of Rs 200 crore, for Fortis the dues are Rs 100 crore. Likewise, Medanta hospital is waiting for a payment of nearly Rs 60 crore.

The CGHS covers all current and retired Central Government staff and kin. The OPD consultation charge for a CGHS beneficiary at most of the empanelled hospitals, including Max, Fortis, Medanta, etc, is Rs 150 per visit, while non-CGHS rates at these hospitals range from Rs 500 to Rs 2,000.



Women of the 'Varkari' movement run with tulsii plant on their head as they participate in 'Gol Ringan' during Sant Tukaram Maharaj Palkhi procession, in Solapur

PTI Photo

Father-daughter create IAF history

Duo flew Hawk fighter jet sortie in Bidar together on May 30

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A father-daughter duo created history as they became the first such combine to fly IAF fighter jets together. They are Air Commodore Sanjay Sharma and Flying Officer Ananya Sharma. The duo flew a Hawk fighter jet sortie in Bidar, Karnataka on May 30, the IAF said on Tuesday. The father-daughter duo created history when they flew in the same formation of Hawk-132 aircraft.

"There has not been any previous instance in the IAF where a father and his daughter were part of the same fighter formation for a mission. It was mission where Air Commodore Sanjay and Flying Officer Ananya were more than



Air Commodore Sanjay Sharma, along with his daughter, Flying Officer Ananya Sharma, created history by flying an Indian Air Force fighter jet sortie together

PNS

just father and daughter. They were comrades, who had full faith in each other as fellow wingmen would," the IAF said in the release. The photo shows Air Commodore Sharma and his daughter posing in front of fighter plane. Ananya is currently undergoing her training in Bidar before she graduates

onto faster and more superior fighter aircraft of IAF. As Ananya was growing up, she watched her father nurture this very bond with his fellow squadron pilots. Having virtually grown up in the IAF, there was absolutely no other profession that she could imagine being a part of. As first women

fighter pilots of the IAF entered service in 2016, Ananya saw that her lifelong dream was now a possibility. Having completed her B Tech in Electronics and Communication, she was selected for training for the flying branch of IAF. She was commissioned as a fighter pilot in December 2021.

Accessible India drive: Centre equips just 20 airports with ambulifts for divyangs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Even as the deadline for making all the airports in the country accessible expired last month, just 20 airports have been equipped with ambulifts under the Centre's Accessible India campaign. These airports include Vijayawada, Kanpur, Port Blair, Jodhpur, Belgum, Silchar, Jharsuguda, Rajkot and Hubli.

The ambulifts aim to facilitate passengers with reduced mobility, 'divyang' travellers on wheelchairs and passengers on stretchers during their air travel. However, an official from the Department of Disability Affairs said India's 35 international airports and 55 out of 69 domestic airports are now accessible to 'divyangjan' with accessibility features, and 41 airports are fully equipped with aerobridges and 20 airports have been equipped with

ambulifts under the Accessible India campaign. Ambulifts are used as a boarding vehicle for disabled passengers, passengers with reduced mobility or disabled air-travellers, or people using wheelchairs or the elderly with mobility issues.

"An ambulift is fitted with heating ventilation and air conditioning and can cater to six wheelchairs and two stretchers at a time with an attendant.

The ambulifts have been procured for Rs 63 lakh per unit. "...Airports Authority of India (AAI) is providing an ambulift facility at a nominal token charge to the operating airlines at its airports," an official from the Authority had said two months ago. The Ambulift is manufactured domestically under the Make in India policy.

The central advisory board on disability has asked all states/UTs to assess the public buildings by July-end that are

to be made accessible in "shortest possible time" for disabled under Accessible India campaign. The Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwD) had launched Accessible India Campaign (Sugamya Bharat Abhiyan) as a nation-wide Campaign to serve differently-abled community of country.

Although Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 provided a timeline of five years for

making all existing public buildings accessible by June 14 this year, till now 585 state buildings and 1,030 central government buildings have been made barrier-free for disabled. It was launched for achieving universal accessibility for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) on December 3, 2015. It has three important verticals, namely-theBuild Environment, the transportation sector and the ICT ecosystem.



Study recommends complete transformation of RS Secretariat

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A study has recommended a complete transformation of Rajya Sabha Secretariat with specific delegation of administrative and financial powers, well defined tasks and output besides reorganization of sections for quick decision making and delivery.

The first ever comprehensive study on 'System Improvement' in the Upper House Secretariat has recommended delivery of services in a transparent, monitorable and accountable manner.

The study report with about 130 recommendations was presented to Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu who instituted the study in January this year. The study also covered the functioning of the committee sections and recommended increasing their tenure from present one year to two years.

The Rajya Sabha Secretariat that came into being with about 200 officers and staff in 1952 has expanded to 1,700 personnel now with 10 different services with the needs of the times. The reviews of the working of the secretariat undertaken so far by parliamentary pay committees and a couple of internal committees were limited to staff requirement, their salaries.

Given the importance of field visits by the department related parliamentary standing committees, their field visits have been recommended to be increased from the present two visits for a maximum of 10 days in a year to three visits and 15 days.

Keeping in mind the efforts that go into preparation of reports by the committees and their import and implications, a committee hour has been recommended for consideration to discuss select major reports in Parliament for wider amplification of the content of the reports. The recommendations include clear delegation of administrative and financial powers so that about 75 per cent of the issues are disposed off at the lower and middle level in the 10 layer hierarchy that exists in the Secretariat at present by eliminating 4 to 5 layers as appropriate.



The study conducted by former secretary general P P K Ramacharyulu, Advisor, suggested pathways for quantification of output in respect of every aspect of the functioning of the Rajya Sabha, its committees and the secretariat and corresponding additional mandate for each of the services for presenting a transparent account of their working in the public domain.

The study concluded that most of the decisions could be taken at the lower and middle levels and accordingly, recommended administrative delegation pointing out that such delegation has not been defined and done so far.

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Akhilesh launches Statewide membership drive at SP HQ

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Days after dissolving all party fronts, Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav launched a membership drive at the party headquarters in Lucknow on Tuesday. The drive will be carried out at tehsils, zones and districts across the state. The SP chief said he would reveal the number of new party members.

Addressing mediapersons at the SP headquarters in Lucknow on Tuesday, Yadav targeted the Yogi Adityanath government's 100 days celebrations. "The CM should speak about his achievements of five years and 100 days. Even today, this government is cutting ribbons of the projects completed during the Samajwadi Party regime. Whatever is being inaugurated is also incomplete," Yadav said.

Taking a jibe at UP Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak without taking his

name, Yadav said, "In the Yogi Adityanath government, the deputy chief minister is questioning the transfers of doctors even though he goes around raiding hospitals. Who is actually doing backseat driving in this government?" he asked. "The deputy chief minister has no control over the officers of his department who ignore his directives. The recent transfers were done without consulting him. This is a deputy CM who is known for his surprise raids. It appears as if someone is running the Yogi government from behind," Yadav said.

Replying to a question, Akhilesh said he did not campaign in the bypolls because he had been assured by his party leaders that they would easily win Azamgarh and Rampur seats. "We did not know that the administration would play such a major role and prevent people from casting their votes," he said.

Attacking the Congress



and the Bharatiya Janata Party, the SP chief said: "The BJP is following the footsteps of the Congress. When the Congress was in power at the Centre, it used the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to hound the opposition leaders. In Maharashtra, they (BJP) accepted that there was an ED government. The ED government also exists in Madhya Pradesh and other states. The BJP is misusing these institutions."

A few days ago, Akhilesh Yadav had dissolved national and state executive of the

party with immediate effect, including all youth organisations, mahila sabhas and national presidents of all other cells, except the UP president of the party. It is believed that after the completion of this membership drive, the SP will reorganise all the units of the party organisation.

As per party sources, leaders who have come from the Bahujan Samaj Party and BJP may be given key responsibilities while leaders from Dalit, OBC and Muslim communities may also be given important positions. There are plans to make space for leaders from Brahmin and Kayasth communities in the new working committee. A SP spokesperson said it was a big step with an eye on the 2024 parliamentary elections. As per sources, a fresh SP executive could be formed after the national conference of the SP which is likely to be held in the last week of August or early September.

Cong questions Modi, Shah on links with ultras

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Tuesday questioned the silence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah on the alleged links of two arrested terrorists with the ruling party. Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera alleged the BJP was indulging in "fake nationalism", remarks coming in the backdrop of alleged links of Udaipur tailor Kanhaiya Lal's killer Riyaz Attari and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) terrorist Talib Hussain Shah with the BJP.

At the AICC Press conference, Khera said two incidents in the past week have exposed the "double-faced" BJP, after Attari and Shah, who was cap-

tured by villagers in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district, were claimed to be associated with the Centre's ruling party. Their photographs with BJP leaders have gone viral on social media.

Khera also asked how Talib Hussain Shah, who was allegedly planning to attack the Amarnath Yatra in Kashmir, was seen in a photograph with Amit Shah. He wondered whether it was not a security breach. A photograph tweeted by the Congress' Jammu and Kashmir unit showed a bearded man standing among people at a meeting attended by Amit Shah which some claimed was Talib, the alleged mastermind of serial bomb blasts in Rajouri.



"It is shocking that the BJP, a party that loses no opportunity to preach to Indians about nationalism, has members and office-bearers who are deeply implicated in violent anti-national activities," Khera said.

Jammu and Kashmir police chief Dilbag Singh had said on Monday Talib Hussain

Shah was briefly associated with a political party and also posed himself as a mediaperson. The BJP had denied claims that the arrested LeT terrorist was its member.

Party J-K spokesperson Abhinav Sharma had claimed on Monday that Talib Hussain Shah had visited the party headquarters while posing as a reporter of a news portal to conduct recce at the behest of his handlers across the border to target the BJP leadership. He had also rejected claims that Shah was the minority cell's IT in-charge in J-K.

Khera claimed the NIA had confirmed former BJP leader and ex-sarpanch Tariq Ahmad Mir's association with terrorists. Mir, arrested two years ago for allegedly procur-

ing weapons for Hizbul Mujahideen commander Naveed Babu, was claimed to be an associate of Dy SP Davinder Singh.

Naveed Babu had previously been arrested with Davinder Singh who had himself been accused of supplying weapons to terrorists, he said.

The truth would have come out had the probe in the Davinder Singh case been carried to its conclusion but was halted midway, the Congress spokesperson alleged. "Will the prime minister open his mouth? Will the home minister come out and give a clarification to the country? What were these terrorists doing in the BJP? What were you doing with those terrorists in the BJP?" he asked.

EC warns of strict action against leakage of voters' Aadhaar details

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission (EC) warned of "severe" disciplinary action against electoral registration officers for any leakages of physical forms filled by electors to share their Aadhaar details. This comes after rules were issued allowing linkage of Aadhaar with voters list to weed out duplicate entries. The Commission has also emphasised that submission of Aadhaar by electors is "voluntary".

In a letter sent to chief electoral officers of all states and Union territories on July 4, the poll panel said special camps at cluster level can be

arranged on the dates coinciding with special campaign dates during special summary revision, where the electors can be persuaded to give their Aadhaar number voluntarily in Form-6B in hard copy.

According to a law ministry notification, using the newly-introduced Form-6B, existing voters may share their Aadhaar number with poll authorities.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by sub-section (5) of Section 23 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 (43 of 1950), the Central Government hereby notifies the 1st April, 2023 as the date on or before which every person whose name is included in the electoral roll

may intimate his Aadhaar number in accordance with the said section," read the notification.

"The notification uses the term 'may' and not 'shall' which makes sharing details voluntary," a senior functionary had explained recently. Asserting that furnishing of Aadhaar number is "purely voluntary", the letter said the electoral registration officer (ERO) "will make it clear to the electors that the purpose of obtaining of Aadhaar number is for authentication of his entries in electoral roll and extending better electoral services to them in future... It is emphasised that submission of Aadhaar by electors is voluntary".

Security breach: Cellphones banned at Nabanna, CM house

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Bengal Government has banned using mobile phones by visitors and the police staff, inside the residential premises of Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. Visitors and policemen on duty will also not be allowed to use their phones at State secretariat Nabanna which houses the Chief Minister's office.

There was no confirmation as yet on whether the journalists too will have deposit their cellphones before entering these two high security places.

The decision was taken in a high-level meeting attended by Chief Secretary HK Dwivedi, Home Secretary BP Gopalika and top police officials including the Kolkata Police Commissioner and State Director General of Police.



There was a serious security breach on Saturday midnight when a trespasser Hafizul Mollah sneaked inside the Chief Minister's residence at Kalighat. The allegedly mentally deranged person has been arrested and is being investigated.

According to sources top bureaucrats are holding mobile addiction among the police personnel for such

security lapses. The police men engaged in security duty both at Nabanna and the CM house will have to deposit their handsets before joining work, sources said adding the visitors too will be required to follow the same rule.

After Saturday's incident about 15 police personnel including an inspector, a sergeant and two constables were removed from their duties.

Meanwhile, in an unrelated development Bengal Opposition Leader Suwendu Adhikari has written a letter to Home Minister seeking NIA investigation into some recent "alarming developments" including recovery of thousands of gelatin sticks and loads of explosives from various parts of the State.

"I have written to the Home Minister that Bengal is sitting on powder keg ... I have told him how 81,000

gelatin sticks were recovered by the police in Birbhum district and how a person was killed while making bombs at Domkal in Murshidabad district bordering Bangladesh ... these all indicate towards a serious law and order problem ahead of the panchayat elections ... it is clear that the TMC are preparing for the panchayat elections with bombs," Adhikari on Tuesday said.

Referring to Mamata Banerjee's recent 'Jihad' comments where she allegedly asked her party men to go for a jihad against the BJP Adhikari said, "as you know the Chief Minister has gone on record asking her people to conduct jihad, and subsequent recovery of these gelatin sticks and loads of explosives a time has come to investigate the entire development ... so I have requested the Home Minister for an NIA investigation.

CAA likely before 2024: BJP MP; poll gimmick, retorts Opp

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

There were ample chances of Citizenship Amendment Act being implemented ahead of the 2024 general elections, Bengal BJP president Sukanto Majumdar on Tuesday said.

The BJP MP from Balurghat in North Bengal said that the "CAA has already been passed only some procedural aspects and rules have to be framed ... I am sure it will be implemented before the 2024 general elections."

Majumdar's statements triggered immediate reactions from the TMC, Left and Congress who linked his remarks to election politics. "It is clear from his statement that the BJP is trying to divert attention from the main issues like unemployment, price rise and general law and order issues in the country," said TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh.

CPI(M) central committee member Sujan

Chakrabarty said that the "by saying that the CAA will be brought before the elections the BJP has proved that it is nothing but an election gimmick ... what the CAA will give that is not there presently ... whether it will bring down hardships, improve hunger index, bring back jobs and reduce prices ... if not then the CAA will cut no ice in Bengal."

Congress Lok Sabha leader Adhir Chowdhury said "CAA was already there and they have not been able to frame the rules because there is big technical issues ... they will not be implemented and the BJP is only using this as an electoral plank."



Ganguly warming up to TMC now?

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Even as Bengal BJP leaders continued to leave the party to join the Trinamool Congress, there were speculations about former saffron Rajya Sabha MP Rupa Ganguly's future course of action after she was scene holding discussions with Trinamool Congress spokesperson. According to sources the two leaders recently spoke to each other for quite sometime in the sidelines of a public programme.

When contacted Ghosh said that the talks had nothing to do with Ganguly's leaving BJP. "There was no politics in our talks ... I consider her as a sister though she is from a different political party ... we met her in a programme where we had a discussion but not on politics ... so nothing should be read into it," he said.

Though Ganguly could not be contacted she was quoted as remaining non-committal about things asking "why should people always think of



issues."

