

## OPINION 6

CONTROL POPULATION  
IN NON-COERCIVE WAY

## WORLD 8

US MILITARY MAKING PLANS IN  
CASE PELOSI TRAVELS TO TAIWAN

## MONEY 10

5G SPECTRUM AUCTION GETS  
BIDS WORTH ₹1.49 LAKH CR

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## ED's power to seize, arrest under PMLA valid, rules SC

Apex court says  
burden of proof  
is on accused to  
come cleanPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

In a landmark judgment, the Supreme Court on Wednesday upheld the sweeping power of the Enforcement Directorate for search, seizure, arrest, and attachment of property under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The court also upheld stringent bail conditions in money-laundering cases and said the burden of proof is on the accused to come clean.

Amid outcry by the Opposition parties that the ED was used as a tool by the Centre to target its political rivals, nearly 240 petitioners, including Congress MP Karti Chidambaram, had challenged certain provisions of the PMLA.

Rejecting their pleas, the SC observed that it was a common experience world over that money laundering can be



a "threat" to the good functioning of a financial system.

A host of top Opposition politicians, including Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi, P Chidambaram, his son and MP Karti Chidambaram, Shiv Sena's Sanjay Raut, National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah, TMC MP and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's nephew Abhishek Banerjee and Delhi Minister Satyendar Jain are among those under the ED's lens for alleged money laundering.

Interestingly, several stringent provisions in the PMLA were introduced by the UPA regime in 2012, when Chidambaram was Finance

Minister.

Endorsing the powers of the federal anti-money laundering agency, a bench headed by Justice AM Khanwilkar said authorities under the 2002 Act are "not police officers as such" and the Enforcement Case Information Report (ECIR) cannot be equated with an FIR under the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPc).

The bench, also comprising Justices Dinesh Maheshwari and CT Ravikumar, said supply of an ECIR copy in every case to the person concerned is not mandatory and it is enough if ED, at the time of arrest, discloses the grounds of such arrest.

The petitioners in the case had challenged the ED's power of not disclosing the contents of ECIR, contending it violated the fundamental rights of the accused. The bench said in view of the special mechanism envisaged by the 2002 Act, ECIR cannot be equated with an FIR.

"The ECIR is an internal document of the ED and the fact that FIR in respect of scheduled offence has not been recorded does not come in the way of the authorities referred to in section 48 to commence inquiry/investigation for initiating 'civil action' of 'provisional attachment' of property being proceeds of crime," said the apex court in its 545-page judgment, empowering the ED.

The court said section 45 of the PMLA, which deals with offences to be cognisable and non-bailable and have twin conditions for bail, is reasonable and does not suffer from vice of arbitrariness or unreasonableness.

The petitioners had also challenged the stringent bail conditions laid down by the law for the accused. Section 45 says when the public prosecutor opposes the bail plea of an accused, the court can grant relief only after it is satisfied

that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the accused is not guilty of having committed such an offence and is unlikely to commit any offence if granted bail.

"The challenge to the constitutional validity of section 19 (power to arrest) of the 2002 Act is also rejected. There are stringent safeguards provided in section 19. The provision does not suffer from the vice of arbitrariness," said the judgment. It also said section 5 of the Act, which relates to attachment of property involved in money laundering, is constitutionally valid.

"It provides for a balancing arrangement to secure the interests of the person as also ensures that the proceeds of crime remain available to be dealt with in the manner provided by the 2002 Act," the bench said.

The SC said the question as to whether some of the amendments to PMLA could not have been enacted by Parliament by way of money bills has not been examined and is left open to be considered along with or after the decision of a larger bench of seven-judges which is looking into the matter.

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## ₹21 cr more cash found at house of Partha aide Arpita

Partha stashed  
jobs scam money  
at my home,  
claims Arpita

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The ED probing the school job scam in Bengal on Wednesday unearthed another ₹21 crore in cash and about 3 kg of gold from an apartment owned by Arpita Mukherjee, a close aide of senior Bengal Minister and Trinamool Congress secretary general Partha Chatterjee, who is currently in the custody of the Central agency.

The recovery comes three days after the ED seized ₹22 crore in cash apart from foreign currency and jewellery worth ₹1.5 crore from Mukherjee's another apartment at Tollygunge in South Kolkata.

Meanwhile, in a big disclosure to the Enforcement Directorate (ED) as reported by a Hindi portal, Mukherjee allegedly claimed that Partha used her house as a "mini bank" to stash cash.

However, lawyers of Mukherjee are likely to reject the claims of the ED sources in court at the next hearing and slammed the agency for leaking details of their investigation to the media.

"There was so much cash



that three giant counting machines and several bank staff had to be rushed in to count the notes," sources in the ED said.

The Wednesday's recovery comes against the backdrop of ED telling a special court that the money was sent to some "invisible hand."

While in Tollygunge apartment seven small machines were used to count the notes, this time three huge machines were carried inside by the ED staff, sources said, adding this time too the amount could run into crores.

The ED on Wednesday conducted simultaneous raids in at least six places — all belonging to Mukherjee and Partha, sources said.

"Important documents too were recovered from various places," ED sources said. Meanwhile, the agency has already gone on record telling

the special court that the cash for job scam collected from thousands of aspirants had gone to some invisible hand.

The ED action came following a High Court order which found massive irregularities in appointment process of thousands of candidates in Group C, D and teachers' posts. The successful candidates were denied jobs whereas the unsuccessful ones and those who did not appear in the exams were given jobs allegedly in lieu of cash that hovered between ₹15 lakh and ₹25 lakh.

The ED was also interrogating TMC MLA Manik Bhattacharya, a former chairman of the primary teachers recruitment council who was removed by the Calcutta High Court. Bhattacharya was being asked questions on the list of 269 candidates earlier sacked by the High Court for getting illegally employed.

## Cabinet OK's ₹1.64L crore revival package for BSNL

Project for 4G  
services in 25K  
uncovered villages  
at ₹26K cr clearedPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved a huge package of ₹1.64 lakh crore for the revival of State-owned telecom firm BSNL.

The revival measures approved by the Cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi include infusion of fresh capital for upgrading services, allocating spectrum, de-stressing the balance sheet, and the company's fiber network by merging Bharat Broadband Nigam Ltd (BBNL) with BSNL.

The Union Cabinet also approved a project for saturation of 4G mobile services in



uncovered villages across the country at a total cost of ₹26,316 crore. The project will provide 4G mobile services in 24,680 uncovered villages in remote and difficult areas, he said. Briefing media on the decision taken by the Union Cabinet, Telecom Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the package has a cash component of ₹43,964 crore and a non-cash component of ₹1.2 lakh crore spread over four years.

The Government will make administrative allocation of spectrum BSNL needs to offer 4G services. The allocation of spectrum in 900/1800 MHz band at the cost of ₹44,993 crore would be through equity infusion.

The Minister said to meet the projected capital expenditure for next four years, the Government will fund capex of ₹22,471 crore for developing 4G technology stack. Also, the Government will provide ₹13,789 crore to BSNL as viability-gap funding for commercially unviable rural wireline operations done during 2014-15 to 2019-20. To de-stress the balance sheet, ₹33,404 crore statutory dues will be converted into equity. Besides, the Government will provide sovereign guarantee for raising money to repay current loans, he said.

Vaishnaw said to facilitate wider utilisation of infrastructure laid under BharatNet, BBNL will be merged with BSNL. The infrastructure created under BharatNet will continue to be a national asset, accessible on a non-discriminatory basis to all the Telecom Service Providers.

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## 20 suspended RS MPs start 50-hr protest on Parl premises

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

Twenty Opposition MPs who were suspended from the Rajya Sabha for disrupting proceedings started a 50-hour-long protest inside the Parliament complex on Wednesday.

The Upper House could not transact any business amid uproar over suspension of MPs and other issues.

Leaders of several Opposition parties met Rajya Sabha Chairman M Venkaiah Naidu and demanded the suspension of 20 MPs be revoked, but Naidu made it clear that it can happen only after the MPs express regret over their "misconduct".

On the other hand, the Opposition suggested that the action may be revoked so as to have good attendance in the House.

They also suggested that a specific date may be indicated on which the issue of price rise



Suspended RS members during a sit-in protest at Parliament House complex in New Delhi, on Wednesday evening

PTI

could be discussed.

The Government indicated that a discussion on price rise may be taken up next week in Parliament.

However, the Government does not appear keen on a debate on the Agnipath military recruitment scheme and could evade the matter on the

ground that it is sub-judice.

The Opposition parties have been holding protests to press for an immediate discussion on the price rise and the GST issues, paralysing proceedings in Parliament since the start of the Monsoon Session on July 18.

Continued on Page 2

## India helped Lanka 'swiftly', but China turned a deaf ear: US

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The US on Wednesday lauded India's efforts in helping Sri Lanka during the recent crisis there and said it reacted "really swiftly" with an absolutely critical set of measures to help the island nation tide over its economic crisis.

Visiting US Agency for International Development (USAID) administrator Samantha Power also said calls to Beijing to provide significant relief to Sri Lanka have gone unanswered.

The US official said Beijing promised Lines of Credit to Sri Lanka, but it paused to provide significant relief. "The calls to provide more significant relief have gone unanswered and the biggest question of all is whether Beijing will restructure debt to the same extent as other bilateral creditors," she said.

In an address at an event



in Delhi IIT, Power said China became one of Sri Lanka's "biggest creditors" offering often "opaque loan" deals at higher interest rates than other lenders. Power is on a visit to India from July 25 to 27. The USAID is one of the leading aid agencies globally.

"India has reacted really swiftly with an absolutely critical set of measures," she said.

The USAID administrator referred to India's line of credit of USD 3.5 billion to Sri Lanka and other assistance to help the country steer its economy out of default and further collapse.

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## SpiceJet's flights capped at 50% for 8 weeks over safety

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Wednesday restricted SpiceJet flight departures to 50 per cent for the next eight weeks following a number of technical snags. The airline, however, said there will be no flight cancellations because of the regulator's order as it is already operating limited services "due to the current lean season".

"In view of findings of various spot checks, inspections and the reply to the show cause notice submitted by Spicejet, for continued sustenance of safe and reliable air transport service, the number of departures of Spicejet are hereby restricted to 50 per cent of the number of departures approved under Summer Schedule 2022 for a period of 8 weeks from the date of issue of this order, in accordance



with powers conferred under rule 19A of the Aircraft Rules, 1937," the DGCA order read.

"Any increase in the number of departures beyond 50 per cent shall be subject to the airline demonstrating to the satisfaction of DGCA that it has sufficient technical support and financial resources to safely and efficiently undertake such enhanced capacity," the order further stated.

"The same has been reviewed at appropriate level and it has been observed that M/s Spicejet is taking measures for arresting the trend of incidents, however, the airline needs to sustain these efforts for safe and reliable air transport service," it said.

Continued on Page 2

## CBI arrests Lalu's man Friday Bhola Yadav in Railways land-for-job scam

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Wednesday said it has arrested Bhola Yadav, then officer on special duty (OSD) to then Railways Minister Lalu Prasad and another employee of the railways in connection with the land-for-job scam.

Besides Bhola Yadav, the agency arrested Hridayanand Choudhary, substitute employee of the Railways.

The CBI also conducted searches at four locations, including Patna and Darbhanga, on the premises of the accused and a private person. Both arrested accused are being produced before a court.

"During investigation, it was found that the OSD to the former Railway Minister, during the period 2005-2009, was involved in the alleged conspiracy in the appointment of substitutes," the CBI said in a statement.

Continued on Page 2

## Sonia quizzed for 3 hours on 3rd day in Herald case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday questioned Congress president Sonia Gandhi for over three hours on the third day of her deposition in a money laundering case linked to the party-promoted National Herald newspaper.

The Congress president was not given fresh summons amid indications that her questioning might have concluded.

Spread over three rounds, including on Wednesday, Sonia has been questioned for over 11 hours and faced around 100 questions, officials said.

Her first round of questioning took place on July 21 and lasted for two hours.

On Wednesday, she reached the anti-money laundering agency's office in Central Delhi at 11 am accompanied by her daughter Priyanka Vadra and son Rahul Gandhi. The questioning session began at 11.15 am.



The team of investigators included the Investigating Officer (IO) who is of the rank of Assistant Director and a person who recorded the statements dictated by the Congress chief.

Around 2 pm, she left the agency office along with Priyanka, who stayed with her at the Pravartan Bhawan (ED headquarters) in order to provide any assistance or medical care to her mother.

The questioning relates to the charge of alleged financial irregularities in the Congress-promoted Young Indian Private Limited, which owns the National Herald newspaper.

Continued on Page 2

## BJP leader hacked to death, tension in Karnataka dist

PTI ■ MANGALURU/BENGALURU

The killing of a BJP yuva morchha leader by unidentified assailants led to tension at several places in Dakshina Kannada district in Karnataka on Wednesday with instances of stone-pelting and police lathicharge being reported.

Assuring strict action against individuals or organisations behind the killing, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said the Government would not hesitate to hand over the case to the NIA, if required.

The Sangh Parivar had called for a bandh in Puttur, Kadaba and Sullia taluks in Mangaluru on Wednesday in protest against the murder and shops downed shutters.

Praveen Nettar, a Zilla BJP Yuva Morchha committee member was hacked to death in front of his broiler shop in

Bellare by three bike-borne miscreants on Tuesday night.

A resident of Nettaru in Bellare in Dakshina Kannada district, the 32-year-old man was hacked to death when he was heading home after closing his shop. "He tried to escape and ran but he fell down after a blow on his head," police said.

Local residents immediately informed the police, which rushed to the spot and took Nettar to hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead.

With BJP and Sangh Parivar supporters and workers turning their angst against the Government accusing it of not standing up to protect the lives of Hindu Karyakartas, Bommai assured of arrest and strict punishment to the culprits soon and said, "don't have any doubts about it."

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## CAPSULE

38 TMC MLAS IN TOUCH WITH BJP: MITHUN

**Kolkata:** Actor-turned-politician Mithun Chakraborty, who had joined the BJP ahead of the West Bengal Assembly polls last year, on Wednesday claimed that 38 TMC MLAs are in touch with the saffron camp, said sources.

P5

ANTI-DOPING BILL PASSED IN LOK SABHA

**New Delhi:** The Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed a bill to provide a statutory framework for the functioning of the National Anti-Doping Agency and the National Dope Testing Laboratory.

P4

RLY CONCESSIONS MAY RETURN FOR ELDERLY

**New Delhi:** In the face of criticism from several quarters, the Railways is mulling the restoration of senior citizen concessions but for general and sleeper classes only. Also on the cards is tweaking the age criteria by extending the rebate to those above 70 years, as against the earlier 58 for women and 60 for men.

P4



NCR-PULSE

**BJP PROTESTS AGAINST DELHI GOVT'S EXCISE POLICY**  
New Delhi: The BJP held a protest on Wednesday over "irregularities" in the implementation of the new excise policy by the Delhi government. The demonstration was led by party MP Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma. He alleged that the AAP Government has turned Delhi into an "intoxicated capital" by allowing more and more liquor shops to open across the city.

**YASIN MALIK ON HUNGER STRIKE ADMITTED TO HOSPITAL**  
New Delhi: Kashmiri separatist leader Yasin Malik, who was on a hunger strike in Tihar Jail here, has been admitted to the RML hospital following a fluctuation in blood pressure, sources said on Wednesday, adding he is stable. Malik has submitted a letter to the doctors at the medical facility, saying he did not want to be treated, they said. "He was admitted to RML hospital on Tuesday after fluctuation in his BP levels," a source said.

**22-YEAR-OLD ELECTROCUTED TO DEATH**  
New Delhi: The Delhi Police on Wednesday said a 22-year-old man was electrocuted to death while installing a lift in south Delhi's Fatehpur Beri area. His associate, who too received the electrical shock, managed to escape with minor injuries. The incident took place in Mandi village, they said.

**TEEN ESCAPES ABDUCTION ATTEMPT**  
New Delhi: An 18-year-old boy escaped an abduction attempt unhurt after being fired at by two suspects in south Delhi's Sangam Vihar area, said the Delhi Police on Wednesday. Police said that the accused have been identified as Amarpal and Nobita. Deputy Commissioner of Police (south) Benita Mary Jaiker said that the accused tried to take the man towards the bike forcibly, when he tried to resist, Amarpal fired two shot at the victim but he managed to escape unhurt. The police recovered two empty cartridges and efforts are being made to arrest the absconding accused.

**2 HYPNOTISE PATIENT, STEAL GOLD EARRINGS, ARRESTED**  
New Delhi: Two men were arrested over a month after they made away with gold earrings of a patient by "hypnotising" and performing "black magic" on her, police said on Wednesday. With the arrest of Naeem (45) and Hannan (32), the GTB Enclave police station claimed to have cracked seven more incidents of Shahdara district. The duo targeted old and sick people, police said.

**IP UNIVERSITY STARTS ONLINE COUNSELLING**  
New Delhi: The Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University on Wednesday said it has started online counselling for two undergraduate programmes - B. Tech and B. Arch. The eligible applicants for both programmes can apply for the online counselling till August 5, the university said. The applicants can deposit the counselling participation fee of Rs 1,000 till August 5.

ED's power to seize, arrest...

**From Page 1**  
The bench also endorsed section 24 of PMLA relating to self-incrimination. Section 24 says when a person is accused of having committed the offence of money-laundering, the burden of proving that proceeds of crime are untainted property shall be on the accused.

The bench said Section 24 of the law has reasonable nexus with the purposes and objects sought to be achieved by the Act and it cannot be regarded as unconstitutional.

The CrPC guards a citizen's right against self-incrimination. Section 162 of CrPC says every person is bound to answer truthfully all questions put to them by a police officer other than questions the answers to which would

have a tendency to expose that person to criminal charge, penalty or forfeiture.

The bench said statements recorded by authorities under the 2002 Act are not hit by Article 20(3) or Article 21 of the Constitution. While Article 20 (3) says no person accused of any offence shall be compelled to be a witness against himself, Article 21 deals with protection of life and personal liberty.

The bench, however, conceded that petitioners are justified in expressing serious concern "bordering on causing injustice" owing to the vacancies in appellate tribunal. "We deem it necessary to impress upon the executive to take corrective measures in this regard expeditiously," it said. The judgment said section 63 of

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra's former Chief Minister and Shiv Sena president Uddhav Thackeray on Wednesday charged that democracy was at peril as the ruling BJP was conspiring to finish the Opposition and regional parties by "misusing" the investigation agencies like the CBI and Enforcement Directorate (ED).

In the second and concluding part of the interview published in his party's official mouth-piece "Saamana" on the occasion of his birthday, Uddhav said that if the ruling BJP at the Centre appeared scared of the Opposition parties, it was because of its eroding strength.

Uddhav said that he agreed with the perception of chief



ministers of Delhi and West Bengal Arvind Kejriwal and Mamata Banerjee and other opposition leaders that a conspiracy was in full-swing to "finish off" the Opposition and regional parties in the country.

Queried if democracy would survive in the country, Uddhav said: "Given the current political situation in the country, I also get a similar feeling. If the ruling BJP appears

scared of the Opposition, it is because of its eroded strength. In a democracy, it is not necessary that one party - which could be Shiv Sena, Congress, BJP or any other party-- wins all the time. Victory and defeat are part of democracy. In fact that is the magic of democracy." "I do not say that democracy in the country has been replaced by dictatorship. But many people in the country feel that the country is heading towards that direction. They feel that the country is heading in the wrong direction," he said.

Recalling the late Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's statement that "Power comes and goes, but the country should remain", Uddhav said: "Till today many chief ministers have come and gone... I was the CM yesterday, I am not today

Nitin Gadkari's statement that the BJP was like a 'washing machine' which made people facing allegations as 'virtuous', Uddhav said: "This is not really the sign of a strong ruler, but one in fear"

Calling for unity among opposition parties, Uddhav said: "Like it happened during the emergency, the then Janata Party (1975-1977) did not even have election agents at polling booths, yet people of all classes voted for them overwhelmingly, and the party came to power. It is another that the Janata Party government collapsed later due to infighting". "The first thing that is necessary to bring change in government is that the opposition parties should have the will to do so. They should come together and create awareness

among people about the need for a change in government. We as the Shiv Sena are willing to be part of this exercise, we cannot go alone and all opposition parties in the country must join together for the struggle without making too many enemies. Together, we must ensure healthy politics," he said.

Maintaining that the Shiv Sena-NCP-Congress combine's Maha Vikas Aghadi was a "successful experiment" and the government enjoyed the support of the people, Uddhav said: "There was nothing with the MVA experiment. The people have welcomed it. Many in the state cried when I left the chief minister's official residence" Varshaon June 22). I will not allow those tears go in vain," he said.

Sonia quizzed for 3 hours on 3rd...

**From Page 1**  
During her deposition, she is understood to have stuck to the party's position that no personal assets were made in the Associated Journals Limited (AJL)-Young Indian deal and that the routine affairs of the companies were handled by other office bearers, including late Moti Lal Vora.

Earlier, the agency has questioned Congress leaders Pawan Bansal and Mallikarjun Kharge in this case.

The questioning sessions were recorded in an audio-video mode, officials said.

The Congress has slammed the agency's action against its

top leadership and termed it as "political vendetta" and "harassment". Former Congress president and her son Rahul was also questioned by the ED in this case last month in sessions that clocked over 50 hours spread over five days.

The move to question the Gandhis was initiated after the ED late last year registered a fresh case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

This followed a trial court here taking cognisance of an Income Tax Department probe against Young Indian based on a private criminal complaint filed by BJP MP Subramanian Swamy in 2013.

Cabinet OK's...

**From Page 1**  
The Minister said BSNL's 8.6 lakh km optical fibre will be extended by merging BBNL (which has the BharatNet project under it and an optical fibre network of 5.8 lakh km). With this, BSNL will have 14 lakh km of the optical network.

"The revival package will enable BSNL to improve services and generate a net profit in 3-4 years. Its 5G services launch will happen in next 1.5-2 years," Vaishnav said.

"In 1-1.5 years its 4G telecom services will reach people." On the merger of MTNL and BSNL, he said the plan is still there but "it needs complex financial restructuring".

12-yr-old girl raped, accused arrested

**STAFF REPORTER ■ NOIDA**  
A 12-year-old girl on her way to school in Noida was allegedly raped by a 20-year-old man on Wednesday, prompting the police to arrest the accused, according to officials.

The accused, however, tried to escape and clashed with the police personnel leading to gunshot injuries to him as he was taken into custody once again, they said.

"The girl was on her way to school in the morning when

the accused met her and lured her to an isolated area in Sector 32 and forced himself on her. The matter was reported to the local Sector 24 police station and the accused was soon held," a police official said.

India helped Lanka 'swiftly', but China turned a deaf ear...

**From Page 1**  
Power said India has helped countries around the world in times of difficulties.

"Contrast this with the People's Republic of China which has been an increasingly eager creditor of the Sri Lankan

Governments since the mid 2000s," Power said.

"Indeed, over the past two decades, China became one of Sri Lanka's biggest creditors offering often opaque loan deals at higher interest rates than other lenders and financing a raft

of headline grabbing infrastructure projects with often questionable practical use for Sri Lankans, including a massive port that generated little income and was barely used by ships," she said in an apparent reference to the Hambanthota port.

