

## OPINION 6

NAGALAND TRAGEDY:  
THE SIT FARCE

## MONEY 10

INDIA JUMPS TO 37TH RANK ON  
WORLD COMPETITIVENESS INDEX

## WORLD 8

RUSSIA TARGETS AMMUNITION  
DEPOT IN WESTERN UKRAINE

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY JUNE 16, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3

## the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com

HARDIK TO  
LEAD INDIA  
IN IRELAND  
11 SPORTNo consensus in Opp's  
meet on Prez poll pickAfter Pawar's  
no, TMC, Left  
propose Farooq,  
GopalkrishnaPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

In the absence of the TRS, the AAP, the BJD and the YRS Congress, a meeting of Opposition parties convened by West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday failed to arrive at a consensus candidate for the Presidential election.

The Opposition leaders decided to meet again after NCP supremo Sharad Pawar again declined their suggestion. Mamata and left parties have reportedly suggested the name of Gopalkrishna Gandhi. The TMC chief also came out with the name of veteran NCP leader Farooq Abdullah.

Wednesday's meeting decided to build consensus among all Opposition parties to challenge the ruling BJP's candidate, said several leaders.

"I sincerely appreciate the leaders of the Opposition parties for suggesting my name as a candidate for the election of the President of India, at the



Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav, PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti, West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC chief Mamata Banerjee, NCP chief Sharad Pawar and Congress leader Mallikarjun Kharge during a press conference after the Opposition leaders meeting regarding upcoming Presidential elections, in New Delhi on Wednesday

Ranjani Dimri | Pioneer

meeting held in Delhi. However, I like to state that I have humbly declined the proposal of my candidature. I am happy to continue my service for the well-being of the common man," said Pawar later on Twitter. Pawar said the next meeting of the Opposition leaders will take place in Mumbai on June 20-21.

Leaders of the Congress, the Samajwadi Party (SP), the NCP, the DMK, the RJD, and the Left parties attended the over two-hour-long meeting called by the Trinamool Congress supremo, while the AAP, the SAD, the AIMIM, the

Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) and Odisha's ruling BJD skipped it. The leaders of the Shiv Sena, the CPI, the CPI(M), the CPI(ML), the National Conference, the PDP, the JD(S), the RSP, the IUML, the RLD, and the JMM were among those who attended the meeting, which took place on the day the nomination for the presidential election began. The election will be held on July 18.

The Akali Dal also skipped the meeting protesting the Congress' presence. The AAP said it will "consider the matter only after the Presidential candidate is declared."

Continued on Page 2

Rajnath meets  
Opp leaders

**New Delhi:** The ruling BJP, which is a little short of the majority in Presidential College votes, on Wednesday began the consultation exercise on evolving a consensus name for the Presidential election with senior party leader Rajnath Singh speaking to several key Opposition leaders, including Mallikarjun Kharge, Mamata Banerjee and Akhilesh Yadav, said BJP leaders.

Continued on Page 2

Rahul's grilling again on Fri; Cong  
says cops beat workers at party HQDelhi Police  
rejects Cong's  
allegationPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday questioned Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for over eight hours for the third consecutive day in connection with a money laundering probe linked to the National Herald newspaper. The agency has asked him to appear again on Friday for further questioning.

Rahul arrived at the ED headquarters around 11.35 am and his questioning began at 12 noon. He took a break for an hour at 3 pm and rejoined the questioning session at 4 pm which continued past 9 pm.

The entire questioning session of Rahul is being recorded both in audio and video formats. His statements are being printed on A4 size papers. Rahul minutely reviews his printed statements before putting his signatures on them and submitting the same to the investigating officer of the case who is an Assistant Director level officer, sources said.

The Congress leaders alleged that the Delhi Police forcibly entered the AICC headquarters in the national



Police stop Congress workers who were staging a protest outside the AICC office against the summoning of party leader Rahul Gandhi by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with the National Herald case, in New Delhi on Wednesday

Ranjani Dimri | Pioneer

Capital and thrashed the party workers. The Delhi Police rubbished Congress' allegations.

The party also shared purported video clips on social media showing police personnel entering its office premises. Congress leader Ajay Maken shared a video as visual proof of police personnel entering the AICC headquarters at 24, Akbar Road. "Delhi Police entered the headquarters of the Congress, the country's principal Opposition party, and assaulted our workers. Is democracy alive?" Maken

wrote on Twitter in Hindi. "Watch the full clip," he added.

Addressing a press conference, party leader Randeep Singh Surjewala said the action of the Delhi Police was "criminal trespass" which will not be tolerated and will be accounted for.

A video of police allegedly manhandling Congress workers was also doing rounds on social media.

The Congress has demanded that an FIR for "criminal trespass" be registered, the erring police personnel be sus-

pended and disciplinary action initiated against them.

The ED's questions revolved around his "personal role" in decision making with regard to the media organisation and its owner Young Indian, assets owned by Associated Journals Ltd (AJL) that published the National Herald newspaper and how Young Indian (YI), a not-for-profit company, was undertaking commercial activities of renting out its land and building assets, they said.

Continued on Page 2

CBI arrests daughter of HP Chief  
Justice in boyfriend's murder casePIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

The CBI on Wednesday arrested Kalyani Singh, daughter of the acting Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh High Court, in connection with the killing of national level shooter Sukhmanpreet Singh, alias Sippy Sidhu, over six years ago in Chandigarh.

During probe, the CBI found some documentary evidence suggesting Kalyani Singh and Sidhu were close, and a romantic relationship had turned sour, officials said.

The CBI had called Kalyani Singh, daughter of acting Chief Justice Sabina Singh, for questioning where she was found evasive in responses following which she was arrested.

The agency had registered the FIR in the killing of Sidhu, who was also a lawyer, on April 13, 2016, on the request of Chandigarh Administration, the CBI said in a statement.

"During further investigation, alleged involvement of the



accused (Kalyani Singh) came forth in the case. Accordingly, she was examined and arrested. The arrested accused was produced today (Wednesday) in the Court of Special Judicial Magistrate, Chandigarh and she was remanded in four days police custody," the CBI said in its statement.