Sources close to her however said that Ganguly was not content with the limited role she was getting in the party after her Rajya Sabha term lapsed. "She needs some responsibility which is not coming to her which is why she may be getting impatient ahead of the 2024 general elections," a sources in the TMC said refusing to divulge whether she could be joining the Bengal ruling outfit on July 21 mass rally celebrated by the TMC as martyrs' day.

After last year's Assembly elections that saw TMC coming back to power with huge majority a number of BJP leaders including Mukul Roy, Arjun Singh, Rajiv Banerjee apart from a number of MLAs have left that party to join the State ruling outfit.

Rajnath urges French companies to forge alliances with Indian firms

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday urged the French companies to forge joint ventures with Indian firms to make world-class weapon systems here as part of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' policy of the Government.

He made this suggestion when a high-level delegation of French company Safran Group led by its Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Olivier Andries called on the defence ministry here, the defence ministry said.

Safran is one of the leading original equipment manufacturers of advanced aircraft engines for civil and fighter jets.

During the meeting, the CEO briefed Rajnath of their company's plans to set up a Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility in India for overhaul of LEAP-1A & LEAP-1B engines in use by Indian and foreign commercial airlines.

The MRO facility through direct foreign investment of \$US 150 million in Hyderabad is expected to create 500-600 highly skilled jobs. The facility will be able to overhaul over



250 engines per year in the beginning.

The CEO also briefed the defence minister of their plan to inaugurate this week Safran Aircraft Engines and Safran Electrical and Power India Pvt Ltd. - both to come up in Hyderabad and Safran-Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) Aircraft Engines as a joint venture in Bengaluru.

Safran aircraft engine, Hyderabad, with an investment of Euro 36 million and located on 10 acres land in the Hyderabad SEZ, will produce parts and components for advanced aircraft engines including rotating seals.

UP Govt has failed on all fronts: Mayawati

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ LUCKNOW

Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati on Tuesday attacked the Bharatiya Janta Party for celebrating 100 days of the government's second term. She alleged that the government failed on all fronts, especially the rising prices, unemployment and deteriorating law and order.

She alleged that the Yogi Adityanath government had been "extremely disappointing" as far as ensuring communal harmony and peace is concerned. In a tweet on Tuesday morning, Mayawati made a direct attack on the Yogi government.

"The UP BJP government celebrated 100 days' tenure but it has been indifferent and very disappointing in doing away with the burning problems of poverty, unemployment, inflation etc and improving law & order, and creating mutual brotherhood and communal harmony," Mayawati tweeted.

Earlier on Monday, the Congress and the Samajwadi Party had also attacked the government over its 100-day celebrations.



SP chief Akhilesh Yadav took a jibe at CM Yogi Adityanath saying someone was running the government from behind. Yadav further said that democracy had been weakened due to misuse of power under the BJP rule.

He termed the achievements claimed by the BJP government as a bundle of lies and alleged that the BJP indulged in fraudulent politics.

Akhilesh said that this government showed people a lot of dreams of development but did not implement a single scheme on the ground.

Former Congress state president Ajay Kumar Lallu also attacked the government claiming that the Yogi Adityanath and his cabinet colleagues were padding their backs on "false propaganda".

Yogi Govt did nothing as promised in 100 days: RLD

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Rashtriya Lok Dal's national general secretary Trilok Tyagi said on Tuesday that the Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh did nothing as promised in the first 100 days. He termed the success claims of state government as a lies.

"The state government is yet to clear the arrears of sugarcane growers. The state government has failed in bringing the farmers relief from stray animals' menace even as law and order has deteriorated," Tyagi said.

He said stray animals had caused the farmers to face losses due to crop damage, but the government was looking away. "There has been a spate in incidents of murder, loot, rape and dacoity in UP. It can be said that the system (order) has been destroyed completely in UP," he commented.

Tyagi said the state government overloved the law while implementing its bulldozer policy in UP. "The state government has also forgotten its promise to halve the electricity bills," he said.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

We can do better

The Government’s desire to lead Industry 4.0 is there; it has even made efforts in that direction

Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s assertion that India is leading the fourth industrial revolution, or Industry 4.0, may appear to be an exaggeration to his critics. It is, however, correct that the country has made remarkable progress in the technologies that are the defining features of the fourth revolution. The World Economic Forum elucidates the concept as: “The First Industrial Revolution used water and steam power to mechanise production. The Second used electric power to create mass production. The Third used electronics and information technology to automate production. Now a Fourth Industrial Revolution is building on the Third, the digital revolution that has been occurring since the middle of the last century. It is characterised by a fusion of technologies that is blurring the lines between the physical, digital and biological spheres.” Are we even near Industry 4.0? Well, certain facts are indeed disconcerting. For all the talk about being an emerging economy or, as more enthusiastic souls call it, a rising economic power, the reality is that our per capita income is below \$2,300, below that of Bangladesh’s. India is a poor country, placed at the 142nd rank in terms of per capita income. Besides, manufacturing has not been doing well since 2011-12. Its share in the country’s gross value added (GVA) has come down from 17.4 per cent in 2011-12 to 14.5 per cent in 2020-21.

Yet, it would not be very correct to say that there is no hope. As Prime Minister Modi said, “All programmes launched today are going to strengthen Ease of Doing Business and Ease of Living. They’ll give a fillip to India’s start-up ecosystem. India can proudly say that it is not just part of the Industry 4.0 Revolution but is actually leading it.” He said this while launching multiple digital portals at the Digital India Week 2022 on Monday. All Industry 4.0 technologies are not only being used in India but are promoted by the Government. In February this year, for instance, the Government released a national strategy for additive manufacturing (also called 3D printing) to encourage interface between academia, Government and industry. The objective was to make India a global hub for design, development and deployment in the sector. The Department of Science & Technology is implementing the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS) to promote research, train personnel, develop the relevant technologies, incubate entrepreneurship and promote international collaboration. As many as 25 technology innovation hubs have already been established in reputed institutes across the country in advanced technologies including machine learning and artificial intelligence. The Government’s desire to lead Industry 4.0 is there; it has also made some efforts in that direction. What PM Modi has to ensure is that the scourges that plagued the earlier rounds of industrialization — statist policies, the institutionalised anti-business attitude, excessive regulation, red tape *et al* — don’t beleaguer Industry 4.0. It will be a pity if that happens.

PICTALK



Students walk past as people try to repair an auto-rickshaw on a flooded road amid heavy rain, in Mumbai

PTI

Economy travails

There’s a crying need for reforms to boost the pace of economic growth in India

Reserve Bank of India’s former Governor Raghuram Rajan has again warned that without the suitable aid of the much-needed reforms, the pace of economic growth is bound to slow down steeply. It is true, too. Without the right set of reforms and more of the political turmoil and infighting that always keeps happening in India, it is likely it’ll grow too slowly. However, the big question still remains as to how the country gets to that higher pace of reforms. Rajan, speaking at a Standard Chartered event in Singapore recently, said: “We have in place a Government that’s attempting those reforms. But unfortunately, perhaps because a consensus for those reforms hasn’t been reached widely, there is a lot of opposition and those reforms haven’t played out — for example, on agriculture these were effectively rolled back.” On November 19, following months of massive and nationwide protests by farmers to the three new farm laws, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the Government would repeal them. Such *ad hoc*, *kabhi haan*, *kabhi naa* approach is bound to rattle the Government’s reforms agenda and depict it in a rather poor light in the eyes of the electorate.



however, pointed out to the recent reports of bank privatisation and said the Government may not be done yet with reforms. “If that can be done reasonably, it offers an opportunity because the banking sector at this point, on net, is holding back the economy rather than propelling it. Credit growth has to be much stronger,” he added. But how is India seen abroad as an investment opportunity? Of course, it has a great deal of potential because of its young population and with a great need for infrastructure. However, a point of concern remains in terms of India’s ‘drag consumption’ which could in the long term mean that while India may be a \$3-trillion economy, it is a long way from being a substitute for China, which is five times larger.

A bait to regime of blasphemy

The Indian judiciary will do great disservice to a free nation by even remotely encouraging the blasphemous, unauthorised regime of Islam

Last Friday, a local court in Udaipur transferred the tailor-beheading case to the National Investigative Agency (NIA). Even the Rajasthan Government, otherwise accused of soft-peddalling Muslim fanaticism, is treating the case as an act of terror with foreign linkage. The same day, however, a vacation Bench of the Supreme Court held Nupur Sharma morally culpable for the Udaipur killing. The Bench, comprising Justices Surya Kant and JB Padrewala, orally observed that she was “single-handedly responsible” for what was happening in the country like the “unfortunate incident” in Udaipur. One is sure that Riyaz Akhtari and Ghaus Mohammed, arrested on charges of Udaipur murder, will not fail to take advantage of the Supreme Court’s observations during their trial.

Way back in September 1934, one Abdul Qayum stabbed to death Nathuramal Sharma inside the Court of the Judicial Commissioner of Sind. The latter was waiting for his turn to be heard under Section 195 of Indian Penal Code for publication of a pamphlet on the history of Islam. The case of Abdul Qayum was argued by Barkat Ali, a barrister from Lahore. “He went to the length of saying” — as BR Ambedkar informs — “that Qayum was not guilty of murder of Nathuramal because his act was justifiable by the law of Koran” (*Pakistan or Partition of India*, P147). It would be unsurprising if Riyaz & Ghaus also argue that they had done nothing wrong according to the laws of Islam by beheading Kanhaiya Lal Teli, the tailor. Nupur Sharma has received a flurry of death threats, from India and abroad, most of which she possibly could not see as they clogged her email account. These death threats are not arbitrary, but there is a definite basis to them in Islamic law. This explains why a large number of Muslims thought the same way, despite the fact that intimidation is punishable under law of the land. The answer could be found in a *fatwa* of Darul Ifta of Darul



Uloom, Deoband, accessed online. An inquirer sought to know about the punishment of blasphemy against Prophet Mohammed in India, and under Islamic law respectively (Question ID=2019). The answer ie *fatwa* (1386/1226=B) says that punishing a criminal guilty is the duty of the Government not individuals though one should try one’s level best to punish such a perpetrator according to Indian Constitution. Under an Islamic country, the culprit is to be killed.

The acts of the enthusiasts, it is evident, are not without sanction in Islam. Those issuing death threats, or carrying out executions, feel self-righteous in doing so in the light of Islamic laws. Accepting even that Nupur had been wrong, no Maulana or Mufti has yet come forward to correct her on facts. Would that not have been the most civilised way of dealing with the issue? Only a Salafi school cleric from Pakistan, Engineer Muhammad Ali Mirza, was discerning enough to state that what Nupur said was evidently under provocation from the Muslim side. Her approach was that if Muslims wish to mock Hinduism on theological ground, they must not over-

look their own Achilles’ heel.

It is speculative if Christians of India would come out with kitchen knives if Nupur had expressed grave doubts on Jesus Christ’s miracles of loaves and fishes raining from heaven. Or would the Indian ambassador to Israel Sanjeev Singla would have been hurriedly summoned to Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs at 9, Yitzhak Rabin Boulevard at Kiryat HaLeom in Jerusalem, if Nupur had expressed a negative opinion on certain acts of Moses or Prophet Isaiah in the *Old Testament*? Neither Judaism nor Christianity at present enforces blasphemy, which explains why no Christian or Jew views defending the honour of their Prophets with the aid of swords or guns as part of their religion. This allows critical and historical examination of those religions possible without any fear of lethal reprisal. Any such exercise with regard to Islam is fraught with mortal risk although, at the same time, Islam is being hailed as ‘religion of peace’. This dichotomy begs for an answer.

On June 8, 1992, prominent Egyptian professor, writer and human rights activist Farag Foda was assassinated in Cairo by the mem-



PRIYADARSHI DUTTA



THE DEATH THREATS TO NUPUR ARE NOT ARBITRARY; THERE IS A DEFINITE BASIS TO THEM IN ISLAMIC LAW. THIS EXPLAINS WHY A LARGE NUMBER OF MUSLIMS THOUGHT THE SAME WAY, DESPITE THE FACT THAT INTIMIDATION IS PUNISHABLE UNDER LAW OF THE LAND

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GODS OF THE WAR CURSE

Sir — What a travesty it is of global leadership that keeps fanning the fire of war, this time in Ukraine? Whither the tenets of great thinkers and statesmen who helmed the destiny of nations and people across ages. History is no longer in the syllabus of modern-day politicians who stake false claims to statesmanship. Wars start small and then grow too big to be controlled by the comity of nations. The fickleness and vanity of nations had prevailed over human sanity in every major conflict. It is significant that Germany was at the core of both the World Wars and Russia, its opponent.

The Ukraine conflict now has Russia on the one side and Germany is rubbing shoulders with other Western nations at Nato. Nothing has changed except that technology has vastly upgraded weapons. But these nations and their leaders have not graduated from archaic mindsets, despite suffering miseries of large scale military engagements over many a modern decade. Going by precedents, the Ukraine conflict can only expand, perhaps exponentially, as the likes of Hannibal who swore eternal enmity to Rome or Hitler the visceral racist, keep reincarnating. Mankind is willingly propitiating the gods of war curse.

R Narayanan | Navi Mumbai

REACHING OUT TO MUSLIMS

Sir — It has come as a pleasant surprise that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has exhorted the party cadre to reach out to the “deprived, non-elite” Muslims. This is because he is not exactly known for his pro-minority or pro-Muslim utterances. His persona is one of a leader who refused to sport a skull cap and urged people to identify the anti-CAA protesters by their dress. One wishes that the BJP cadres abide by his call to care for the impoverished Muslims. It will improve the lot of the poor Muslims and strengthen inter-faith bonds. It doesn’t matter whether it is known as ‘Muslim appeasement’ or ‘politics of fulfilment’.

The Sachar Commission report gives an account of how the majority of Muslims live

Act against corrupt leaders



Though Chief Minister MK Stalin has been striving hard to implement the promises made in the electoral manifesto of his party and has also succeeded in implementing a sizeable number of their leaders’ promises, it is a wonder why there is no progress in taking action against the former Ministers and partymen of the AIADMK alleged to have been involved in gargantuan corruption and amassing wealth disproportionate to their income,

G David Milton | Maruthancode

in misery. It should not be reduced to a game plan to prevail on the impoverished Muslims to support the party and subscribe to its Hindutva ideology. Also, as a goodwill gesture, Modi can accept a skull cap from a member of the Pasmandas community or a non-Syed, OBC Muslim if he is more comfortable with it. This will dispel the impression that he embraces only the rulers of the affluent Arab nations and not his humble Indian Muslim compatriots.

G David Milton | Maruthancode

NEED TO SAVE AAREY FOREST

Sir — The Mumbai Congress strongly opposed the construction of the Metro rail car-shed in the green lungs of Aarey, with city unit chief Bhai Jagtap urging the Union Government and Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis to drop their “juvenile insistence” on going ahead with the plan. One of the first decisions taken by the Eknath Shinde Government was to

allow construction of the car-shed for Metro Line 3 at Aarey, a move that has met with opposition from environmental activists and some political parties, overturning the previous Government’s plan to build it at Kanjurmarg.

The Aarey forest is the breathlife of Mumbai. It is basically the lungs of Mumbai. By destroying the forest and cutting down trees, the Centre and State are doing juvenile insistence to set up a metro car-shed there. This is a project that destroys the environment. It is being opposed at all levels. Mumbaikars don’t want this project in Aarey. The Metro car-shed should come up in Kanjurmarg. With this, the legal dispute is expected between the Centre and the Mumbaikars with support of activists and the Opposition parties like the Shiv Sena, Congress and the NCP.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

In the last 100 years, different countries adopted two models: Communism & Capitalism. But our cooperative model is the idle path, one that succeeds.



Union Home Minister

—Amit Shah



German Chancellor

—Olaf Scholz

I want to do a film but whenever I get an opportunity to do a TV show, I can’t say no.



Actor

—Shaheer Sheikh



Tennis player

—Stefanos Tsitsipas

Gujarat can get cheap, 24x7 power... I’ll be back on Sunday with a solution to the State’s power issue.