SpiceJet's flights capped at 50% for 8 weeks over...

**From Page 1**  
The order comes after SpiceJet planes were involved in at least eight technical malfunction incidents in the 18-day period starting June 19.

After which the DGCA had on July 6 issued a show-cause notice to the airline, stating that "poor internal safety oversight" and "inadequate maintenance actions" have resulted in degradation of safety margins.

Just three days after issuing the notice, the DGCA started conducting spot checks on SpiceJet planes. The spot checks were completed on July 13.

On March 11, the DGCA approved 4,192 weekly domestic flights of SpiceJet for this year's summer schedule, which

ends on October 29. Wednesday's order means the budget carrier will be able to operate not more than 2,096 weekly flights for the next eight weeks.

In a statement on Wednesday, SpiceJet said, "We are in receipt of the DGCA order and will act as per directions of the regulator. Due to the current lean travel season, SpiceJet, like

other airlines, had already rescheduled its flight operations. Hence, there will be absolutely no impact on our flight operations." The airline said it wants to reassure its passengers and travel partners that its flights will operate according to schedule in the coming days and weeks. "There will be no flight cancellation as a consequence of this order.

CBI arrests Lalu's man Friday Bhola Yadav in Railways land-for-job...

**From Page 1**  
It was further alleged that the accused was managing affairs in transfer of land by the family members of substitutes to the family members of former Railway Minister (Lalu Yadav) and also engaging substitutes in Railway," the CBI said in a statement.

It was also alleged that the then OSD had acquired some properties during the relevant period.

The CBI had registered a case on May 18, 2022 against former Railways Minister Lalu Yadav and 15 others, including his wife, two daughters and unknown public servants and private persons.

It was alleged in the FIR that Lalu Yadav, during the period 2004-2009, had obtained pecuniary advantages in the form of transfer of landed property in the name of his family members in lieu of appointment of Substitutes in Group "D" Post in different Zones of Railways.

It was further alleged that in lieu of the jobs, the substitutes, who were residents of Patna themselves or through their family members sold and gifted their land situated at Patna in favour of the family members of the said minister and a private company controlled by his family members, which was also involved in

transfer of such immovable properties in the name of said family members.

It was also alleged that no advertisement or any public notice was issued for such appointments of substitutes in Zonal Railways, yet the appointees who were residents of Patna were appointed as Substitutes in different Zonal Railways located at Mumbai, Jabalpur, Kolkata, Jaipur and Hajipur.

It was further alleged that in continuation of this modus operandi, about 1,05,292 Sq. feet land/ immovable properties situated at Patna were acquired by family members of Lalu Yadav through five sale deeds and two gift deeds, showing the payment made to the seller in cash in most of the land transfer.

Earlier, searches were conducted on May 20 at 16 places in Delhi, Patna and Gopalganj.

20 suspended RS MPs start 50-hr protest on...

**From Page 1**  
Those who met Naidu were Mallikarjun Kharge and K C Venugopal of Congress, Ram Gopal Yadav (SP), Derek O'Brien (TMC), Tiruchi Siva (DMK), Sanjay Raut (Shiv Sena), Elamaram Kareem (CPM), Binoy Viswam (CPI),

Suresh Reddy (TRS) and Vaiko (MDMK).

Minister of Parliamentary Affairs Pralhad Joshi, Leader of the House Piyush Goyal and MoS (Parliamentary Affairs) Muralaedharan also joined the meeting at Naidu's chamber.

Joshi said the suspension of Opposition MPs can be revoked by the Chair if they apologise and assure they would not show placards in the House. As many as 24 opposition MPs - 20 from the Rajya

Sabha and four from the Lok Sabha - have been suspended for their unruly behaviour and creating ruckus in Parliament.

Naidu is learnt to have told Opposition leaders that as many as 63 members of Lok Sabha were similarly suspended in 1989 and another 25 in 2015 for persistent violation of the rules of the House. The Chairman also had a meeting with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman and enquired about her health and her readiness to reply to the debate on the issue of price rise. AAP's Sanjay Singh on Wednesday became the 20th MP to be suspended for unruly behaviour from Rajya Sabha sittings for the rest of the week. The latest suspension triggered protests from other AAP MPs while the Opposition parties insisted on a discussion on price rise.

Minister of State for Parliamentary Affairs V Muralaedharan moved a

motion to suspend Singh from the House for the remainder of the week. The motion was adopted by voice vote, even as Opposition members continued to raise uproar in the Well of the House.

The 50-hour-long relay protest inside the Parliament complex started near the Gandhi Statue and will continue through the night as well. The MPs suspended over the last two days include seven from the TMC, six from

the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam , three from the Telangana Rashtra Samithi, two from the Communist Party of India (Marxist), and one each from the Communist Party of India and the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP). Also, four Lok Sabha MPs of the Congress have been suspended.

Opposition MPs on Wednesday again trooped into the Well against the suspension of the MPs, even as Deputy

Chairman Harivansh appealed to the suspended member to move out. Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi took a swipe at Prime Minister Narendra Modi dubbing him as a 'king' who has got 57 MPs arrested and 23 MPs suspended for asking questions on unemployment and inflation. He also alleged that while the king is afraid of questions in the temple of democracy, they well know how to fight dictators. Talking to the media

Singh said the AAP will continue to raise the "fundamental issues" of the masses, including spurious liquor sale in Gujarat, both in Parliament and on the streets. The AAP has 10 members in the Rajya Sabha. Singh said Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah, both of whom are from Gujarat, could have come and told the House "how spurious liquor trade is going on in Gujarat."

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Notice is hereby given on behalf of Mr. Navneet Panchal & Mrs. Amita who are intend to purchase the Freehold Plot No.43 (Part), area measuring 33.5 Sq. Yds. (28.01 Sq. Mtrs.), out of Kharsa No. 257, situated at Eastern Jawahar Nagar, Village Bahata Hazipur, Loni, Paragana & Tehsil Loni, District Ghaziabad (U.P.); from Mr. Pramod Kumar who is owner of the aforesaid property by virtue of Sale Deed Dated 18.04.2022, which is registered as Doc. No.6124 in the office of Sub Registrar-Loni, Ghaziabad and intend to mortgage the same against the financial assistance from Ummeed Housing Finance Private Limited. That, Surviving Member Certificate (SMC) of Late Mrs. Ram Kishni is not available. To comply the requirements of BANK/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any person(s) having any objection regarding ownership and/or creating mortgage of the said property is/are hereby requested to intimate in writing to the undersigned within 7 days at below address.

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**कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम, भोपाल**  
( सीवेज शाखा )  
// निविदा आमंत्रण //

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**वि.क्र. 423/022/023**

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# Implement GNCTD Amendment Act: L-G to Assembly Speaker

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Possibly triggering a new flashpoint between the Centre and the ruling AAP Government in the national Capital, Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has asked Delhi Assembly Speaker Ram Niwas Goel for “constitutional compliance”, to the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (GNCTD) (Amendment) Act, 2021.

The Lieutenant Governor has also questioned why Assembly has not amended its functioning after 14 months of its implementation.

The GNCTD (Amendment) Act, 2021, accords primacy to Delhi's Lieutenant Governor (LG) over the elected Government. According to the legislation, the “Government” in Delhi means the “Lieutenant Governor”.

Sources in the L-G's office said that even 14 months after the GNCTD (Amendment) Act, 2021, came into effect, the Delhi Assembly has kept necessary amendments in its Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business pending.

“Sub-section (1) of Section 33 of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi Act, 1991 as amended up to date, hereinafter called “Amendment Act”, provides, - 33 Rules of procedure – (1) the Legislative Assembly may make rules for regulating, subject to the provision of this Act, its procedure and the conduct of its business (which shall not be inconsistent with the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in House of the People),” they said.

“Provided that the Legislative Assembly shall not make any rule to enable itself or its Committees to consider the matters of day-to-day administration of the Capital or conduct inquiries in relation to the administrative decisions, and any of the rule made in



contravention of this proviso, before the commencement of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act, 2021, shall be void,” the sources said.

The L-G, in his message to the Speaker, cited the GNCTD (Amendment) Act provision under which the Assembly will not make any rule to enable itself or its committees to consider the matters of the day-to-day administration of the capital or conduct inquiries in relation to the administrative decisions, they said.

“Necessary amendments in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Legislative Assembly or any other existing rule on the subject are immediately required to be made to make them in consonance with the provisions of the amended Act,” LG office sources said quoting Saxena's message to the Speaker.

Speaking on the matter, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) said that the matter pertains to Delhi Assembly and they are sure that the Speaker will act as per the constitution.

Reacting on the message sent by the LG, Delhi Legislative Assembly Speaker Ram Niwas Goel said that the amendment to the GNCTD Act made by Parliament has been challenged by the Delhi Government on the ground that it violates article 239AA.

“This amendment has made the committee system of the Assembly non functional. The amendment prohibits the

## Make detailed presentation on revision of circle rates, Revenue Dept told

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Wednesday asked the revenue department to make a detailed presentation on Revision of Circle Rates along with the reports of the various working groups constituted for this purpose. The order comes during the review of the revenue department.

“The Department was also asked to make a detailed presentation on Revision of Circle Rates along with the reports of the various working groups constituted for this purpose,” the Raj Niwas said in a statement.

“The LG pointed towards the blanket order that had led to sealing thousands of borewells in the city irrespective of the water table beneath them. With the aim of framing a scientific and reasoned policy for regulating borewells in

the Capital, the Department was instructed to examine the map of Delhi prepared by Central Ground Water Board to identify locations where water table is high and accordingly frame such policy.

De-sealing of borewells at such sites accompanied by pit holes to recharge ground water will help meet the City's water requirements in an environmentally sustainable manner,” the statement said.

“The Revenue Department has been instructed to create a template for monitoring progress of restoration and renovation of water bodies and the same will be monitored by respective District Magistrates (DMs) regularly,” it informed.

“Instructions were issued to expedite and dispose the claims pending for payment of ex-gratia to families of Covid-19 victims within 15 days,” the statement further added.

Assembly and its committees from making inquiries into administrative decisions. Then what will the committees look into? United Nation's affairs? Committees of legislature look into administrative decisions and ask the government to fix responsibility of individual officers if found guilty by the committees,” he said.

“Recently the Petitions Committee and Privileges Committee have inquired into the orders of a few SDMs and ADMs in different matters. This has led to the suspension of four SDMs, two ADMs, a Sub Registrar, and a few others.

Government land worth hundreds of crores could be saved from illegal transfers to private parties. Why are they trying to stop such inquiries?” he questioned. “This is the legitimate, constitutional func-

tion of committees of a legislature.

The legislature enforces accountability of the Executive through these committees. Under Article 239AA the executive is accountable to the Assembly which ensures it through its systems.

Parliament cannot through an amendment take away this fundamental function of the legislature. But this is what it has done through this amendment. PAC, PU, SCST committee, Committee on OBC welfare, etc delve deep into administrative decisions. These committees perform functions that are absolutely necessary for our constitutional scheme.

The amendment which LG wants to be enforced will effectively put an end to the committees,” Goel added.

# HC rejects plea seeking suspension of Jain from Kejriwal's Cabinet

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday dismissed the petition seeking a direction to the Lieutenant Governor for Delhi Minister Satyendar Jain's suspension, saying it cannot direct Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to remove Minister from his Cabinet and it hopes that the Chief Minister while appointing Ministers, will uphold the trust reposed in him by the electorates.

“It is for the chief minister to act in the best interest of the state and consider whether a person who has a criminal background or has been charged with offences involving moral turpitude should be allowed to continue as a minister or not,” a division bench comprising Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Subramonium Prasad said in its 16 pages order while dismissing the petition. The petition was filed by former BJP MLA Nand Kishore Garg.

“While it is not for the Court to issue directions to the Chief Minister, it is the duty of the Court to remind these key duty holders about their role with regard to uphold the tenets of our Constitution. The Chief Minister exercises his/her discretion in choosing the Members of Cabinet and to formulate a policy pertaining to appointment of Council of Ministers.

“The Council of Ministers has a collective responsibility to sustain and uphold integrity of the Constitution of India, and it is for the Chief Minister to act in the best interest of the State and consider as to whether a person who has criminal background and/or has been charged with offences involving moral turpitude should be appointed and should be allowed to continue as a Minister or not,” the order said.

“Good governance is only in the hands of good people. Even though the Court cannot sit in judgement of what is good or bad, it certainly can

remind constitutional functionaries to preserve, protect and promote the ethos of our Constitution.

There is a presumption that the Chief Minister would be well advised and guided by such constitutional principles,” it read.

“The Court believes that the Chief Minister upholds the trust reposed in him that forms the foundation of a representative democracy while appointing persons to lead the people,” the order further stated.

The Court held that it cannot frame wider guidelines on the issue or pass any direction on who should be appointed as a legislator or is entitled to become a minister either at the central or state level.

The judges further said that it is not for them to direct the Governor or Chief Minister to remove a person who has committed breach of their oaths and a High Court under Article 226 is not competent to issue direction terminating appointment of a minister of the State.

However, the judges said that it is the court's duty to remind key persons about their role with regard to upholding the tenets of the Constitution.

Quoting Dr BR Ambedkar, the bench said that it wholeheartedly agrees with the observation of the founding father and hopes that CM will uphold the trust reposed in him that forms the foundation of a representative democracy while appointing persons to lead the people.

The petition argued that Jain is a public servant with a duty to uphold the constitutional oath and rule of law but he continues to enjoy the perks and privileges of a cabinet minister despite being indicted under serious charges.

Apart from seeking removal of Jain from the cabinet, the PIL also asked the court to issue broader guidelines for resignation/suspension of the ministers if he/she is arrested.



## ED files chargesheet against Jain and others under PMLA

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday filed a chargesheet before a court against Delhi Minister Satyendar Jain and others in an alleged money laundering case.

According to sources, the ED prosecution complaint has named Satyendar Jain, his wife Poonam Jain, Vaibhav Jain, Ankush Jain, Ajit Prasad Jain and Sunil Jain, including four private firms as accused. The above-mentioned are accused of violations under sections of the money laundering Act.

Special Judge Geetanjali Goel on Wednesday posted the matter for July 29, 2022 on the point of cognizance. The trial court also examined the interim bail plea of Satyendar Jain on basis of medical grounds. Jain is currently in judicial custody.

The ED had initiated a money-laundering investigation on the basis of a First Information Report registered by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on 24 August 2017 under Section 13(2) r/w 13(1)(e) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 against Satyendar Jain, Poonam Jain, Ajit Prasad Jain, Sunil Kumar Jain, Vaibhav Jain and Ankush Jain.

The CBI filed a chargesheet on 3 December 2018 against Satyendar Kumar Jain, Poonam Jain, Ajit Prasad Jain, Sunil Kumar Jain, Vaibhav Jain and Ankush Jain.

## Balcony, ceiling in 2 separate hostels collapsed due to rain: JNU students

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Students of the Jawaharlal Nehru University on Wednesday alleged that a portion of a balcony and a ceiling in two separate hostels collapsed following the recent spells of rain. An immediate reaction was not available from the university.

JNU Dean of Student Sudheer Pratap Singh did not respond to calls and texts seeking a response. In a statement, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) said roofs collapsing has become a common sight in the varsity.

The incidents took place on Monday at Periyar and Kaveri hostels of the university. No one was injured in the incident. The students, however, expressed concerns over the dilapidated condition of the hostels. A portion of the balcony collapsed at the Periyar hostel. “My room is on the ground floor and suddenly the balcony on the first floor partially collapsed. I was at the spot. Somehow I was saved,” said a student who did not wish to be identified.

“In another incident, the roof of a hostel room partially collapsed in Kaveri hostel. These incidents have become quite common in the university. The hostels are in very bad condition. Everyday there is one or the other incidents,” the student added.

On April 13, a student was injured after a portion of the bathroom ceiling collapsed at a hostel in JNU. ‘Incidents of falling roofs of hostels are coming to the fore every day. At present, due to the rainy season, moisture has formed, in such a situation, water can be seen continuously dripping from the walls and roofs.

“On Monday, roof of Periyar Hostel collapsed on the previous day. A similar incident has also been seen in Kaveri Hostel,” the statement by ABVP read.

# Punjab plans to give cash to farmers for not burning stubble: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Wednesday said the Punjab Government has sent a proposal to the Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) to give cash incentives to farmers in the border State for not burning stubble.

The proposal says Rs 2,500 per acre should be given to farmers in Punjab to wean them away from stubble burning, the Chief Minister said after inaugurating charging stations for electric vehicles.

“The Punjab Government has sent a proposal to the Air Quality Commission as per which the farmers will be provided a cash incentive of Rs 2.5 thousands per acre for not burning their paddy stubble.

They are free to use technology of their choice,” he said. As per the proposal, the Punjab Government has proposed that it will give Rs 500, Delhi Government will give Rs 500 and the Central Government can give Rs 1.5 thousand. Whenever the Air Quality Commission will take decision, the Delhi Government will implement the same. “We are ready to do everything possible to protect the environment as we are committed to provide a healthy environment to the people of Delhi,” he said. The AAP



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot at the inauguration of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations, at Rajghat Bus Depot in New Delhi on Wednesday

Governments in Punjab and Delhi plan to provide cash incentive to farmers in the border state for not burning stubble and have requested the Centre to share the cost. Paddy straw burning in Punjab and Haryana is a major reason behind the alarming spike in air pollution levels in the national capital in October

and November. Punjab generates around 20 million tons of paddy straw annually. “Delhi will share the cost since smoke from farm fires impact air quality in the national capital,” a Punjab government official had said. He had said the Punjab and Delhi governments will implement the scheme even if the Centre doesn't

agree. Under a Centre-sponsored scheme, farm machinery is provided to farmers at a subsidised rate for in-situ management of the stubble. The governments of Punjab and Haryana had announced a bonus of Rs 2,500 an acre for small and marginal farmers in 2019 too, following the Supreme Court's suggestion to

incentivise farmers to stop farm fires. According to Indian Agricultural Research Institute, Punjab had reported 71,304 farm fires between September 15 and November 30 last year and 83,002 farm fires in the corresponding period in 2020. Last year, the share of farm fires in Delhi's PM 2.5 pollution had peaked to 48% on November 7.

## Sisodia reviews markets redevelopment projects

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government is preparing an individual action plan for each of the five retail markets here chosen for redevelopment and the work will be initiated in a phased manner, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said on Wednesday.

Sisodia reviewed the progress of various ongoing projects, including the shopping festival, redevelopment of retail markets, development of food hubs under the Delhi food truck policy.

The Delhi Government announced last month that it will redevelopment five markets — Kamla Nagar, Khari Baoli, Lajpat Nagar, Sarojini Nagar and Kirti Nagar — to make

them “world class”. Reviewing the projects, Sisodia said, “Several meetings have been held with the stakeholders to understand the needs of the markets.

“In the meeting, officials said keeping in mind the requirements of the five markets selected for redevelopment, an action plan is being prepared for each of them and the work will be done in a phased manner accordingly,” an official statement said.

While reviewing the projects, Sisodia said that several meetings have been conducted with the stakeholders to understand the needs of the markets. Work on each of the schemes announced in the “Rozgaar Budget” is going on in a phased manner.

# 41 major roads to be redeveloped ahead of G20 in city: NDMC

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the G20 summit in the national Capital, the New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) on Wednesday said the redevelopment work of 41 major roads and roundabouts in the area including pavement, green berms and illumination, will be designed and executed.

According to the vice chairman of the NDMC, Satish Upadhyay, redevelopment of roads and roundabouts in NDMC area, including pavement, green berms, and illumination with one year maintenance in light of the upcoming G20 Presidency related events in Delhi.

“NDMC has received several correspondences from the G20 Secretariat and other higher authorities related to upgradation and improvement of infrastructure in NDMC area in view of the ensuing G20 Presidency and its related events in New Delhi. Several rounds of meetings have been held in this regard at G20 Secretariat,” he said.

“In line with the discussions held in these meeting a comprehensive review of the existing infrastructure especially the major roads have been done. Accordingly, 41 major roads having maximum



impact have been identified and a proposal has been prepared for redevelopment of these roads. The work of “Sculpture and Art Promotion Work” will be designed and executed separately being specialized work,” he informed.

“Council resolved to grant the administrative approval and Expenditure sanction for the work of Redevelopment of roads and roundabouts in NDMC area including pavement, green berms and illumination with one year maintenance amounting to Rs. 85.02 Crores,” Upadhyay said.

The Council will impart skill training to 25,000 people in next six months in collaboration with National Skill Development Corporation, Upadhyay said.

To implement measures specified under the National Clean Air Programme, the civic body will also sign a pact with IIT Delhi, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC),

Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and Delhi Cantonment Board, he said.

Upadhyay said a slew of other proposals were also approved by the NDMC Council which included taking a number of initiatives to celebrate “Har Ghar Tiranga Programme” by conducting cultural events, illuminating roads, flyovers and roundabouts.

Addressing a press conference, Upadhyay said the skill development training programme will be carried out in three phases where contractual workers, masons, plumbers, construction workers, blacksmith among others will imparted training.

“In the first phase, we will provide skill training to 25,000 people with the help of National Skill Development Corporation. This phase will be completed in six months,” he said.

NDMC Member Kuljeet Chahal said in total 75,000 people would be trained out of which 25,000 will be given skill training in the first phase.

“A budget of Rs 4.36 crore have been approved for this out of which Rs 1.5 crore would be provided by the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship,” Chahal said.

## PICTALK



Members of the Aam Aadmi Party stage a protest against the BJP over Gujarat hooch tragedy at the AAP headquarters in New Delhi on Wednesday

# Chinese knives smuggling racket busted, 5 held

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police busted the Indo-Chinese knives smuggling racket and have recovered 14,053 button actuated knives. Five people have been arrested involved in illegally importing and selling Chinese knives in e-commerce websites, police said.

According to police, on July 18, police got a call regarding a courier package lying on the road. When they analysed the CCTV footage, it was revealed that the box had fallen from the motorcycle of a delivery boy, a senior police officer said. Each knife was in a packet with the details of the sender — Mohammad Sahil from Delhi's Malviya Nagar. A raid was conducted at his ware-

house in the south Delhi locality and Sahil (28) and his employee Wasim (18) were apprehended, Deputy Commissioner of Police (south) Benita Mary Jaiker said. A total of 533 button actuated knives were seized from there, she said.

Sahil sold the knives online. He was helped by one Yusuf (29) who used to buy the knives from Ashish Chawla (43) in Sadar Bazar and transport them to Sahil's warehouse, police said, adding that Yusuf was arrested.

Later, Chawla was also arrested and another 13,440 button actuated knives were seized from his godown in Sadar Bazar, Jaiker said. Chawla disclosed that he used

to place orders for the knives and the payment was made by Mayank Babbar (32), an importer who has an office in China, police said.

Babbar would misrepresent the consignment as kitchen knives to avoid getting caught by the customs department, they said. Babbar too has been arrested, police said.

The investigation will now focus on the lapses, if any, on the part of regulatory and facilitating authorities like customs, Directorate General of Foreign Trade and the abettors of the crime, including e-commerce websites where the knives were being sold, the DCP said. “We are also looking at the possibility of involvement of Chinese state actors who



might be in collision with the arrested Indians into pushing the contraband and to find out

what else has been pushed into India under camouflaged names and titles,” the DCP said.