The case was originally registered by police station, Sector-26, Chandigarh as FIR No. 374 dated September 21,

2015, in connection with the murder of Sidhu in the night of September 20, 2015 in Sector 27, Chandigarh by unknown persons. Sidhu had started his own law firm styled as Sippy Sidhu LLB at Mohali (Punjab).

The bullet-riddled body of national-level shooter and corporate lawyer Sidhu, 35, was found in a park in Sector 27 on September 20, 2015. Sippy was the grandson of the late Justice SS Sidhu, a former Punjab and Haryana High Court judge.

The alleged role of judge's daughter in the murder cropped up during the CBI investigation. However, the agency wanted to have a watertight lead and in September 2016, it announced a reward of Rs 5 lakh to any persons leading to provide a clue to crack the case, officials said.

The CBI also issued a newspaper advertisement stating that "there is reason to believe that a woman was accompanying Sidhu's killer at the time of the murder. The said woman is also being given this opportunity to come forward and contact us if she is innocent. Otherwise it shall be presumed that she was a party to the offence."

Continued on Page 2

Delhi, Maha drive India's daily  
Covid count to 3-month high8,822 cases on  
Wed; Delhi sees  
positivity rate  
soaring to 7%PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

After witnessing a mild dip in daily cases a day ago, India on Wednesday saw a new three-month high in the daily Covid tally with 8,822 new cases in the last 24 hours, taking the overall count to 4,32,45,517. Delhi and Maharashtra are recording a spike in cases over the last few days. Delhi's daily tally case count reached 1,375 on Wednesday with positivity rate rising to 7.01 per cent.

Maharashtra, which has reported a few cases of sub lineage of Omicron, BA4 and BA5, is witnessing rising new infections with 4,024 new cases, 3,028 recoveries and 2 deaths in the last 24 hours.

According to the Union



Health Ministry data, a total of 15 deaths have been reported since Tuesday, with the total fatalities due to the virus at 5,24,792.

With 8,822 fresh coronavirus infections being reported in a day, India's tally of Covid-19 cases rose to 4,32,45,517 on Wednesday, while the count of active cases increased to 53,637, according to Union Health Ministry data.

The count of active cases now comprises 0.12 per cent of the total infections, while the national Covid-19 recovery rate was recorded at 98.66 per

cent, the Ministry said. An increase of 3,089 cases has been recorded in the active Covid-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours, the data showed.

The daily positivity rate was recorded at two per cent and the weekly positivity rate at 2.35 per cent, according to the ministry. Maharashtra Health Minister Rajesh Tope on Wednesday said the surge in Covid-19 cases in the State is restricted to certain districts, and despite the spike, hospitalisations remain at 2-3 per cent.

Continued on Page 2

JD(U) wants RCP to  
quit Modi Cabinet,  
expels supporters

PNS ■ PATNA

After denying him a Rajya Sabha berth, the Janata Dal (United) has now mounted pressure on its senior leader and union Steel Minister RCP Singh to resign from the Union Cabinet. The JD(U) has also expelled several leaders reportedly for following RCP Singh's pro-BJP political line.

JD(U) Parliamentary Board chairman Upendra Kushwaha said on Wednesday that Singh should "heed the message" and resign from the Union Cabinet. Singh is a member of the Rajya Sabha and his tenure ends on July 7. As per the rules, a Minister can occupy the post for a maximum period of six months unless he or she gets elected to either House of Parliament.

Kushwaha's comment is seen as yet another sign of growing rift between Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and the BJP. Singh is seen close to

the BJP leadership. He and his supporters have been regularly praising the Modi Government and its policies.

"There is no technical problem as such if he (Singh) continues in his chair. But if he heeds the message and reads the political situation, it would be nice if he resigns," Kushwaha told reporters. The JD(U) will have no representation in the Union Cabinet when RCP Singh comes out of it.

Asked what responsibilities Singh, a former national president, was likely to be given in the JD(U) if he gives up his cabinet berth, Kushwaha said dismissively, "It is for him to decide. The party has other things on its agenda."

About the expulsion of a number of perceived "RCP supporters", including party spokesperson Ajay Alok, Kushwaha said, "Anybody who does not follow the party line will face the consequences."

Continued on Page 2

Ultra who shot manager  
in bank killed, teacher's  
killer trapped in Valley

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

A joint team of the security forces on Wednesday avenged the killing of Vijay Kumar, a young bank manager from Rajasthan, by eliminating two Lashkar-e-Tayyeba terrorists in an anti-terrorist operation in south Kashmir's Shopian district, while the terrorist who killed teacher Rajni Bala is trapped in an ongoing operation in Kulgam.

Inspector General of Police Kashmir, Vijay Kumar, said the slain LeT terrorist identified as Jan Mohd Lone was involved in the recent killing of bank manager Vijay Kumar in Kulgam on June 2.

Kumar also revealed that Jan Mohd was earlier working as overground worker of LeT's

district commander Adil Ramzan and he killed the bank manager on the direction of the said LeT commander.

Jan Mohd later joined the terror outfit after executing the terror attack.

Another slain terrorist has been identified as Tufail Nazir.

According to police, Tufail had earlier escaped from two encounters at Chaki Samad area of Kulgam on April 9 and Khur-Batpora area of Kulgam on April 11.

Sharing the operational details, official sources said the joint team of security forces established an initial cordon around the suspected cluster of houses in village Kanji Ullar area of Shopian which was subsequently strengthened.

Continued on Page 2

## Over 100-yr-old 227 dams pose safety risk

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Of the total 5,334 existing large dams in the country, at least 227 dams are more than 100 years old, thus posing greater safety risks, cost higher in terms of maintenance and have declining functionality due to sedimentation. Apart from these 5,334 dams, at least other 411 large dams are under various stages of construction across the States.