Delhi Chief Minister

—Arvind Kejriwal

FIRST COLUMN

SEEKING NEUTRALITY,
DETACHMENT IN WORLD

Neutrality brings balance and fairness in all actions



RAJYOGI BHRAHMAKUMAR **NIKUNJ JI**

Those who know driving are aware that we need to shift gears to change the speed of the vehicle. And when we stop the car, we bring the gear to neutral position. Just like the car, there is a neutral gear for everything. It is the gear that brings everything to stillness, neutrality, balance and renewal. When things are in neutral gear, they are at rest, and they get aligned properly. Neutrality brings balance and fairness in all actions.

In India at several places, especially in workshops, they have something called 'dharam kaanta', which is basically a device used for weighing goods in commercial vehicles such as trucks. It is believed that weighing at such a place assures accuracy in weighing standards. It is again a way to ensure neutrality and fairness in commercial transactions. Similarly, in political and social affairs, mediators play a vital role. That's because they act neutrally to find a solution for different parties or groups of people involved in a conflict or disagreement. Likewise, there are mediators even in families and communities who help to resolve family disputes.

Meditation helps in looking at a problem or dispute from a neutral perspective, which facilitates a balanced and unbiased decision and choices. In order for things to flow or move smoothly even speed needs to be controlled and brought to a neutral point. That is why we see how traffic signals ensure the smooth flow of traffic on roads. Similarly, a taxi meter is readjusted to neutral or zero and so is the petrol vending machine in order to ensure fair transaction. In the same way, when we need to change the colour of clothes, we have to first bleach and make them white, which is a neutral colour. There is a neutral power above all creation that acts neutrally to bring the creation to its best state.



HE, whom we know by different names, is both loving and detached. HE is always neutral – HE does not act out of bias, likes or dislikes. That is why everyone prays to HIM to solve their problems and to guide them to well-being. Hence, it is important for humans also to be detached whilst performing actions. For, it is only through spiritual awareness that one can act neutrally and be free from the bondage of 'Karma'. And, it is only when we perform neutrally that we can empower others or do welfare and constructive work. Remember! When we are too involved and attached to actions and roles, we cannot do good or empower others in spite of wanting to do so because attachment creates expectations and dependence on people and results.

So, in order to act and live neutrally, we have to come to the zero point, i.e., to a neutral position. We have to detach even from our body and become soul conscious. As souls we are the children of ONE Supreme, hence, we need to live in this world like a trustee who owns nothing. When we act in the remembrance of ONE, we accumulate tremendous power and fortune, which further adds the power of zero to our account of Karma like 10, 100, 1000.... One of the easiest and effortless ways to become neutral is to put a full stop. YES! Throughout the day while playing different roles, we just have to pause and stop thinking about external things and connect to our original state of being peaceful and pure for a minute and then come back to action. These full stops, applied periodically during the day, help us to become neutral, balanced and empowered to do our best. So, let's begin the journey to ZERO.

(The author is a spiritual educator.)

KCR for conscience
vote in Prez election

KCR has sought conscience vote for Presidential candidate
Yashwant Sinha to boost anti-Modi front

VANAM JWALA
NARASIMHA RAO
& VJM **DIVAKAR**

A ray of hope for sustenance of democracy and for a bright and prosperous India emerged crystal clear when Telangana Chief Minister and Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) president K Chandrashekhara Rao attacked the Union government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. He pointed out how for the past eight years it has been bulldozing every institution, basic rights of democracy, the secular fabric of the nation, while ruthlessly, arrogantly and unethically trying to silence the opposition, and also immorally and illegally toppling the democratically elected state governments when its inability to face the aggression of the external enemies and becoming an agent of a few crony capitalists and so on. The platform was Hyderabad Jalavihar where a meeting of TRS MLAs and MPs was convened to extend support to the presidential candidate Yashwant Sinha.

Reminding the 1969 Presidential election contest between Congress' official candidate Neelam Sanjiva Reddy and the then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi supported independent candidate VV Giri, when an appeal was made to the electoral college members to vote as per their conscience, KCR urged all MPs and MLAs to once again vote as per their conscience this time irrespective of party affiliations.

KCR argued that Yashwant Sinha would be a better choice when compared to NDA candidate Droupadi Murmu, in view of his ability to bring a qualitative change in politics. And thus, KCR had every reason to make an appeal for a conscience vote in favor of Yashwant Sinha, as he said "nothing in this country is going on in a rightful manner". KCR in his hour-long address to the Electoral College members cited a series of examples in support of his appeal for a conscience vote and also as to why there is a need for qualitative changes and why there is a need for electing Yashwant Sinha to the highest office.

Though PM Modi made tall promises soon after assuming office, pointed out KCR, he failed to fulfill even a single promise. In addition, he enacted three draconian farm laws, forcing the peasant community to sit on protests for over a year. Finally, Modi had to withdraw the farm laws after 700 farmers lost their precious lives. Also, neither the farmers' income was doubled nor Minimum Support Price (MSP) was increased.

KCR was sarcastic when he said that PM Modi thinks he is invincible though the 14 Prime Ministers who preceded him never thought so. Modi is under the false impression that he would be the PM of India permanently despite the fact that political change in a democracy is imminent.

KCR detailed how under PM Modi, the country's image all over the world lowered; how farmers, unemployed and employees have been facing problems; how price rise and inflation are uncontrolled; how the union government is abusing the Constitutional institutions; how opposition



CANDIDATES
OFTEN APPEAL
FOR
CONSCIENCE
VOTE IN THE
PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTION,
AND THE
TELANGANA
CM KCR
ARGUED IN AN
ADDRESS TO
MPs AND MLAs
THAT
YASHWANT
SINHA'S
VICTORY
COULD
HERALD MANY
CHANGES FOR
THE BETTER



parties are harassed and targeted, etc. This according to KCR is nothing but murder of democracy.

Touching upon the aspect of how the BJP rulers are conspiring to destabilize the state governments, KCR said the Modi government has toppled nine Opposition-ruled states.

Taking serious objection to Modi's exerting pressure on Sri Lanka government to allot contract works to his favored persons, which was openly confessed by a Sri Lanka Electricity Board official, KCR demanded a clarification from PM. He also labelled that the present crisis in Sri Lanka is the handiwork of Modi and Sri Lankan economy's collapse hurt India's reputation. KCR hinted at fighting against this. KCR wanted Modi to disclose the inside story of the Sri Lanka crisis.

Criticizing the much-hyped 'Make in India' programme, KCR sought a clarification on job creation due to this, as well as industrial growth in the Modi regime. KCR also suggested to Modi to learn lessons from China where the rulers speak less and work more.

While the country has abundant coal stocks, KCR asked why the Modi government forced Telangana to buy 10 per cent imported coal at a higher price. Charging that Modi is working like a salesman of big traders, KCR said that he should explain why the BJP government is promoting coal imports. KCR sought an explanation from Modi as to why many major international companies like Fiat, Ford, GM motors, Datsun, United Motors, Harley Davidson stopped their businesses in the country.

Asserting that the 130-crore population cannot be a spectator, KCR expressed concerns at black money doubling in the Modi regime, depreciation of rupee to an all-time low, privatization of profit-making public-sector undertakings, including LIC. The inference is that the Modi government played a major role in the decline of all sectors.

Referring to the period of corona crisis, KCR said that while the holy Ganga River was flooded with corpses, while the Modi government failed to provide any succor to the migrant labor, it was Telangana government that did its best in extending relief to one and all. Every policy adopted by the Modi government proved disastrous for the country.

With statistical data, KCR explained how under the Modi regime rankings in many sectors at the international level had fallen, be it Human Development Index, Human Rights, employment, happiness index, environment, etc. It shows the poor performance of the Modi government in the last eight years.

Asserting that the Modi government killed democracy and weakened federal structure, besides harassing state governments, KCR took serious objection to the statement of a Union minister that Telangana government would be toppled. He said if Modi's dictatorial rule dethrones Telangana government, his party would unseat the BJP government at the Center, hinting that Telangana is ready for another big fight.

Among others, KCR also cate-

gorically mentioned that India is being insulted on international platforms due to Modi's decisions and policies; India's Father of the nation is insulted repeatedly by the Modi's men; Modi is unnecessarily interfering in elections of other countries as he supported Donald Trump in the US elections; Harassment of states and exploitation of the constitutional bodies continue.

In his concluding remarks, KCR said that it is time for people in the country to wage another non-violent movement to dislodge the BJP-led government at the Center and pave the way for a new, honest, peaceful, secular, democratic and progressive government. The first step in this direction is to get Yashwant Sinha elected as the President of the country. Hence, he made an appeal for a conscience vote for Sinha. In this context he made the timely reminder of the Presidential contest between Neelam Sanjeev Reddy and VV Giri, when the conscience vote gave India its President.

KCR's address has raised hopes that Modi can be questioned, and his actions can be opposed. KCR's speech may well be the first step in the direction to restore the country back to its glorious past. It also is the beginning to lay a strong foundation for the country to once again stand tall with true democratic and secular values and become once again an economic power in Asia.

Though KCR demanded replies from PM Modi to the points he raised, PM remained silent in his address in the public meeting held after the BJP national executive committee meeting.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

AS AN ORGANISATION, WE HAVE BECOME BIGGER THAN THE CONGRESS IN GUJARAT. IT EXISTS LARGELY ON PAPER HERE. —AAP NATIONAL CONVENER ARVIND KEJRIWAL



CONGRESS HAS BEEN WORKING IN GUJARAT WITH THE PEOPLE... YOU WILL COME ACROSS PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE IN OUR IDEOLOGY. —GUJARAT CONGRESS GENERAL SECRETARY NISHIT VYAS



EPS, OPS slug it out for control over AIADMK

It's a challenge for AIADMK as to how to engage with ally BJP which is trying to use it as a counterforce to DMK

While the Shiv Sena has split in Maharashtra, the AIADMK in Tamil Nadu is engaged in a power struggle with two former chief ministers, E. Palaniswamy (EPS) and O. Panneerselvam (OPS), fighting with each other.

In a fast-developing drama, the EPS camp would like to relieve OPS of his present post of party treasurer and Deputy Leader in the Assembly. After losing the Assembly elections last year, and successive local body polls, the EPS camp feels that the dual leadership has only hampered the working of the party.

Amid its golden jubilee celebrations, the AIADMK cadres are confused. Five years ago, when a relatively unknown EPS was chosen as



KALYANI **SHANKAR**

(The writer is a senior journalist. The views expressed are personal.)

CM candidate by ex-AIADMK general secretary V.K. Sasikala, EPS and OPS reached a truce in 2017 to establish dual leadership. Together they steered the party and government successfully for four years, braving a pandemic.

After five decades, the AIADMK is facing a bleak future. Carefully built by two former chief ministers—founder M.G. Ramachandran and his protegee J. Jayalalithaa—it is undergoing a bad patch. There is a disconnect between the leaders and cadres. Some of the party's challenges include factionalism and the approach towards the ally Bharatiya Janata Party, which is trying to replace the Dravidian party as a counterforce to the DMK.

A gradual erosion in the post-Jayalalithaa era is amply

clear. The AIADMK's vote share stands at 25.47 per cent in the urban local body election. It got 33.29 per cent of votes in the Assembly.

The charismatic matinee idol MGR established the AIADMK on October 12, 1972, two days after the parent party DMK expelled him. He served as the chief minister from 1977 till his death in 1987. He chose to be on the right side of the Centre and made compromises with the prime ministers, including Indira Gandhi.

The philosophy of DMK founder and former chief minister C.N. Annadurai became the founding principle of the AIADMK. MGR's successor Jayalalithaa aligned with BJP and the Congress at different times, and became

chief minister six times with interruptions.

It is not the first time the AIADMK is facing a split. Following MGR's death in 1987, there was a power struggle between one faction headed by MGR's wife Janaki and the other by Jayalalithaa. While Janaki succeeded MGR as chief minister for a short period, both sections lost miserably to the DMK in the 1989 polls. Then Janaki withdrew from politics, and Jayalalithaa became the sole leader.

OPS and EPS have taken their fight to the general council, which has the power to elect an interim general secretary, not a permanent one. That was how Sasikala donned the post following the death of Jayalalithaa. But EPS and OPS removed Sasikala from that post and created new positions such as coordinator and co-coordinator, which are also temporary.

In the current situation, OPS got a midnight hearing before the Tamil Nadu High Court to restrict discussion points in the general council meeting. He thus stopped the party from elevating EPS as the sole leader at the June 23 general council meeting. However, the discussion turned ugly when clashes broke out between the two camps.

Seventy-five district secretaries, headquarters functionaries, and general council members have moved to the EPS camp in the last few days. OPS has the support of just nine district secretaries and leaders like Manoj Pandian and R. Vaithilingam.

OPS blamed vested interests and asserted that the general council and Monday's meeting of top AIADMK functionaries were illegal. Similarly, a proposed GC on July 11 is also not legal. It is doubtful whether it will take place or OPS will move the court to stop it.

After Jaya, the BJP has remote control over the AIADMK from the Centre. The change was abundantly clear on issues like NEET, New Education Policy, three-language policy (giving the nod first and then withdrawing it after the protests), the CAA, farmers' law, handling of the pandemic, etc.

The BJP is not able to penetrate much because of its ideology. In Tamil Nadu, the Dravidian-Tamil sentiment is

strong. So just like Congress, the BJP is riding piggyback on AIADMK. The Dravidian parties have had tie-ups with the two national parties at different times.

OPS tried to rope in the BJP, which had backed him earlier, but Prime Minister Narendra Modi refused to give him an audience last week. A disappointed OPS came back from Delhi and is resorting to other measures to survive.

In any political party, the cadres decide who gets to lead the party, and, in this case, Panneerselvam is certainly not their first choice. It is about time he accepted the fact and worked towards gaining acceptance of the large number of AIADMK cadre as their leader, as, after all, courts cannot get him back to his workers.

Lanka scrambles for aid

Nation to present debt restructuring programme to IMF by August, says Lankan PM Wickremesinghe

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka will present a debt restructuring programme to the IMF by August to secure a bailout package, Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe told Parliament on Tuesday, but acknowledged that negotiations with the global lender were "more difficult and complicated" than in the past as the country is now "bankrupt."

Sri Lanka is going through the worst economic crisis since its independence from Britain in 1948, and needs to obtain at least USD 4 billion to tide over the acute shortage in foreign exchange reserves. An International Monetary Fund (IMF) team visited Colombo on June 20 to continue discussions on an economic programme that could be supported by an IMF lending arrangement.

The IMF later said it has concluded "constructive and productive" discussions with Sri Lankan authorities, but warned that the crisis-ridden island nation needs to do more on debt restructuring and step up structural reforms to address corruption vulnerabilities before a bailout package is finalised.

"The first round of discussions with the IMF has been a success but the assistance depends on the debt restructuring programme which Sri Lanka has to come up with," Wickremesinghe said in Parliament.

Sri Lanka is currently working on the debt restructuring sustainability being prepared by legal and financial experts. "We hope to submit this report to the IMF by August. Once this is done we will be able to reach an agreement," he said.

The anticipated IMF facility is viewed as being slow to materialise due to the question of the island's debt sustainability.



Wickremesinghe said the economic crisis will be resolved through meaningful reforms and stressed that the support of Parliament, including the Opposition, is of paramount importance. "A return to an open economy, devoid of state monopolies, is a must. Economic integration with the region mustn't be feared, but pursued," he said.

Wickremesinghe recalled that Sri Lanka held negotiations with the IMF on many occasions before, however at those

times discussions were held as a developing country.

"But this time the situation is different from all those previous occasions. We are now participating in the negotiations as a bankrupt country. Therefore, we have to face a more difficult and complicated situation than in previous negotiations," he said.

"Once a staff-level agreement is reached, this will be submitted to the IMF Board of Directors for approval. But due to the state of bankruptcy our country is in, we have to submit a plan on our debt sustainability to them separately.