# Lok Sabha passes National Anti-Doping Bill, 2021

To provide legal framework for operation of NADA

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

In an important legislation, Lok Sabha on Wednesday passed the National Anti-Doping Bill, 2021, which will provide a statutory framework for the functioning of the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) and the National Dope Testing Laboratory in the country.

The passage of the Bill in the post-lunch session happened despite the partial derailment of the proceedings of the house earlier.

“We tied up with the National Forensic Science Laboratory. NADA has also developed a toolkit. India can become a hub of anti-doping testing. The data of any athlete will not go into the public domain,” said Union Sports Minister Anurag Thakur while replying to the debate on the National Anti-Doping Bill, 2021. The house was adjourned for the day after

passing the bill. The Minister said, “National Anti-Doping Bill will boost India’s reputation. The country will have special laws and anti-doping testing facilities. We need to widen the scope of doping investigations and increase the testing capacity of doping.”

“Almost Rs 70-100 crores is spent in building one testing laboratory but our government will not be left behind in this. Through this, we will not be dependent on other countries and will support our initiative of ‘Aatmanirbhar Bharat,’” said Thakur.

Elaborating on the long-term benefits of the bill the sports minister said, “National Anti-Doping Bill will boost India’s reputation. The country will have special laws and anti-doping testing facilities. We need to widen the scope of doping investigations and increase the testing capacity of doping.” “Countries like US, China, Australia, Korea & Japan had already adopted Anti Doping Law. Now India will be among these countries to have its own anti-doping law and testing laboratories as well,” Thakur informed mem-

bers. “Currently, we’re testing 6,000 samples in a year, when we host big sporting events in our country, we’ll have to test 10,000 samples in a month. So we need to increase the number of testing laboratories as well,” he said while detailing the significance of the bill.

Earlier in the day, the Bill to provide statutory framework for NADA’s functioning came up for consideration in the House. The Bill, moved by Thakur, sought to strengthen measures to check drug abuse by sportspersons.

The minister said the bill will give effect to a UN convention on anti-doping. While moving the Bill for consideration and passage, Thakur recalled the achievements of Indian sportspersons in the recent past and expressed hope that Indians will win more medals in international tournaments in future.

“The bill is intended to provide a ‘statutory framework for the operation of the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA), the National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL) and other dope testing laboratories, and for the creation of

a National Board for Anti-Doping in Sports to strengthen anti-doping activities in sport,” he said.

It seeks to give NADA powers of “investigation, levying sanctions for anti-doping rule violations, the disciplinary procedures to be adopted and the powers of inspection, sample collection and sharing and free flow of information.” It also provides for the establishment of the NDTL and other dope testing laboratories.

Participating in the discussion, BJP MP Manoj Tiwari said the bill will prevent unnecessary litigation between sportspersons and NADA, which currently does not have legislative backing.

He also underlined the need for educating sportspersons about the perils of doping and using banned performance-enhancing drugs. Rahul Ramesh Shewale of the Shiv Sena said efforts should be made to give sportspersons dope-free supplements. The bill was introduced in Lok Sabha in December last year and had undergone the scrutiny of a parliamentary committee.

## LS disruption over GST, price rise continues

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

The stalemate over the ways to restore normalcy in Lok Sabha continued as Opposition on Wednesday again forced adjournments over price rise and GST rate, demanding a debate on the issues and revoking suspension of four of its members while the government said it was ready for discussion on price rise right away.

During discussion on matters of urgent public importance in the afternoon under Rule 377, TMC MP Saugata Roy urged the Government to immediately withdraw ‘Agnipath’ scheme in the interest of the country, citing the protests by youths and security concerns expressed by experts.

The proceedings in the house resumed in the morning on the familiar pattern that had followed the start of the Monsoon session with opposition moving to the well of the house carrying placards and shouting slogans on the issues like price rise and GST rate and



demanding a debate on them. The House was first adjourned soon after it convened at 11 am and later at 12 noon, following the laying of parliamentary papers on the table of the House. When the House assembled for the day, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla welcomed a parliamentary delegation from Mozambique which was here to witness proceedings. Birla appealed to the members to go

back to their seats and cooperate in running the House. The opposition members also demanded revocation of the order suspending four MPs. Congress MPs Manickam Tagore, Ramya Haridas, T N Prathapan and S Jothimani were on Monday suspended for rest of the session for staging protests and carrying placards inside the House. The Speaker tried to run the House despite

the protests and allowed Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw and Coal Minister Pralhad Joshi to reply to supplementaries related to their respective ministries.

When the protests grew louder, Birla appealed to the opposition members to go back to their seats, saying House rules and regulations were framed by the MPs themselves and they should not violate it.

“Such improper (ashobhaniya) behaviour is not good. You should take part in the debate. This is not good for democracy as well as individually for you. Otherwise, I will have to use the rules framed by you,” he said.

The Speaker said people and the assemblies in country were watching what was happening in this House. Joshi, who is also Parliamentary Affairs Minister, said Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has returned after recovering from an illness and government was ready for a debate on price rise on Wednesday itself.

## Ladakh standoff tops bilateral talk agenda



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE**

**■ NEW DELHI**

The persisting stand-offs at the border in Ladakh for the last two years despite several rounds of military and diplomatic level talks will figure prominently during a likely bilateral meeting between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar’s and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Tashkent on July 28-29.

Both the leaders will be there to attend the meeting of the Shanghai Council of Foreign Ministers in Samarkand.

The Foreign Ministers of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) grouping will assemble there at the invitation of Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan Vladimir Norov.

Pakistan’s Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto will also take part in the deliberations. However, there is no confirmation on the likelihood of talks between him and Jaishankar. He is likely to have a bilateral meeting with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on the sidelines of the SCO conclave besides several other ministers.

Giving details of Jaishankar’s schedule, the ministry of external affairs said here on Wednesday the meeting will discuss preparations for the upcoming Meeting of the Council of Heads of State on 15-16 September 2022 in Samarkand. They will review ongoing cooperation in expan-

sion of the SCO Organisation and exchange ideas on regional and global developments of common concern. The Heads of State meeting next month may see Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping having parleys on the sidelines of the conclave, sources said.

As regards likely talks between Jaishankar and Wang Yi, they said the two leaders will review the progress made on efforts to resolve the ongoing face-offs at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh. They will also discuss the takeaways from the Corps Commander level talks between India and China earlier this month. It was the 16th round of talks at the military level since trouble erupted at the LAC in May 2020.

It will be second in person meeting between Jaishankar and Wang Yi in last few months. He was first Chinese minister to visit India in March since face-offs in 2020. The two ministers then held detailed discussions on finding ways to hasten up process of disengagement from remaining friction points at LAC.

The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) is a permanent intergovernmental international organisation, the creation of which was announced on 15 June 2001 in Shanghai (China) by Republic of Kazakhstan, the People’s Republic of China, the Kyrgyz Republic, Russian Federation, Republic of Tajikistan, and Republic of Uzbekistan.

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

In the ongoing probe into illegal mining and extortion in Jharkhand, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) has further seized one inland vessel styled as MV Infralink-III bearing registration number WB 1809 during a search conducted on Tuesday.

The estimated cost of the vessel is around Rs 30 crore. The said inland vessel was being operated illegally without having any permit from Sukargarh Ghat, Sahibganj. The seized vessel was being operated at the behest of Rajesh Yadav alias Dahu Yadav in col-



lusion with Pankaj Mishra, key political aide of Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren and others for transporting illegally mined stone chips/stone boulders, the agency said. An FIR number 84/2022 dated July 26, 2022 has been lodged by Muffasil police station against the owner of the vessel MV INFRALINK-III under Section 25/30 of Bengal

## ‘SC judgment on ED to have far reaching implications: Cong

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

As the Supreme Court upheld certain powers of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the Congress on Wednesday said the judgment will have far-reaching implications for India’s democracy, especially when the Governments are anchored in “political vendetta”.

Top Opposition politicians, including Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi along with P Chidambaram and his son and MP Karti, Shiv Sena’s Sanjay Raut, National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee’s nephew Abhishek Banerjee, also a TMC MP, and Delhi minister Satyendar Jain are among those under the ED’s lens for alleged money laundering.

In a statement, Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh said the judgment pronounced by the Supreme Court on the powers of the Enforcement Directorate today will have far-reaching implications for “our democracy, especially when governments are anchored in politi-

cal vendetta”.

“However, there is one specific aspect of the judgment I would like to address immediately; I had moved the Supreme Court on the blatant misuse of the Money Bill route by the Modi Government, on the amendments made to the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002. The Supreme Court had issued notice on my petition on July 2nd, 2019.

This question remains unresolved in today’s judgment,” Ramesh said. He, however, noted that the court has agreed that they “are conscious of the fact that if that ground of challenge is to be accepted, it may go to the root of the matter and amendments effected vide Finance Act would become unconstitutional or ineffective”.

The court has left these matters to be decided by a larger bench, Ramesh said, adding that this is a matter of some gratification.

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot also expressed disappointment and said the apex court’s ruling will increase the possibility of “political misuse” of the ED by the Centre.

“The pronouncement of the Hon’ble Supreme Court on the rights of PML Act and ED

is disappointing and worrying,” the chief minister tweeted. “A dictatorial atmosphere

has prevailed in the country for the last few years and after this decision, the possibility of

political misuse of ED by the Centre will increase further,” Gehlot said.

## Cong stir to save one particular family: Nadda

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

BJP president J P Nadda on Wednesday lashed out at the Congress protest against the interrogation of Sonia Gandhi by Enforcement Directorate (ED) saying “this is a political campaign to save one particular family” thinking that “one family is above the law.”

In a strongly-worded reaction, Nadda said the Congress protests over the investigation into corruption cases against their top leadership, is “not satyagrah” but “duragrah in support of lies and corruption.”

The reality, he said, is that the Congress is “trying to influence and pressurize law enforcement agencies and trying to shield the truth.” “If they are not happy with the investigation of our law enforcement agencies, they are free to approach our courts. To protest against our law enforcement agencies and to try and sabotage investigation into corruption cases proves that the Congress party is legally on

weakfooting in cases of corruption and they do not want truth to come out,” said the BJP president. He said the Supreme Court has passed a judgment on the powers and jurisdiction of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and the Enforcement Directorate. The Supreme Court has upheld PMLA and has also validated the jurisdiction of the ED. “We honour and respect our Supreme Court and also our Constitution and our law,” said Nadda.

He said Congress president Sonia Gandhi is being questioned by ED in National Herald scam involving thousands of crores and Congress is doing so called satyagraha against it. “It is nothing but an unholy attempt to save family.

This is apolitical campaign to save one particular family. The Congress is holding protests against law enforcement agencies, the Congress leaders are raising questions over our law enforcement agencies, all this is highly inappropriate and illegal.

Raj Ministers, officials involved in illegal mining in Bharatpur, alleges BJP, calls for CBI probe

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

The BJP on Wednesday alleged involvement of Rajasthan Government Ministers and officials in suspected illegal mining in Bharatpur and demanded a CBI probe into matter.

A BJP delegation, including its general secretary Arun Singh, MP and former Mumbai commissioner Satya Pal Singh and MP and former Uttar Pradesh DGP Brij Lal, also presented its enquiry report to party president J P Nadda after visiting site of alleged illegal mining where a sadhu immolated himself during an anti-mining agitation. The sadhu, Vijay Das, had died a few days later on July 23 at a hospital in Delhi.

### IN SHORTS

**J&K SCRIBE STOPPED FROM TRAVELLING**

**New Delhi:** Immigration authorities at the airport here stopped another Kashmiri journalist, Akash Hassan, from travelling abroad, citing restrictions imposed by the Jammu and Kashmir Police. Hassan was on his way to Sri Lanka on Tuesday evening when his boarding pass was cancelled and he was offloaded from the aircraft.

**SC AGREES TO HEAR J’KHAND GOVT, CM PLEA**

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court agreed to hear on Thursday two separate pleas of the Jharkhand Government and Chief Minister Hemant Soren against a high court order that had accepted the maintainability of a PIL for a probe against the JMM leader into alleged irregularities in the grant of mining leases.

**6,514 KASHMIRI PANDITS IN KASHMIR VALLEY: RAI**

**New Delhi:** Altogether 6,514 Kashmiri Pandits are still residing in Kashmir valley -- highest 2,639 in Kulgam district, MoS Home Nityanand Rai said on Wednesday in the Rajya Sabha. He also said that no Kashmiri Pandit has left the valley in 2022.

**INDIA 1ST TO LAUNCH FAMILY PLANNING: MIN**

**New Delhi:** India understood the importance of family planning early and was the first country to launch a national family planning programme in 1952, Minister of State for Health Bharati Pravin Pawar said on Wednesday while chairing the national family planning summit, 2022.

**84,405 POSTS ARE VACANT IN CAPF: RAI**

**New Delhi:** A total of 84,405 posts are lying vacant in six Central Armed Police Forces, with the Central Reserve Police Force having the highest number of vacancies at 29,985. MoS for Home Nityanand Rai also informed Rajya Sabha on Wednesday that the government has decided to fill up the existing vacancies in CAPFs by December 2023.

**SC AGREES TO LIST PLEA OVER LAW COMMISSION**

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Wednesday agreed to consider listing for hearing a 2020 PIL seeking a direction to the Centre to declare the Law Commission as a ‘statutory body’ and appoint chairperson and members to the panel.

**SC LEGAL SERVICES PANEL OFFICE INAUGURATED BY CJI**

**New Delhi:** Chief Justice of India N V Ramana on Wednesday inaugurated the front office of the Supreme Court Legal Services Committee here which works as a one-stop centre for legal aid seekers for the apex court.

**‘CALLOUS GOVT ATTITUDE SPOILED UJJWALA YOJANA’**

**New Delhi:** Senior Congress leader P Chidambaram on Wednesday said “exorbitant” price of subsidised cylinder under ‘Ujjwala Yojana’ is a ‘spoiler’ and asserted that a good scheme of subsidised cooking gas started by UPA has practically perished due to ‘callous attitude’ of present Govt.

**CORRIGENDUM**  
**ICICI Bank** Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No-23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005  
Demand notice publication under SARFAESI Act for Loan Account No. 777705790029 & 015405007308 Name of the Borrower **PROGEN SAS TECHNOLOGIES INDIA PRIVATE LIMITED, SANJAY RAWAT, SANDEEP RAWAT, PUJA RAWAT, SUSHIL KAUSHIK, BHAWANA KAUSHIK** were published in 13.2 notice dated December 02, 2021 & also published dated **January 15, 2022** at The Pioneer (English) & The Pioneer (Hindi) under section 13.2 & May 08 2022 under section 13.4, respectively. We wish to mention that inadvertently and unintentionally a typographical error has occurred in the property address mention in the demand notice & it's publication, Symbolic possession notice & its publication mention as **BQ- 58 Shalimar Bagh , Sarawati Vihar, Delhi-110088** instead of **BQ- 58, first Floor Shalimar Bagh , Sarawati Vihar , Delhi- 110088** We therefore, request you to please read the same as **BQ- 58, first floor Shalimar Bagh , Sarawati Vihar, Delhi- 110088**.  
Date : July 28, 2022 Authorized Officer  
Place: Delhi NCR ICICI Bank Limited

**PUBLIC NOTICE: LOST ID CARD**  
**ICICI Bank** Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited, Plot No. 7, Community Centre, S.D. Tower, Sector 8, Rohini, New Delhi- 110085  
Public Notice  
This is to bring to the notice of the general public that one ID Card of Mr. Puneet Kashyap issued by ICICI Bank Ltd, having ID card No. 2211356, has been found missing and/or lost on 07/07/2022. Anyone, who finds the said ID card, is requested to return the said ID card to the Manager Debt Services & Management Group, ICICI Bank Limited, Plot No. 7, Community Centre, S.D. Tower, Sector 8, Rohini, New Delhi- 110085. Therefore, all the customers of ICICI Bank Limited are hereby notified not to make any payment to any Unauthorised person holding the said ID card No. 2211356.  
Please take further notice that anybody making payment to any person holding the said ID card shall do so at his/her own costs, risk and peril and ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any payment.  
Date : July 28, 2022 Sd-  
Place: Delhi For ICICI Bank Ltd

## Rlys to restore concessions on fares for sr citizens with a tweak after PMO intervenes

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Facing severe criticism from the masses and the Opposition after Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw asserted in the Parliament against restoring concessions on fares for senior citizens and some other categories, the PMO has intervened in the matter following which the Indian Railways is on course to restore them but with a severe tweak.

The restoration of senior citizen concessions is being planned only for the general and sleeper classes as of now. The age criteria too is being changed. Only those above 70 years, as against the earlier 58 for women and 60 for men, will be eligible for the concessionary fare, sources said. The con-

cessions were discontinued since the Covid outbreak. The sources said that fearing a constant attack by the Opposition on the issue and the huge uproar on social media against the Government’s assertion, the Railway Board, to begin with, has started to work on the restoration.

This change of line comes a week after Vaishnaw in a written reply in Lok Sabha last week ruled out a restoration citing that fares in most of the classes were already very low and Railways has suffered a recurring loss due to low fares and concessions to different category of passengers.

The tweaked restoration, the sources indicated, is to offset the cost of granting these concessions for Railways while retaining subsidy for the elderly. “We understand that these

concessions help the elderly and we never said we were going to scrap it completely. We are reviewing it and will take a decision on it,” sources said. Before being withdrawn during the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, the senior citizen concession was extended to women aged 58 and above and men aged 60 and above. While women were eligible for 50 per cent concession, men and transgenders could avail 40 per cent discount in all classes.

Another provision Railways is considering is to limit the concessions to non-AC travel only. “The logic is that if we limit it to sleeper and general classes, we cover 70 per cent of travellers. These are just some of options we are considering and nothing has been finalised,” a source said.

## ‘Innovation in ammunition must to meet challenges’

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday called for innovations in the field of ammunition for the creation of a strong and self-reliant base that keeps the Armed Forces fully prepared to deal with future challenges.

Addressing inaugural session of second conference on Military Ammunition (Ammo India) on the theme ‘Make in India Opportunities and Challenges’ here, he described advanced ammunition as reality of new age warfare, which is a must for India, given its regional and global imperatives and security challenges. Rajnath asserted that Government understands crucial role private sector can play in strengthening defence sector and to enhance their partici-

pation in the field of ammunition, many barriers, which were earlier prevalent, have been removed. He exhorted the public and private sectors, research and development establishments, start-ups, academia and individual innovators to explore newer avenues which can create a base that caters to needs of Armed Forces, ensuring their enhanced preparedness.

The Defence Minister also emphasised the importance of precision guided ammunition, saying that it will play a major role in future warfare. “The employment of precision guided ammunition at ‘Muntho Dhalo’ base played an important role in India’s victory in 1999 Kargil war. Precision strike of ammunition during 2019 strikes on terror camps in Balakot also ensured our success in operation.



# Centre trying to do a Maha in WB: Didi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday sought to find a link between the arrest of senior State Minister Partha Chatterjee on graft charges and the Centre's attempt to topple her Government and accused New Delhi of using the agencies to destroy the reputation of Opposition parties for its narrow political agenda.

"There can be lapses while running big institutions ... for which corrective measures can be taken but it is another matter when agencies are used to destroy the image and reputation of the opposition parties in order to pull down their governments," the Chief Minister said alleging there were "plans to do a topple the Bengal Government much the way



they did in Maharashtra." Wondering "why Enforcement Directorate conducted raids at various places at midnight or early in the morning and why those raids were planned just one day after the massive rally organised by the Trinamool Congress in Kolkata," Mamata said, "they are trying to do a Maharashtra in Bengal but we are different ... if they come here they will have to face the Royal Bengal Tiger, crocodiles and ele-

phants." In an apparent bid to tone up the sagging morale of her party men in the wake of the arrest of Chatterjee and his close aide Arpita Mukherjee from whose apartment the ED recovered Rs 22 crore in cash Banerjee said "I ask all of you not to be afraid of the agencies let them come ... but be sure BJP is not going to continue after 2024 ... they will lose ... they will lose ... they will lose ... how I cannot say ... on what arithmetic I cannot say ... but they will go after 2024 ... so don't be afraid."

Attacking the media for acting as "agents" of some political outfits Mamata said "even the Chief Justice of India has said the media is organising kangaroo courts ... I don't say to spare the guilty ... but I warn against persecuting the innocent."

Saying that the Bengal Government had achieved bigger success than the Government of India Banerjee said while "in nationally unemployment has increased 20 percent in Bengal it has gone down by 45 percent ... during the pandemic period India witnessed a negative growth of 7.7 percent where as Bengal was the only State to witness a growth of 1.2 percent ... this is all because we have investment worth Rs 15 lakh crore and we have increased revenue by four times."

Mamata's statement came amid reports that she was flying out to Delhi in the first week of August. The report was immediately interpreted by CPIM) State secretary Md Salim as "yet another effort by Mamata to fix the Centre."

## 38 TMC MLAs in touch with BJP, says Mithun

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

While Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday claimed that efforts were on to topple her Government like it was done in Maharashtra, Mumbai star Mithun Chakrabarty who on Wednesday met BJP MLAs from Bengal told reporters in Kolkata that at least 38 Trinamool Congress MLAs were in touch with the saffron outfit.

Chakrabarty's claim assumes importance in the backdrop of the ED raids, recovery of huge amount of cash and arrest of senior minister Partha Chatterjee. "There are 38 MLAs who have a good relationship with the BJP and out of them 21 are in direct touch with me ... that is a big breaking news I can give you," Chakrabarty who had campaigned for the saffron party during the last year's Assembly elections said.



On whether these MLAs would be used to topple the TMC Government, Chakrabarty said "one fine morning in Mumbai I found that Shiv Sena and BJP Dpen ... In the Mumbai film industry we first release the music, then we release the trailer and then we release the film ... whatever I told you today consider it as the release of music ... more is likely to follow."

On the ED raids he said "those who had done nothing should not be afraid and should sleep tight but those who have stolen money will not be spared ... no one on this earth can ... not even the Prime Minister or the President can save them."

Chakrabarty who has been camping in Kolkata for the past several days on Wednesday had an elaborate meeting with the BJP leaders including the MLAs who were given some directions by him.

## 'UP tops in custodial deaths in last 2 yrs'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Much to the embarrassment of the Uttar Pradesh Police, the record tables in Parliament by the Central Government points that the State has topped the list of custodial deaths in the country in the last two years.

As many as 955 custodial deaths took place in Uttar Pradesh during 2020-22, the Lok Sabha was informed on Tuesday. Uttar Pradesh recorded 451 custodial deaths in 2020-21 and the number rose to 501 in 2021-22, as per the Government data.

Besides custodial deaths, Jammu and Kashmir has seen a nine-fold increase in police encounters in 2021-22 — the highest in the country — followed by Assam where encounters rose by over four times as compared to the previous year.

Union Minister of State for Home Nityanand Rai, while presenting the data in response to a question raised by Indian



Union Muslim League MP Abdussamad Samdani, explained these figures. Rai informed the House on Tuesday that there were 82 cases of police encounters in 2020-21 in the country and the number went up to 151 in 2021-22.