Overall, Maharashtra leads with 2,394 dams, while Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat are at the second and third spots in terms of the number of dams. India's dams annually store about 300 billion cubic metres of water. As many as 80 per cent of dams are exceeding 25 years of age and over, said an official from the Central Water Commission (CWC) under the aegis of the Department of Water Resources.

He said the ageing of dams and deferred maintenance of the dam have made dam safety a matter of concern. "To deliberate on their safety and consequent challenges, a one-day national workshop is being held on Dam Safety Act, 2021 for Dam Safety governance in India on June 16 in the



national Capital here," he said.

The Dam Safety Act 2021 was enacted by the Parliament and came into force on December 30, 2021. The Act is aimed at ensuring surveillance, inspection, operation and maintenance of the specified dam for prevention of dam failure-related disasters and to pro-

vide for an institutional mechanism to ensure their safe functioning.

The brainstorming session follows a recent study that pointed out that India must analyse the costs versus benefits of its ageing dams, and conduct timely safety reviews in order to ensure safety of the structures, and the safety

of those who inhabit the areas downstream.

A study by the Canada-based United Nations University Institute for Water, Environment and Health, released in January had pointed out that climate change is also likely to accelerate the ageing of dams.

All over the world, many large dams built in the 20th century may start to show signs of ageing, and many may already be operating at or beyond their design life, the study said. For India, 2025 is set to be a big year as more than 1,000 dams would turn roughly 50 years or older, it noted.

Fifty years is not a defining age for all dams because the design life also depends on factors such as construction and maintenance, the study said, adding that a well constructed and well maintained dam can go up to a 100 years. However, 50 is roughly the age when a dam may begin to show signs of ageing. In some cases, dam components such as gates and motors may need to be replaced after 30 to 50 years, it added.

Therefore, an assessment of the structure should be carried out, and, if needed, the dam should be decommissioned, said the study.

Pak Min urges  
people to cut  
down on tea  
to save forex

**Islamabad:** Cash-strapped Pakistan Government has urged people to cut down the consumption of tea as sipping fewer cups a day would help reduce the import bill eating into the nation's depleting foreign exchange reserves.

The appeal from Federal Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal came after it emerged that Pakistan consumed tea worth Rs 83.88 billion (USD 400 million) in the fiscal year 2021-22. The News International newspaper reported.

He said that Pakistan, the biggest importer of tea in the world, has to borrow money to import it.

"I appeal to the nation to cut down the consumption of tea by 1-2 cups because we import tea on loan," Iqbal said while speaking to reporters here on Tuesday.

Continued on Page 2



NCR PULSE

**WTE PLANT BESIDE GHAZIPUR LANDFILL OPERATIONAL**  
New Delhi: The waste-to-energy (WTE) plant beside the Ghazipur landfill site here became operational on Wednesday, Lieutenant Governor Vinai Saxena said. "Of the 2600 MTs garbage generated daily in East Delhi, the Plant will consume 1300 MTs per day & would reduce additional burden of fresh waste on the mounds at Ghazipur," he tweeted. According to the data gathered from several reports of the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC), a total of 21 lakh tonnes of legacy waste is being bio-mined at the three landfill sites per year (since October 2019). Only 52.5 lakh tonnes of the legacy waste has been processed so far at the three sites, the latest DPCC report said.

**TWO SUSPECTED COW SLAUGHTERERS ARRESTED**  
Noida: Two suspected cow slaughterers were arrested after they got injured in a gunfight with the police in Uttar Pradesh's Noida on Wednesday morning, officials said. Their four other associates, however, managed to escape during the encounter which broke out around 8 am near a dumping yard in Sector 68, under the Phase 3 police station limits.

**5 INJURED AFTER BEING RUN OVER BY WATER TANKER**  
New Delhi: Five people were injured after being run over by a speeding water tanker in a busy market in southeast Delhi's Badarpur area. According to police, the incident took place on Tuesday evening. The video of the incident is being circulated on social media. In the video, the tanker is seen entering the market area, hitting the people before stopping nearby. The tanker also damaged vegetable carts even as some people managed to save themselves.

**72-YR-OLD ARRESTED FOR HOLDING PROTEST**  
New Delhi: A 72-year-old man has been arrested for allegedly disrupting communal harmony and holding a protest without permission at the Jama Masjid area here recently against the controversial remarks of now-removed BJP functionaries on Prophet Mohammad, police said on Wednesday. The accused has been identified as Anwaruddin, a resident of Matia Mahal in the Jama Masjid area. The police had arrested two people -- Mohd Nadeem Zaid (45), a resident of the Jama Masjid area, and Mohd Faheem Khan (37), a resident of the Turkman Gate area -- on Saturday night in connection with the protest.

**WOMEN REFUGEE VOICES FROM ASIA AND AFRICA**  
New Delhi: Ahead of World Refugee Day, the book "Women Refugee Voices from Asia and Africa: Traveling for Safety" was released by a group of activists and academicians in Delhi. The launch was part of ActionAid Association's celebrations of 50 years of service and solidarity in India. The three-displaced Nobel Peace Prize winner Lymah Gbowee has succinctly outlined the importance of this book in her foreword for the book.

Govt to build guest house 'Dilli Sadan'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi government has decided to construct its own state guest house, 'Dilli Sadan', on the lines of several other states, in Dwarka sector 19 of the city. Official said that almost every state of the country has its own guest house, 'Sadan' or 'Bhawan' in the national capital. The officials said a proposal in this connection has been finalised, and the Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation (DTTDC) has been entrusted with the task of constructing the 'Dilli Sadan'. The facility is to come up on a 3,899.42 square metre plot of land will be used to "house and host" dignitaries and officials invited by the city government from India and abroad, they said. According to the proposal document, 'Dilli Sadan' will have all the modern and latest facilities. "All states have their own Bhavans in Delhi. Similarly, the Government of Delhi intends to set up its 'Dilli Sadan' for providing reliable and economic

accommodation for staying of dignitaries and officers coming to Delhi for various purposes. Government guests can also be serving officials as well as others," the document stated. It stated that Dilli Sadan will be located in sector 19 in Dwarka near Manipur Sadan and Bihar Sadan. It will come up near the Dwarka Sector 10 metro station. Dilli Sadan's distance from the Indira Gandhi International Airport will be around 11 km. The document said Dilli Sadan will be different from other state guest houses as it will be a green building with at least a 3-star IGBC rating and will be equipped with a number of modern facilities such as restaurants, cafeteria, lounge, VIP suits etc. "The state guest house shall be designed to cater to the requirements like entrance lobby, reception, artwork, conference hall, meeting rooms, kitchen and dining, restaurant, ATM, WiFi, CCTV, rain water harvesting, water treatment plant, sewage treatment plant etc," it stated.