"Only when they are satisfied with that plan can we reach an agreement at the staff level. This is not a straightforward process. We have been able to end the round of discussion effectively despite these difficulties," Wickremesinghe said.

He said Sri Lanka's economy is currently shrinking and the government was trying to reverse it.

"According to central bank statistics, our current economic growth rate is between negative four and negative five. According to IMF statistics, it is between negative six and negative seven. This is a serious situation," he said.

"By 2025, our aim is to create a surplus in the primary budget. Our effort is to raise the

economic growth rate to a stable level. Our expectation is to establish a stable economic base by 2026," he said.

"It will take till 2026 to go back to the 2018 level. If we make a determined journey along this road map, we can achieve an economic growth rate of negative one by the end of 2023, he said.

He said the total debt burden of the government at the end of 2021 was Rs 17.5 trillion and by March 2022 it has increased to Rs 21.6 trillion.

The Prime Minister also presented the roadmap with proposed solutions to the existing economic problem. He said it was important to stabilise the rupee as soon as possible and strengthen the rupee without letting it fall.

"We have implemented a plan to limit the printing of money in the future. In 2023, we will have to print money with restrictions on several occasions. But by the end of 2024, it is our intention to stop printing money completely."

Wickremesinghe said that Sri Lanka's inflation by the year end would be over 50 per cent. "Our plan is to control inflation. By the end of this year, inflation will rise to 60%. This is mainly due to the increase in the prices of goods in the world and the fall in the value of the rupee," he said.



France brings 51 citizens home from ISIS camps in Syria

AP ■ PARIS

French authorities on Tuesday repatriated 51 women and children from the former Islamic State-controlled areas in Syria, according to a statement from the national antiterrorist prosecutor's office.

It's the single largest return of women and children to France from camps in northeastern Syria since the territorial defeat of the Islamic State group in March 2019. France saw more of its citizens leave to join IS than any other country in Europe.

Tuesday's group comprises 16 women, aged 22 to 39, and 35 minors, seven of whom are coming to France unaccompanied by adults. All but two of the women in the group are French citizens. Twelve women returned with their children and four of the women had previously agreed to the return of their children, according to the prosecutor's statement.

Eight women were taken into custody for questioning and the other eight were detained

on arrest warrants. The children were placed in the care of the child protective services attached to the Versailles Judicial Court.

One of the 35 minors is in police custody on suspicion of participating in activities of a terrorist criminal enterprise, according to the prosecutor's statement. The minor will shortly turn 18, the statement said.

Many European countries were slow to allow the return of women and children for fear they would violently turn on their homelands. France, which saw more of its citizens join IS in Syria than any other European country and suffered multiple deadly attacks beginning in 2015, has been especially reluctant.

French authorities have insisted that adults who fought with IS should be prosecuted in the country where they had committed crimes.

In December, a 28-year-old Frenchwoman with diabetes died in a camp in Syria, leaving her 6-year-old daughter an orphan, according to the family's lawyer, who had been requesting their return since 2019.

6 dead, 30 hurt in shooting at Chicago-area July 4 parade

AP ■ HIGHLAND PARK (US)

A gunman on a rooftop opened fire on an Independence Day parade in suburban Chicago on Monday, killing at least six people, wounding at least 30 and sending hundreds of marchers, parents with strollers and children on bicycles fleeing in terror, police said.

Authorities said a man named as a person of interest in the shooting was taken into police custody Monday evening after an hours-long manhunt in and around Highland Park, an affluent community of about 30,000 on Chicago's north shore.

The July 4 shooting was just the latest to shatter the rituals of American life. Schools, churches, grocery stores and now community parades have all become killing grounds in recent months. This time, the bloodshed came as the nation tried to find cause to celebrate its founding and the bonds that still hold



it together.

"It definitely hits a lot harder when it's not only your hometown but it's also right in front of you," resident Ron Tuazon said as he and a friend returned to the parade route Monday evening to retrieve chairs, blankets and a child's bike that he and his family abandoned when the shooting began.

"It's commonplace now," Tuazon said of what he called yet another American atrocity. "We don't blink anymore. Until laws change, it's going to be more of the same."

The shooting occurred at a spot on the parade route where many residents had staked out prime viewing points early in the day for the annual celebration. Dozens of fired bullets sent hundreds of parade-goers — some visibly bloodied — fleeing. They left a trail of abandoned items that showed everyday life suddenly, violently disrupted: A half-eaten bag of potato chips; a box of chocolate cookies spilled onto the grass; a child's Chicago Cubs cap.

China sees record rain, heat as weather turns volatile

AP ■ BEIJING

From the snowcapped peaks of Tibet to the tropical island of Hainan, China is sweltering under the worst heatwave in decades while rainfall hit records in June.

Extreme heat is also battering Japan, and volatile weather is causing trouble for other parts of the world in what scientists say has all the hallmarks of climate change, with even more warming expected this century.

The northeastern provinces of Shandong, Jilin and Liaoning saw precipitation rise to the highest levels ever recorded in June, while the national average 112.1 millimeters (4.4 inches) was 9.1 per cent higher than the same month last year, the China Meteorological Administration said in a report Tuesday.

The average temperature across the nation also hit 21.3 degrees Celsius (70.34 Fahrenheit) in June, up 0.9 C (1.8 F) from the same period month last year and the highest since 1961. No relief is in sight, with higher than usual temperatures and precipitation forecast in much of the country throughout July, the administration said.

In the northern province of Henan, Xuchang hit 42.1 C (107.8 F) and Dengfeng 41.6 C (106.9 F) on June 24 for their hottest days on record, according to global extreme weather tracker Maxmilliano Herrera.

China has also seen seasonal flooding in several parts of the country, causing misery for hundreds of thousands, particularly in the hard-hit



south that receives the bulk of rainfall as well as typhoons that sweep in from the South China Sea.

China is not alone in experiencing higher temperatures and more volatile weather. In Japan, authorities warned of greater than usual stress on the power grid and urged citizens to conserve energy.

Japanese officials announced the earliest end to the annual summer rainy season since the national meteorological agency began keeping records in 1951. The rains usually temper summer heat,

often well into July.

On Friday, the cities of Tokamachi and Tsunan set all-time heat records while several others broke monthly marks.

Large parts of the Northern Hemisphere have seen extreme heat this summer, with regions from the normally chilly Russian Arctic to the traditionally sweltering American South recording unusually high temperatures and humidity.

In the United States, the National Weather Service has held 30 million Americans under some kind of heat advisory amid record-setting temperatures.

The suffering and danger to health is most intense among those without air conditioning or who work outdoors, further reinforcing the economic disparities in dealing with extreme weather trends.

Sydney floods impact 50,000 around Australia's largest city

AP ■ SYDNEY

Hundreds of homes have been inundated in and around Australia's largest city in a flood emergency that was impacting 50,000 people, officials said Tuesday. Emergency response teams made 100 rescues overnight of people trapped in cars on flooded roads or in inundated homes in the Sydney area, State Emergency Service manager Ashley Sullivan said. Days of torrential rain have caused dams to overflow and waterways to break their banks, bringing a fourth flood emergency in 16 months to parts of the city of 5 million people.

The New South Wales state government declared a disaster across 23 local government areas overnight, activating federal government financial assistance for flood victims. Evacuation orders and warnings to prepare to abandon homes impacted 50,000 people, up from 32,000 on Monday, New South Wales Premier Dominic Perrottet said.

"This event is far from over. Please don't be complacent, wherever you are. Please be careful when you're driving on our roads. There is still substantial risk for flash flooding across our state," Perrottet said.

Emergency Services Minister Steph Cooke credited the skill and commitment of rescue crews for preventing any death or serious injury by the fourth day of the flooding emergency. Parts of southern Sydney had been lashed by more than 20 centimetres (nearly 8 inches) of rain in 24 hours, more than 17 per cent of the city's annual average, Bureau of Meteorology meteorologist Jonathan How said.

Al-Qaida, ISIS attacks kill 22 people in Burkina Faso, say officials

AP ■ OUAGADOUGOU (BURKINA FASO)

At least 22 people in northwestern Burkina Faso and also injured others, the government said Monday.

The "cowardly and barbaric" attack occurred late Sunday in the commune of Bourassay in Kossi province, Babo Pierre Pierre Bassinga, governor of Boucle du Mouhoun region, said in a statement.

The West African nation has been overrun by jihadi violence linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group in recent years. Violence has killed thousands and displaced nearly 2 million people from their homes.

Mutinous soldiers ousted Burkina Faso's democratically elected president in January promising to secure the country, but since then violence has increased and spread.

More than 530 violent incidents occurred between February and May, which was more than double the level during the same period of 2021, according to the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project.

At least 135 people were killed in 12 jihadi attacks during the first two weeks of June, according to an internal security report for aid workers seen by The Associated Press.

In an attempt to stem the violence, last month the junta announced the creation of two military zones in the hard-hit East and Sahel



Rebel landmine wounds seven soldiers in central Philippines

AP ■ MANILA

A land mine set by suspected communist guerrillas wounded seven soldiers in the central Philippines on Tuesday, in one of the insurgents' first known attacks since President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. Took office last week.

Army troops were checking reports from villagers of anti-personnel mines laid by New People's Army rebels along a village trail in Mapanas town in Northern Samar province when an explosion wounded the seven soldiers, regional army commander Maj. Gen. Edgardo de Leon said.

Two of the wounded soldiers were in critical condition, he said, adding that no villagers were injured.

"Some of the soldiers were tossed away because the rebels have been using really powerful land mines," de Leon said.

The government will file criminal complaints against rebel leaders for the attack and the use of internationally banned types of land mines, de Leon told reporters.

The soldiers were not able to open fire at the rebels, who fled after the attack and were being hunted by government forces, he said.

On Friday, a day after Marcos Jr. Was sworn in after winning a landslide victory in a May 9 election, government troops assaulted eight communist rebels, killing one, in a brief gunbattle in central Negros Oriental province, the army said.

PUBLIC NOTICE

M/s Elite Homes Pvt. Ltd.
[CIN: U45201DL2005PTC133721]
Regd. Office: Shop No. 30, M2K Mall, 16 Mangalam Place, Dist. Centre, Sector - 3, Rohini, New Delhi - 110085
Site Office: M2K Galleria, A Block, Sector 5, Dharuhera, Dist. Rewari, Haryana Ph: 9813270990

Whereas, we M/s Elite Homes Pvt. Ltd. are in the process of undertaking of development of two Colonies in accordance with the licenses granted by Director, Town & Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh for (i) a Residential Plotted Colony vide License no. 189 of 2007 dated 16.06.2007 and 06 of 2020 dated 20.01.2020 over an area measuring 67.9435 acres in the revenue estate of Village Malpura and Ghari Alawalpur in Sector 5 & 7A, Dharuhera and (ii) a Group Housing Colony vide License no. 1 & 2 of 2007 dated 02.01.2007 over an area measuring 16.006 acres in the revenue estate of Village Ghari Alawalpur in Sector 5, Dharuhera.

And whereas, several individuals have made bookings/ entered into agreements for purchase / allotment of plot/flats/property in the said colony (hereinafter referred as existing allottees).

And whereas, the revised layout plan of above said Residential Plotted Colony earlier approved on 23.01.2020 and the revised building plan of above said Group Housing Colony earlier approved on 23.10.2012 are now proposed to be revised on account of request made by us for migration of 2.09375 acres in Rect no./ Killa no. 42//6min, 15min, 25min 43//3/2, 8min, 9min, 10min from Residential Plotted colony and for migration of 4.10 acres in Rect no./ Killa no. 43//11min, 12min, 20min, 21min, 45//1min, 2min, 9/1min, 10/1min, 26min, 46//5min from Group Housing Colony both of village Ghari Alawalpur, Sector 5, Town Dharuhera for grant of a license on land measuring 6.19375 acres (2.09375 + 4.10) under Deen Dayal Jan Awas Yojna, 2016.

And whereas, the office of Director General, Town & Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh has required seeking of objection from existing allottees as per the procedure laid down in the departmental direction dated 25.01.2021, as a pre-condition for allowing such revision in the layout plan and building plan.

Accordingly, vide this public notice objections are hereby invited from existing allottees in the said colonies on the revision in the Layout Plan and Building Plan. Copies of the earlier approved revised layout plan of Residential Plotted Colony bearing drawing no. DTCP-7349, dated 23.01.2020 and approved revised building plan of Residential Group Housing bearing memo no. 21183, dated 23.10.2012 alongwith the layout plan/building plan now proposed to be revised bearing memo no. 8411, dated 27.06.2022 are available for perusal on our website www.m2kindia.com. The said layout plan can also be perused at the site office of undersigned at as well as in the office of Senior Town Planner, Gurugram.

Any allottee / general public having any objection on the revision in the approved revised layout plan and approved revised building plan of above said colonies, may file their objection in the office of Senior Town Planner, Gurugram within 30 days of the publication of this notice, failing which it shall be assumed that there are no objections to the proposed migration and revision in the layout plan and building plan.

Date: 06.07.2022
Place: Dharuhera
M/s Elite Homes Pvt. Ltd.

Nations meet Somalia fate as their aid diverted to Ukraine

AP ■ MOGADISHU

More than two dozen children have died of hunger in the past two months in a single hospital in Somalia. Dr Yahye Abdi Garun has watched their emaciated parents stumble in from rural areas gripped by the driest drought in decades. And yet no humanitarian aid arrives.

Shortly after Russia invaded Ukraine, a donor who was preparing to give a half-million dollars to a Somali aid group told its executive director Hussein Kulmiye it was redirecting the money to help Ukrainians instead. And now, as Somalis fleeing the drought fill more than 500 camps in the city of Baidoa, aid workers make “horrific” choices to help one camp and ignore 10 others, Norwegian Refugee Council Secretary General Jan Egeland said, telling The Associated Press he is “angry and ashamed.”

His group’s Ukraine appeal was fully funded within 48 hours, but its Somalia appeal is perhaps a quarter funded as thousands of people die.

The war in Ukraine has abruptly drawn millions of dollars away from other crises. Somalia, facing a food shortage largely driven by the war, might be the most vulnerable.



Its aid funding is less than half of last year’s level while overwhelmingly Western donors have sent more than USD 1.7 billion to respond to the war in Europe.

Yemen, Syria, Iraq, South Sudan, Congo and the Palestinian territories are similarly affected.

The USD 2.2 billion appeal for Ukraine is almost 80 per cent funded, according to United Nations data, an “exceptional” level for any crisis at the midway point of the year, said Angus Urquhart, humanitarian and

crisis lead for the Development Initiatives consultancy. The smaller appeal for Somalia is just 30 per cent funded.

This year’s global shift in money and attention is perhaps most urgently felt in the Horn of Africa, including Ethiopia and Kenya, where some areas could be declared in famine within weeks.

The United States Agency for International Development says regional authorities haven’t seen anything on this scale in well over 100

years. Millions of livestock, families’ source of wealth and nutrition, have died. People are next.

To the shock of some exhausted Somalis who walk for days through parched landscapes to places like Mogadishu in search of aid, there is often little or none. Hawa Osman Bilal sat outside her makeshift tent holding the clothes of her daughter Ifrah, who like many vulnerable Somalis died after the difficult journey to seek help.

“She was skinny and emaciated, and she died in front of me,” Bilal said. The girl was buried nearby, one in a growing number of tiny graves.

The crowded camp’s caretaker, Fadumo Abdulkadir Warsame, told the AP that about 100 families had arrived in the past week alone, swelling the population to 1,700 families. There is no food to give them.

“The only thing we can afford for them is bread and black tea,” he said.

“There is no aid from the donors yet.”

At a nearby storeroom run by the local organisation Peace and Development Action, supported by the UN World Food Program, the stock has shriveled. “The world has turned its back on Somalia to focus on Ukraine,” manager Shafici Ali Ahmed said. The White House acknowledged the problem in a June 28 statement on global food security, saying

that “while the entire globe will continue to be affected by Russia’s actions, the most immediate needs will present in the Horn of Africa,” where Somalia once sourced 90 per cent of its wheat from Russia and Ukraine but now struggles to find supplies amid soaring prices.