Meanwhile, as per Government data, while there were 1,940 custodial deaths in the country in 2020-21, the number rose to 2,544 in 2021-22. West Bengal has seen a substantial increase in custodial death cases, from 185 cases in 2020-21 to 257 in 2021-22.

Bihar registered 159 custodial death cases in 2020-21 and the number rose to 237 in 2021-22. Madhya Pradesh recorded 163 such cases in 2020-21 and the number rose to 201 the next year.

## Rajbhar wants to return to BJP fold

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party president Om Prakash Rajbhar, after being shown the door by the Samajwadi Party and rebuffed by Bahujan Samaj Party, wants to return to the Bharatiya Janata Party fold for the 2024 Lok Sabha election.

The SBSP had contested the 2017 polls in alliance with the BJP but the relations between the two parties soured in 2019 and SBSP chief Om Prakash Rajbhar was dismissed from the UP cabinet by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

The recent presidential election seems to have brought the two former allies closer and Rajbhar voted for National Democratic Alliance candidate Droupadi Murmu. According to sources, the BJP also is keen to further strengthen its reach among Other Backward Classes for the Lok Sabha election.

Accounting for over 40 per cent of the electorate in Uttar Pradesh, the OBC com-



munity has been a key constituent of the social coalition for all political parties. While Rajbhar is now seeking a return to the BJP fold, he is also eyeing a seat in the Vidhan Parishad for his son, Arvind Rajbhar, who had lost the recent assembly election from Shivpur constituency in Varanasi.

Rajbhar's supporters claim that another BJP ally, Sanjay Nishad, has been given a seat in the Vidhan Parishad, a ministerial position while his elder son is an MP and younger son is an MLA. Going by the same formula, the SBSP also deserves a better deal, they claim.

By-elections are due for two seats of UP Legislative Council. Rajbhar wants his

son to be accommodated in the Vidhan Parishad before he announces his loyalty to the BJP again.

BJP's OBC Morcha chief Narendra Kashyap says that the backward classes know what the BJP has done for them. "We have constituted an OBC Commission and given space to more than two dozen ministers from the OBC background in the Narendra Modi cabinet," he said.

Meanwhile, Rajbhar launched a scathing attack on Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, saying, "Akhilesh Yadav has inherited political power while I am in politics due to hard work at the grassroots level among the downtrodden and the disadvantaged sections of society."

"Akhilesh Yadav is doing politics from a cosy and comfortable zone to a social zone while I live amidst the people. It was Akhilesh's style of functioning that forced me to vote for Droupadi Murmu," Rajbhar said.

## ICMR isolates monkeypox virus; may pave way for development of vaccines

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The National Institute of Virology (NIV) in Pune under ICMR has isolated monkeypox virus from the clinical specimen of a patient which can pave the way for development of diagnostic kits and vaccines against the disease, officials said on Wednesday.

With India isolating the virus, the Indian Council of Medical Research also invited expression of interest (EOI) from experienced vaccine manufacturers, pharma companies, research and development institutions and in-vitro diagnostic (IVD) kit manufacturers for joint collaboration in development of vaccine candidate against monkeypox and diagnostic kits for the infection.

The virus isolation enhances India's capacity to do research and development in many other directions, Dr Pragna Yadav, a senior scientist at NIV, said. The development comes amid India reporting



four cases of monkeypox — three from Kerala and one from Delhi — so far.

"The National Institute of Virology has successfully isolated monkeypox virus from the clinical specimen of a patient which can help in the development of diagnostic kits and also vaccines in future. For smallpox live attenuated vaccine was successful for mass immunisation in the past. Similar approaches on new platforms can be tried for making vaccines.

"The virus isolation enhances India's capacity to do research and development in many other directions," Dr Yadav said. At present, fluid inside the lesions on the skin are being used for virus isolation as they have the highest viral titre.

## Probe panel finds irregularities in transfers in UP's PWD

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The PWD headed by Jitin Prasada shot into limelight last week when the Yogi Adityanath government removed officer on special duty Anil Kumar Pandey who is said to be a close confidant of Prasada. Pandey, who was brought from Delhi, has been repatriated to the Central government.

In a further crackdown, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had also ordered the suspension of Engineer-in-Chief and head of department Manoj Gupta.

A three-member committee formed to probe corruption in the PWD also indicted six other senior officers of the department.

The needle of suspicion is revolving around PWD Minister Jitin Prasada, who, sources said, had approved the transfer list. The inquiry is reported to have revealed that his staff had suppressed information.

However, Prasada, who rushed to Delhi last week to meet the Bharatiya Janata Party leaders, said in a statement that there was no question of being upset over the controversy.

Reposing his faith in the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Prasada said the government was meeting the expectations of the people.

Apart from the committee report, a departmental review has also brought glaring irregularities in transfers. It is to be noted that the officers who were transferred by Manoj Gupta are groups A and B officers. The permission of the state cabinet minister, as well as the Chief Minister, is required for the transfer or posting of such officers.

Apart from the cancellation of these transfers, the State Government has also decided to expedite inquiries against officers attached to the PWD headquarters for more than a year.

## Whistleblower seeks SC-monitored probe into gold smuggling scam

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

T P Nandakumar, a seasoned journalist-cum-whistle-blower in Kerala, has demanded a Supreme Court monitored investigation into the infamous gold smuggling scam in which M Sivsankar, the then principal secretary to Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and some of his associates were arrested.

"The probe into the gold smuggling scam was sabotaged with the connivance of a union minister of State and a BJP leader from Kerala. A Supreme Court monitored probe alone would bring to light the truth," said Nandakumar.

Nandakumar was arrested by the Kerala Police and was in jail for 37 days on a complaint filed by one of his employees under charges of SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act 1989 and sexual assault. The Kerala High

Court which heard his bail application, said the police failed to furnish any incriminating documents other than the statement by the victim to substantiate their demand that the accused should not be given bail.

The arrests of two other public personalities by the Kerala Police and their subsequent release on bail too have come as a setback to the State Government which is facing charges of foisting fabricated cases against political rivals. The first to be arrested was veteran legislator P C George of the Kerala Congress under charges of disrupting communal harmony in the State. He was released on bail within hours of his arrest. The next to be targeted was KS Sabarinathan, Congress leader and former MLA under charges of conspiring to murder Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan.

Sabarinathan was arrested last Tuesday within minutes of Vijayan himself alleging in the

assembly that the former had played a crucial role in "imperilling" his safety while he was on a flight from Kannur to Thiruvananthapuram on June 13. The former MLA was released on conditional bail on the same day.

Nandakumar has been an eyesore to Vijayan since the latter's days as minister of power in the EK Nayanar headed Government (1996-2001). It was Nandakumar who brought out the infamous SNC Lavlin case which is still under the consideration of the Supreme Court.

Nandakumar had in his YouTube videos had alleged that Vijayan, his wife Kamala and daughter Veena had direct links with the smuggling of gold through diplomatic channel in Thiruvananthapuram international airport. The case probed by the National Investigation Agency and the Customs Department saw the arrests of Sivsankar, Swapna

Suresh, the liaison officer of the Space Park of the Kerala Government and two of her associates. The non-cooperation by the Kerala Government and subversion activities of Customs officials belonging to the CPI(M) too caused the derailment of the probe, said Nandakumar.

"A union minister and senior BJP leader hailing from Kerala are hand in glove with Pinarayi Vijayan in sabotaging the gold smuggling investigation. Though the CPI(M) and the BJP do not have any alliance outwardly, leaders of both the parties in Kerala help each other and more details would come out in days to come," said Nandakumar. The journalist also charged that the chief minister, union minister, the Kerala BJP leader and a business baron based in UAE are working together to amass wealth and weaken the Indian National Congress in the State.

## BJP seeks CBI probe into 'illegal' mining in Rajasthan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Wednesday alleged the involvement of Rajasthan Government Ministers and officials in the suspected illegal mining in Bharatpur and demanded a CBI probe into the matter.

A BJP delegation, including its general secretary Arun Singh, MP and former Mumbai commissioner Satya Pal Singh and MP and former Uttar Pradesh DGP Brij Lal, also presented its inquiry report to party president J P Nadda after visiting the site of alleged illegal mining where a sadhu had immolated himself during an anti-mining agitation.

The sadhu, Vijay Das, had died a few days later on July 23 at a hospital in the national capital, following which the BJP formed the committee to look into the matter.

Nadda said the report exposes the "dismal state of affairs in Rajasthan and the



destroyed by illegal mining which has also wrought destruction on the environment, he said.

The National Green Tribunal should also probe the matter, he said.

The Congress government in Rajasthan is insulting 'saints' who have been forced to launch an agitation in support of their demands, he said.

Such a government is certain to go, Singh claimed.

Nadda tweeted, "Received the report by the BJP Fact Finding team, constituted to enquire about the grave case of self-immolation by sadhu Vijay Das and the huge illegal mining in Rajasthan. The report exposes the dismal state of affairs in Rajasthan & the rampant mining mafia raj."

Assembly election is due in the state in the second half of the next year, and the BJP has been working to corner the ruling Congress over a host of issues

## AIADMK hits streets to take on DMK regime over hike in taxes

PTI ■ CHENNAI

The main Opposition AIADMK staged a protest here on Wednesday and slammed the DMK regime over increase in property taxes and proposed hike in electricity tariff.

Edappadi K Palaniswami, the party's interim general secretary, who led the demonstration in the scorching sun nearly fainted on the dais after he completed his speech and it led to anxious moments for a while. After party office-bearers took him aside, provided him water and a brief rest, Palaniswami resumed his participation in the demonstration.

Palaniswami, the Leader of Opposition, slammed the DMK regime for price rise and said that the government steered by the DMK is the only one to increase all kinds of taxes, including property and water taxes, and it has also proposed to increase electricity tariff. During the 14-month DMK rule, people across Tamil Nadu have been hit hard, he alleged. The DMK assumed power in Tamil Nadu in May 2021. The protest is to condemn steps to hike taxes that affect the people. Shaken by the massive protests held across the State by the AIADMK, cases are being filed against party-men, he alleged. The DMK



regime does not have influence among people and to divert attention, cases are filed by police, he claimed.

The AIADMK leader targeted the DMK regime for not 'fulfilling' poll promises. He listed ruling party's assurances including getting NEET

scrapped, Rs 1,000 assistance for women family heads and a subsidy of Rs 100 for cooking gas cylinder and demanded to know if all the promises have been fulfilled. The DMK has deceived all sections of people, including government employees, he said.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

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

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Abhash Kumar Jha, Preeti., House No-2183, B Block, Agar Nagar, Kirari Suleman Nagar, North West Delhi, A/c No. LBJAI00004896636	Flat, No. N 103 N 104, 1st Floor, Pink Pride-The Suites, Khasra No. 9, Village Jaisinghpura, Bass Bhankrota, Tehsil Sanganer, Jaipur, Rajasthan, Jaipur - 303902	09/06/2022 Rs. 24,25,951/-	03/02/2022
2.	Kunal Gupta, Neelabh Gupta, Flat No-403, Tupil Tower, Omaxe Green Valley, Sector-41-42, Faridabad, Faridabad, Haryana, A/c No. LBJAI00003429103	Plot No. S 106, S 107, 1st Floor, Pink Pride, Khasra No. 9, Village Jaisinghpura Bass Bhankrota, Tehsil Sanganer, Jaipur, Rajasthan, Jaipur - 303902	14/06/2022 Rs. 21,51,712/-	04/08/2021
3.	Kunal Gupta, Neelabh Gupta, Flat No. 403, Tupil Tower, Omaxe Green Valley, Sector-41-42, Faridabad, Faridabad, Haryana, A/c No. LBJAI00003459574	Plot No. S 106, S 107, 1st Floor, Pink Pride, Khasra No. 9, Village Jaisinghpura Bass Bhankrota, Tehsil Sanganer, Jaipur, Rajasthan, Jaipur- 303902	14/06/2022 Rs 1,12,169.5/-	04/08/2021

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

Date : July 28, 2022  
Place : Delhi (Gurgaon, Faridabad)

Authorized Officer  
ICICI Bank Limited

**FORM NO. 5**  
**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL**  
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow- 226007  
(Area of Jurisdiction- Part of Uttar Pradesh)  
Summons for filing & Appearance by Publication

**O.A. No. 98/2020**  
**Date 25/07/2022**  
(Summons to defendant under section 19(3) of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure Rules, 1993)  
**Original Application No. 98 of 2020**  
ICICI BANK LTD. ....Applicant  
**Versus**  
MR. ASHUTOSH SHUKLA & OTHERS .....Defendant.  
**To,**  
**1. ASHUTOSH SHUKLA**  
H. No.415, Near Shihabad, Subji Mandi Sec- 14, Vasundhra, Ghaziabad-201012  
**Also At:-**  
Unit No.703, A Block, Nikhil Park Royale, Muza Chamrauli, Jaypee Hotel, TV Tower, 125, Wide Link Road Taj Nagri, Phase II, Agra-282001  
**Also At:-**  
TATA Consultancy Services, Tower C 8D, A/44/45, DLF IT Park, Sec-63, Noida- 201301  
**2. MRS. POOJA SHUKLA**  
H. No.415, Near Shihabad, Subji Mandi, Sec-14, Vasundhra Ghaziabad-201012  
**Also At:-**  
Unit No.703, A Block, Nikhil Park Royale, Muza Chamrauli, Jaypee Hotel, TV Tower, 125, Wide Link Road Taj Nagri, Phase II, Agra-282001  
**Also At:-**  
Accenture Services Pvt. Ltd., R/o Street 3rd Floor, Tower, B SP INEO City, Plot No.243, Gurgaon-122016  
**3. MAA MANSA DEVI SAKHARI AVAS SAMITI LTD.**  
**Registered Office :** 5th Floor, E 12/8, Sri Vrindavan, Sanjay Palace, Agra  
**4. M/S. NIKHIL HOME ASSOCIATES**  
**Registered Office :** Jaypee Hotel, TV Tower, 125, Wide Link Road, Taj Nagri, Phase-II, Agra  
**Corporate Office:** 5th Floor, E- 12/8, Sri Vrindavan Sanjay Palace, Agra  
In the above noted application, you are required to file in Paper Book form in two sets along with documents and affidavits (if any), personally or through your duly authorized agent or legal practitioner in this Tribunal, after serving copy of the same on the applicant or his counsel/duly authorized agent after publication of the summons, and thereafter to appear before the Tribunal on **22/08/2022 at 10.30 A.M.** failing which the application shall be heard and decide in your absence.

**Registrar**  
**Debts Recovery Tribunal**  
**Lucknow**





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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Avoidable bet

The decision to revive BSNL, though well-intentioned, is not grounded in reality

The Government's decision to revive Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) is indeed well-intentioned but one has to be too optimistic to believe that it would spell success. Telecom is a strategic sector, an official press release said. The presence of BSNL in the sector, apart from acting as a market balancer, helps expand telecom services in rural areas, development of indigenous technology, and disaster relief, it added. It is for these reasons that the Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Wednesday approved the BSNL revival package amounting to Rs 1.64 lakh crore.

The package includes infusion of fresh capital for upgrading the public sector enterprise's services, allocation of spectrum, de-stressing of its balance sheet, and augmentation of its fiber network by merger of Bharat Broadband Nigam Limited (BBNL) in it. "To improve existing services and provide 4G services, BSNL will be allotted spectrum in 900/1800 MHz band administratively at the cost of Rs 44,993 cr through equity infusion. With this spectrum, BSNL will be able to compete in the market and provide high-speed data using their vast network including in rural areas," the press release said. Then there is also financial support for capex, to the tune of Rs 22,471 crore over the next four years. Much of this will be in the next two years, Telecom Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told reporters while briefing about the Cabinet decision.

It's a typical PSE revival package, complete with debt restructuring, conversion of debt into equity, etc. And, typically, the cost will be borne by the taxpayer. This raises several issues. First, at a time when private players are moving towards 5G, how would a rickety PSE compete with them with 4G networks? Second, BSNL got a revival package worth Rs 70,000 crore in 2019, but it is still not in the pink of health. It is earning operating profits only; only in 2026-27 it is expected to earn a net profit, according to Vaishnaw. Which means that its revival is iffy. Can and should the public exchequer be allowed to take this bet? Third, revival packages have rarely, if ever, worked. Air India is a recent example; tens of thousands of crores were spent over the years to resuscitate the airline—to no avail. Earlier too dozens, if not hundreds, of attempts were made to revive sick PSEs—without any success. The government's disinvestment manual of 2003 presented a list of 21 PSEs whose revival was studied. The verdict: "Despite huge investments shown above, the Government has not even been able to achieve turnaround in any of the sick companies shown in the Table."

The reason is simple: PSEs are controlled by politicians and bureaucrats, the people least equipped to run commercial enterprises. Not infrequently, political and partisan interests trump economic logic. Then there are the issues of incompetence and corruption. Against this backdrop, the decision to revive BSNL seems to be a bet that should have been avoided.

### PICTALK



Ladakh: ITBP personnel hoist the tricolour as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' Celebrations ahead of Independence day

PTI

## Watch out for Monkeypox!

Though the Monkeypox cases are just four in India so far, the situation could snowball into a major medical crisis

Even as WHO declared Monkeypox a global health emergency amid an outbreak in over 70 countries, Delhi got its first case of Monkeypox and now the tally of monkeypox cases is four in the country. This may not look alarming but it can multiply fast and the time to take action is now.

The reason for this is the unpredictability of the cause of its spread and the speed at which it has spread across the world. That the person who tested positive did not travel abroad is a good enough indication of its uncertainty. The latest person to get infected was in Manali, Himachal Pradesh where he contracted the disease. The previous three cases were reported from Kerala. All three of them had returned from the Middle East. So it is difficult to say from where exactly it would spread and how.



Monkeypox like many other diseases has its roots in Africa. It has been there for quite some time in parts of central and West Africa for decades, but it did not go beyond the continent. This is for the first time that it has been reported from across the globe and that too in a very short period. Nearly 14,000 people across the globe have contracted Monkeypox this year, and five have died.

Monkeypox was labeled a global health emergency by the WHO. The Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) should sound an alarm that a coordinated international response is needed.

The 70 odd countries which have a Monkeypox footprint are now on high alert and taking precautions to control it. The low death rate, however, is no consolation as we do not know how the virus would behave in different climatic conditions. Monkeypox is a DNA virus and is similar to chickenpox in its symptoms and span. One needs to wear a face mask and maintain social distancing to prevent its spread. It normally starts with a fever and skin rash.

Like most viruses this too is unpredictable. The health system in the country must be geared up to meet the challenge when it is just beginning. As we know that waking up late, as we did in the corona pandemic, can be disastrous and play havoc with people's lives. The only silver lining is that this is not a new disease as the virus has been around in Africa for a while and gave scientists time to study it. But still, its spread is fast and would spread fast if proper precautions are not taken up.

# Control population in noncoercive way

There is urgent need to manage the demography of the country else all the development efforts could be nullified



BRIJENDER SINGH PANWAR

As per the World Population Prospectus (WPP, 2022) report, India is all set to surpass China to become the most populous country of the world by 2023. India's population is projected to be 1,429 billion by next year when China would have 1,426 billion people. It is estimated that India will have 1,688 billion people, far ahead of China's population which will drop to 1,317 billion by 2050 whereas the world's population would reach 8 billion on November 15, 2022.

Rates of population growth vary significantly across countries and regions. By 2050, more than half of the projected world's population will be concentrated in just eight countries- India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Egypt, Congo, Philippines and Tanzania.

Disparate growth rates among the world's largest countries will re-order their ranking by size. The 46 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are among the world's fastest growing. Many are projected to double in population between 2022 and 2050, putting additional pressure on resources and posing challenges to the achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The report warns that the share of the global population aged 65 years or above is projected to rise from 10% in 2022 to 16% in 2050. Thus, these countries should take steps to adopt effective programmes like improving the sustainability of social security and pension systems and by establishing universal health care systems.

Coming back to India, the findings of a survey indicates that there were only five states whose fertility rate was above the replacement level of 2.1 (the rate at which a population exactly replaces itself from one generation to the next)- Bihar, Meghalaya, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Manipur. These states are also backward in terms of per capita income. This makes it obvious that the population growth adversely impacts economic prosperity.

The fact that Jains, Sikhs and Buddhists have fertility rates well



below the national average can be largely attributed to economic security among members of these communities. The fifth edition of India's National Family Health Survey, 2021 pointed out for the first time that the Total Fertility Rate (TFR) had hit 2.0 or below the replacement rate of 2.1.

This decline in India's population is in line with what is being observed in developed countries and is expected to translate into improved living standards. The fact that the decline in population is possible without state coercive policies has been demonstrated by India's two most populous states, i.e. Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Now, the focus has shifted to whether we can reduce poverty, provide healthcare facilities, education etc. The available data clearly shows that during the coming decades, cohorts of 0-14 years and 15-24 years will continue to decline while those of 25-64 and 65+ will continue to rise. This indicates that India will continue to have a large population of working age people who will be expected to support a growing number of aged. Providing social security to this growing 65+ category of population would be a big challenge.

ONLY FIVE STATES WHOSE FERTILITY RATE WAS ABOVE THE REPLACEMENT LEVEL OF 2.1 ARE - BIHAR, MEGHALAYA, UTTAR PRADESH, JHARKHAND AND MANIPUR. THESE STATES ARE ALSO BACKWARD IN TERMS OF PER CAPITA INCOME.

The welfare schemes of the government will have to factor in the rising numbers and the availability of resources to ensure that all eligible beneficiaries are covered. Healthcare, housing and education sectors would come under great strain. The need for skilling is a prerequisite for 25-64 age groups because skilling is the only way to ensure that they are productive and have better incomes to take care of the aged. This is the major policy challenge both for the cohort and the future governments.

Another segment of society which needs special attention is the Girl Child. Effective, job-oriented education is a way out. There is a need to have open discussions keeping the size of the family small.

The NFHS reports revealed that "unmet need for family planning methods" are highest among lowest quintile (11.4%) and lowest among the highest wealth quintile (8.6%) implying that the usage of modern contraceptives increased with income. 66.3% of women who are employed are more likely to use modern contraception compared with 53.4% of women who are not. The NFHS (2019-21) indicates that of all the girls and women above the age of 6 years, only 16.6% were educated for 12 years or more.

To make the situation worse, ASER reports point out the quality of education imparted is poor. Female education is the determining factor of the status of malnutrition amongst the children below the age of five. More than 35% of our children below the age of five are stunted. They will be trapped in poverty and would remain dependent on others throughout life.

Again, comparing the reports of NFHS-5 (2019-21) and NFHS-4 (2015-16), we find that 57 per cent of women in the reproductive age group of 15-49 are anaemic in 2019-21 in comparison to 53% in 2015-16. This unbalanced growth need to change and investment in healthcare and education is the key to prosperity, especially of the Girl Child by providing them more than 12 years of quality job-oriented education. The improvement of human development index of our masses leading to prosperity at all levels will not be possible until and unless we take the flagged issues seriously and put in sincere and honest efforts to solve the problems.

(The writer is a senior journalist and Chairman, Panwar Group of Institutions, Solan, Himachal Pradesh. The views expressed are personal.)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### CONGRATS TO SANDHYA RAJU FOR NATYAM

Sir — Congrats to Sandhya Raju whose film Natyam has won 2 awards at the 68th National Film Awards (for Best Choreography to Sandhya Raju, and Best Make-up Artist to TV Rambabu). The First Indian full-time dance movie was Shantharam's Kalpana.