Child labour rose in 6 Maha districts during Covid: Survey

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

With the closure of schools, lack of access to internet connectivity and mobile phones for online classes, the number of children working in the agricultural sector has gone up in six districts of Maharashtra, including Jalna, Nandurbar and Pune during the Covid-19 period.

According to the findings of a survey conducted by NGO Child Rights and You (CRY) in six districts, the number of children who are in child labour or working in agriculture has gone up since 2020 after the outbreak of the Covid-19. The total number has gone up from 2556 in 2020 to 3356 in 2021 and to 3309 in 2022.

"Closure of schools, lack of access to internet connectivity and mobile phones for online classes, financially stress of the families with huge job losses as well as the long strike of state run bus services seemed to have affected children's academic prospects" in rural areas, thereby forcing them to work in agriculture as well as in family run enterprises. Within CRY intervention areas in Maharashtra, close to 55% children accessed online education because of their linkage with



Activity Centres and access to digital learning aids (tablets)," Kreeanne Rabadi, Director, CRY (West) said.

One of the findings of the survey said: "Children have migrated to neighbouring cities for work. These children often work as waiters or in brick kilns, as helpers, beggars and labourers in cities of Mumbai, Pune, Daund, Beed, Manmad, Aurangabad and Nashik. Many also migrate to work in sugarcane harvesting, irrigation, cultivation of agricultural land, sowing or planting, intercropping, threshing, spraying etc".

Even in cities, CRY – in its survey -- found that a large number of children, despite attending online classes, are opting to work. In Mumbai's two intervention areas, CRY found the pandemic and the lockdown to have had a mul-

tilayered impact on families that were on the margins in urban centres.

In areas of Mumbai like Bandra's Rahul Nagar, Sion Koliwada and Mankhurd's Cheetah Camp, CRY found that out of 589 children in the age group of 14 to 18 years, while 145 children are currently involved in a different kind of jobs of which 84 girls are engaged in household chores like cooking, sweeping, washing clothes and utensils and taking care of elderly or young ones.

"Children have unfortunately felt the burden of their family's financial conditions and have preferred to work rather than go to school. The children who claimed to accompany their parents to work in fields earning alongside them anywhere between Rs 100 to Rs 500 per day," one of the observations in the survey said.

"More investment is needed in programs to get children out of the workforce and back into schools, and increased efforts need to be made to provide social protection for families so that they don't have to make the difficult choice of pulling their children out of education and putting them to work," Rabadi said.

Cherrapunji records 811.6 mm rain in 24 hrs as monsoon pummels Northeast

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As monsoon rain pummeled the northeast, Cherrapunji in Meghalaya recorded a massive 811.6 mm of rainfall in 24 hours ending 8:30 am on Wednesday, the highest in June since 1995. "One of the wettest places in the world, Cherrapunji has recorded more than 750 mm of precipitation on a June day on 10 occasions since the IMD started keeping records", the

India Meteorological Department (IMD) said.

On June 16, 1995, the town nestled in the East Khasi Hills gauged 1563.3 mm of rainfall. A day before, on June 15, 1995, it received 930 mm of precipitation. The Met office said the southwest monsoon further advanced into more parts of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and coastal Andhra Pradesh on Wednesday.

It said the ongoing spell of intense rainfall is likely to continue in the northeast and sub-

Himalayan West Bengal and Sikkim during the next five days.

"Under the influence of strong southwesterly winds from the Bay of Bengal in lower tropospheric levels and a trough in westerlies in middle tropospheric levels, isolated extremely heavy rainfall is likely over Arunachal Pradesh on June 15; over Assam and Meghalaya on June 15-16 and sub-Himalayan West Bengal and Sikkim till June 17," it said.

Head Constable writes to Commissioner, urges him to take steps towards road safety

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police Head Constable D has written a letter to Police Commissioner Rakesh Asthana urging him to take steps towards road safety and ensure that police personnel follow traffic rules.

Sandeep Kumar who is currently posted at the Patel Nagar police station of the Central district, said he had learnt through an RTI that 228 Delhi Police personnel from various units up to the

rank of ACP were killed in road accidents from 2010 to 2021.

Kumar also mentioned that he has been injured twice in road accidents at Daryaganj and Moti Nagar and since then has been involved in raising awareness about road safety and use of helmets.

"It is requested that important steps should be taken so that police personnel adhere to traffic rules and everyone remains safe and following the ideals of Shanti, sewage and naya, we can fulfil our respon-

sibilities and make Delhi a pleasant place," Kumar said in Hindi.

Claiming that the numbers of police personnel who died in accidents is more than those killed by terrorists or by criminals, Kumar in the letter written earlier this month, said the majority of those who died were constables. He cited a 2021 order by the then special commissioner of police, Traffic, Mukesh Chander, flagging violations of traffic rules by police personnel.

Doval for bolstering cooperation against terror at BRICS meet

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

National Security Advisor (NSA) Ajit Doval on Wednesday called for bolstering cooperation against terrorism without any reservations as he addressed a virtual meeting of the five-nation grouping BRICS.

The virtual meeting, hosted by China, took place over a week before the top leaders of the BRICS hold a virtual summit that is expected to be attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Chinese President Xi Jinping and Russian President Vladimir Putin among others. The BRICS (Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa) brings together five of the world's largest developing countries, representing 41 per cent of the global population, 24 per cent of the global GDP and 16 per cent of the global trade.