“We’re really trying to stave off mass deaths at this point,” Sarah Charles, assistant to the administrator for USAID’s Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, told the AP, adding that “unfortunately, the nature of these crises is such that they go slow and then go very fast.” Nimo Hassan, director of the Somalia NGO Consortium, and several others said they believe donor countries’ representatives on the ground understand the urgency, but decision-makers in capitals like Brussels and London appear distracted by the war in Europe. “They’re not saying openly, We’re focused on Ukraine, but you can see what they’re doing in Ukraine,” Hassan said.

“It should be based on need, not a political decision, you know?”

Less than 30 per cent of the new arrivals at camps for those fleeing drought in Somalia were receiving immediate food or other assistance as of April, the UN humanitarian agency has said.

Ukrainians displaced near Kyiv fear for war-damaged homes



AP ■ BORODYANKA

Valentyna Klymenko tries to return home as late as possible to avoid the darkness of her war-damaged home outside Ukraine’s capital. She visits friends, goes to the well for water or looks for a place to charge her phone.

The 70-year-old Klymenko then returns alone to an apartment that used to be noisy and full of life. She is now greeted by dim, damp rooms instead of the voices of her great-grandchildren.

Klymenko rarely cooks. She drinks fruit compote and eats canned tomatoes, which she prepared last year, so she doesn’t waste the gas in her portable stove. She goes to bed quickly, but can’t fall asleep for a long time.

Her thoughts revolve around one question: “What will happen to my home?”

Russian troops retreated from the area around Kyiv in late March. But they left behind 16,000 damaged residential buildings in the Bucha region, where Borodyanka is located, according to the head of the Kyiv regional administration, Oleksiy Kuleba.

The most affected street in Borodyanka, a town with a population of more than 12,000, was Tsentralna, which was still called Lenin Street less than a decade ago. One of the homes on this street belongs to Klymenko.

The shockwave from a Russian airstrike that witnesses say struck the building across the street with two bombs caused a fire in Klymenko’s five-story apartment building.

The apartments on the upper floors of Klymenko’s building burned. Four months later, there is no electricity, water, or gas. Some residents lost everything and ended up on the street without any means to find a new home.

“I had a sofa here and armchairs here.

“But now there are just the springs,” said Tetiana Solohub, pointing to the blackened walls of her home. Nothing is left but a couple of small enamel cups and the suffocating smell of ashes.

Solohub’s scorched apartment is located a few floors above Klymenko’s. They moved into the building at the same time 36 years ago, when it had just been built.

Ukraine town warned to evacuate ahead of Russian assault

AP ■ KRAMATORSK (UKRAINE)

A day after Russian President Vladimir Putin declared victory in seizing an eastern Ukraine province essential to his wartime aims, the mayor of a city in the path of Moscow’s offensive warned residents Tuesday to evacuate ahead of an expected assault.

The warning from the mayor of Sloviansk underscored fears that Russian forces were positioned to advance farther into Ukraine’s Donbas region, a mostly Russian-speaking industrial area where the country’s most experienced soldiers are concentrated.

Sloviansk, which had a population of about 107,000 before Russian invaded Ukraine more than four months ago, appeared to be the next target. The city has taken rocket and artillery fire during the war, and the bombardment has picked up since Moscow took the last major city in neighbouring Luhansk province, Mayor Vadim Lyakh said.

“It’s important to evacuate as many people as possible,” he said, adding that shelling damaged 40 houses on Monday.

The Ukrainian military withdrew its troops Sunday from the city of Lysychansk to keep them from being surrounded, Russia’s defense minister and Putin said the city’s subsequent capture put Moscow in control of all of Luhansk, one of two provinces that make up the Donbas.

The office of Ukraine’s president said the Ukrainian military was still defending a small part of Luhansk and trying to buy time to establish for-



tified positions in nearby areas.

The question now is whether Russia can muster enough strength to complete its seizure of the Donbas by taking Donetsk province, too. Putin acknowledged Monday that Russian troops who fought in Luhansk need to “take some rest and beef up their combat capability.”

Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu said Tuesday that the war in Ukraine would continue until all of the goals set Putin are achieved. However, Shoigu said “the main priorities” for Moscow at the moment were “preserving the lives and health” of the troops, as well as “excluding the threat to the security of civilians.”

When Putin ordered the invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, his stated goals were defending the people of the Donbas against Kyiv’s alleged aggression, and the “demilitariza-

tion” and “denazification” of Ukraine.

Pro-Russia separatists have fought Ukrainian forces and controlled much of the Donbas for eight years. Before the invasion, Putin recognised the independence of a pair of self-proclaimed separatist republics in the region. He also sought to portray the tactics of Ukrainian forces and the government as akin to Nazi Germany’s, claims for which no evidence has emerged.

The General Staff of the Ukrainian military said Russian forces also shelled several Donetsk towns and villages around Sloviansk in the past day but were repelled as they tried to advance toward a town about 20 kilometers (12 miles) to the city’s north. South of the city, Russian forces were trying to push toward two more towns and shelling areas near Kramatorsk.

Meanwhile, Moscow-

installed officials in Ukraine’s southern Kherson region on Tuesday announced the formation of a new regional government there, with a former Russian official at the helm.

Sergei Yeliseyev, the head of the new Moscow-backed government in Kherson, is a former deputy prime minister of Russia’s western exclave of Kaliningrad and also used to work at Russia’s Federal Security Service, or the FSB, according to media reports.

It wasn’t immediately clear

what would become of the “military-civic administration” the Kremlin installed earlier. The administration’s head, Vladimir Saldo said in a Telegram statement that the new government was “not a temporary, not a military, not some kind of interim administration, but a proper governing body.”

“The fact that not just Kherson residents, but Russian officials, too, are part of this government speaks clearly about the direction the Kherson region is headed in the future,” he said. “This direction is to Russia.”

There was no immediate comment from Ukrainian officials.

In other developments:

The 30 NATO allies signed off on the accession protocols for Sweden and Finland, sending the membership bids of the two nations to the alliance capitals for legislative approvals. The move further increases Russia’s strategic isolation in the wake of its invasion of neighbouring Ukraine in February and military struggles there since. Alliance Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg hailed the signing as a “truly a historic moment for Finland, for Sweden and for NATO.”

NATO poised to sign accession protocols for Sweden, Finland



AP ■ BRUSSELS

The 30 NATO allies are set to sign off on the accession protocols for Sweden and Finland on Tuesday, sending the membership bids of the two nations to the alliance capitals for legislative approvals. The move will further increase Russia’s strategic isolation in the wake of its invasion of neighbouring Ukraine in February and military struggles there since.

The 30 ambassadors and permanent representatives are to formally approve the decisions of last week’s NATO summit when the alliance made the historic decision to invite Russia’s neighbor Finland and Scandinavian partner Sweden to join the military club.

Despite the agreement in the alliance, parliamentary approval in member state Turkey could still pose problems for their final inclusion as members.

PUBLIC NOTICE
I Shaloo Aggarwal D/o Mr. Mam Raj Aggarwal R/o 104, Banarsi Dass Estate, Timarpur, Delhi - 110 054 lost original Flat Buyer Agreement of Flat No.801, Tower-10, La-Tropicana, Civil Lines, Delhi- 110 054 issued by M/s Parsvanath Landmark Developers Pvt. Ltd. Along with Receipt Nos.: S0001314 Dt. 05-07-2014, S0001301 Dt. 30-12-2005, S00001302 Dt. 30-12-2005, S0001303 Dt. 30-12-2005, S0002019 Dt. 23-06-2007 in favour of Late Sh. Anand Vardhan Aggarwal in this regard a report Dt. 04-07-2022 wide LR No: 558663/2022 finder call 9810809260

Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala-147001)
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in Mobile No. 9646110541
E-Tender Enq. No. 7286/P-1/EMP-12013 Dated 30-06-2022
Dy. Chief Engineer/Headquarter (Procurement Cell-1) GGSSSTP, Roopnagar invites E-Tender ID No. 2022. POWER 87423_1 for procurement of Special purpose welding electrodes for the year 2022-23.
For detailed NIT & tender specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from dated 04-07-2022 / 12.30 PM onwards.
Note: Corrigendum / addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>
76155/12/274/2021/15481 RTP-51/22

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client i.e. Fullerton India Home Finance Company that Mrs. Sonika Luthra is the owner of Built up first floor, without roof rights of Property bearing No. 562A, Kharsia No. 63, in Block C, Village Azadpur, Majlis Park, Delhi, by virtue of Gift Deed dated 29.09.2021, Doc. No. 13694. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owner wants to mortgage the said property and intend to obtain a loan in the name of Mr. Sanjay Luthra from our client against the said property, if anybody has any objection/s upon the ownership of above owners over the said property, its mortgage/litigation, and any other objections, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.
Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
200, 1st Floor, 23, Shivaji Park, Moh Nagar, N. Delhi-110 017
Ph: 011-41112522-28 kumarassociatesadvocates@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of ICICI Bank Ltd. that Mr. Pawar Kumar is the owner of the Property/Flat Bearing no.54-A, on Ground Floor, in Block and Pocket G&J/U, Situated at Pilampura, New Delhi, by virtue of Sale Deed dated 10.12.2021, Registration No. 17159, executed by Mrs. Reena Sharma & Mr. Sagar Sharma, has been registered SMC Certificate stating legal heirs of late Mr. Ramesh Chand Sharma, All persons are hereby informed not to deal or carry out any transaction with anyone on the basis of the said missing document. If anyone has already carried out or being carried out kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 10 days of the present.
Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
200, 1st Floor, 23, Shivaji Park, Moh Nagar, N. Delhi-110 017
Ph: 011-41112522-28 kumarassociatesadvocates@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
I, Bachuli Devi W/o Late Sh. Bachi Singh Bisht R/o C-404, Sector-22, Noida, Distt: Gautam Budh Nagar (U.P.) has disowned my son Rajee Singh/ Rajee Singh Bisht from all moveable and immovable properties and also severed all relations with him and I shall not be responsible for any acts done by the above said my son in future. And if any body deal, with him shall be responsible for the same.
Bachuli Devi
W/o Late Sh. Bachi Singh Bisht
R/o C-404, Sector-22, Noida (U.P.)

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that Shri Iqbal Ahmed S/O Lt. Shri Meharban Ahmed R/o H. No. A-46/3, St. No. 1, Jafraabad, NewSeelampur, Delhi-53, has purchased the ground floor (commercial) and residential third floor of property bearing No. H.No. 229/14-B, Gali No.2, Railway Colony, Mandawali, Delhi - 110092, measuring 50 sq. yard from Ms. Vishakha Pandey D/o Sh. Mahesh Pandas vide registered sale deed dated 16.08.2022 duly registered with SR VILAPreetVihar. On behalf of our client i.e. Shri Iqbal Ahmed, the undersigned advocate hereby invites claims or objections from other heirs or claimant/s or objector/s for transfer of the said right, interest, or title in the said property within a period of 14 days from the publication of this notice, with copies of proofs to support the claim/objectation at below mentioned address. If no claim/s/objections are received within the period prescribed above, it will be presumed and/or deemed that there are no such claim/s/objectations and if any, the same have been abandoned and our client will at the liberty to transfer his legal right in the manner provided under the bye laws and our client will not entertain subsequent claim, if any.
Tushar Sharma-Advocate
B-1/103 Sant Nagar Burari
Delhi-110084, Ph.: 999592027

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform the general public and all men that my client Smt. Sushila Devi Raina W/o Late Shri Manohar Nath Raina R/o A-3/307, Paschim Vihar, New Delhi 110063 has disowned, disbarred and disinherited her son Sh. Uday Raina alias Uday Kumar Raina alias Uday Rana; and his spouse Smt. Vipula Raina including all his legal heirs from all her movable and immovable properties. She has severed all her relations with him and his wife for all purposes. He and his wife have no right, title, interest, interference or concern with any of her movable and immovable properties. Anybody dealing with him or his wife in any manner whatsoever will be doing so at his/her own cost, risk and responsibility. My client will not be liable for any act of whatsoever nature done by her son and his wife in the future.
Rajeev Lochan Mahanta, (Advocate)
Off Add: W-31, Lower Ground Floor, Greater Kailash Part-1, New Delhi-110048, M: 9711750166

PUBLIC NOTICE
I, Mr. Karthik Kumar, S/o. Mr. Senthil Kumar, holder of Indian Passport No. M3216770 issued at Bahrain on 26/11/2014, Permanent Residence at 42/35, Parupoorani North, Muthupattinam, Karaikudi, Sivagangai Dist., Tamilnadu-630002 and temporary Resident of 22, Building 437, road 15, block 517, Saar and Ms. Drishti Harish Rajuathi, holder of Indian Passport No. L1187614 issued at Bahrain on 04/11/2013, Permanent Residence at 3A, Thatta Niwasi, above Canara Bank, Chembur, Mumbai-89 and Temporary Resident at 12, Building Number 350, Road no 1106, Block 711, tubli of intend to solemnize our civil marriage during 30 days at the Indian Embassy of India, Building 1090, al seef, p.o.box 26106, kingdom of Bahrain under the foreign marriage act 1969 of India.
Object(s), if any, may be forwarded to the embassy of India, kingdom of Bahrain within a period of 30 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Russia Foreign Minister visits Mongolia in drive for support

AP ■ BEIJING

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov met with leaders in Mongolia on Tuesday during a trip to Asia to seek support amid his country’s diplomatic isolation by the West and punishing sanctions levelled over its invasion of Ukraine. Lavrov met with Mongolian Foreign Minister Battsetseg Batmunkh and paid a courtesy call on President Khkhnaagiin Khurelsukh, Mongolian state media reported.

Mongolia is a landlocked nation sandwiched between Russia and China, and has sought to maintain friendly relations with both neighbours while also cultivating close ties with the US, whose relations with Moscow and Beijing have become increasingly fraught.

Mongolian and Russian state media gave no details of any specific discussions about



the Ukraine conflict, while emphasising strong bilateral relations. The two sides have signed a series of trade agreements, and a pipeline carrying Russian natural gas to China is being built through Mongolian territory.

“Reaffirming his commitment to strengthening bilateral relations, (Lavrov) expressed readiness to cooperate with Mongolia in all aspects,” Mongolia’s official Montsame

news agency said of Lavrov’s meeting with Khurelsukh. Ukraine and Russia’s rejection of Western criticism were major themes of Lavrov’s public comments.

He was quoted by the Russian state news agency Tass as saying that the West is seeking to turn Ukraine “into an openly Russophobic, neo-Nazi state, a military foothold” that would threaten Russia’s security.

SVP HOUSING LIMITED
(Formerly Known As MAHABIR METALLEX LIMITED)
Registered Office: A-3, NDSE, Part-1, New Delhi-110049
CIN: L70100DL2003PLC118413 Website: www.svphousing.com
Email Id: info@svphousing.com Phone: 011-41070148

NOTICE OF EXTRA-ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING AND E-VOTING

NOTICE is hereby given that an Extra- Ordinary General Meeting of the members of SVP Housing Limited will be held on Friday, 29th day of July, 2022 at 12:00 P.M. at A-3, NDSE, Part -1, New Delhi-110049, to transact the business as stated in the Notice thereof.

In compliance with Section 108 of the Companies Act, 2013 read with Rule 20 of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014, as amended by Companies (Management & Administration) Rules 2015 the Company is pleased to provide Remote e-voting facility to the Members enabling them to cast their vote electronically for all the resolutions as set out in the EGM Notice, through the e-voting services provided by National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL).