On the other hand boxer, Lovelina's responsible coach Sandhya Gurung and the team are not allowed into the Common Wealth Games (CWG) village in Birmingham, UK. We request CWG administrators to resolve the issue amicably. Without a responsible and able team of coaches, Lovelina's victories and medal colors can get hampered.

Madhu PV | Bengaluru

### ANIMAL VACCINATION IS IMPORTANT

Sir — Vaccination in animals is very important as it's for humans. It helps in keeping the immune system strong and helps to prevent the disease. Though animal vaccination has a cost but most definitely less than the amount which may cost you should they fall sick. Vaccination helps to keep animals strong and provides sustainability to the farmer. It helps them to be physically strong since they cannot get affected by any communicable diseases. Scientists are doing much research on safe, quality, and effective vaccines. This is particularly important for those diseases which are complex and incurable. Therefore we must prioritize preventing disease or minimizing the clinical signs of disease in the first instance to protect the health and welfare of animals.

Tithi Trivedi | Ujjain

### KOVIND DIDN'T ACT AS PEOPLE'S PRESIDENT

Sir — It is alleged that former President Ramnath Govind acted only as a mouthpiece of the ruling dispensation and had only been fulfilling the political agenda of the BJP by signing on dotted lines without murmur. The assent given by him without delay to the scrapping of Article 370 and

## Suspension of MPs is apt!



The Lok Sabha has suspended Congress MPs for the entire monsoon session due to waving placards and disrupting the parliament proceedings by ignoring Speaker Om Birla's warning. It is apt and sets a good precedent for rabble-rousers. It would be better if similar steps were taken against other parties too, who were also protesting against the gov-

ernment regarding pertinent issues suffered by the country's people on GST, LPG price hike, and price rise of other essential commodities. It's also a huge responsibility of the ruling dispensation to come forward, acknowledge the impending predicament and try to answer the questions raised by wider opposition instead of procrastination by using finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman as a stop-gap.

Since week proceedings of both houses are being disrupted due to continuous adjournment and tug of war between ruling and opposition which yields no result. It incurred huge waste of public exchequer at the same time neglecting the areas of public concern for a healthy debate at the cost of absurdities which must be avoided unanimously and a sense of respect to parliament rather than making it a ritual of disruption each year.

Janga Bahadur Sunuwar | Jalpaiguri

the Citizenship Amendment Act brought in by the BJP government without any deliberation in the houses of parliament is a case in point.

He only remained a passive spectator of various atrocities committed against the Dalits and minorities and the lynching of innocents by the so-called cow vigilantes, conveniently forgetting the constitutional duties he was entrusted with towards all citizens irrespective of their caste, community, creed or religion, allegedly not to irk the ruling party.

While he spent the entire five years in his palace without even once raising his objection to the controversial acts passed by the government and the atrocities committed by the right-wing goons, one expected that at least in his speech to the nation on the last day of his stay in the Raisena Hills, he will gather strength to raise his voice as per his conscience, to at least advise the government to follow the Raj Dharma in its acts, one was disappointed that he was talking of many other things except this! He

has miserably missed the bus to be acclaimed as a president who took care of the interest of all the people as the first citizen of the country!

Hope the incumbent President Murmu would prove differently and by the end of her tenure, earn the name as one who acted with conscience.

Tharcus S Fernando | Chennai

### THE KING OF GAMES IN TAMIL NADU

Sir — Holding the grandiose event of the Chess Olympiad for the first time in India is in itself a momentous pride and triumph for the sports-crazy nation. And no better city in the country than Chennai will be relevant to host the world's biggest chess tournament, as, after all, Chennai is India's chess hub and widely known as the country's "Mecca of chess."

Chess indeed is "the game of kings and the king of games."

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

## SOUND BITE

These rebels are like rotten leaves of a tree and should be shed. It is good for the tree as there will be new leaves.



Shiv Sena leader —Uddhav Thackeray



British parliamentarian —Rishi Sunak

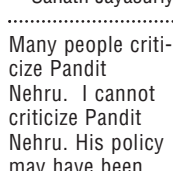
Whatever a woman does she lives in the headlines. Whether she has decided to become a mother, or on a holiday. Eyes are always on women's choice.



Actor —Alia Bhatt



Today is the first death anniversary of Kili Rajamahendren. His memory will be eternal in the hearts of all the past cricketers including myself as a benefactor, mentor and a friend. —Sri Lankan Cricketer —Sanath Jayasuriya



Many people criticize Pandit Nehru. I cannot criticize Pandit Nehru. His policy may have been wrong, but his intention was not.

Defence Minister —Rajnath Singh



FIRST COLUMN

MTP ACT: DOES IT ENABLE CHOICE FOR WOMEN?

Reasonable restrictions apply to the right of abortion

VIPUL MAHESHWARI

Women's right to abortion, and to a larger extent, their own bodies has found varying degrees of contention in society, polity, culture and even the law. The recent overturning of the 1973 landmark decision in Roe v. Wade, and subsequent companion decisions, is that abortion is legal, but may be restricted by the states to varying degrees. The recent overturning is estimated to affect almost 3.6 crore women in the US.

The judicial interpretation of the US Constitution regarding abortion, following the decision in Roe v. Wade, and subsequent companion decisions, is that abortion is legal, but may be restricted by the states to varying degrees. The recent overturning is estimated to affect almost 3.6 crore women in the US.

Abortion remains a hot-button issue in our culture, too. A recent ruling by the Indian Supreme Court ruling will stir up the debate even more, after the apex court allowed an unmarried woman to terminate her pregnancy at 24 weeks, thereby expanding the scope of the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act to include unmarried women. It noted, "a woman's right to reproductive choice is an inseparable part of her personal liberty under Article 21 of the Constitution".

Given the larger pro-life and pro-choice debate on the international stage, the question is: Does this ruling protect human rights?

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act governs abortions in India and legalizes them under certain conditions. In a country like India, where women's rights still remain a far cry in many aspects, one would be rather shocked to learn about its relatively liberal abortion law.



The Act, first enacted in 1971 and later amended, permitted terminated of pregnancy by a licensed doctor up to 20 weeks of gestation if the pregnancy could cause grave injury to the mother's mental or physical health, if the child would be born with physical or mental abnormalities, if pregnancy is caused due to rape or failure of contraceptives used by a married woman or her husband, or if the socio-economic condition of the family is poor and the couple already has 2-3 children.

Following a revision in the law in 2021, the phrase 'married woman' was replaced by any woman' and the word 'husband' was replaced by 'partner' in the Act. More recently, it said that special categories of women, including survivors of sexual assault, minors and disabled women, can terminate their pregnancy up to 24 weeks.

Women can now abort unwanted pregnancies caused by contraceptive failure, and marital status will not bother in this situation. If there is a chance of fetal disability, a state-level Medical Board will determine the request for termination of a pregnancy even after 24 weeks (about six months).

However, activists who fought for reproductive rights still opine that the amended law does not accept abortion as a woman's absolute right. The exercise of choice still remains under the ceiling of "reasonable restrictions".

The right of the pregnant woman to access termination of pregnancy should be autonomous, affordable and effective. Allowing abortion means women have the right to a safe abortion, and are not harming their bodies by 'do-it-yourself' abortions outside of a safe medical framework.

As noted by the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency UNFPA, "Whether abortion is legal or not, it happens all too often. Data show that restricting access to abortion does not prevent people from seeking abortion, it simply makes it more deadly."

When sex and sexuality, as well as their discussion in public domain, remain a taboo, it is imperative for a comprehensive rights-based sexuality education, so women can learn about their bodies and the rights under the Indian law.

*(The author is an advocate in the Supreme Court.)*

# Finding education for brick kiln children

PRAVIN KHUNTE

## Universal education isn't reaching many children, including those who work in brick kilns, while they also lag on nutrition

Indian parliament enacted the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act on April 1, 2009. More than a decade has passed after the enactment of the law, but few know that Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, while framing the Constitution had made provision for free primary education for all in the country.

However, it's also a fact that not every child has been able to access education. Even today lakhs of children are out of school. Majority of the children of migrant workers and daily wage earners have been left out of the education system. Many landless labourers leave their abode after the harvest for work in brick kilns or sugarcane fields with children in tow.

This exodus results in their children not having access to education and proper nutrition. Driven by poverty, child marriages are also perpetuated and frequently cut girls off from education. The number of out of school children is in lakhs but no one is really paying heed.

In this backdrop, 'Arise Vishwa Society' under its Milaf project has started weekly schools in Pune district (Maharashtra) for the children of brick kiln workers. Brick kiln work is hazardous; you have to work in the sticky mud under the burning Sun. With their feet trapped in the slush, these workers have to mix the soil with a proportion of water, knead it to compact it into a mould.

Children lend a helping hand by ferrying these molds for drying and firing. They are also involved in pulling the cart for lighting the furnace and laying one brick on top of the other in the furnace. When the bricks are ready, children have to take part in loading them in trucks. The hands of these children get bruised because of handling bricks all the while. At any point you will see coats of dust on their face and hands. Their clothes are soiled, faces sunburned and hands ruptured. This is the state of the brick kiln workers and their children.

The workers raise their makeshift abode at the site using mud, stones, ply, sackcloth and tin. In the local language, it's called Kopi. The height of Kopi is so low that you have to bend your head to enter. A gloom is cast over the settlement, unrelieved by a single ray of hope.

In the midst of this despair some efforts are on to address the needs of the children of brick kiln workers who the Sarvashiksha Abhiyan forgot. Non-formal schools have been started in a few villages near brick kilns close to Pune-Saswad Road. When the social workers first went to meet the parents, their children were working with them in the brick kiln. They assembled the children and asked them 'Do you want to study? Would it be alright if we teach you?' 'Yes,' said children in chorus. Then discussions with their parents were held. But they



THE NGO FOUND 25 CHILDREN FROM TWO BRICK KILNS WHO HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO ATTEND SCHOOL FOR THE LAST SIX MONTHS. THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF BRICK KILNS IN MAHARASHTRA ALONE AND THOUSANDS OF OTHERS WILL BE IN OTHER STATES.

*(The author works with the NGO, Arise Vishwa Society. The article was translated in English by Alka Gadgil.)*



sought permission from the brick kiln owner. It was essential, as no activity would be possible without his go ahead.

To begin with, the NGO conducted a survey to collect information about the number of children, their age and educational background. They also found that on any brick kiln there are 10 to 12 children on an average, with the majority of them working with their parents.

Rapid research done by the social workers before embarking on the project found that children have a great passion for learning. Brick kilns are normally in the deserted areas.

The parents are not able to teach children, because they themselves were deprived of education. They are also bogged down by the workload they have to endure. Bhimashankar Gurushantappa, 13 years, from Karnataka is in the 7th grade, but he has not been to school for six months. He was not able to study on his own because he just didn't have the time for it. By the time the work gets over Gurushantappa is fully exhausted.

But his handwriting is beautiful. He likes to write and to express. Kannada is his mother tongue and he also tries to read English. There was no one to take care of him in his village. Hence, his parents brought him along. He can't attend the nearby Marathi school because he doesn't know

the language. He understands a bit of spoken Marathi but not the formal Marathi, which is used in textbooks. He wants to rejoin the school after returning to the village. But integration of migrant children into mainstream classes has not been smooth. They are also likely to drop out of school by the next harvest.

Eleven-year-old Rani Basavraj Shrigani from Kalburgi district Karnataka has to take care of her younger siblings during the day. She doesn't have the privilege to attend school. She's good at studies and would like to learn English. "I want to be a cop. For that I have to practice running," she shared. But she didn't know that along with running one also has to crack the entrance exam.

Nine-year-old Akshara Rode from Deglur in Nanded district in Maharashtra is in the 3rd standard. She has spent the last six months on the brick kiln far away from her school. She has to help her parents in pushing the cart full of bricks and in building the furnace. She loves to study and she looks forward to Sunday school. "I want to be a lawyer, but I don't have books and notebooks. But I enjoy the Sunday class," she says gladly.

Thirteen-year-old Kirtan Gbate who is also from Naded is very sharp and intelligent.

Although he was deprived of schooling for the past seven months, he knows all the multi-

plication tables by heart. His English is really good for his age. No matter what word it is, he spells it correctly. He remembers everything and his general knowledge is also good. He studies verbally, tries to solve mathematical sums verbally.

Twelve-year-old Nandini from Nanded studies in the 6th standard. She had to accompany her parents to the brick kiln to take care of her younger sibling and to cook. She likes to prepare different dishes. She prepared pavbhaji for all the children from the brick kiln. She also tries to assemble children in the evening for fun and play.

These are some of the representative stories. The list can go on and on. But each case is unique. The NGO has found 25 children from two brick kilns who have not been able to attend school for the last six months. There are thousands of brick kilns in Maharashtra alone and there will be thousands of others in other states. What will be the number of children working in brick kilns nationally? We have no idea.

Along with education, nutrition is also a grave issue. These children have been deprived of their fundamental rights like right to nutrition, right to education, right to play among others. This is not just about one educational year; this cycle continues year after year.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

LOOK AT THE DICTATORSHIP, CANNOT HOLD PEACEFUL DEMONSTRATIONS, EVEN BY ARRESTING US, YOU WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO SILENCE US. —CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI



THIS SHOWS THE HEIGHT OF HYPOCRISY WHICH EXPECTS NO ONE QUESTIONS THEM. SONIA AND RAHUL GANDHI, SHOULD REPLY TO THE QUESTIONS OF ED. —BJP SPOKESPERSON SAMBIT PATRA

# President Droupadi Murmu and golden days for tribals

## With Murmu occupying the top Constitutional office, all efforts should be made for socio-economic empowerment of tribals

In her maiden address to the nation, President Droupadi Murmu said that it is the power of Indian democracy that a daughter born in a remote tribal area could reach the highest Constitutional post of the country. Yes, it is true that Droupadi Murmu is the first member of a tribal community to hold the nation's highest office. Her Excellency richly deserves congratulations from every Indian in general and every Tribal in particular, with an affectionate hope that she will do her best to elevate many more tribals on par with Her, so that they would reach not only such highest positions but also excel at the grassroot, district, state and central level, in all elected bodies.

Unfortunately, it took 75 long years, thanks to Congress

VANAM JWALA NARASIMHA RAO

*(The author is Chief Public Relations Officer to Chief Minister, Telangana.)*

and BJP-led governments at the center, to think of a tribal to make the first citizen of India. Nobody knows how many more years it would take to elect a tribal leader as Prime Minister, said to be the real executive according to the Indian Constitution! Nobody also knows when tribals in large numbers will be able to get elected to legislatures and parliament from a general constituency.

The untold stories and tribal issues in India are umpteen right from their day-to-day livelihood to their habitation, their land, health and medicine, facility for drinking water, education and so on. These were not properly addressed by the successive union governments. Few states like the newest and 29th state Telangana came out with several, role model schemes but



under economic support, Aasara pensions, ST special development fund through ST Sub Plan, making Thandasas Gram Panchayats, etc. Perhaps these could be studied by the Rashtrapathi Bhavan in the near future and forwarded to the union government to be replicated all over the country.

This apart, ensuring accel-

erated development of Scheduled Tribes with emphasis on achieving equality, focusing on economic, educational and human development along with ensuring the security and social dignity and promoting equity among the Scheduled Tribes has been successfully attempted by Telangana government. This is made possible by earmarking a portion, in proportion to population of Scheduled Tribes in the State, of the total PragathiPaddu (Development Fund) outlay of the State of Telangana as the outlay of the Scheduled Tribes Special Development Fund of the State.

Of all the issues the tribal in India continue to face is the land in the tribal area and its alienation to non-tribal in multiple ways either for exploitation for mining or otherwise. Several

governments have come and gone, important judgments by apex courts were pronounced in this regard but the basic problem persists.

One of the assets of the tribal is the availability of minerals in their areas. Very large number of mineral deposits exist in the tribal tracts in India, of which much is known but remain under exploited or unexploited and thereby left unutilized. If these areas are properly investigated and exploited, there will be tremendous development of mining and mineral-based industries, resulting in industrial employment for the tribal. However, most of the tribal habitats are in forest areas and hence there may be some disturbance to terrestrial configuration. But there can be no mineral development without this

disturbance.

And hence, vast mineral potential in tribal areas can be commercially exploited, perhaps involving tribal communities, and a number of downstream mineral industries can also be developed for value addition and exports. When this is achieved it would not be difficult to create any permanent arrangement to create a "Royalty Developmental Dividend Fund" for tribal development and much needed tribal empowerment.

Tribal can also be uplifted by suitably granting a certain percentage of shares in mining business. The tribal can be made to form small cooperative societies so that they can be involved in several fields such as small business concerns and cooperative stores and for trading.



# Trump back in Washington, repeating election lies



AP ■ WASHINGTON

Former President Donald Trump returned to Washington for the first time since leaving office Tuesday, vigorously repeating his false election claims that sparked the Jan. 6 insurrection at the nearby Capitol.

"It was a catastrophe that election. A disgrace to our country," he said, insisting despite all evidence that he had won in 2020. "We may just have to do it again," he said, repeating as he does in all recent appearances the ever-clearer hints that he will run again in 2024.

He recent frequent applause and cheers from his audience, a meeting organized by a group of former White House officials and Cabinet members who have been crafting an agenda for a possible second Trump term.

Trump's appearance in the nation's capital — his first trip back since Jan. 20, 2021, when President Joe Biden was sworn into office despite Trump's frantic efforts to remain in power — comes as allies have

urged him to spend more time talking about his vision for the future and less relitigating the 2020 election as he prepares to announce an expected 2024 White House campaign.

Trump spoke hours after former Vice President Mike Pence, a potential 2024 rival, outlined his own "Freedom Agenda" in a speech nearby. While the former president remains consumed by the election he falsely claims was stolen from him a year and a half ago, Pence again implored conservatives to stop looking backward and focus on the future as he mulls his own.

"Some people may choose to focus on the past, but elections are about the future," Pence said in an address to Young America's Foundation, a student conservative group. "I believe conservatives must focus on the future to win back America. We can't afford to take our eyes off the road in front of us because what's at stake is the very survival of our way of life."

The former White House partners were making dueling appearances again after campaigning for rival candidates in Arizona

on Friday. Their separate speeches come amid news that Pence's former chief of staff, Marc Short, testified before a federal grand jury investigating the Jan. 6, 2021, assault on the U.S. Capitol.

Short was at the Capitol that day as Pence fled an angry mob of rioters who called for his hanging after Trump wrongly insisted Pence had the power to overturn the election results.

Pence has repeatedly defended his actions that day, even as his decision to stand up to his boss turned large swaths of Trump's loyal base against him. Polls show that Trump remains, by far, the top choice of GOP primary voters, with Pence far behind.

That contrast was on display Tuesday as Trump spoke before an audience of hundreds gathered for the America First Policy Institute's two-day America First Agenda Summit. Composed of former Trump administration officials and allies, the group is widely seen as an "administration in waiting" that could quickly move to the West Wing if Trump should run again and win.

The event had the feel of a Trump White House reunion — but one without Pence.

Pence, meanwhile, received a friendly — but not enthusiastic — welcome from the students, who struggled to break into a "USA!" chant.

In his remarks, he repeatedly touted the "Trump-Pence administration." But the first question he received during a brief question-and-answer session was about his growing split with Trump, which is particularly stark given the years he spent as the former president's most loyal sidekick.

Pence denied the two "differ on issues," but acknowledged, "we may differ on focus." "I truly do believe that elections are about the future and that it's absolutely essential, at a time when so many Americans are hurting and so many families are struggling, that we don't give way to the temptation to look back," he said.

# US military making plans in case Pelosi travels to Taiwan



AP ■ SYDNEY

US officials say they have little fear that China would attack Nancy Pelosi's plane if she flies to Taiwan. But the US House speaker would be entering one of the world's hottest spots, where a mishap, mis-step or misunderstanding could endanger her safety. So the Pentagon is developing plans for any contingency.

Officials told The Associated Press that if Pelosi goes to Taiwan — still an uncertainty — the military would increase its movement of forces and assets in the Indo-Pacific region.

They declined to provide details, but said that fighter jets, ships, surveillance assets and other military systems would likely be used to provide overlapping rings of protection for her flight to Taiwan and any time on the ground there.

Any foreign travel by a senior US leader requires additional security. But officials

said this week that a visit to Taiwan by Pelosi — she would be the highest-ranking US elected official to visit Taiwan since 1997 — would go beyond the usual safety precautions for trips to less risky destinations.

Asked about planned military steps to protect Pelosi in the event of a visit, US Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said on Wednesday that discussion of any specific travel is premature.

But, he added, "if there's a decision made that Speaker Pelosi or anyone else is going to travel and they asked for military support, we will do what is necessary to ensure a safe conduct of their visit. And I'll just leave it at that."

China considers self-ruling Taiwan its own territory and has raised the prospect of annexing it by force. The US maintains informal relations and defence ties with Taiwan even as it recognises Beijing as the government of China.

The trip is being considered at a time when China has escalated what the US and its allies in the Pacific describe as risky one-on-one confrontations with other militaries to assert its sweeping territorial claims.

The incidents have included dangerously close fly-bys that force other pilots to swerve to avoid collisions, or harassment or obstruction of air and ship crews, including with blinding lasers or water cannon.



# Japan, Indonesia to boost naval security ties as China rises

AP ■ TOKYO

The leaders of Japan and Indonesia agreed Wednesday to bolster their ties in maritime security and their cooperation on climate change, energy and investment between the Asian archipelago nations.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, at a joint news conference after holding talks with Indonesian President Joko Widodo in Tokyo, said Japan will provide support to "further reinforce Indonesian maritime security capability to ensure peace and safety at sea in the Indo-Pacific region."

Kishida also announced that Tokyo is loaning 43.6 billion yen (\$318 million) to fund Indonesian infrastructure projects and disaster prevention.

Widodo's Japan visit follows his trip to China, where he met with Chinese President Xi Jinping and formally invited him to the Group of 20 summit in Bali in the fall. The two leaders on Tuesday also discussed issues ranging from trade to maritime cooperation.

While Indonesia and China enjoy generally positive ties, Jakarta has expressed concern about Chinese encroachment on its exclusive economic zone in the South China Sea, which China claims virtually in its entirety.

Widodo's comments in Tokyo focused on investment, energy and the G-20 summit. Widodo welcomed new Japanese investments and asked

for Japan's support in new technology involving clean energy, infrastructure, medicine, agriculture and natural resources.

"In particular, I invite Japan to support the acceleration of Indonesia's net zero emission target through advocating innovative technologies such as hydrogen and ammonia technology," he said.

Japan is promoting mixing hydrogen and ammonia at coal-fired power plants as a way to lower emissions.

Also, Kishida said Japan is researching whether it can provide Japanese patrol vessels for Indonesia to build its maritime capabilities.

Japan's Ground Self-Defense Force is participating for the first time in the Garuda Shield multilateral training exercise hosted by Indonesia next month, Kishida said. The U.S. is also joining the exercise.

While Japan promotes a "free and open" Indo-Pacific vision of security and trade with the United States and other democracies and friendly nations in the region that share concern about China's increasing assertiveness, the two leaders did not mention the country by name.