At the meeting of the NSAs of the BRICS hosted by China, Doval also emphasised the need for urgent reforms of the

multilateral system in order to address global issues with credibility, equity and accountability.

The NSA particularly highlighted that cooperation against terrorism should be bolstered without any reservations.

He also welcomed the ongoing cooperation under the framework of the BRICS Counter-Terrorism Working Group.

Doval also spoke about the need for continuing cooperation against the challenges of pandemics and climate change.

The NSA called for giving importance to cooperation in the areas of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), outer space and maritime security.

He said there is a need to prevent the use of ICT by terrorists.

Doval also delved into the importance of having "trusted and resilient supply chains".

The BRICS virtual summit is scheduled to be held on June 23 and June 24.

No consensus in Opp's meet on...

From Page 1

The TRS said there was "no question of sharing any platform with the Congress." It also accused the Congress of "ganging up with the BJP" in Telangana, especially in the recent by-polls.

"Leaders of all parties requested Pawar to contest the President's election and be the joint candidate, but he declined the offer," DMP leader TR Baalu told reporters after the meeting. He said some leaders have requested that Mallikarjun Kharge, Pawar, and Mamata to negotiate and discuss the issue of a consensus Opposition candidate for the Presidential election with all non-BJP parties.

RJD's Manoj Jha, however, said the leaders would convince Pawar to reconsider the offer as he was the right candidate.

CP's Binoy Viswam said, "There was consensus in the meeting that there should be only one candidate who is acceptable to all". He said that only Sharad Pawar's name came up during the meeting. RSP's NK Premchandran, however,

said that Mamata later also suggested the names of Farooq Abdullah and Gopalkrishna Gandhi as possible Opposition candidates. The leaders who attended the meeting included Pawar and Praful Patel of the NCP, Mallikarjun Kharge, Jairam Ramesh and Randeep Surjewala of the Congress, HD Deve Gowda and HD Kumaraswamy of the JD(S), Akhilesh Yadav of the SP, Mehbooba Mufti of the PDP and Omar Abdullah of the National Conference. The meeting which began at Constitution Club at 3 pm ended a little after 5 pm.

Mamata last week invited leaders of 19 political parties, including seven Chief Ministers, for the meeting in the national Capital to produce a "confluence of Opposition voices" for the July 18 election. With the ruling NDA having about half the votes of the electoral college and the possible support of fence-sitters like the BJD, AIADMK, and YSR, its candidate is likely to sail through the contest.

JD(U) wants RCP to quit Modi Cabinet, expels...

From Page 1

Incidentally, Ajay Alok has been attacking the Congress and the RJD over corruption charges even as the JD(U) leaders have kept away from making any statement against Rahul Gandhi over his questioning by the Enforcement Directorate. Ajay Alok also recently made some trenchant comments against Tejashwi Yadav.

Singh, who is perceived to have grown too close to ally BJP, is said to have miffed Kumar by not taking the latter's consent before accepting a ministerial berth at the Centre. Kumar has been opposed to "token representation" being given to allies by the BJP which enjoys a brute majority in the Lok Sabha.

In a related development, the JD(U) has also come out with a detailed statement rebutting state BJP president Sanjay Jaiswal's contention that Bihar was lagging behind in development because of unchecked population growth.

The statement, issued jointly by JD(U) spokespersons Neeraj Kumar, Nikhil Mandal and Arvind Nishad, made no mention of the BJP or Jaiswal, but rued "bad name being given to Bihar by repeated talks of population growth".

The statement asserted that Bihar had fared better than most states in checking population explosion ever since

Kumar assumed command. It also questioned the link between high density of population and progress which Jaiswal had sought to establish in a lengthy Facebook post last week and cited the example of densely-populated Kerala which is noted for its exemplary performance in terms of human development.

The JD(U) statement also railed against "dushprachar" (malicious campaign) against "a particular religion", highlighting "almost equal fertility rates among both Hindus and Muslims".

It also pooh-poohed the suggestion, made explicitly by Jaiswal, that those with two children or less be provided with incentives in Government jobs, pointing out that a similar proposal was rejected in 2000 by the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Government at the Centre which chose to focus more on health and education, like the Nitish Kumar administration has been doing in the State.

In the recent past, Nitish Kumar had rejected all of BJP's pet agenda including Uniform Civil Code National Register of Citizens (NRC), removal of loudspeakers from mosques. The BJP has started raising the demand for population control measures after Nitish Kumar decided to go for caste census in Bihar, an issue the saffron party is not comfortable with.

Pak Min...

From Page 1

The federal budget document for the outgoing fiscal year showed that Pakistan imported ₹13 billion (USD 60 million) worth of more tea than the last fiscal year.

In the fiscal year 2020-21, ₹70.82 billion (USD 340 million) was spent on the import of tea, the News Network International news agency reported.

Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves dropped from around USD 16 billion in February to less than USD 10 billion in the first week of June, barely enough to cover the cost of two months of all its imports.

Last month, the government restricted the import of dozens of non-essential luxury items as part of its bid to save foreign exchange.

Iqbal's appeal to cut down the consumption of tea by one to two cups did not go down well with people as they started criticising him on social media.

"Did Ahsan Iqbal really ask the nation to cut down on chai? Did he honestly really ask us for that? Do they really think we're that stupid," a Twitter user said.

"Ahsan Iqbal urging the nation to cut down on chai is sorry but I can not be a part of this," another user named Zoha said in a tweet.

The planning minister said the traders' community has also been asked to close markets by 8:30 PM to conserve energy.

Rajnath...

From Page 1

The BJP authorised Singh and the party's chief JP Nadda to consult with other parties for building a consensus on a presidential candidate.

Singh made the calls to Kharge, Mamata, and Yadav besides some other leaders on a day when leaders of 17 Opposition parties met here to build a consensus on a joint Opposition candidate. Singh has also called Janata Dal (United) leader and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Biju Janata Dal (BJD) supremo and Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to deliberate upon the presidential polls, said senior party leaders.