Copies of the Notice convening EGM along with attendance slip and proxy form have been sent to all the Members of the Company through electronic means to those Members whose Email IDs are registered with the Company / Depository Participants. In case of other Members i.e. Members not having Registered Email ID, as per the requirement of the Companies (Management and Administration) Rules, 2014 as amended by Companies (Management & Administration) Rules 2015, physical copies of the above documents will be sent through the permitted mode at the registered address of the Members and same will be completed till 05.07.2022

All the Members are hereby informed that: -

(i) The remote e-voting period commences on Monday, 25th July 2022, 9:00 a.m. and ends on Thursday, 28th July 2022, 5:00 p.m. Remote e-voting shall not be allowed beyond 5:00 P.M. 28th July 2022. The e-voting module shall be disabled by NSDL for voting thereafter. Once the vote on the resolution is casted by the Member, the Member shall not be allowed to change it subsequently.

(ii) In case of any person becoming the member of the Company after 1st July 2022 or before the cut-off date i.e. 22nd July 2022 (to whom the EGM Notice has not been dispatched) become the member of the company may write an email to evoting@nsdl.co.in or helpdesk@nsdl.co.in by mentioning the Folio NO/ DP ID or Client ID for obtaining login ID and password for e-voting. Further, if the Member is already registered with NSDL remote e-voting platform, then he can use existing User ID and Password for casting the vote through remote e-voting.

(iii) Members may note that: -

(a) The facility for voting through polling paper shall be made available at the EGM.

(b) The Members who have casted their vote by remote e-voting prior to the EGM may also attend the EGM, but shall not be entitled to cast their vote again.

(iv) The Notice of EGM is available on the Company's website i.e. www.svphousing.com

The Board of Directors have appointed M/s Ankit Singhal & Associates, Company Secretaries, New Delhi as Scrutinizer for conducting the voting / poll and remote e-voting process in a fair and transparent manner.

Members are requested to read the instructions pertaining to e-voting as printed in the EGM Notice carefully. In case of any queries, you may refer to the Frequently Asked Questioning (FAQs) for Shareholders and remote e-voting user manual for Shareholders available at the Downloads sections of www.evoting.nsdl.com or contact NSDL through e-mail at evoting@nsdl.co.in / amitv@nsdl.co.in on Toll Free No.: 1800-222-990 / Telephone No.: 022-2499 4360.

To support green initiative, Members who have not registered their email addresses so far or who want to update their email address, are requested to approach their respective DP (for electronic holding) or Big Share Services Pvt. Ltd/ Company (for physical holding) for receiving all communications electronically.

For SVP Housing Limited
Sd/-
(Vijay Kumar)
Managing Director

Place : New Delhi
Date : 27.06.2022

Sensex erases intra-day gains to settle down by 100 points

Mumbai: Benchmark BSE Sensex on Tuesday reversed its intra-day gains to close down by 100 points due to lag-end selling in FMCG, banking and IT stocks amid a weak opening in European stock markets.

The 30-share BSE index declined by 100.42 points or 0.19 per cent to settle at 53,134.35 points.

The index opened higher and later jumped 631.16 points or 1.18 per cent to touch the day's high of 53,865.93 after buying in banking, metals, energy and pharma shares boosted by gains in most Asian markets.

However, the barometer lost steam in the pre-close session due to selling in IT, FMCG and select banking counters as European stock markets opened with losses on recession fears.

The broader NSE Nifty also erased its intra-day gains and dipped 24.50 points or 0.15 per cent to close at 15,810.85.

“The current trend in the global market indicates that uncertainties around recession and tightening monetary policy continue to haunt investors’ confidence. Dollar index opened sharply high affecting the performance of emerging currencies, depreciating INR,”



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

Among Sensex stocks, ITC fell the most by 1.73 per cent. Wipro dropped by 1.58 per cent, M&M by 1.2 per cent, L&T by 1.12 per cent, Maruti by 1.1 per cent and IndusInd Bank by 0.98 per cent.

Infosys fell 0.77 per cent and TCS by 0.57 per cent while Axis Bank, Asian Paints and HDFC twins also declined.

Gains in Reliance Industries (0.8 per cent) and HUL (0.92 per cent) restricted losses in Sensex. Power Grid, Bajaj Finserv, Sun Pharma,

and Tata Steel were among the major gainers.

“It was a roller-coaster ride for markets as the Nifty swung volatile in a broader range and finally settled around the day's low. The decline in the index can be attributed to the uncertain global markets and caution ahead of the earnings season,”

Ajit Mishra, VP - Research, Religare Broking Ltd said.

“Nifty gave up morning gains and ended in the negative zone. Following early weakness in European markets, it fell and closed lower,” said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities. **PTI**

Work needs to be done to prune GST exemption in services: Revenue Secy

New Delhi: A lot of work still needs to be done to prune GST-exempted items, especially in the services sector, Revenue Secretary Tarun Bajaj said on Tuesday.

Addressing a CII interactive session, Bajaj said the effort is to remove the “rough edges” in Goods and Services Tax (GST) over the next two-three years.

On rationalisation of GST rates, the secretary said a group of ministers is looking into it. “We will have to wait for some time,” he said. Exemptions still remain, a large number on the services side, Bajaj said, adding “work needs to be done to prune it”.

On representations that 5 per cent GST on non-ICU hospital rooms above ₹5,000 is against affordable healthcare, Bajaj said the percentage of rooms in hospitals which charge more than ₹5,000 is “minuscule”.

“If I can spend ₹5,000 on a room, I can pay ₹250 for GST. I don't see any reason for such a messaging that 5 per cent GST is hitting affordable healthcare,” Bajaj said.

The secretary said the 28 per cent slab in GST contributes 16 per cent to the



gross GST revenue, while the major chunk of 65 per cent comes from the 18 per cent slab.

The slabs of 5 per cent and 12 per cent contribute 10 per cent and 8 per cent of the total gross GST revenue.

Under the GST, a four-rate structure that exempts or imposes a low rate of tax of 5 per cent on essential items and a top rate of 28 per cent on cars is levied. The other slabs of tax rates are 12 per cent and 18 per cent.

Besides, there is a special 3 per cent rate for gold, jewellery and precious stones and 1.5 per cent on cut and polished diamonds.

Also, a cess is levied on the highest tax slab of 28 per cent on luxury, sin and demerit goods. The collection from the cess goes to a separate corpus – Compensation fund -- which is used to make up for revenue loss suffered by the state due to the rollout of GST. **PTI**

NTPC mines 61% more coal at 42.20L metric tonnes in April-June

New Delhi: State-owned power giant NTPC on Tuesday said that its coal output grew by 61 per cent to ₹42.40 lakh metric tonnes in April-June quarter from 26.40 lakh metric tonnes (MT) in the same period a year ago.

“The three operational coal mines -- Pakri-Barwadih (Jharkhand), Dulanga (Odisha) and Talaipalli (Chhattisgarh) -- have contributed to achieving 42.40 lakh metric tonnes of coal production,” an NTPC statement said.

According to the statement, the coal production of 42.40 lakh MT in the first quarter of FY23 was 61 per cent more than the production of 26.40 lakh MT achieved in the same period last year.

The production of coal during the month of June 2022 almost doubled to 15.55 lakh MT from 7.73 lakh MT in the same month a year ago.

Along with this coal production, the NTPC has also contributed to the removal of 106 lakh cubic metre and coal despatch of 41.74 lakh MT to NTPC power plants, in this quarter.

NTPC said that it has also started mining operations in its Chhatti-Bariatu coal mine (Jharkhand) and has already touched coal in May this year.



The coal from this mine will be supplied to Barh Power Station of NTPC. NTPC was awarded the operation contract for Talaipalli (West Pit) (Chhattisgarh) on June 30, 2022 and the mining operations in this pit will commence soon.

NTPC's coal mining division has signed an agreement with MECON on June 2, 2022 for consultancy and project management services of its coal mines.

Being a signatory to the prestigious United Nations Global Compact's CEO Water

Mandate, the NTPC has engaged the National Institute of Hydrology, Roorkee for assessing the potential of rain-water harvesting, design of the rainwater harvesting structure in Talaipalli township area and water positivity in the 2 villages around the township.

The coal mining headquarters in Ranchi has developed and procured safety reflective jackets with LED lights through MSME vendor in June 2022 to ensure improved visibility for personnel deployed in mines and siding during night hours. **PTI**

PLI scheme can add 4% to GDP annually: Report

Mumbai: The production-linked incentives (PLI) scheme, which seeks to boost manufacturing in key areas by offering nearly ₹2.4 lakh crore in incentives over the next five years, can add 4 per cent to the GDP annually in terms of incremental revenue, says a report. So far, the scheme has seen maximum response from the electronics, auto components, and pharma sectors, according to Emkay Investment Managers.

The PLI scheme has the potential to add nearly 4 per cent to GDP per annum in terms of incremental revenue if fully realised, the report released on Tuesday said.

Manufacturing companies are adding capacities due to robust returns and this is evident from the number of new manufacturing companies registered.

Registration of manufacturing companies has shot up to the highest ever in the last seven years and the share of manufacturing companies in total registrations is also at almost highest level since the past decade.

Also, the number of environmental clearances sought and granted was the highest ever in FY22, which was 10x of FY15, says the report and credits the same to the structural changes unveiled during 2018-21 which are reminiscent of the many such things that happened prior to the 2003-06 boom cycle.

The report said that domestic manufacturing was hit due to demonetisation, badly rolled out GST, and the pandemic apart from the missing consumer demand. As a result manufacturing companies have been reporting dismal RoCEs (return on capital employed) till FY18.

Since then the cash ROCEs have improved to almost 20 per cent driven by tighter working capital cycles and the cash return on capital employed was the highest in FY22. **PTI**

Rupee plunges by 41 paise to record low of 79.36 against US dollar

Mumbai: The rupee fell by 41 paise to close at a fresh lifetime low of 79.36 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday amid a strong greenback overseas and unrelenting foreign fund outflows.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 79.04 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 79.02 and a low of 79.38.

It finally settled at 79.36 (provisional), down 41 paise over its previous close. On Monday, the rupee had closed at 78.95 against the US dollar.

The Indian rupee hit a fresh record low against the US Dollar on Tuesday on the back of stronger dollar and weaker-than-expected domestic data, said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

India's merchandise exports in June rose by 16.78 per cent year-on-year to USD 37.94 billion while the trade deficit ballooned to a record USD 25.63 billion on account of a steep increase in gold and crude oil imports, according to



the government's preliminary data released on Monday.

“Rupee is expected to trade on a negative note on a firm tone in the US Dollar, elevated oil prices, and weak global market sentiments,”

Choudhary said.

Dollar may strengthen on expectations of aggressive rate hikes by the Federal Reserve, Choudhary said, adding that the hike in import duty on gold may support rupee to some extent as it may dent import demand for gold. Rupee may trade in the range of 78.50-80 in the next couple of sessions.

The dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was up 0.89 per cent at 106.07. **PTI**

Public-private partnership projects can improve ports' competitiveness: Min

Mumbai: Public-Private Partnership (PPP) projects in the port sector are of great significance in making Indian ports more competitive and strengthening the country's position in international trade, minister of state for ports, shipping and waterways Shripad Yesso Naik said on Tuesday.

The minister said that roping in private players has helped in improving the efficiency of the port sector and increase earnings.

Naik was addressing the Maritime Public-Private Partnership Enclave 2022 here, organised jointly by the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) and Mumbai Port Authority (MbPA) on 25 years of PPP investments in major ports.

“PPP mode has become the perfect mode of infrastructure development. While we celebrate these fruitful 25 years, we need to further strengthen the existing and future PPPs by providing a supportive environment,” he said.

When the port privatisation

programme was flagged off in 1997, the minister said, the port sector witnessed new investments including those from overseas.

“PPP projects in the ports sector are of great significance in making Indian ports more competitive and thereby strengthening India's position in international trade,” he said.

To drive the economic transformation through the modernisation of port infrastructure requires expansion and upgradation of berths, construction of new berths and terminals, automation of port operations, among others, the minister said.

“As we embark on a new era of economic resurgence, bolstered by port-led development, we look forward to streamlining initiatives to promote private participation,” Naik said.

He said the government is working on providing a conducive ecosystem by implementing policies to enhance the legal and political environment, improving the efficiency of the public sector, preparing

ing a robust institutional framework, expediting the clearance processes and providing funding assistance.

Private players with their capabilities and experience are augmenting the management of infrastructure resources and assuring quality service by inducting the latest technology and improved management practices, he said, adding that the investment driven through the PPP model will offer greater training and employment opportunities for workers, create job opportunities and enhance Indian companies' share in the global market.

“To further benefit private players, the government grants concessions to promote transshipment and coastal shipping and allow the concessionaires at major ports to set tariffs as per market dynamics providing a level-playing field,” he said.

JNPA chairman Sanjay Sethi, in his address, said that PPPs bring in the benefits of private sector expertise and cost-effective technologies with efficiencies in operation. **PTI**

Gold gains ₹65; silver rises ₹307



New Delhi: Gold price in the national capital increased by ₹65 to ₹52,050 per 10 grams on Tuesday amid rupee depreciation, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the yellow metal finished at ₹51,985 per 10 grams.

Silver also gained ₹307 to ₹58,051 per kg in the previous trade.

The rupee depreciated 9 paise to 79.04 against the US dollar in early trade on Tuesday, weighed down by persistent foreign fund outflows.

In the international market, gold was quoting lower at USD 1,803 per ounce while silver was flat at USD 19.94 per ounce.

“Gold prices traded down on stronger dollar and expectations of larger rate hike by US Federal Reserve which overpowered the economic slowdown worries,” said Tapan Patel, Senior Analyst (Commodities) at HDFC Securities. **PTI**

BUSINESS BRIEF

TATA INTRA SALES CROSS 1 LAKH UNITS

New Delhi: Tata Motors on Tuesday said its small truck Intra has crossed 1 lakh sales milestone in just over three years since its launch in May 2019. Intra has been engineered to suit the needs of customers looking for higher load carrying capacity and better driveability. Over the past three years, it has been popular in its segment for superior driving comfort and fuel economy, the company said in a statement. “The Intra's immense popularity is a testament to its position as a game-changing vehicle within its segment, and the profound sense of trust customers have in our brand,” Tata Motors Vice President, Product Line - SCV & PU, Vinay Pathak said.



MORE CENTRES MAKE EYE-CARE ACCESSIBLE

New Delhi: In India, when it comes to eye care, the numbers are dismal. Over 53 per cent of Indians suffer from poor vision and need prescription eyeglasses. But for every 1.15 lakh Indians, there is only one optometrist. Lenskart Foundation chairperson Nidhi Mittal Bansal said, “We plan to open 100 to 150 Child Eye Care Centres in the next two years, giving everyone within 4-kilometer radius access to eye care and corrective glasses, if needed.”



Therefore, levying a 5 per cent GST rate on hospital rooms raises the embedded tax burden in the healthcare sector impacting affordability which is a key objective of the National Health Policy,” the industry body stated.

“Our recommendation is that the current tax levied on

hospital rooms may be kept in abeyance as in the case of textile sector and should be considered after the recommendation of the Bommai committee are received,” it noted.

It should be examined in the background of holistic view of the healthcare as a whole which is an important sector whose role in the economy is crucial as emphasised during the recent covid crisis, NATHEALTH stated.

“Holistic approach to GST on hospital rooms will also send the right signal to foreign investors who value certainty in taxation and policy changes which are principally embedded in a larger policy narrative,” it added. **PTI**

Industry body CII pitches for GST simplification, reduction in tax slabs

New Delhi: CII's President Sanjiv Bajaj on Tuesday pitched for the simplification of Goods and Services Tax structure, and suggested that electricity as well as fuel should be brought under the GST ambit as that will help make the industry more competitive.

He also suggested that the number of tax slabs under the GST should be brought down to three.

“Going forward, we believe that on GST further simplification, cutting some of the inconsistencies, there are sectors where there is inverted tax structure, bringing in items like electricity, fuel under GST will further help simplify, cut costs, make industry more competitive,” he said in an interview to PTI.