Widodo said Indonesia, as the chair of the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations next year and Japan as the chair of the Group of 7 summit, will continue to cooperate for the peace and prosperity in the region and the world.

# 15 killed, 50 hurt in anti-UN protests in Congo's east

AP ■ KINSHASA

At least 15 people have been killed and dozens of others injured during two days of demonstrations in Congo's east against the United Nations mission in the country, officials said Tuesday.

The United Nations confirmed that one peacekeeper and two international policemen serving with the U.N. Peacekeeping force were killed and another injured at the UN base in Butembo in North Kivu province in the east when "violent attackers snatched weapons from Congolese police" and fired on the UN personnel.

UN deputy spokesman Farhan Haq said reports of civilian casualties, including reports of UN peacekeepers killing and injuring civilians, would be investigated.

He said that on Tuesday "hundreds of assailants again attacked



bases of the UN force, known by its French acronym MONUSCO, in Goma as well as other parts of North Kivu "fuelled by hostile remarks and threats made by individuals and groups against the U.N., particularly on social media."

"Mobs are throwing stones and petrol bombs, breaking into bases, looting and vandalizing, and setting facilities on fire," Haq said. "We are trying to calm things down" including by dispatching quick reaction forces but there is no evidence the violence has ended.

In addition, Haq said at least four incidents targeted the residences of MONUSCO staff, who have now been relocated to UN camps. And a mob also tried to enter the compound of the UN Development Programme earlier Tuesday but was rebelled by security guards, he said.

Demonstrators on Monday had set fires and forced entry into the UN mission offices in Goma, accusing the peacekeeping forces of failing to protect civilians amid rising violence in Congo's eastern region. They are calling for the UN forces, present in Congo for years, to leave.

Congo's police said at least six people were killed in Goma on Monday, and eight civilians in Butembo. Earlier, government spokesman Patrick Muyaya said at least five people were killed and about 50 wounded by Monday.

Protesters blamed shots fired by

the peacekeepers for the deaths.

Congo's mineral-rich east is home to myriad rebel groups and the region's security has worsened despite a year of emergency operations by a joint force of the armies of Congo and Uganda. Civilians in the east have also had to deal with violence from jihadi rebels linked to the Islamic State group.

The government spokesman didn't say what caused the deaths but on Twitter, he described the response by security forces and peacekeepers as "warning shots to disperse the demonstrators and prevent any attack on the @MONUSCO base and installations."

"The government has instructed the security forces to take all measures to ensure a return to calm and the normal resumption of activities in Goma," he said. He also reiterated that steps are already being taken for the peacekeeping forces to be withdrawn.

# Amnesty: Taliban crackdown on rights suffocating women



AP ■ ISLAMABAD

The lives of Afghan women and girls are being destroyed by a "suffocating" crackdown by the Taliban since they took power nearly a year ago, Amnesty International said in a report released Wednesday.

After they captured the capital, Kabul, in August 2021 and ousted the internationally backed government, the Taliban presented themselves as having moderated since their first time in power, in the 1990s. Initially, Taliban officials spoke of allowing women to continue to work and girls to continue their education.

Instead, they formed an all-male government stacked with veterans of their hard-line rule that has banned girls from attending school from seventh grade, imposed all-covering dress that leaves only the eyes visible and restricted women's access to work.

Amnesty said the Taliban have also decimated protections for those facing domestic violence, detained women and girls for minor violations and contributed to a surge in

child marriages. The report also documented the torture and abuse of women arrested by the Taliban for protesting against restrictions.

"Taken together, these policies form a system of repression that discriminates against women and girls in almost every aspect of their lives," the report said. "This suffocating crackdown against Afghanistan's female population is increasing day by day."

The group's researchers visited Afghanistan in March as part of a nine-month-long investigation conducted from September 2021 to June 2022. They interviewed 90 women and 11 girls, between 14 and 74 years-old, across Afghanistan.

Among them were women detained for protesting who described torture at the hands of Taliban guards, including beatings and threats of death.

One woman told Amnesty that guards beat her and other women on the breasts and between the legs, "so that we couldn't show the world." She said one told her, "I can kill you right now, and no one would say anything."



# Strong quake kills 5, injures dozens in N Philippines

AP ■ MANILA

A strong earthquake set off landslides and damaged buildings in the northern Philippines on Wednesday, killing at least five people and injuring dozens. In the capital, hospital patients were evacuated and terrified people rushed outdoors.

The 7-magnitude quake was centred in a mountainous area of Abra province, said Renato Solidum, the head of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology, who described the mid-morning shaking as a major earthquake.

"The ground shook like I was on a swing and the lights suddenly went out. We rushed out of the office, and I heard screams and some of my companions were in tears," said Michael Brillantes, a safety officer of the Abra town of Lagangilang, near the epicentre.

"It was the most powerful quake I've felt and I thought the ground would open up," Brillantes told The Associated Press by cellphone.

# UN experts urge Hong Kong authorities to repeal security law

AP ■ GENEVA

Independent human rights experts backed by the United Nations called on Thursday on authorities in Hong Kong to repeal a national security law that fanned protests and criticism over China's tightening grip on the freewheeling semi-autonomous region. The UN-backed Human Rights Committee added its voice to independent advocacy groups that have said the National Security Law was passed by the National People's Congress in Beijing without adequately consulting the people of Hong Kong.

Since its passage in 2020, the law has



reportedly been applied in connection with the arrests of more than 200 people, the experts say.

The committee aims to ensure that signatories of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights uphold their commitments to respecting people's

rights and freedoms.

The findings by the committee, part of a regular review of parties to the covenant, expose again the complexities of Beijing's control of Hong Kong for the last 25 years. The findings were published Thursday after a string of hearings — including Hong Kong authorities — earlier this month. The Chinese region of Macao, Georgia, Ireland, Luxembourg and Uruguay were also examined.

Hong Kong acceded to the covenant after Britain, the region's former colonial ruler, ratified it in 1976. After the handover of Hong Kong to China in 1997, Chinese authorities told the UN chief that

the covenant would continue to apply to the region.

"Hong Kong, China should ensure that the covenant prevails over local legislation and laws applicable in Hong Kong, including the National Security Law, and bring these laws and practices in full conformity with the Covenant," the experts wrote. Addressing Hong Kong — and not China, which has not ratified the covenant — committee vice chair Christopher Arif Bulkan told reporters: "The committee urged Hong Kong to take action to repeal the national security law and in the interim refrain from applying it."

# Japanese city alarmed by biting, clawing, attacking monkeys

AP ■ TOKYO

People in a southwestern Japanese city have come under attack from monkeys that are trying to snatch babies, biting and clawing at flesh, and sneaking into nursery schools.

The attacks — on 58 people since July 8 — are getting so bad Yamaguchi city hall hired a special unit to hunt the animals with tranquiliser guns.

The monkeys aren't interested in food, so traps haven't worked. They have targeted mostly children and the elderly.

"They are so smart, and they tend to sneak up and attack from behind, often grabbing at your legs," city official Masato Saito said on Wednesday.

When confronted by a monkey, the instructions are: Do not look them in the eye, make yourself look as big as possible, such as by spreading open your coat, then back away as quietly as possible without making sudden moves,



according to Saito.

A woman was assaulted by a monkey while hanging laundry on her veranda. Another victim showed bandaged toes. They were taken aback and frightened by how big and fat the monkeys were.

The monkeys terrorising the community are Japanese macaque, the kind often pictured peacefully bathing in hot springs.

One male monkey, measuring 49 centimeters in height and weighing 7 kilograms, was caught on Tuesday by the team with the tranquiliser gun. It was

judged by various evidence to be one of the attacking monkeys and put to death.

But more attacks were reported after the capture.

No one has been seriously injured so far. But all have been advised to get hospital treatment. Ambulances were called in some cases.

Although Japan is industrialised and urban, a fair portion of land in the archipelago is mountains and forests. Rare attacks on people by a bear, boars or other wildlife have occurred, but generally not by monkeys.

# Suicide bombing in Somalia kills 11

AP ■ MOGADISHU (SOMALIA)

Witnesses say at least 11 people are dead after a suicide bomber blew himself up at the entrance to a government building in southern Somalia.

District Commissioner Abdillahi Ali Waafow was among those killed in Wednesday's attack, the secretary-general of the Marka town administration in the Lower Shabelle region, Mohamed Osmaan Yariisoow, told The Associated Press by phone.

"Minutes after we had concluded a meeting we had at the district headquarters and were on our way out, we found an unknown man approached us and blew himself up," Yariisoow said, adding that the commissioner's bodyguards, traditional elders and women also were killed.

The Somalia-based extremist group al-Shabab claimed responsibility for the



attack.

Marka is about 100 kilometers south of Somalia's capital, Mogadishu.

Witness Hassan Abdullahi confirmed to the AP by phone that 11 people including the district commissioner had been killed.

"I heard a huge blast. I ran toward the explosion scene. I have seen with my own eyes several bodies and remains of human flesh scattered on the ground," he said.



# Russian airstrikes target Black Sea regions of Ukraine



AP ■ KYIV

Russia targeted Ukraine's southern Black Sea regions of Odesa and Mykolaiv with airstrikes Tuesday, hitting private buildings and port infrastructure with missiles fired from long-range bomber aircraft, the Ukrainian military said.

In the Odesa region, buildings in coastal villages were hit and caught fire, Ukraine's Operational Command South said on Facebook. A Ukrainian air force spokesman said long-range Russian Tu-22M3 bombers and Su-30 and Su-35 fighter jets launched the strikes from the Black Sea. In the Mykolaiv region, port infrastructure was targeted despite agreements intended to allow grain grain shipments to resume from Ukraine's Black Sea ports.

Hours after the strikes, a Moscow-installed official in southern Ukraine said the Odesa and Mykolaiv regions would soon be "liberated" by Russian forces, just like the already occupied Kherson region further east.

"The Kherson region and the city of Kherson have been liberated forever," Russian state news agency RIA Novosti quoted the region's Russia-appointed official, Kirill Stremousov, as saying.

On the diplomatic front, Russia's top diplomat repeated his insistence that Moscow was ready to hold talks with Ukraine on ending the war, though he once again claimed that Kyiv's Western allies oppose a deal.

"We never refused to have talks, because everybody knows that any hostilities end at the negotiating table," Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said Tuesday during a trip to Uganda.

He said negotiations have gone no further since a meeting between the two sides in Istanbul at the end of March.

While Ukrainian officials have spoken of a possible counteroffensive in the south, the British Defense Ministry said Tuesday there was no indication a Ukrainian warship and a stockpile of anti-ship missiles were at Odesa's

port, as Moscow claimed when it struck the site over the weekend.

The British ministry said Russia sees Ukraine's use of anti-ship missiles as "a key threat" limiting its Black Sea Fleet.

"This has significantly undermined the overall invasion plan, as Russia cannot realistically attempt an amphibious assault to seize Odesa," the ministry said. "Russia will continue to prioritize efforts to degrade and destroy Ukraine's anti-ship capability."

It added that "Russia's targeting processes are highly likely routinely undermined by dated intelligence, poor planning, and a top-down approach to operations."

In other military developments, Russian shelling over the previous 24 hours killed at least three civilians and wounded eight more in Ukraine, the Ukrainian president's office said Tuesday. In the eastern Donetsk region, where the fighting has been focused in recent months, shelling continued along the entire front line, with Russian forces targeting some of the region's largest cities, Bakhmut, Avdiivka and Toretsk, the presidential office said.

Donetsk regional governor Pavlo Kyrylenko accused Russian troops of using cluster munitions and repeated his call for civilians to evacuate.

"There is not a single safe place left. Everything is being shelled," Kyrylenko said in televised remarks. "But there are still evacuation routes for the civilian population."

The Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, reported that Moscow was using mercenaries from the shadowy Wagner Group to capture the Vuhledar Power Plant on the northern outskirts of the Bakhmut region village of Novoluhanske.

But Russian forces have made "limited gains" there, according to Ukraine's General Staff. The main regional Russian focus for the moment is on capturing Bakhmut, which the Russian military needs to press its eastern offensive on the Ukrainian strongholds in Donetsk, the cities of Sloviansk and Kramatorsk.

# Ukraine forces hit key bridge in Russian-occupied south

AP ■ KYIV

Ukrainian troops have struck a strategic bridge essential for Moscow to supply its forces occupying the country's south, as Russia pounded several areas in Ukraine with rocket and artillery strikes.

The Ukrainian military struck the Antonivskiy Bridge across the Dnieper River late on Tuesday, the deputy head of the Moscow-appointed administration for the Kherson region, Kirill Stremousov, said.

He said the bridge was still standing but its deck was pierced with holes, stopping vehicles from crossing.

The 1.4-kilometre bridge sustained serious damage in Ukrainian shelling last week, when it took multiple hits. It was closed for trucks but had remained open for passenger vehicles until the strike late on Tuesday.

Ukrainian forces used the US-supplied HIMARS multiple



rocket launchers to hit the bridge, Stremousov said.

The bridge is the main crossing across the Dnieper River in the Kherson region. The only other option is a dam at the hydroelectric plant in Kakhovka, which also came under Ukrainian fire last week but has remained open for traffic.

Knocking the crossings out would make it hard for the Russian military to keep supplying its forces in the region

amid repeated Ukrainian attacks.

Early in the war, Russian troops quickly overran the Kherson region just north of the Crimean Peninsula that Russia annexed in 2014. They have faced Ukrainian counterattacks, but have largely held their ground.

The Ukrainian attacks on the bridge in Kherson come as the bulk of the Russian forces are stuck in the fighting in Ukraine's

eastern industrial heartland of Donbas where they have made slow gains in the face of ferocious Ukrainian resistance.

Supplies of US weapons such as HIMARS have helped slow the Russian advances.

Russian forces kept up their artillery barrage in the eastern Donetsk region, targeting towns and villages, according to regional governor Pavlo Kyrylenko.

In Bakhmut, a key city on

the front line of the Russian offensive, the shelling damaged a hotel and caused casualties, Kyrylenko said. A rescue operation was under way.

Amid Moscow's push to take full control of the eastern Donetsk and Luhansk regions, Russian have gained marginal ground northeast of Bakhmut, according to a Washington DC-based think tank.

Russian forces, however, are unlikely to occupy significant additional territory in Ukraine "before the early autumn", the Institute for the Study of War said.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy claimed that Russian military losses have climbed to nearly 40,000, adding that tens of thousands more were wounded and maimed. His claim couldn't be independently verified. The Russian military last reported its losses in March, when it said that 1,351 troops were killed in action and 3,825 were wounded.

# Philippines scraps Russian chopper deal



AP ■ MANILA

The Philippine government has scrapped a deal to purchase 16 Russian military transport helicopters due to fears of possible U.S. Sanctions, Philippine officials said.

Former Defense Secretary Delfin Lorenzana said Tuesday night he cancelled the 12.7-billion-peso (\$227 million) deal to acquire the Mi-17 helicopters in a decision last month that was approved by then-President Rodrigo Duterte before their terms in office ended on June 30. "We could face sanctions," Lorenzana told The Associated Press, describing ways Washington could express its displeasure if the Philippines proceeded with the deal due to America's worsening conflict with Russia.

American security officials were aware of Manila's decision and could offer similar heavy-lift helicopters for Philippine military use, he said.

After serving as defense chief under Duterte, Lorenzana has been appointed by new President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. To head a government agency in charge of transforming former military bases into business hubs. Philippine Ambassador to Washington Jose Manuel Romualdez told The AP that the deal was canceled because Manila could face possible sanctions under a U.S. Federal law called the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act if the helicopter deal went through.

A Philippine military official said the helicopter deal would undergo a "termination process" after the decision to cancel it was made since a con-

tract has already been signed.

The Russians can appeal but there is little room for the Philippine government to reconsider, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity because of a lack of authority to publicly discuss the issue. Under the helicopter purchase agreement, which was signed in November, the first batch of the multi-purpose helicopters would have been scheduled for delivery by Russia's Sovtechnoexport in about two years.

Asked in March if Russia's invasion of Ukraine would affect the purchase, Lorenzana told reporters: "We do not see any likelihood of it being scrapped as of this moment" and added that "only time can tell." Lorenzana at the time said an initial payment had been made by the Philippines in January. It was not immediately clear what would happen to the payment after the Philippines' decision to back out of the deal.

The Russian-made helicopters could have been used for combat, search and rescue operations, and medical evacuations in the Southeast Asian archipelago, which is often lashed by typhoons and other natural disasters, Philippine officials said.



# UK gives Churchill award to Zelenskyy

AP ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Tuesday presented Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy with the Sir Winston Churchill Leadership Award, drawing comparisons between the two leaders in times of crises.

Zelenskyy accepted the award by video link during a ceremony at Johnson's London office that was attended by members of the Churchill family, Ukrainian Ambassador Vadym Prystaiko and Ukrainians who have received training from British soldiers.

Johnson recalled how Zelenskyy confirmed on February 24 that Russia had invaded, adding: "In that moment of supreme crisis, you faced a test of leadership that was, in its way, as severe as Churchill's challenge in 1940." Zelenskyy thanked

Johnson and Britain for their support.

The two men have formed a close relationship since Johnson became the first Western leader to visit Ukraine after Russia's invasion. Earlier this month, Zelenskyy said he was saddened when Johnson quit as Conservative Party leader after months of ethics scandals.

The Ukrainian leader received a standing ovation in the British Parliament in March, when he invoked one of Churchill's most famous speeches and vowed to fight Russian troops in the air, sea and on the streets.

The Churchill leadership award was first presented in 2006. Past recipients include Prince Charles, former British Prime Ministers Margaret Thatcher and John Major, and former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

# Lanka's SC extends overseas travel ban on Rajapaksa brothers till Aug 2

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Supreme Court on Wednesday barred former prime minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, ex-finance minister Basil Rajapaksa and former Central Bank Governor Ajith Nivard Cabraal from leaving the crisis-hit country till August 2, extending an overseas travel ban that was imposed till July 28.

The petition against them was filed by a group including former Chairman of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce Chandra Jayaratne, for-

mer Sri Lanka swimming champion Julian Bolling, Jehan Kanagaratna and Transparency International Sri Lanka, according to news portal Colombo Gazette. The petitioners claimed that the three persons were directly responsible for the unsustainability of Sri Lanka's foreign debt, its debt default and the current economic crisis. On July 15, Sri Lanka's apex court had barred the trio from leaving the country till July 28, the report said.

That ban has now been extended till August 2, it added.

Earlier this month, Basil was



prevented from leaving Sri Lanka following protests from passengers and officials at the Bandaranaike International Airport here in Colombo.

The former Finance Minister attempted to leave the airport lounge, before being spotted by passengers who began protesting.

Eventually immigration officers stepped in and stopped him from leaving the country, amidst unprecedented anti-government protests.

Mahinda and Basil's brother Gotabaya Rajapaksa, the former Sri

Lankan President, arrived in Singapore on July 14 on a private visit from the Maldives after he fled his country to escape a popular uprising against his government's economic mismanagement.

He first fled to the Maldives on July 13 and from there he proceeded to Singapore the next day.

Rajapaksa has been issued a new visa by Singapore, extending his stay in the country till August 11.

His visit pass has been extended by 14 days, *The Straits Times* newspaper reported.

**NOTICE**  
This is to bring to the notice of the general public that one ID Card of Mr. Abdul Wahid Sofi D/O Abdul Rashid Sofi issued by ICICI Bank Ltd having ID card no. 2225343 has been found missing and/or lost on 6 July 2022 at 1000AM. Anyone, who finds the said ID Card, is requested to return the said ID card, to the Manager (Gift Services & Management Group, ICICI Bank Limited, SC Shoppers Arcade, Plot No. Community Center, Sector-9, Rohini, New Delhi, Delhi 110085) Therefore, all the customers of ICICI Bank Limited are hereby notified not to make any payment to any unauthorized person holding the said ID card no. 2225343. Please take further notice that anybody making payment to any person holding the said ID card shall, do so at his/her own costs, risk and peril, and ICICI Bank shall not be bound and / or responsible for any payment.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
I Ajay Kumar Gupta S/o Sh. Vishnu Kumar Gupta, Resident of # 1583, Sector 18-D, Chandigarh. (earlier House No. 3007, Sector 19-D, Chandigarh) would like to inform the general public that following of my document(s) for unit no. PGN-06-12A05, in Palm Gardens by Emaar India Limited, Sector 83 Gurgaon, have been lost: Builder Buyers Agreement AND Allotment Letter AND Handover Letter. If any person/s, organization/s finds it, is requested to return the same to us as address mentioned above.

# Singapore extends ex-Lankan prez visit pass by 14 days: Report

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

The Singapore government has issued a new visa to former Sri Lankan president Gotabaya Rajapaksa, allowing him to stay in the country for another 14 days till August 11, a media report said on Wednesday. The report on the extension of Rajapaksa's visit pass came a day after Sri Lanka's Cabinet spokesman Bandula Gunawardena said that the ex-president was not hiding and is expected to return to the island nation from Singapore.

Rajapaksa arrived in Singapore on July 14 on a private visit from the Maldives after he fled his country to escape a popular uprising against his government's economic mismanagement. He first fled to the Maldives on July 13 and from there he proceeded to Singapore the next day. Rajapaksa has been issued a new visa, extending his stay



here till August 11. His visit pass has been extended by 14 days, *The Straits Times* reported. After Rajapaksa landed in Singapore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here confirmed that he had been allowed entry on a private visit. The ministry stressed that the ex-president had not asked for asylum.

Singapore generally does not grant requests for asylum, the spokesman had said.

The ex-president was issued a 14-day visit pass when he arrived at Changi Airport on a Saudia flight from the Maldives on July 14. He initially stayed at a hotel in the city centre, but is believed to have

moved to a private residence, according to the report. He has not been seen in public in Singapore.

When asked about Rajapaksa at a weekly Cabinet media briefing, Cabinet Spokesman Gunawardena told reporters on Tuesday that the former president was not in hiding and he is expected to return from Singapore.

Gunawardena, who is also the Minister for Transport and Highways and Mass Media, said he does not believe the former president fled the country, and is in hiding. He, however, did not offer any other details of Rajapaksa's possible return.

Sri Lanka's Parliament on Wednesday elected Ranil Wickremesinghe, an ally of Rajapaksa, as the successor to Rajapaksa, who resigned after reaching Singapore. It was the first time in 44 years that Sri Lanka's Parliament directly elected a president.

Rajapaksa, 73, fled Sri Lanka after the July 9 uprising when people broke into the President's House after months of public protests against him for mishandling the country's worst economic crisis since 1948. A massive protest on July 13 attempted to break into the parliamentary complex in continuation with the July 9 popular uprising, forcing then president Rajapaksa to leave the country to the Maldives and then to Singapore.

On July 9, anti-government protesters occupied the official residence of Rajapaksa and the private home of Wickremesinghe. The mob also torched the private residence of Wickremesinghe.

Sri Lanka has seen months of mass unrest over the worst economic crisis and many blame the former government led by Rajapaksa and his family for mishandling the island nation's economy.

# Lanka's PM: Ready to listen to democratic public protesters:

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's newly-appointed Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena on Wednesday said the government is ready to listen to the demands of democratic public protesters, but denounced acts of terrorism, calling it the "greatest threat to democracy."