CBI arrests...

From Page 1

In December 2021, the CBI raised the reward money to Rs 10 lakh, stating that members of the public are requested to come forward, if they have any credible information regarding the murder or any relevant information. However, the investigating agency failed to make headway in the case. Earlier in 2020, the CBI had also filed an "untraced report" in the court and had mentioned that investigation may be allowed to open and continue as it has brought strong suspicion as to the role of a woman to eliminate Sippy Sidhu. But Sippy Siddhu's relatives protested before the designated court that directed the CBI to expedite the probe.

Rahul's grilling...

From Page 1

Other questions being put to Rahul include the incorporation of the Young Indian, the operations of the National Herald newspaper, the loan given by the Congress to the Associated Journals Limited (AJL) and the funds transfer within the media establishment.

Congress president Sonia Gandhi and her son Rahul Gandhi are among the major promoters and shareholders of Young Indian.

The money laundering probe relates to alleged financial irregularities in the Congress-promoted Young Indian Private Limited, which now owns the National Herald newspaper.

The newspaper is published by the AJL and owned by Young Indian Private Limited.

Congress president Sonia Gandhi, who is currently undergoing treatment at a hospital here for Covid-related complications, has also been summoned by the agency for questioning in the case on June 23.

The ED recently registered a fresh case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after a trial court here took cognisance of an Income-Tax department probe against YI on the basis of a private criminal complaint filed by BJP MP Subramanian Swamy in 2013.

Ultra who shot...

From Page 1

"After confirming the presence of one to two terrorists hiding in one of the houses, the security forces started evacuating the civilians in the vicinity to a safe location. As the civilians were being moved, the terrorists climbed to the roof of the house, opened indiscriminate fire and hurled grenades", official sources said.

To prevent collateral damage in the area the security forces stopped engaging the terrorists and prioritised the evacuation of civilians out of the danger zone, while keeping terrorists under observation.

**THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS**

CHANGE OF NAME

**I, Inderjeet Singh Rathor S/o Harcharan Singh Rathor, 43 yrs R/o A-10/2, South Anarkali Delhi- 110051, do hereby inform that as per Adhaar no 909574124795 and my Pan No BBEP546521, not Inderjeet Singh.**

**PD(90108)A I, Manjeet Singh S/o Jaswant Singh, 54 yrs R/o a-9/2, South Anarkali Delhi - 110051, do hereby inform that as per Adhaar No 208889378943 and my Pan No AOIPS12581, not Manjeet Singh Gudi**

**PD(90109)A**



# Delhi reports 1,375 new Covid cases

No casualty, low hospitalisation but positivity spikes to 7.01%

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi recorded 1,375 new Covid cases but no casualties on Wednesday. This was an increase of 20 cases in the last 24 hours, the highest since May 8. The positivity rate rose to 7.01 per cent. This is the second-consecutive day that Delhi has crossed the benchmark of over 1,100 Covid cases in a day. With the new cases, Delhi's tally of Covid cases increased to 19,15,905 and the death toll stood at 26,223, the Health Department said in its latest bulletin. "There are 9,582 beds for Covid patients in Delhi hospitals and 169 (1.76 per cent) of them were occupied," it said. A total of 19,622 Covid tests were conducted a day ago.

# Heatwave sends city's power demand soaring to 7,334 MW



This is highest till date in the month of June

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As the heatwave continued to scorch the national Capital, the power demand in Delhi on Wednesday clocked 7,334 MW, the highest to date in the month of June. According to the sources in discoms, Delhi's power demand continues its northwards climb, creating new records along the way. On Wednesday at 3:35 P.M. the city's peak power demand not only clocked the season's highest of 7,334 MW, but also the highest-ever in the month of June. "Before June 9, the city's peak power demand had never crossed the 7,000 MW during June. However, on May 19 this year, it clocked 7,070 MW. In fact, it has already crossed the 7,000 MW-mark six times in June this year and once in May," it stated. "This June, every sin-

Data show that despite the increase in cases and the Centre urging States to reach out to the eligible population during the 'Har Ghar Dastak 2.0' campaign that started in June, Delhi's immunisation drive has been slow. Only 3.17 lakh doses were administered in June as compared to 3.2 lakh doses during the last 14 days of May. Experts said that the Delhi Government is not implementing the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) devised by the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), since hospital admissions are low. The GRAP stipulates measures to be taken by the Government as per the positivity rate and bed occupancy. According to a Government doctor posted in the west district, they have directed all public health centres to increase the number of teams deployed for monitoring home isolation cases. "We have sought a report from them on it and on the available stocks of Covid drugs and also if stocks of any medications are running

out. If case of a shortage we will put in the request with the DGHS," he said. He also said that health teams have been asked to take minute details of patients' travel history, location of offices and all the places visited three to four days before testing positive. "After getting those details we will be studying the Covid trend there," he asserted. He also shared that they have reviewed the status of hospital beds, including those with oxygen and ventilator facilities. "Despite the spike in cases, the hospitalisation rate is low. People with co-morbidities are getting hospitalised and there are also instances where trauma patients or those coming for treatment of other illnesses turn out to be positive for the infection," he added. On Tuesday, Delhi had logged 1,118 cases and two deaths while the positivity rate was 6.50 per cent. Delhi on Monday reported 614 new cases and zero death due to the disease, while the positivity rate stood at 7.06 per cent.

Weather dept gets it wrong again!