Further, the president of the industry body said there is justification for keeping sin

and luxury goods in the highest slab.

“We believe there is (scope for) simplification to probably three slabs. Now that five years have gone and there is experience over there, is what makes sense and that is something that should be deliberated upon,” Bajaj, who is Chairman and Managing Director of Bajaj Finserv Limited, said.

Besides the exempted category, GST is levied at 5 per cent, 12 per cent, 18 per cent and 28 per cent. There are separate tax rates for gold and precious and semi-precious stones.

On rupee movement against the US dollar, Bajaj said strong forex reserves helped the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to intervene when required to at least check volatility. **PTI**

Guwahati: In flood-hit Assam, LPG delivery vans of PSU major Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) have been replaced by boats for the seamless supply of the fuel to keep the burner flames on, a senior official said on Tuesday.

At least 180 people have died and more than 89.13 lakh people suffered cumulatively across 34 districts since April 6 in one of the worst floods Assam witnessed in recent times.

The challenge increased manifold with severe landslides in several neighbouring states such as Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur, Indian Oil Corp Executive Director (Indian Oil AOD) G Ramesh told PTI here.

“Indian Oil rose magnificently to the occasion and ensured an uninterrupted supply of LPG as well as petrol and diesel to affected areas. Our dealers and distributor network rolled up their sleeves and also made food and water available to stranded people,” he added.

The IOC official particularly praised the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) cylinder delivery channels, which never stopped working despite immense difficulties in reaching households that were completely submerged by flood waters.

“The LPG door-to-door delivery continued through boats. Boats replaced delivery vans. This resulted in achieving an enviable LPG cylinder backlog in Assam of only 1.03 days during the peak of floods last week,” he said.

Currently, the backlog period for delivery of LPG cylinders has improved to 0.7 day for the entire state, the official said.

Ramesh claimed that the waiting period for LPG cylinders in Silchar town and other places of Cachar, Karimganj and Hailakandi districts of Barak valley, which saw unprecedented flooding this time, is just 1.88 days at present.

He said that the retail outlets were instructed to prioritise the supply of diesel to mobile tower operators to keep the communication channels alive in the face of continuous power cuts during the massive deluge. **PTI**

IOC delivers cooking gas by boats in flood-hit Assam

put stage and phasing out of exemptions at the inputs/intermediate stage,” NATHEALTH said in a statement.

Failure to recognise this has led to the government levying a GST duty of 5 per cent on hospital rooms with rental value above Rs 5,000 per day, it added.

While this measure may look innocuous it distorts the design of the GST and imposes an additional tax burden on the healthcare sector, the lobby group noted.

The services in the hospital rooms are an intermediate input feeding into the overall healthcare services which is currently outside the GST net, it said.

New Delhi: Healthcare industry body NATHEALTH on Tuesday asked the government to put into abeyance the recently announced 5 per cent GST on hospital rooms with rental value of above Rs 5,000 per day, terming it an additional burden on the sector.

Last week, the GST Council decided that hospital room rents (excluding ICU) exceeding Rs 5,000 per day per patient shall be taxed at 5 per cent without input tax credit.

“While the phasing away of the exemptions is a laudable objective for it integrates a large part of the value chain in the tax net, a crucial distinction must be made between phasing out exemptions at the final out-

log in Assam of only 1.03 days during the peak of floods last week,” he said.

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India to be self-sufficient in urea by 2025 end; output of conventional & nano urea rising: Govt

New Delhi: India will not need to import urea by 2025-end as the domestic production of conventional urea and nano liquid urea is expected to be sufficient to meet the country's annual demand, Union Minister for Chemicals and Fertilisers Mansukh Mandaviya said on Tuesday.

At present, the country's urea (conventional) production is 260 lakh tonnes, while around 90 lakh tonnes are imported to meet local demand.

“As per our estimate, we will be self-sufficient in urea by 2025-end and there will be no



import dependence. Our domestic production of conventional urea and nano urea will be more than the demand,” he told reporters here.

The minister said around 60 lakh tonnes of production capacity will be added for conventional urea, while the output of nano urea is estimated to rise to 44 crores bottles (of 500 ml each) per annum, which will be equivalent to 200 lakh tonnes of conventional urea.

Mandaviya said the adoption of nano urea by farmers has been very encouraging and highlighted that the liquid nutrient is effective for maintaining soil health as well as for increasing crop yield.

According to a ministry official, the government will save foreign exchange of about

Rs 40,000 crore per annum due to a reduction in imports.

One bottle of nano urea is equivalent to one bag of urea. Its application can effectively lead to a reduction in soil, water and air pollution which happens due to the overuse of chemical fertilisers both at production and consumption levels. At present, the capacity of nano urea is 5 crore bottles per year. Co-operative major IFFCO has introduced innovative nano urea in the market. The commercial production started on August 1, 2021 from IFFCO's plant at Kalol in Gujarat. **PTI**

DJOKER BATTLES BACK TO BEAT SINNER

AP ■ LONDON

Defending champion Novak Djokovic battled back from two sets to love down to defeat Jannik Sinner and reach his 11th Wimbledon semi-final on Tuesday.

Djokovic triumphed 5-7, 2-6, 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 and will face either Britain's Cameron Norrie or David Goffin of Belgium for a place in Sunday's final.

It was the seventh time in the Serb's career that he had recovered from two sets to love at the Slams.

"Huge congrats to Jannik for a big fight, he's so mature for his age, he has plenty of time ahead of him," said Djokovic.

"The first two sets compared to the next three were like two different matches. He was the better player for those first two sets.

"But at the end of the second set I took a toilet break, gave myself a little pep talk, tried to gather my thoughts.

"I broke early in the third set. I saw a little bit of doubt start to come into his movement. I have many years' experience of playing on these courts and coping with the pressure."

Djokovic is bidding to go level with Pete Sampras as a seven-time Wimbledon champion and stand just one off Roger Federer's men's record of eight.

He appeared set for a routine afternoon when he swept into a 4-1 lead in the opener and had a break point for 5-1 against the 20-year-old Italian.

Sinner, the 10th seed, saved it and rallied to move 6-5 ahead, carving out an opportunity to serve for the set.

Djokovic saved a set point but a netted service return gave



HALEP DOWNS BADOSA

AP ■ LONDON

Former champion Simona Halep swept past fourth-seeded Paula Badosa to reach the Wimbledon quarter-finals for the fifth time on Monday.

Halep won 6-1, 6-2 in just one hour as her Spanish opponent's game fell apart with 21 unforced errors.

The Romanian, who was champion in 2019, has yet to drop a set at the tournament.

Halep, 30, had to sit out Wimbledon in 2021 due to a



calf injury that sidelined her for three months.

Her build-up to this year's tournament was compromised by a neck injury.

"It means a lot that I'm back in a quarter-finals after I struggled so much with injuries and self-confidence," said Halep.

"I'm working hard every day. I feel like if I do that, I will get better. I'm really happy with the way I'm playing. I'm really confident. It's a pleasure to be on court."

the Italian the set.

Sinner, relentlessly unleashing winners from all corners of the court, stunned the top seed again with breaks in the third and seventh games on his way to a two-set lead.

However, Djokovic is no stranger to Grand Slam adversity, having twice come back from two sets to love down as recently as last year's French Open.

The second of those stunning recoveries came in the final against Stefanos Tsitsipas.

A break in the fourth game of the third set enabled Djokovic to cut his quarter-final deficit.

In control, the 35-year-old levelled the tie with a double break in the fourth set as Sinner took a worrying tumble on his ankle scrambling to the Centre Court net.

Djokovic carved out two more breaks in the decider, the second off the back of a stunning, cross-court backhand on the stretch to go to 5-2 before calmly serving it out.

MARIA WINS

Germany's Tatjana Maria came from behind to beat compatriot Jule Niemeier 4-6, 6-2, 7-5 on Tuesday and reach her first Grand Slam semi-final.

The 34-year-old mother of two will play either third seed Ons Jabeur or unseeded Marie Bouzkova for a place in the final.

"I have goosebumps everywhere," said Maria, who returned from maternity leave just under a year ago.

"My two little girls, it's a dream to live this with my family, to live this with my two girls. Almost one year ago I gave birth, it's crazy."

She said would like to face world number two Jabeur in the semi-finals.



HS Prannoy regains his place in world's top 20

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Star Indian shuttler HS Prannoy on Tuesday regained his place in the world's top 20, riding on his consistent show in the international circuit this season.

The 29-year-old from Kerala, who had played a pivotal role in India's monumental Thomas Cup win in May, improved two places to 19 in the men's singles rankings.

Prannoy, who had reached a career-best ranking of eight in 2018, has been one of the most consistent male shuttlers in the circuit with a series of quarter-finals and semifinals appearance this season.

He is now the third highest ranked Indian male shuttler in the world after Lakshya Sen (10th) and Kidambi Srikanth (11th).

Prannoy, who had reached

the finals of Swiss Open in March, surpassed Tokyo Olympian B Sai Praneeth (20th).

Two-time Olympic medalist P V Sindhu maintained her seventh spot in the latest chart, while Saina Nehwal also stayed static on 24th.

Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy were steady on eighth in the men's doubles rankings, while Ashwini Ponnappa and N Sikki Reddy dropped a rung to 24th position.

Among others, 2014 Commonwealth Games champion Parupalli Kashyap jumped three places to reach the World No. 36 ranking, riding on his second round appearance at the Malaysia Open Super 750 event.

The Verma brothers — Sameer and Sourabh — were the other two Indians inside the world's top 50.

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Manchester United completed their swoop for Feyenoord defender Tyrell Malacia on Tuesday as Erik ten Hag made his first signing since taking charge at Old Trafford.

United landed Malacia in a reported £12.95 million (\$15.4 million) deal after making a late move for the Netherlands full-back, who had been close to joining French club Lyon.

The 22-year-old has agreed a four-year contract with the option of a further 12 months.

It is a landmark deal for Ten Hag, who had been linked with a host of potential signings before finally making Malacia the first acquisition of his United reign.

Ten Hag arrived at United in May after finishing his successful spell at Ajax, where he had plenty of opportunities to see Malacia's quality with Dutch rivals Feyenoord.

Malacia, who made 136 appearances for Feyenoord, said: "It's an incredible feeling to have joined Manchester United. This is a new chapter for me, a new league with new teammates and a tremendous manager leading us.

"I know from playing against his teams in the Eredivisie, the qualities that he has and what he demands of his players.

"Whilst I know that I am still young and will continue to



ORIGI JOINS AC MILAN

AP ■ MILAN

Divock Origi signed for AC Milan on Tuesday after being let go by Liverpool at the end of last season.

The 27-year-old Belgian international Origi has joined Milan as a free agent after his contract was registered with the Italian top flight.

Origi arrives at the Serie A team after not having played enough matches to trigger an extension to his contract with

Liverpool.

He has reportedly signed a four-year deal which will net him four million euros (\$4.23 million dollars) a season.

He was largely a bit-part player at Liverpool but scored vital goals over his eight years on Merseyside which made him a favourite of fans and manager Jurgen Klopp.

Those strikes include two in an astonishing comeback against Barcelona in the Champions League semi-finals

in 2019, and the second is that year's final as Liverpool lifted their sixth European Cup against Tottenham.

Origi made 176 appearances for the Reds after arriving in 2014, scoring 41 times.

He has been capped 32 times for his country, but all three of his international goals came in 2014. Milan have brought in Origi to bolster a forward line which struggled for goals despite winning last season's thrilling Serie A.

after that incident and lost 21-13, 19-21, 16-21.

The Indian was seen having an animated discussion with the chief referee after the chair umpire asked her to hand over the shuttle to Yamaguchi but it all fell on deaf ears.

"The umpire told me you're taking a lot of time but the opponent wasn't ready at that point. But the umpire suddenly gave her the point and it was really unfair. I think that was one of the reasons why I lost, Sindhu had said.

"I mean that is my feeling because at that moment it was 14-11 and could have become 15-11 but instead, it became 14-12 and she took continuous points. And I think it was very unfair. Maybe I would have won the match and played in the final."

Sindhu, who is a member of Badminton World Federation's (BWF) Athletes' Commission, had immediately written a letter to the world body and the Asia badminton confederation, protesting against the decision.

Sania-Pavic in mixed doubles SF

PTI ■ WIMBLEDON



Indian tennis ace Sania Mirza and her Croatian partner Mate Pavic advanced to the Wimbledon mixed doubles semifinals with a hard-fought win over fourth seeds Gabriela Dabrowski and John Peers.

Mirza and Pavic, seeded sixth, eked out a thrilling 6-4, 3-6, 7-5 win over Canadian-Australian duo in one hour 41 minutes on court 3 on Monday night.

The Indo-Croatian pair will take on the winners of the quarterfinal between Robert Farah and Jelena Ostapenko, the seventh seeds, and second seeds Neil Skupski and Desirae Krawczyk.

This is Mirza's best mixed doubles performance at the All England Club. She had previously reached the quarterfinals in 2011, 2013 and 2015.

A Wimbledon title is the

only mixed doubles Grand Slam missing from her trophy cabinet.

Mirza, a six-time Grand Slam winner, has already announced her retirement at the end of this season.

Rafa into 8th Wimbledon quarters

AP ■ LONDON

Rafael Nadal reached the Wimbledon quarter-finals for the eighth time on Monday with a straight-sets defeat of Botic van de Zandschulp.

Nadal, who has already won the Australian and French Opens to stand halfway to the first calendar Grand Slam since 1969, triumphed 6-4, 6-2, 7-6 (8/6).

Next up for the 36-year-old Spaniard is a clash against American 11th seed Taylor Fritz, who beat him in the Indian Wells final earlier in the year.

"To be back in the quarter-finals after not being here for three years is amazing," said the 2008 and 2010 champion.

"I expect a very tough match against Taylor — he won his first Masters title this year against me in the final.

"The quarter-finals of a Slam are always very tough."



Malacia becomes Ten Hag's 1st Man Utd signing

Celik from Lille, the Serie A club announced on Tuesday.

In a statement, Roma said the 25-year-old full-back "has signed a four-year contract with the Giallorossi that runs until 30 June 2026".

The 32-times capped Celik arrives for a reported fee of seven million euros (\$7.2 million) with 15 percent of any future sale also going to Lille.

In his four years at Lille Celik played nearly 150 times in all competitions.

RICHARLISON BANNED

Tottenham forward Richarlison was banned on Tuesday from his new club's English Premier League opening game after throwing a smoke canister when playing for Everton last season.

Richarlison admitted a charge of improper conduct and was banned for one game and fined 25,000 pounds (\$30,000), the English Football Association said in announcing the tribunal verdict.

Tottenham start the league hosting Southampton on August 6. Richarlison should be available to play at Chelsea one week later. Richarlison scored in Everton's 1-0 win against Chelsea on May 1 that helped his then club avoid relegation. But a lit, blue smoke canister was thrown on the pitch by Everton supporters and Richarlison picked it up and threw it away from the field.

Badminton Asia Technical Committee apologises to Sindhu for 'human error'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Badminton Asia Technical Committee chairman Chih Shen Chen has apologised to two-time Olympic medalist P V Sindhu for the 'human error' committed by the referee during the women's singles semi-final match of the Badminton Asia Championships in April.

Sindhu had been left in tears after an "unfair" call by the umpires midway through her semifinal match against Japan's Akane Yamaguchi saw her go down in three games and eventually sign off with a Bronze medal, her second in the continental championship.

"Unfortunately, there is no rectification at this time. However, we have taken the necessary steps to avoid a repetition of this human error," the



official said in the letter to Sindhu.

"We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience caused to you. We believe it is part of the sport and that it is accepted as such."

The incident had happened

while Sindhu was leading 14-11 in the second game after having won the first game when the umpire handed her a one-point penalty for taking too much time to serve between points.