Gunawardena, 73, an ally of the Rajapaksas and a school friend of the newly-elected President Ranil Wickremesinghe, was sworn in as the Sri Lankan Prime Minister last week amid an unprecedented economic and political crisis.

Addressing Parliament on Wednesday, Gunawardena said the Sri Lankan government is ready to listen to the democratic public protests, but they could not accept acts of terrorism.

**UTTARAKHAND TRANSPORT CORPORATION H.Q.**  
UCF Sadan, Deep Nagar Road, Vishnu Vihar, Ajabporkalan, Dehradun.  
No 629/Adv/2022 **E-TENDER NOTICE** Dated 27.07.2022  
Uttarakhand Transport Corporation (A Government of Uttarakhand Undertaking) invites E-tenders for the Supply of Packaged safe Drinking Water under the Brand Name of 'UTTARAKHAND PARIVAHAN NEER'. The tender documents are available online on <http://ukenders.gov.in> the bidder can download the documents through temporary username and password that is mentioned in the website. The tender can be submitted along with the cost of Tender (Rs.5,000.00/- + GST@18% (900.00/- 5,900.00/-), in the form of DD in favour of Managing Director, Uttarakhand Transport Corporation payable at Dehradun.  
Tender Schedule :-  
Pre Bid Meeting : 05-08-2022 at 11.00 Hrs  
Last Date for online submission of Tender Forms: 20-08-2022 up to 14.00 Hrs  
Tender Opening (Technical bid) : 20-08-2022 at 15.00 Hrs  
General Manager (Op/Technical)

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
The Public at large is hereby notified that my clients are intending to an immovable property at Second Floor Portion of Property No.8, Measuring Area 152.50 Sq.Yds. Situated in the Layout Plan of the D.N.R. Account Employees Co-operative House Building Society Ltd. Known as Shankar Vihar, Vikas Marg, Delhi-110092, from Smt. Anju Malik W/o Shri Hemant Kumar, she represent himself as owner of the said property on the basis of Gift Deed dated 12.10.2011, duly regd. As Document No.17129, in Book No. 1 Volume No.5778, on Pages 192 to 197, Dated 13.10.2011 in the office of Sub-Registrar VIII Delhi executed by Shri Hemant Kumar S/o Shri Prakash Malik.  
It is therefore notified that anybody claiming any rights, share, claim, title, interest or lien over the aforesaid property may file such claim or objection to the undersigned within a period of 15 days from the date of Publication of this Notice, otherwise it will be presumed that the said property is free from all encumbrances, charges and/or lien etc. and my clients are free to sell/transfer the said property.  
Sd/Rakesh N.D.,  
Advocate #Office No.107, First Floor, M.S. Chamber, C-1/A, Vikas Marg, Laxmi Nagar, Delhi-110092

**United Textiles Limited**  
Regd. Office 7<sup>th</sup> K.M. Stone, Barwala Road, Hisar - 125001 (Haryana)  
CIN: L17115HR1993PLC032092  
**Notice**  
Pursuant to Regulation 29 read with Regulation 47 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations & Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015, Notice is hereby given that the Meeting of Board of Directors of the Company is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, 9th August, 2022 at 11.00 AM at the Regd. Office of the Company to consider the Unaudited Quarterly Results for the Period Ended 30th June, 2022.  
Further as per the Company's Code of Conduct for Prevention of Insider Trading, the trading window for dealing with securities of the Company will remain close from 30.06.2022 to 48 hours after the declaration of the Financial Results. The said information is also available on the Company's Website [www.unitedtextileslimited.com](http://www.unitedtextileslimited.com) & also on the website of stock exchanges at [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com).  
For United Textiles Limited (Vivek Aggarwal)  
Whole Time Director  
Dated 26.07.2022 (DIN 07079208)

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Ld. Advocate for the applicant: N.P. VANKAR  
IN THE COURT OF PRINCIPAL JUDGE, FAMILY COURT, VADODARA  
FAMILY SUIT NO: FSUIT 429/2020  
EX:-10  
APPLICANT :- SHIVA CHATURVEDI  
W/O NARENDRA JADAV  
VERSUS  
OPPONENT: SHRI NARENDRA RAO JADAV  
RES:- 91, F. POCKET ONE, MAYUR VIHAR, PHASE-1, DELHI  
NEXT DATE : 29/08/2022  
It is here by intimated to the above-named Opponent that, the above-named applicant has filed a suit u/Sec.13(a) 3 (a-b) of the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955 against you to get divorce before the present court, you are informed by this notice that, many notices were issued, but returned unserved. Therefore, by publishing this notice, you are hereby informed to remain present before this court personally on 29/08/2022 IN THE COURT OF S.M MEHTA, PRINCIPAL JUDGE, FAMILY COURT, VADODARA for your defense by producing/giving written evidence whichever you rely on.  
It is hereby informed you by this Notice that, if you are not remained present on the above date, the suit is disposed of after hearing in your absence. Further, You are informed by this notice that, your defense will not be considered if you fail to write the address for service of notice on or before the above date.  
Given under my Signature and Court Stamp, Today i.e 7th July of 2022  
I/C Registrar, (S.V. Parikh)  
Family Court, Vadodara



# 5G spectrum auction gets bids worth ₹1.49 lakh cr

Auction to continue on Thursday, says Telecom Minister

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's auction of the 5G spectrum, capable of offering lag-free connectivity and ultra-high speed internet, has garnered Rs 1.49 lakh crore worth of bids so far as the sale stretched to the third day.

Firms run by tycoons Mukesh Ambani, Sunil Bharti Mittal and Gautam Adani as well as Vodafone Idea had put in bids worth Rs 1.45 lakh crore on the opening day on Tuesday and incremental demand for airwaves came in five rounds held on Wednesday.

Telecom Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said the second day of the auction has ended and it will continue on Thursday.

"I am happy to see good competition in auction, good competition for all bands have come in," he said. "Bids worth Rs 1,49,454 crore have been



received so far at the end of 9th round." Analysts said Ambani's Reliance Jio may be the most aggressive of those in the race. The minister said all bands of the spectrum are seeing demand.

Though details of the bids are not announced as yet, ICICI Securities said its analysis shows that Jio has likely bid for the highest spectrum worth Rs 80,100 crore, and likely opted for 10MHz spectrum in the premium 700 MHz band.

Bharti Airtel may have bid for spectrum worth Rs 45,000 crore, spending 20 per cent more than expected, possibly in 1800 MHz and 2100 MHz

bands. Vodafone Idea Ltd has likely bid for Rs 18,400 crore for spectrum, while Adani Data Networks should have picked 26 GHz spectrum pan-India, it said.

"It appears Adani has bought 26GHz spectrum in 20 circles (except in Delhi and Kolkata), and its total spectrum purchase could be 3350MHz for Rs 900 crore. Our estimate is provisional as data does not reflect the entire purchase by Adani. We believe, it should have purchased 200 MHz spectrum in all circles except Gujarat, where it would have bought 400MHz," ICICI Securities noted.

## Markets bounce back after 2-day decline

Sensex, Nifty climb 1 nearly pc

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark indices bounced back on Wednesday after a two-day decline, with the Sensex and Nifty climbing nearly 1 per cent each, tracking a positive trend in European markets.

Buying in IT and bank stocks also supported the recovery in equities.

The 30-share BSE benchmark jumped 547.83 points or 0.99 per cent to settle at 55,816.32. During the day, it climbed 584.6 points or 1 per cent to 55,853.09.

The broader NSE Nifty advanced 157.95 points or 0.96 per cent to 16,641.80.

Sun Pharma was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, spurring 3.39 per cent, followed by State Bank of India, Larsen & Toubro, Asian Paints, TCS, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finance and IndusInd Bank.

Bharti Airtel, Kotak Mahindra Bank, NTPC, Bajaj Finserv and Reliance Industries were the laggards, shedding up to 1.32 per cent.

In Asia, markets in Seoul and Tokyo ended higher, while Shanghai and Hong Kong settled in the red.

Markets in Europe were trading mostly higher during mid-session deals. The US markets had ended lower on Tuesday.

"Nifty broke a two-day losing streak on July 27 ahead of the US Fed meet outcome in the



evening. In the process, Nifty was one of the best performers in the Asian region," said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities.

Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.53 per cent to USD 105 per barrel.

Foreign institutional investors again offloaded shares worth Rs 1,548.29 crore on Tuesday, as per exchange data.

# RBI to go for 35 basis points hike in rates at next week's monetary policy meeting: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India's rate-setting panel will go for a 0.35 per cent hike in the key repo rate at its meeting next week, an American brokerage said on Wednesday.

The hike will be accompanied by a change in the policy stance to "calibrated tightening", Bofa Securities said in a report published ahead of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) resolution which is set to be announced on August 5.

RBI has hiked the rate by a cumulative 0.90 per cent in two tightening moves in May and June, responding to the

runaway headline inflation which has consistently overshot the upper end of the target set for the central bank for many months.

Referring to policy actions since April, when RBI introduced the standing deposit facility, the brokerage said the central bank has effectively hiked rates by 1.30 per cent.

"In our base case, we now see the RBI MPC hike policy repo rate by 0.35 per cent, taking it to 5.25 per cent (higher than pre-pandemic level), with stance change to calibrated tightening from withdrawal of accommodation," the report said.



The brokerage expects MPC to retain its FY23 Consumer Price Inflation (CPI) and real GDP growth

forecasts, at 6.7 per cent and 7.2 per cent, respectively.

Last week, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said that head-

line inflation, which came at 7.04 per cent for April, is appearing to have peaked.

There is a possibility for MPC to adopt a more aggressive measure and deliver a 0.50 per cent hike in rates like it did in June, joining some developed market and regional central banks who have sent out more decisive signals.

On the other hand, a 0.25 per cent hike in rates can also not be ruled out, the brokerage said, explaining that MPC could acknowledge that inflation has peaked and there are downside risks to their estimates and there will be measured hikes from here on.

## Industry must follow best global practices for safe use of chemicals, says Mandaviya

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Chemicals and Fertilisers Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Wednesday asked the chemicals and petrochemicals industry to follow the best global practices to ensure the safety of persons working in this sector.

Employees working in the chemicals industry should get the best information and training on the safe use of chemicals, he said while referring to incidents like the Bhopal Gas tragedy.

In this regard, Mandaviya said the department of chemicals and petrochemicals has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with International Labour Organisation (ILO) to ensure the adoption of best global practices and standards.

The objective of the cards is to promote the safe use of chemicals in the workplace. Therefore, the primary target users are workers and those responsible for occupational safety and health.

"Human safety and humanity are paramount for the nation," Mandaviya said while addressing a Ficci conference on "Safe use of Chemicals".

The minister said India readily accepts any best practice that ensures the safety and security of life, humanity, the environment and the industry.

The MoU with ILO will ensure the safety of personnel in the chemicals and petrochemicals industry. The industry will follow these practices, and the government will monitor the implementation," he added.

The MoU was signed in the presence of Mandaviya and Minister of



State for Chemicals and Fertilisers Bhagwanth Khuba. As per the Ficci statement, the MoU seeks to adopt the International Chemical Safety Cards (ICSCs) for information dissemination to the chemical industry.

The ICSCs are data sheets intended to concisely provide essential safety and health information on chemicals. Arti Ahuja, Secretary, Department of Chemicals and Petrochemicals, emphasised the need to manage potential hazards.

"Anchoring a culture of safety is important," she said.

Ahuja said there is a need to adopt a "standardised format which is internationally acceptable".

The secretary also said that the chemical safety cards developed by the ILO and WHO are globally recognised. The industry should prominently disseminate the information to workers, she said, adding that the department would also organise training of trainers in association with the

## Sebi again extends deadline for commencing KYC record validation by KRAs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Wednesday extended the deadline by three months to November 1, for commencing the validation of all KYC records by KYC Registration Agencies (KRAs).

This is the second time, when the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has extended the deadline. Initially, such agencies were required to independently validate the Know your Client or KYC records of

all clients by July 1, which was extended till August 1.

Now once again the regulator has received requests from the KRAs to extend the timelines.

"Considering the KRAs' request for extension of the timeline... It has been decided that the validation of all KYC records (new and existing) shall commence from November 1, 2022," Sebi said.

Further, it said that KYC records of all existing clients, who have used Aadhaar as an Officially Valid

Document (OVD), will be validated within a period of 180 days from November 1.

The regulator, in January, notified new norms to make KRAs responsible for carrying out independent validation of the KYC records uploaded onto their system by Registered Intermediaries (RIs).

Under the notified rules, such agencies will have to maintain an audit trail of the upload/modification/download with respect to KYC records of clients.

## Sebi penalises 8 individuals for breach of insider trading norm in Titan share trades

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Wednesday imposed fines totalling Rs 8 lakh on eight individuals for violation of insider trading norms in the shares of Titan Company Ltd.

The transactions were carried out between April 2018 and March 2019 when they were designated employees of Titan Company.

The regulator levied a fine of Rs 1 lakh each on Raghuraman Rangharajan, Ajay Singh, R Saravanan, Nagaraja Ravichandran, Shyamsunder Rambhau Bedre, Krishan Sharma, Subramaniankannan and Y S Manjunath, according to eight separate orders.

The order came after Sebi received a

letter from Titan Company Ltd (TCL), wherein the company intimated the regulator about alleged violations of Prohibition of Insider Trading (PIT) and company's code of conduct by some of its designated persons/employees.

Thereafter, the market regulator conducted an investigation in the scrip of TCL and found non-compliances of PIT rules by the individuals during the April 2018-March 2019 period. During their employment with TCL, they had transacted in the securities of the company but failed to make disclosures to the firm as required under the PIT norms, as per the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi).

The disclosure was mandatory as the transactions exceeded the market value of Rs 10 lakh.

## Maruti Suzuki reports over two-fold rise in net profit to ₹1,036 cr in Q1

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Maruti Suzuki India (MSI) on Wednesday reported over two-fold jump in its consolidated net profit to Rs 1,036 crore for the first quarter ended June 30, mainly due to a low base in the year-ago period.

The auto major had posted a net profit of Rs 475 crore in the COVID-hit April-June quarter of

the last fiscal. Its net sales rose to Rs 26,512 crore in the June quarter compared to Rs 17,776 crore in the same period of 2021-22.

Performance in the first quarter of the last year was affected by COVID-related shutdowns and disruptions, and hence comparison with the first quarter this year is not on a like-to-like basis, MSI said in a statement.

It sold 4,67,931 vehi-

cles during the June quarter against 3,53,614 units in the year-ago period. Sales in the domestic market stood at 3,98,494 units, while exports were 69,437 units, the highest ever in any quarter, MSI said.

In Q1 of last fiscal, the company had sold 3,08,095 units in the domestic market and 45,519 units in the export markets, it added.

## Govt proposes higher penalties for violations under warehousing development and regulation law

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has proposed amendments to the Warehousing Development and Regulation Act (WDRA), 2007 to make registration of godowns compulsory and to sharply raise the penalty for various offences, says a senior Food Ministry official.

In the amendment bill, the government has also proposed simplified registration process, accepting negotiable receipts only in electronic form, more powers to regulator.

Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA) to investigate, take enforcement action, impose monetary penalty and adjudication.

That apart, the government has proposed doing away with up to three year imprisonment for various offences but suggested significant increase in penalty from the current Rs 1 lakh for various offences, the official added.

According to the official, the Food Ministry has already sought inter-ministerial comments on the proposed changes to the act and will soon seek cabinet approval.

Thereafter, the amendment bill is likely to be placed in the monsoon session of Parliament.

Since the registration is optional, the number of warehouses registered with WDRA is very low.

## Tata Motors loss widens to ₹4,951 crore in June Qr as JLR sales dip

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Tata Motors on Wednesday reported a consolidated net loss of Rs 4,951 crore in the June quarter as chip shortage and COVID-19 lockdown in China impacted Jaguar Land Rover sales.

The company had posted a consolidated net loss of Rs 4,450 crore in the same quarter last fiscal. Consolidated revenue from operations during the period under review stood at Rs 71,935 crore as against Rs 66,406 crore in the year-ago period, the company added.

The company's British arm Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) posted rev-



enue of 4.4 billion pound in the first quarter, down 7.6 per cent from the fourth quarter of FY22, impacted by supply challenges including semiconductor shortages.

It sold 78,825 vehicles in the June quarter, broadly flat compared with the fourth quarter of last fiscal and down 37 per cent compared with the April-June period of last fiscal.

JLR's CEO Thierry Bollere said headwinds

from the global semiconductor supply and COVID lockdowns in China impacted its business performance in the period under review.

"We have a completely reinforced organisation set-up to respond to the semiconductor crisis. This is now starting to recover production growth to achieve greater volumes and will allow us to take advantage of our record order book in the 2nd quarter," he added.

## Gujarat announces Semiconductor Policy, offers incentives for investment

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

The Gujarat Government on Wednesday announced a dedicated policy to attract new investment in the semiconductor sector by offering incentives and subsidies to start operations in the State.

Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel unveiled the 'Gujarat Semiconductor Policy', will remain

in force till 2027, state Science and Technology Minister Jitu Vaghani said in a statement.

Under the policy, the state government will set up 'Dholera Semicon City' near Ahmedabad where eligible projects will be given subsidy for setting up manufacturing units, the release said.

Gujarat has now become the first state in the country to have a dedicated policy for the semicon-

ductor and display production sector, the minister claimed.

"The policy has been designed in line with the Centre's India Semiconductor Mission.

We expect that our policy would generate two lakh new jobs in the semiconductor sector during the next five years in the state," Vaghani said.

Under the policy, the state government will set up 'Dholera

Semicon City' in the Dholera Special Investment Region near Ahmedabad.

At the facility, eligible projects will be given 75 per cent subsidy on purchase of first 200 acres of land for setting up manufacturing units.

The eligible projects will be provided good quality water at the rate of Rs 12 per cubic meter for the first five years, the release said.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Campus placements at Vellore Institute of Technology (VIT) commenced on July 12, 2022 for the 2023 graduating batch from VIT sharing

slot-1 with five companies which included Microsoft, DE Shaw, Morgan Stanley, Airbnb, and Media.net.

The VIT adhered to a centralised placement process this year as well, the students from all the four campuses of VIT—

Vellore, Chennai, Amaravati (AP), and Bhopal (MP) participated in all the campus recruitment processes.

The entire process for all slot-1 companies, mainly pre-placement talk, online test, technical and HR interviews, all of them were conducted in a hybrid mode (physical / remote).

Dr G Viswanathan,

Chancellor, VIT announced the results of Slot 1 campus placements this week. Microsoft selected 45 students for fulltime offers, which include Slot - 1 and pre placement offers.

The other slot 1 company offers include DE Shaw - 2 offers, Morgan Stanley- 3 offers and Airbnb - 4 offers and Media.net - 1 offer.

Motorq, a venture-backed connected-car data and analytics software platform company offered Rs. 1.02 crore as CTC annual salary package to Amit Agarwal and Sarthak Bharadwaj, final year Computer Science Engineering students of VIT.

They did their summer internship at MotorQ and got the Pre Placement

Offers (PPO).

Followed by Slot 1 placements, companies like Amazon, Wells Fargo, Texas Instruments, Walmart labs, Sillion labs, Arcesium, Krypto and Meecho are in the pipeline. 184 students from the 2023 graduating batch received Pre-Placement offers (PPO) from companies during their summer internship.



# Sindhu named India's flagbearer at CWG

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

Double Olympic medallist badminton ace PV Sindhu was on Wednesday named flagbearer of the Indian contingent for the opening ceremony of the Commonwealth Games to be held here on Thursday.

Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra, who was also the defending champion in the Commonwealth Games having won the Gold in Gold Coast four years ago, was expected to be the flagbearer.

But a groin injury following his Silver medal at the World Championships forced him to pull-out and the Indian Olympic Association picked Sindhu to be the flagbearer from a three-member shortlist.

Tokyo Olympics medallists — weightlifter Mirabai Chanu and boxer Lovlina Borgohain are the other two athletes, who were also considered before IOA decided to go for Sindhu.

"It's with great pleasure that we announce Sindhu as the flagbearer for Team India," acting IOA president Anil Khanna said in a release.

Sindhu was also the flagbearer at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast.

"The other two athletes, Chanu and Borgohain, were immensely deserving too, but we went ahead with Sindhu because she is a two-time Olympic medallist. We expect Sindhu will continue to do well and perform with excellence at these Games."

The 2022 edition of the Commonwealth Games has the largest contingent of female athletes in the history of the Games.

"So the IOA sensed fit that we spotlight our commitment to gender equity, in adherence to the spirit of the Olympic Charter, by shortlisting three women athletes for

the prestigious role of Team India's Flagbearer at the 2022 Commonwealth Games," Khanna said.

"We hope that watching Ms Sindhu lead Team India with the Indian flag in her hand at the Opening Ceremony will inspire millions of girls in India to take up sports."

The IOA had a four-member committee to pick the flagbearer which also included secretary general Rajeev Mehta, treasurer Anandeshwar Panday, and Team India Chef de Mission Rajesh Bhandari.

"We extend our congratulations to her and wish her, and the other athletes of Team India, the very best for the Commonwealth Games," Mehta said.

Team India Chef de Mission at Birmingham, Bhandari said a maximum of 164 participants can take part from the Indian contingent in the Parade of Nations in the Opening Ceremony.

"The count of 164 will include athletes and team officials. The final list will be drawn up by this evening, gauging the availability of the athletes," Bhandari said.

A total of 215 athletes from India will be competing at the Commonwealth Games.

A former world champion, Sindhu is one of the favourites to win the women's singles Gold medal in Birmingham, having won the Silver and Bronze in the last two editions at Gold Coast and Glasgow.

**CHOPRA DISAPPOINTED**

Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra has expressed his disappointment at losing out the opportunity of leading the country as flag bearer at the opening ceremony of Birmingham Commonwealth Games on Thursday after he sustained a "minor" groin strain during his historic Silver medal-win-



## National coach Bhatt, team doctor Chib move out of 'Games Village'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian women's boxing team head coach Bhaskar Bhatt has moved out of his room at the Commonwealth Games Village here to accommodate Olympic Bronze medallist Lovlina Borgohain's personal coach Sandhya Gurung.

Bhatt has checked into a designated Games hotel nearby.

"I have moved to a hotel which is a 10-minute walk from the Village," Bhatt said.

It was a voluntary move by the national team head coach, who ensured that team's only Olympic medallist pugilist is in good mental frame with her coach around with her.

"I volunteered to do it (give up his room) as it's all 'ghar ka mamla' (internal matter) and it's best to sort out such things amongst ourselves," the soft-spoken Bhatt added.

Bhatt, who took over the senior women's head coach's job

last year, still has access to all the venues and the Games Village. The only change being that he won't be able to stay inside the Village at night.

"I have all the required access, so it's not a problem for me," Bhatt said.

Under Bhatt, the Indian women's team returned with three medals, including a Gold, at the World Championship in May.

On Monday, Tokyo Olympic Bronze medallist Lovlina had claimed that her preparation was getting affected due to the "continuous harassment" of her coaches.

Gurung was added to the Indian contingent just days before the Games were to begin, which resulted in a delay in her accreditation.