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Heatwave returned to parts of the Capital despite the weather department predicting a cloudy sky and light rain on Wednesday. At least four out of the 11 weather stations in Delhi recorded a heatwave as the maximum temperatures at these places settled at least 4.5 notches above normal. The Safdarjung Observatory, the city's base station, recorded a maximum temperature of 42.2 degrees Celsius as against 39.6 degrees Celsius on Tuesday. The mercury jumped to 45.1 degrees Celsius at Mungeshpur in northwest Delhi, making it the hottest place in the Capital. Weather experts said thunderstorm activity remained confined to parts of Uttar Pradesh such as Mathura, Hathras and Aligarh. A trough persisting over this region is likely to move down towards Delhi, they said. "A fresh Western Disturbance, an induced cyclonic circulation over Punjab and moisture-laden easterly winds will provide relief from heat from Thursday," said Mahesh Palawat, vice-president (climate change and meteorology), Skymet Weather. He said pre-monsoon activity in tropical and sub-tropical regions is a sudden development due to high temperatures and humidity and a micro prediction of such development is difficult. Such events are not associated with a pre-defined or prominent weather system such as a low-pressure area that could help weather forecasters predict the area of impact with good probability, he said. The Met office had issued a yellow alert, warning of thunder-showers and gusty winds towards afternoon or evening,

# Cong accuses cops of entering AICC HQs, beating party workers

## We had tried to prevent a procession from being taken out, say police



Police detain a woman Congress worker during a protest outside the AICC HQ in New Delhi on Wednesday  
RANJAN DIMRI | PIONEER

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Protests erupted in Delhi on Wednesday as Congress leader Rahul Gandhi was questioned by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the National Herald case for the third-consecutive day. Stand-offs were witnessed outside and between the Congress' headquarters and the ED's office in central Delhi, with police and security personnel struggling to keep protesters in check. Police detained 240 Congress workers and leaders including five MPs and 33 women party workers. The Congress leaders on Wednesday alleged that the Delhi Police forcibly entered the AICC headquarters in the national Capital and thrashed the party workers while the Delhi Police rubbished the Congress' claims that their personnel barged into the party's headquarters and baton-

charged their leaders. The party also shared video clips on social media showing police personnel entering its office premises. Congress leader Ajay Maken shared a video as visual proof of police personnel entering the AICC headquarters at 24, Akbar Road. "Delhi Police entered the headquarters of the Congress, the country's principal Opposition party, and assaulted our workers. Is democracy alive?" Maken wrote on Twitter in Hindi. "Watch the full clip," he added. Addressing a press conference, party leader Randeep Singh Surjewala said Delhi Police's action was "criminal trespass" which will not be tolerated and will be accounted for.

A video of police allegedly manhandling Congress workers was also doing the rounds on social media. The Congress has

demanding that an FIR for "criminal trespass" be registered, the erring police personnel be suspended and disciplinary action initiated against them. On the other hand, Delhi Police denied the allegations of lathi-charge and termed them "untrue". "The workers came outside and threw barricades at policemen. So, there might have been some tussle. The allegations of policemen forcibly entering the office and lathi-charging are absolutely false. Police are not using any force. There would be no issues if the organisation comes and talks to us and gives a proper list. If there's an unorganised gathering, we are taking action and talking to workers. If they don't listen to us, we have to detain them," said Special CP (Law and Order) Sagarpreet Hooda. Special CP Hooda said, "We had tried to stop them and

# L-G ask police, land dept to change archaic language

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a move that will make legal documents such as FIRs and property registration papers easily comprehensible to people, Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has instructed police, land and revenue officials to do away with their archaic language. Sources said that at a recent meeting with officials on "ease of doing business", Saxena instructed the officials for making the public interface with the government easily understandable to the citizens. "He said the archaic language being used in documents of various departments, particularly police, land and revenue departments, the

sub-registrar's office, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and the lower judiciary, needs to be changed and updated according to the contemporary linguistic needs of people," sources said. In many departments, including police, land and revenue, an old language format with a predominance of Persian and Urdu words, in accordance with British-era laws, is used for official purposes that is difficult to understand for many people, the sources said. The LG has asked the home and revenue department officials of the Delhi government to simplify the language used in police summonses, FIRs, land records, mutation and registry

documents and several other legal documents in a "time-bound" manner, they added. Saxena also suggested that even as government departments start the exercise of simplifying language of official papers, the courts could be requested to simplify language being used in legal matters and documents, the sources said. The LG also instructed the officials to prepare a department-wise list of reforms that could be introduced to make system transparent and more people-friendly. The departments concerned have been instructed to seek public opinion on such matters and based on feedback and viability of suggestions, specific reforms could be introduced.



Volunteers serve 'sherbet' to commuters on a hot summer day in Gurugram  
PTI Photo

# Bishnoi gang member held for making ₹5 crore extortion call

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

A member of the Lawrence Bishnoi-Kala Jathedi gang has been arrested for demanding Rs 5 crore as "extortion money" from a Gurugram-based businessman, police said. The police have also recovered an illegal weapon and live cartridge from the criminal. The accused has been identified as Aakash a native of Mujjafarnagar of Uttar Pradesh. The complainant business told the police that on Monday around 1.32 pm he received a WhatsApp voice call, message and voice note from a man who introduced himself as A member of the Lawrence Bishnoi-Kala Jathedi gang and demanded Rs 5 crore as extortion and threatened him with dire consequences if the amount was



not made. Acting promptly a team of crime branches nabbed the accused on Tuesday from Basai Chowk along with an illegal weapon. "The accused confessed his crime and disclosed that his associate had provided the complainant contact

details and the weapon to him and on Monday he sent threatening calls and messages to the victim," Preet Pal Sangwan, ACP (crime) said. The phone used in the crime has also been recovered from the accused possession, he said.

# Two held for extortion calls in name of Brar, Lawrence

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Special Cell of Delhi Police has arrested two men for allegedly making extortion calls to a Ludhiana based businessman in the name of Lawrence Bishnoi and Goldy Brar group. The accused have been identified as S Singh (29) and A A Khan (24), both residents of Bilaspur in Chattisgarh. According to K P S Malhotra, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), IFSO unit of Special cell, on June 12, Punjab Police (Cyber Police station

Ludhiana) contacted IFSO Unit and sought help in tracing the alleged persons. "A case was already registered with Punjab Police on the complaint of a businessman based in Ludhiana, who alleged that he is receiving threats calls from some unknown international and Indian phone numbers on his mobile number since June 4," said the DCP. "The callers identified themselves to be from the notorious Lawrence Bishnoi and Goldy Brar gang and threatened him to pay ransom money of Rs 10 Lakhs and also shared bank account number.