Sindhu, who turned 27 on Tuesday, lost her momentum

Treesa & Gayatri exits

PTI ■ KUALA LUMPUR

India's Commonwealth Games-bound women's doubles duo of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand made a first round exit from the Malaysia Masters badminton tournament, losing to local pair of Pearly Tan and Thinaah Muralitharan here on Tuesday.

The Indian pair was outplayed by the Malaysians 14-21, 14-21 in the opening round match that lasted just 33 minutes.

None of the Indians won any match on Tuesday with two other women's doubles pairs also suffering first round

defeats.

The combination of Ashwini Bhat and Shikha Gautam lost 7-21, 10-21 to Yuki Fukushima and Sayaka Hirota of Japan while Pooja Dandu and Arathi Sara went down to Bulgaria's Gabriela Stoeva and Stefani Stoeva 17-21, 17-21.

In the women's singles, Malvika Bansod also suffered a 10-21, 17-21 defeat against host country's Goh Jin Wei in 33 minutes to exit from the Super 500 tournament.

Olympic medallists PV Sindhu and Saina Nehwal will feature in the women's singles first round matches on Wednesday.

PSG sack Pochettino, appoint Galtier as new manager

AP ■ PARIS

Paris St Germain announced Christophe Galtier as their new manager on Tuesday, shortly after the Ligue 1 champions parted ways with Mauricio Pochettino.

Galtier joins PSG after leaving Nice last month, having guided them to a runners-up finish in the French Cup and fifth place in Ligue 1 last season.

The 55-year-old Frenchman joined Nice in 2021 after leading Lille to their first Ligue 1 title since 2011 in the previous campaign. Before joining Lille, Galtier spent eight seasons at Saint Etienne, where he won the French Cup in 2012-2013.

Galtier's appointment comes after PSG president Nasser al-Khelaifi put an end to speculation surrounding France great Zinedine Zidane, dismissing reports that PSG had been in talks with the 1998 World



Cup winner about becoming their new boss.

Pochettino, who was appointed by PSG in January 2021, won the Ligue 1 title in 2021-22 and the French Cup in 2020-21 but failed to deliver in the Champions League, the only major trophy that has eluded PSG since Qatar Sports Investment took over in 2011.

PSG, eight times league winners since the takeover, were Champions League runners-up in 2020 but they were knocked out in the last 16 last season by Real Madrid.

POMS WIN ‘RESCHEDULED’ TEST, DRAW SERIES

Joe Root and Jonny Bairstow score centuries to help England chase down 378 runs on final day & win match by 7 wickets

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Jonny Bairstow and Joe Root, who have made chasing tricky targets in Test matches fashionable, put famed Indian pace attack to sword with imposing hundreds as England recorded their highest ever chase of 378 runs with minimum fuss to level the five-match series 2-2.

It is fourth straight successful chase for England, having accomplished tricky fourth innings targets of 278, 299, 296 against New Zealand in the previous series.

For India, the ignominy was of not being able to defend their highest fourth innings target. When England were rattled on the fourth afternoon by stand-in skipper Jasprit Bumrah, the two star batters didn't waver from their game plan. The entire Indian attack, except Bumrah, looked pedestrian. All England needed was just under 20 overs to knock off the remaining 119 runs on fifth morning.

What was more embarrassing was England knocking off the runs in 76.4 overs, which isn't even a full day's play and at a run-rate of nearly five runs per over (4.93).

Root (142 not out), who has been in even more sublime form since relinquishing captaincy, scored his 28th century and was involved in an unbroken 269-run stand with Bairstow (114 not out), whose ton count reached a dozen after the completion of this game.

Bairstow, who is in the form of his life, topped up his first innings of 106 with an even more graceful century as



Brendon McCullum's philosophy of deflating teams on flat decks is currently working wonders.

A cursory look at a statistical nuggets reveals the impact Bairstow and Root have made in England's last four victories.

Root has scored 11, 115 not out, 176, 3, 5, 86 not out, 5 and 142 not out in his last eight innings. Bairstow has scored 1, 16, 8, 136, 162, 71 not out, 106

and 114 not out in the same set of games.

Both have played significant role in three chases in the last four games.

INDIA LOST THE PLOT

This is India's third straight Test match defeat in a 'SENA' country (SA, England, NZ, Australia) after back-to-back defeats against South Africa but this will hurt more as they had

a sizeable first innings lead of 132 runs.

The defeat would also significantly dent India's chances of finishing in top-two in the World Test Championship (WTC) table.

Bumrah in his first tryst as captain was very impressive despite the disappointing outcome but what would hurt India badly is the tactics employed by the team that

had so many senior players.

A team that has set a target of 378 couldn't have possibly started with a spread out field, logic of which would need some explaining from head coach Rahul Dravid.

Since he has taken over, India have lost three out of four overseas Tests and for a man, who relies heavily on method and process, that's not a great piece of stat.

Bowling with a deep extra cover, deep mid-wicket, deep fine leg only gave a negative impression about the strategy deployed on the fourth evening.

The singles and doubles were easy pickings as none of the bowlers was able to settle down. It was imperative to keep one batter at one end under a tight leash.

As pressure released, the boundaries flowed from the blades of both the batters. It wasn't a typical 'Bazball' approach which is going for leather but bleeding the opposition with thousand cuts, both practically and metaphorically.

The gaping holes in the field were a testimony of a hollow strategy.

Ravindra Jadeja (18.4-3-62-0), a classical left-arm spinner, bowled over the wicket throughout, negating any chance of trapping the batters in front of the wicket. Not for once did he come round the wicket to pin the batters.

And to make matters worse, India's third and fourth pacers -- Mohammed Siraj (15-0-98-0) and Shardul Thakur (11-0-65-0) -- hardly made an impact. They were guilty of bowling too short or too full.

We let the game slip away after dominating three days: Bumrah

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

India stand-in captain Jasprit Bumrah on Tuesday blamed his side's defeat to England in the rescheduled fifth Test here to the batting failure in the second innings, saying they let the match slip away from their hands after dominating major part of it.

England rode on Joe Root and Jonny Bairstow's majestic centuries to thump India by seven wickets and register their highest-ever successful run chase in Test cricket.

England overhauled the 378-run target in the morning session of the fifth and final day with Root and Bairstow remaining unbeaten on 142 and 114 respectively.

"That's the beauty of Test cricket, even if you have three good days. We fell short with the bat yesterday and that is where we let the opposition in to let the match slip away from us," Bumrah said at the post-match presentation ceremony.

"Ifs and buts can always be there. If you go back, if there was no rain in the first match, we could have won the series. But England played really well."

England's win meant that the five-match Test series, which spilled over to this year due to COVID-19 cases in the Indian camp last year, ended in 2-2 draw.

"We have drawn the series and both teams played very good cricket and it was a fair result," Bumrah said.

Bumrah lauded Rishabh Pant and Ravindra Jadeja for their tons in India's first innings.

"Pant takes his chances. He and Jaddu got us back into the game with their counter-attack. We were ahead in the game. He takes his chances, backs himself and very happy for him," he said.

Bumrah said he thorough-



ENGLAND'S WIN MEANT THAT THE FIVE-MATCH TEST SERIES, WHICH SPILLED OVER TO THIS YEAR DUE TO COVID-19 CASES IN THE INDIAN CAMP LAST YEAR, ENDED IN 2-2 DRAW

ly enjoyed the captaincy responsibility and it was a pleasure to lead the national team.

"The captaincy is not what I decide. I like responsibility. It was a good challenge, a new challenge. It was an honour to lead the team and a great experience."

England skipper Ben Stokes said his team was trying to rewrite the way Test cricket is being played in the country with its new-found attacking brand of the game.

"When the lads play like this, it makes my job easier. When you have clarity like we have in the dressing room, it makes chasing totals like this

easier. 378 would have been scary five weeks ago, but now it's all good.

"We are trying to rewrite how Test cricket is played in England. All our plans from the last four-five weeks is what we want to take ahead. Bowling on the top of off isn't important, it is all about taking ten wicket," he said.

"We want to give some new life to Test cricket. Inspiring the next generation is what we want to do. We want to bring in new fans and want to leave a mark on 'Test cricket'," he added.

Stokes was all praise of his batters for pulling off the historic run chase for England.

"Jonny and Root will get all the credit, but the precedent was set up by the way the openers played against Bumrah and Shami with the new ball."

Man-of-the-match Jonny Bairstow, who smashed centuries in both the innings, said he was never afraid of failure and just wanted to put the pressure back on the opposition.

"It is great fun at the moment. I am stripping it back to the basics. The last few years have been tough on me but the last few months have been fantastic.

Mandhana jumps to 8th spot in WODI rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

India vice-captain Smriti Mandhana moved up a rung to eighth position in the batter's chart in the latest ICC women's ODI rankings released here on Tuesday.

Mandhana, who hit an 83-ball unbeaten 94 in India's 10-wicket win over Sri Lanka in the second ODI on Monday, is the lone Indian in the top 10 of the batting chart which is headed by Australian Alyssa Healey followed by England's Natalie Sciver.

All-rounder Deepti Sharma and opener Shafali Verma have made significant improvements to their positions after helping India take an unassailable 2-0 lead against Sri Lanka in the three-match ICC Women's Championship (IWC) series being played in Pallekele.

Deepti, who grabbed three for 25 and scored an unbeaten 22, has moved up two places to the 29th position among batters and three slots to 16th among bowlers.

In the rankings for all-rounders, she has gained 20 rating points to reach within one point of Australia's Ashleigh Gardner, who is sixth on the list.

Verma, who is leading the run aggregate in the series with 106 runs including an unbeaten 71 in the second match, is up 12 places to a career-best 36th among batters. She is currently ranked fifth in the T20 list. Other Indians to move up the batters' list are Pooja Vastrakar (up three places to 61st), Rajeshwari Gayakwad (up four places to 93rd) and Meghna Singh (up



seven places to 100th).

They have all also moved up the bowlers' list -- Gayakwad from 12th to 11th, Meghna from 58th to 47th and Vastrakar from 57th to 50th.

Pacer Renuka Singh is also a major gainer, her seven wickets has lifted her 38 places to 65th position.

Saha to join Tripura cricket team as player-cum-mentor

PTI ■ AGARTALA

Veteran India cricketer Wriddhiman Saha will join the Tripura team as a player-cum-mentor, an official said on Tuesday.

A veteran of 40 Tests, Saha has already received a NOC (No Objection Certificate) from the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB).

"We have had talks with Saha and he has agreed to play for the state.

He will also act as a mentor for the senior team to motivate the players," Tripura Cricket Association (TCA) joint secretary Kishore Das said.

TCA expects that Saha, a wicket-keeper-cum-batsman, will sign an agreement by July 15, he said.

Players would be immensely benefited if Saha joins the team, considering his vast experience in international cricket and domestic circuit, Das said. "It is not yet finalised whether he will be made the captain of the team.

This will be decided later," the official said.

He is expected to play Ranji Trophy and Vijay Hazare Trophy matches for Tripura.

Warwickshire to investigate racial abuse charge by Indian fans

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

An investigation has been launched into allegations of racist abuse aimed at Indian fans during the fourth day of the fifth Test between India and England at Edgbaston, the ECB and Warwickshire County Cricket Club said.

Several Indian fans took to Twitter to report the racist behaviour they endured during the fourth day's play on Monday night. They claimed that some British fans hurled racial taunts at them.

Former Yorkshire cricketer Azeem Rafiq, whose testimony to a British parliamentary committee last year led to an investigation into claims of institutional racism at Yorkshire and resulted in major reforms, retweeted some of the social media posts describing the racist behaviour.

"Disappointing to read," he wrote. The official Edgbaston Twitter account responded to Rafiq's tweet saying: "We're incredibly sorry to read this and do not condone this behaviour in anyway. We'll be investigating this ASAP."

Warwickshire later released a statement, stating they are investigating the incident.

"I'm gutted by these reports as



we're working hard to make Edgbaston a safe, welcoming environment for all," Stuart Cain, Chief Executive at Edgbaston said.

"Having seen the initial tweets, I've spoken personally to the gentleman who raised them and we're now speaking to the stewards in this area to establish what hap-

pened.

"Nobody should be subject to any form of abuse at Edgbaston. So, once we've got all the facts, we will make sure this issue is addressed swiftly," the statement added.

One spectator, who was in the Hollies Stand, alleged that the stewards refused to take any action

despite several complaints.

"Racist behaviour at @Edgbaston towards Indian fans in block 22 Eric Hollies. People calling us Curry C**** and paki b*****. We reported it to the stewards and showed them the culprits at least 10 times but no response and all we were told is to sit in our seats. @ECB_cricket."

"We were also fearful of our safety for women and children but no assistance when we left. This is unacceptable in today's society @BCCI #ENGvIND," a spectator said in a series of tweets.

Bharat Army, the official team India supporters group, said the spectators experienced abuse from a "small minority" of individuals.

"Sad to say many of our members experienced racist abuse from a very small minority of individuals. We will work with @Edgbaston to share all your feedback. Thank you to those England fans who stood by us."

"I'm all for some good banter between fans but today was some of the worst abuse we've ever experienced at a match. Some disgusting racism ("you smelly ****" for example). The stewards actually told the India fans to sit down whilst allowing the abuse to go ahead @Edgbaston," another spectator wrote.

NZ women & men cricketers to get equal pay

PTI ■ CHRISTCHURCH

In a first in world cricket, New Zealand men and women will receive the same match fees across formats and competitions, according to a groundbreaking five-year deal between the sports' governing body in the country and the players' association.

"I want to thank and congratulate the players and the Major Associations for their part in reaching such a significant agreement," NZC chief executive David White said in a statement.

"This is the most important agreement in our sport, as it binds NZC, the Major Associations, and our players at the hip, and sets the foundation to fund, grow and develop cricket.

"It's been a collaborative yet very robust negotiation. Importantly, it represents a significant step forward as we continue to grow our investment in women's cricket."

According to the landmark agreement struck between NZC, the six major associations, and the New Zealand Cricket Players Association, White Ferns and domestic women's players will receive the same match fees as the men across all their formats and competitions.

"Translated, this means the highest-ranked WHITE FERN would be able to receive a maximum of NZD 163,246 a year (up from NZD 83,432), the ninth-ranked, NZD 148,946 (NZD 66,266), and the 17th-ranked NZD 142,346 (NZD 62,833)," the statement said.

The top-ranked women's domestic players in each Major Association would be able to receive a maximum of NZD 19,146 (up from NZD 3,423), the sixth-ranked NZD 18,646 (NZD 3,423), and the 12th-ranked NZD 18,146 (NZD 3,423)."

According to the agreement, total



number of women's domestic contracts will increase from 54 to 72, while the men will earn higher retainers, based on the increased number of matches played, formats contested, and time spent training and playing.

"It's great for the international and domestic women players to be recognised in the same agreement, alongside the men," White Ferns captain Sophie Devine said.

"It's a massive step forward and will be a huge drawcard for young women and girls."

New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson said it was an exciting time for the sport.

"It's really important for the current players to build on the legacy of those who have gone before us, and to support tomorrow's players, both men and women, at all levels.

"This agreement goes a long way towards achieving that."

LLC-2 to have four teams, 110 International players

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former India cricketers Virender Sehwag, Irfan Pathan and Yusuf Pathan will be in action when the second season of the Legends League Cricket returns in September with four teams and 110 International players on board, the organisers announced here on Tuesday.

"I love to be in the cricket field. I missed the playing 1st season of LLC but it would be great to go back into the field with the LLC season 2," Sehwag, who missed the last season, said.

Apart from Sehwag, the Pathan brothers have confirmed their participation so far in the tournament.

Former India coach Ravi Shastri, who is the commissioner of Legends League Cricket said: "The carnival of legends is back. Top Cricketers from around the world would be seen coming together.

"These players have contributed immensely to cricket throughout their career. I am looking forward to watching them play the Legends League Cricket second season."

The first season of tournament had former cricketers from India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Australia, England divided into three teams representing India, Asia and Rest of the World.

But this time it would follow IPL style with franchises owning four teams.