On her arrival here on Sunday, she was not allowed to enter the Village as she did not have an accreditation, triggering a twitter tirade from her ward. She was checked in to hotel where the extra officials were staying.

ning campaign at the recent World Championships.

The 24-year-old superstar was all set to defend his title in Birmingham, but pulled out of the multi-sport event after his medical team advised a month's rest after MRI scan revealed a minor injury.

"... I am hurt about not being able to defend my title and missing out on another opportunity to represent the nation. I am especially disappointed about losing out on the opportunity to be Team India's

flag bearer at the opening ceremony, an honour I was looking forward to having in a few day's time," Chopra wrote on his social media handles.

"For now, I will focus on my rehabilitation and hope to be back in action very soon. I would like to thank the entire country for all the love and support I've received over the past few days, and urge you all to join me in cheering on my fellow Team India athletes in Birmingham over the coming weeks. Jai Hind."



## Not thinking of Australia as yet, says Manpreet

PTI ■ BIRMINGHAM

A maiden Gold at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham is the ultimate goal but Indian men's hockey team captain Manpreet Singh said the players will take one game at a time and their immediate focus will be on the group stage matches.

Six-time champions Australia are the hot favourites in Birmingham and the Indians will have to beat them at some stage if they are to clinch gold.

But, Manpreet said his players are not breaking sweat as yet thinking over their possible clash with the Kookaburras.

"Right now, we are focusing on the group stage matches and not thinking about Australia at all. Every one is of the opinion that we give our best in these matches and then think about what Australia has to offer when we face them," Manpreet said at a virtual press conference ahead of the Games.

The Indian team begins its campaign with a group match against Ghana on Sunday.

Australia have won every one of the six Commonwealth Games hockey tournaments to date.

"As a team, we have set a goal that we have to win a medal in Birmingham and we can feel the weight of expectations as well. However, in order to reach that stage, we have to give our absolute best in each game and not take any opposition lightly," he added.

The 30-year-old, who will be making his 300th appearance for India when he turns out against Ghana, termed his playing career as a roller-coaster ride, full of ups and downs.

"The journey has been absolutely special. It has also been a sheer honour to play for India for so long. The game has taught me so many things about life.

Head coach Graham Reid, who has been at the helm of affairs since 2019, said he's fully aware of what the players are capable of achieving in Birmingham.

"We have great expectations from each other in Birmingham. Yes, there will be huge expectations from the Indian fans as well, wanting us to win a medal. But these are external pressure and we cannot do much about it. We can only control what is within our grasp," Reid said.

## Just want to be best version of myself in CWG: Srikanth

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a career spanning over a decade, Kidambi Srikanth has seen it all.

The highs of four Superseries titles in a calendar year, the ecstasy of a Commonwealth Games Silver at Gold Coast, a brief world number one ranking stint, the lows of 23 first-round exits, and the pain of missing out of the Tokyo Olympics — all within a little over four years of his career.

Now a much "matured and experienced" Srikanth says he is just trying to create a "better version" of himself every time he takes the court.

"I am more experienced and mature now. I always wanted to be the best version of myself. I was in the best possible shape in 2018 CWG and I am very confident as I play the Birmingham CWG," Srikanth said.

"I consider CWG on par with Asian Games or World Championships. This is one event that happens in four years and the medal reflects towards the nation. I have been playing well in the last year and for me, it is about constantly trying to learn from my mistakes and play better.

"I don't compare myself to 2018. If I have to do something in Birmingham, I will have to create my best version on that day."

Srikanth's stocks went down after the 2018 CWG as he was left to deal with a nagging knee injury. Soon, the losses piled up and they dented his confidence, which was his hallmark in 2017, leaving him with doubts about his game. His ranking also plummeted but things started looking up after he addressed his fitness issues during the COVID-19 break. He showed better results in the few events that he could play during the COVID-affected 2020 but with several tournament being cancelled, he failed to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics.

Once the international calendar resumed, Srikanth slowly found his bearings and by the end of last year became the first Indian to reach the finals of a world championship as he clinched a coveted Silver at Huelva, Spain. He also won all his matches in Bangkok to lead India to an epic Thomas Cup triumph in May and he is now eyeing to repeat the good show in Birmingham.



"I am feeling good now. I had pulled my abdominal muscle in Thailand, it was a mild thing. I didn't want to take any risk so pulled out. I was okay in Indonesia but was feeling pain in my Achilles, so I didn't play the last few events."

In 2018 CWG, Srikanth defeated the legendary Lee Chong Wei to guide India to its maiden mixed team Gold, beating Malaysia in the final.

"I like playing team events, the whole atmosphere, with the team backing you. It brings out a little more than normal, I guess. I am very happy that I could contribute to the team.

"In 2018, it was a very young team, I was 25 years old and we all just wanted to enjoy and do well as a team and it worked. Winning first team Gold was a special feeling. Now I'm coming after the Thomas Cup win but everything will be a little different in CWG. The whole structure is different but we will be confident.

"It is about playing well on that given day. It is tougher in such events. It is about that one and a half week, we have to do everything possible in that time frame and it will not be easy."

## Constantine named East Bengal head coach

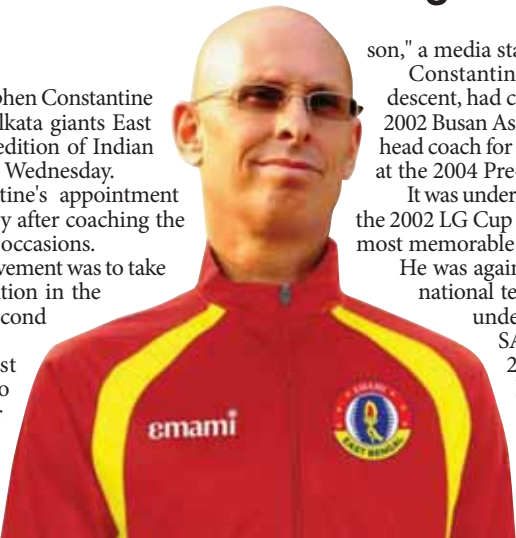
PTI ■ KOLKATA

Former India head coach Stephen Constantine will be in charge of the Kolkata giants East Bengal during the upcoming edition of Indian Super League, the club said on Wednesday.

The 59-year-old Constantine's appointment marks his return to the country after coaching the national team on two separate occasions.

Constantine's biggest achievement was to take India from 173rd to 97th position in the FIFA rankings during his second stint.

"Emami Group and East Bengal club are delighted to announce that the former national team head coach, Stephen Constantine has been appointed as our head coach for the 2022-23 football season," a media statement said.



Constantine, who is of Anglo-Cypriot descent, had coached the national team at the 2002 Busan Asian after he was appointed as the head coach for the first time the same year, and at the 2004 Pre-World Cup.

It was under Constantine that India had won the 2002 LG Cup in Vietnam, which is one of the most memorable wins in the new millennium.

He was again appointed as the coach of the national team in January 2015 and it was under him that India won the 2016 SAFF Cup. He guided the team to 2019 AFC Asian Cup where India were ousted in the group stage after a winning start.

East Bengal had a forgettable 2021-22 ISL season when the team finished ninth among 11 teams.

## Indian equestrians set for FEI World C'ships

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Touching a new high, India's three equestrians, including ace rider Fouaad Mirza, have qualified for the Dressage and Eventing World Championships to be held in August and September.

Anush Agarwalla and Shruti Vora will compete in the FEI Dressage World Championships, which is set to be held at Herning, Denmark from August 5 to 11.

Both are preparing for the championships in Germany.

Mirza will compete in FEI World



Championship Eventing, which is scheduled to be held at Pratoni, Italy from September 10 to 12.

India's Eventing team had won a Silver medal at the 2018 Asian Games in Jakarta.

## 5 Indian athletes who'll miss Birmingham Commonwealth Games

DRITI ATRI ■ NEW DELHI

The 2022 edition of the Commonwealth Games will take place in England's second-most populated city, Birmingham. In the 22nd edition of the multi-sporting event, India will make its 18th appearance and as many as 215 Indian athletes will take part, of which 111 are men and 104 are women. India will field athletes in 19 different sports this time around and will hope to better the last edition's medal tally.

In the 2018 games, India won a total of 66 medals-26 Gold, 20 Silver, and 20 Bronze. 16 of those medals came in shooting, which won't be a part of the games this time around. The absence of

shooting is already a big jolt and, above that, a few Indian players who ended with a yellow metal will also not be seen for various reasons. Here's a look at five prominent Indian athletes who'll miss action in Birmingham.

**NEERAJ CHOPRA**

Neeraj Chopra, a Tokyo Olympics Gold medallist and ace javelin thrower, will be unable to defend his CWG title. The 24-year-old has pulled out of the mega event due to a groin strain he developed during his recent historic second-place finish in the Athletics World Championships in Eugene. The first Indian track and field athlete to win a medal in the Olympics,



that too Gold, was supposed to be India's biggest medal hope, but now he'll be cheering for his fellow Indian teammates from outside. He was set to be India's flagbearer as well in the opening ceremony.

**MC MARY KOM**

The most decorated woman in amateur boxing history is another high-profile name that is missing from this year's Commonwealth Games. The 39-year-old from Manipur, who has a record number of eight medals in World Championships, which includes six Golds, besides a historic Bronze medal in the 2012 London Olympics, is the defending champion in the light flyweight

(48kg) category, but this time she won't defend her title. Her bid to compete in Birmingham ended in heartbreak when she was forced to withdraw midway from the selection trials due to a knee injury.

**SAINA NEHWAL**

Saina Nehwal, a two-time Commonwealth Games Gold medallist and former world number one shuttler, will not feature in the Birmingham games as she has not been able to qualify for the squad. She skipped the national selection trials that took place earlier this year. Nehwal is one of India's most decorated badminton players of all time. Besides her success in the CWG, she is also India's first badminton player to

win an Olympic medal. The 32-year-old won the Bronze medal in the 2012 London Games.

**MANU BAKER**

At her maiden Commonwealth Games in Gold Coast, 16-year-old Manu made headlines for her record-breaking Gold medal win in the 10m air pistol event. In that same year, she went on to win the yellow metal in the Youth Olympics as well. She continued her ace form to win 15 Gold medals at various top-level events like the World Cup, ISSF Junior World Championships, etc. But she won't feature in Birmingham as shooting has been excluded from the 2022 games. In the previous edition, Indian shoot-

ers won 16 medals, and the exclusion of the sport will surely hamper India's standings.

**RANI RAMPAL**

Rani is one of the most popular women's hockey players of current times. But the Indian captain will not be seen in action in the English city this time because she is recovering from an injury and is yet to regain full fitness. Under Rani's leadership, India managed to secure a historic fourth-place finish in the Tokyo Olympics last year. Rani also missed the Women's World Cup, which took place earlier this month. Her absence will be a big miss for Team India as she is one of the best players in the world.



# 'Resource like Upton will be helpful'

PTI ■ PORT OF SPAIN

Paddy Upton's vast reservoir of knowledge will be an immensely useful "resource" at a time when mental health of cricketers is becoming paramount in a choc-a-bloc international cricket calendar, feels India head coach Rahul Dravid.

Upton, who had four fruitful years from 2008 to 2011 under Gary Kirsten is back at Dravid's insistence and will now help the elite Indian players cope up with pressure cooker scenario going into T20 World Cup in Australia.

"With so much cricket being played mental health side of cricket is very important and having a resource like him (Upton) will really be helpful to the group," Dravid told *BCCI.Tv*.

Dravid also feels that Upton's familiarity with Indian cricket set-up will prove to be helpful.

"Travelling as players in international cricket, we do understand the mental side of the game and we are lucky to get someone like Paddy on board because he has that experience of being with Indian team during 2011 World Cup and even a little before that.

"Most importantly he (Upton) is familiar with most Indian players having worked with them at IPL level or in Indian team.

"He is familiar with our culture and how the Indian team functions. (It) seemed like a really good fit for us, to tap into his knowledge as we look to build the team for the World Cup," added Dravid.

## MY ROLE IS TO CREATE...

Upton, who has had his own unique people skills to deal with individual players wants to be seen as a facilitator of optimum performance level from players in top-flight competition.

"Everybody has a natural motivational flow and part of my role is to help individuals find that natural motivation flow and for that we need to set up an environment that allows people to be themselves and to flourish," Upton said.



To prove his point, he gave an analogy of how a gardener needs to create a fertile land to grow beautiful flowers.

"If I give a simple analogy is to grow beautiful flowers, the gardener

needs to create a fertile land. As coaches, our role is to create a fertile environment which helps our players to naturally grow and reach their fullest potential on and off the field," added Upton.

## DHAWAN, IYER MOVE UP IN ICC ODI RANKINGS

PTI ■ DUBAI

Senior India batter Shikhar Dhawan on Wednesday moved up a place to joint 13th spot in the latest ICC ODI rankings on the back of his match-winning knock against the West Indies in the first match of the ongoing limited-over series.

Dhawan, a left-handed batter, made 97 in the first ODI against West Indies last Friday at the Port of Spain. India won the game by three runs.

Another India batter Shreyas Iyer, who struck back-to-back half centuries in the first two ODIs against the West Indies, moved up 20 places to the joint 54th among batters.

Iyer had struck 54 and 63 in the first and the second ODI against West Indies.

Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, who both have been rested for the series against West Indies, have dropped a place each to fifth and



sixth spot respectively.

Meanwhile, in the ICC Test rankings, Pakistan captain Babar Azam's scores of 119 and 55 against Sri Lanka saw him overtake Australia's Steve Smith to reach a career high third ranking with a career best rating of 874 points.

According to Upton, if the team is in great mental space, performances will naturally flow in.

"If team is in great space performances are naturally going to flow. What we need to do is remove obstacles in those performances, individually and from team perspectives," added Upton.

"Mental side of the game hasn't changed a lot but what has changed is Covid experience and lot of players have been on road lot of the times, so there is an extra element of trying to get each individual player as well as team as a whole in best space possible.

## TALKING ABOUT CRICKET, LIFE & SPIRITUALITY

Upton first met Dravid in 1996 when Strength and Codnitioning

coaches weren't in vogue and on his first tour of South Africa, he wanted to pick the former's brain.

"He (Dravid) has always been someone with such a hunger to learn, not just around game of cricket because he is a professor when it comes to game of cricket but about life and everything beyond cricket.

"We have been in conversation about life, cricket, spirituality since 1996. We picked up again when we joined the Indian team in 2008 with Gary Kirsten.

"So I have been in these conversations for a long time and super exciting to have those conversations every day and hopefully it goes towards setting up this Indian team for an unbelievable T20 World Cup," Upton signed off.



## Sri Lanka target early Pak wickets after De Silva ton

AP ■ GALLE

Sri Lankan century-maker Sdhananjaya de Silva warned on Wednesday that they needed early Pakistan wickets on the final day of the second Test with bad weather looming.

Tourists Pakistan, who are chasing a record 508 for victory in Galle or need to bat out three sessions for a draw, were 89-1 when bad light stopped play on day four.

Left-handed opener Imam-ul-Haq was on 46 and skipper Babar Azam on 26.

The arrival of rain confirmed a second consecutive early finish, keeping alive Pakistan's hopes of a draw — and with it victory in the two-match series, which they lead 1-0.

De Silva, who hit 109, said the hosts were wary that bad light could mean another shortened final session on

Thursday.

"We need to get wickets early tomorrow," he said. "The key is to bowl at one point consistently."

The tourists will need to make an unprecedented chase — with another 419 runs needed to win — if they are to make it 2-0.

Sri Lanka, who declared their second innings on 360-8 in the second session after resuming on 176-5, need nine wickets on the final day to end the series level.

Earlier, De Silva made a dominant century before being run out at the non-striker's end and Sri Lanka skipper Dimuth Karunaratne called his batsmen back to the pavilion.

De Silva put on a key stand of 126 with overnight partner Karunaratne, a left-handed batsman who battled spasms of back pain during his knock of 61.

## Suarez has agreement to rejoin Nacional

AP ■ MONTEVIDEO

Former Barcelona and Liverpool star Luis Suarez announced on Tuesday he has reached "a preliminary agreement" to return to his first club Nacional for three months ahead of the World Cup in Qatar.

Striker Suarez, 35, left Atletico Madrid at the end of last season and is looking for a new club.

He is Uruguay's all-time top goalscorer and set to compete at his fourth World Cup.

"First of all I would like to say thank you for the great affection shown to me and my family these last few days," said Suarez in a video published on his social media accounts.

He said this had made it impossible "to reject the possibility of returning to play for Uruguay and we have a preliminary agreement with the club."

Suarez began his career at Nacional, making his debut aged 18 in May 2005.

He is due to sign a three-month deal with Nacional to play in the Uruguayan Clausura competition while preparing for the World Cup in Qatar from February 21 to December 18.

"Details will be finalized in the next hours and we hope to reach the agreement we all desire and that we can all make the most of this new stage and see each other in the coming days," added Suarez.



## Lionesses thrash Sweden to reach women's Euro 2022 final

AP ■ SHEFFIELD

England will have the chance to win a first ever major women's tournament in front of a sold-out Wembley this weekend after beating Sweden 4-0 in Sheffield on Tuesday to reach the Euro 2022 final.

Substitute Alessia Russo's stunning backheel through the legs of Sweden goalkeeper Hedvig Lindahl set the seal on a special night for the Lionesses with Beth Mead, Lucy Bronze and Fran Kirby also on the scoresheet to set up a clash against Germany or France on Sunday.

After semi-final heartache in the last three major tournaments, it was fourth time lucky for the Lionesses to the delight of the home crowd of 29,000 at Bramall Lane.

Mead settled the hosts' nerves after a bright start by Sweden when the Arsenal forward smashed home her sixth goal of the tournament.

Bronze's header early in the second half then opened the floodgates, but it was Russo's finish will live long in the memory.

The Manchester United striker has made a positive impact off the bench throughout the tournament and may finally get the chance to start ahead of England's all-time record goalscorer Ellen White in the final.

Russo's first effort was parried by Lindahl, but she embarrassed the Swedish stopper by using her heel to thread the rebound through the Atletico Madrid goalkeeper's legs.

Lindahl's nightmare evening was rounded off 14 minutes from time when she got a hand to Kirby's chip but failed to keep it out.

A record crowd for a women's Euro of 87,000 is expected at Wembley for the final, hoping England will end a 56-year wait for a major title in either the men's or women's game.

Sweden had not lost in open play in 34 matches stretching back to the World Cup semi-finals in 2019.

## Ronaldo doesn't fit club's 'philosophy': Bayern's Kahn



AP ■ MUNICH

Bayern Munich chief executive Oliver Kahn said on Wednesday that making a move for Cristiano Ronaldo in the transfer market would not fit the club's "philosophy".

"We discussed this topic — otherwise we wouldn't be doing our job properly," Kahn told *Bild*.

"Personally, I think Cristiano Ronaldo is one of the greatest-ever footballers.

## Neymar to be tried over irregularities in Barca transfer

AP ■ MADRID

Neymar is due to face trial in October over alleged irregularities in his transfer to Barcelona, judicial sources said on Wednesday.

The Brazilian international, his parents and former Barcelona presidents Sandro Rosell and Josep Maria Bartomeu will be tried for alleged corruption related to the forward's move from Santos to Barcelona in 2013.

Rosell and Bartomeu will also face fraud charges in the trial which is scheduled to take place from October 17 to 31.

Neymar left Barcelona for Paris Saint-Germain in 2017 for a

world-record 222 million euros, but it is his move from boyhood club Santos to Barca which has caused controversy.

The case stems from a complaint by Brazilian group DIS, the former owner of a percentage of the player's rights.

Barcelona officially said the transfer cost 57.1 million euros (\$63.6 million), with 40 million euros going to Neymar's family and 17.1 million to Santos, but Spanish prosecutors later said it actually cost at least 83.3 million euros.

DIS, which received 6.8 million of the 17.1 million euros paid to Santos, have alleged that Barca and Neymar joined forces to hide the real amount of the transfer.

have been trying to entice England captain Harry Kane to move to the Bundesliga champions.

"Harry Kane is an excellent striker who is under contract with Tottenham," said former Bayern goalkeeper Kahn.

Bayern face RB Leipzig in the German Super Cup on Saturday before opening their Bundesliga title defence at Eintracht Frankfurt on August 5.



## Juventus, Barca draw 2-2 in US friendly

AP ■ LOS ANGELES

Ousmane Dembele and Moise Kean scored two goals apiece as Barcelona and Juventus fought to an entertaining 2-2 draw in their US pre-season friendly in Dallas on Tuesday.

French winger Dembele fired Barcelona ahead after 34 minutes at the Cotton Bowl, wriggling past Juventus players Juan Cuadrado and Sandro before beating Juve goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny to make it 1-0.

But Juventus hit back five minutes later with Colombian wing-back Cuadrado making amends with a pinpoint low cross that found Kean who tapped in past Barcelona goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen.

Barcelona were soon back in front again, however, and once again the goal came as Dembele punished poor defending.

Cuadrado was again at fault, with Dembele skipping past the South American's covering tack-

**French winger Dembele fired Barcelona ahead after 34 minutes at the Cotton Bowl, wriggling past Juventus players Juan Cuadrado and Sandro before beating Juve goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny**

le and then cutting past Manuel Locatelli to shoot past Szczesny for a 2-1 lead.

Barcelona coach Xavi Hernandez made a flurry of changes at half-time, with Dembele making way for new Brazilian signing Raphinha.

The former Leeds striker

## Real Madrid held by Club America

AP ■ SAN FRANCISCO

Karim Benzema and Eden Hazard were on target as Spanish giants Real Madrid were held to a 2-2 draw by Mexican side Club America in their pre-season friendly on Tuesday.

Former Real Madrid player Alvaro Fidalgo's 82nd-minute penalty denied Real victory in a game played on a makeshift surface at Oracle Park, the home of the San Francisco Giants baseball team.

America took the lead with a shock early goal after just five minutes, as Henry Martin latched onto a shot by Miguel Layun and helped it into the net.

But Real responded with

an equaliser from Benzema after 22 minutes.

Real coach Carlo Ancelotti made wholesale changes at half-time, with seven substitutions, which included Benzema making way for Rodrygo and Asensio coming off for Hazard.

Hazard did not take long to make an impact, converting a 55th-minute spot kick after America defender Salvador Reyes was adjudged to have fouled Lucas Vazquez in the box.

Hazard's penalty looked like settling a drab encounter but America got back on level terms eight minutes from time when Vinicius made the slightest of contact with Fidalgo just inside the area.



made an instant impact, blasting a long-range shot that Szczesny parried over the bar.

Despite Barcelona's bright start to the half, it was Juventus who scored next with Kean tucking away a rebound after deft approach play by Denis Zakaria and Locatelli on 52 minutes.

## WEST HAM SIGN SCAMACCA

**London:** West Ham announced the signing of Italy striker Gianluca Scamacca on Tuesday from Sassuolo on a five-year deal.

The 23-year-old will reportedly cost the Hammers an initial £30.5 million (\$37 million) with a further £5 million in add-ons.

Scamacca had been linked with Juventus and Paris Saint-Germain after scoring 16 goals in 36 matches in Serie A last season.

"I am really excited to join West Ham," said Scamacca.

"I've waited a long time for this moment - it's been a dream to play in the Premier League.