They further threatened him that in case of failure of paying ransom money his fate would be like Sidhu Moosewala," said the DCP adding that it was informed by Punjab Police that the location of the one of the alleged phone number is in Delhi and the alleged person is changing his location frequently. "Acting on the information provided by the Punjab Police, the leads were further developed through thorough technical analysis and digital foot prints. Singh and Khan were apprehended from Gurugram, Haryana," said the DCP.

tried to close gate of AICC HQs in order to prevent a procession from being taken out... In this process, there might be some scrimmage, but police had not tried to enter the premises of the AICC and they had no reason to enter." According to Suman Nalwa, spokesperson, Delhi Police, for the past three days, senior leaders of the Congress have been repeatedly informed that any kind of procession and protest is allowed only at designated areas as per the Supreme Court guidelines. "Despite the suggestions of Delhi Police to have the protest at Jantar Mantar, the Congress leaders with utter disregard of the Supreme Court guidelines and our suggestions have again and again tried to create public disturbances in the area," said the spokesperson. "On Wednesday, again some Congress workers had

tried to take out a procession from the party office and were prevented by police personnel present there from assembling unauthorisedly. Some of the miscreants burnt tyres and damaged police barricades which led to traffic congestion and inconvenience to the commuters. Police tried to prevent the situation from deteriorating while maintaining utmost restraint," said the spokesperson. Several videos went viral on social media in which the Congress workers can be heard chanting and shouting in the background with some yelling "Rahul Gandhi zindabad, zindabad" as one person walks past the camera with a party flag. The same video also showed women police personnel dragging away a woman in a blue kurta; four cops grab a limb each as the woman is carried away.

# Slow movement in Central Delhi but traffic flow smooth in New Delhi district

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Traffic movement was slow in central Delhi on Wednesday after the police blocked several roads and diverted traffic as Congress leader Rahul Gandhi appeared before the Enforcement Directorate (ED) for the third consecutive day of questioning in an alleged money laundering probe. Police diverted traffic on roads that had been closed and adequate security arrangements were also put in place. A senior police officer said around 400 traffic personnel were deputed in the New Delhi district. "No call was received about any congestion in the New Delhi district. The traffic was managed smoothly. The diversions were made on roads which were closed," the officer said. In a series of tweets, the traffic department mentioned the routes to be avoided and said necessary arrangements had been made as a precautionary measure. "On 15.6.22, kindly avoid Motilal Nehru Marg, Akbar Road, Janpath & Man Singh Road between 0700 hrs & 1200 hrs. Due to special arrangements traffic movement will not be possible on these roads," the Delhi Traffic Police tweeted. In another tweet, it said, "On 15.6.22, pls avoid Gol Methi junction, Tughlak Road Junction, Claridges Junction, Q-point Junction, Sunehri Masjid Junction, Maulana Azad Road Junction & Man Singh Road Junction between 0700 hrs & 1200 hrs. Due to spl arrangements, there will be heavy traffic movement here."

The department also asked commuters to avoid SP Marg, Dhaura Kuan flyover and Gurgaon road between 2.15 P.M. and 2.45 P.M. due to special traffic arrangements.

# 'Whole shopping festival' will boost sales: Traders

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Several market and traders' associations in the Capital have expressed hope that the 'Whole shopping festival' envisioned by Delhi Government will boost sales and help in bringing business back to the pre-Covid level. The traders said they are optimistic that such a festival will also help in increasing employment opportunities. Ashok Randhawa, president of Sarojini Nagar Mini Market Traders' Association, "We are very hopeful that the shopping festival will help in giving a boost to sales which have been marred by the COVID-19 pandemic. It will also help in giving employment," he said. Randhawa pointed out that due to Covid, businesses have suffered great losses and they are still trying to recover from it. "When Covid emerged, several boys who used to work in clothes outlets left for their home town. They haven't returned and neither we have called them because businesses are still not at the pre-covid level," he said. A representative of Chandni Chowk market association said it was among the few markets in capital which has the capacity and capability to host the big festival. "Chandni Chowk and Connaught Place is only market in capital where they can host a festival. These two markets are developed," Sanjay Bhargava, president of Chandni Chowk Sarv Vypar Mandal, said. Bhargava cited success of the 1998 festival at Chandni Chowk market --Chaudhvin Ka Chand -- to assert that such festivals provide a great opportunity for businesses to flourish. "In 1998, we have had a biggest festival -- Chaudhvin Ka Chand where lakhs of people had come. The festival helped in making market pop-

ular and the festival helped in increasing the sales manifolds. "This also helped food stalls. This festival if reorganised will help in improving the condition and will lead to a surge in the sales," he added. However, Bhargava expressed concern that the "multiplicity of the agencies" might pose a problem in the smooth organisation of the festival. "It might have a positive impact but they (the government) need to be careful. Several agencies will be involved and cooperation among them is necessary. History is seen that agencies do not cooperate. Like police, there is a need to provide security but they do not provide it when necessary," he said. Meanwhile, traders pointed out the lack of clarity regarding this festival. "There is a lack of clarity. Is government trying to involve the just markets or it will include street vendors also. We already have Diwali festivals and other festivals where we provide discounts to customers. "We discuss among ourselves and decide on the discounts. How will government contribute to it?" asked Ashwani Marwah, general secretary of the Traders Association in Lajpat Nagar said. On Monday, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia announced that Delhi government will organise a 'Wholesale Shopping Festival' to celebrate iconic wholesale markets in capital and to give them a new identity across the world. Addressing representatives from wholesale markets, Sisodia had said, "This is a unique feature of Delhi that it has wholesale markets for almost everything including textiles, electronics, spices, and books etc. Our aim is to promote business of these wholesale markets and increase employment opportunities in these markets."



# ARMY, IAF DEFEND ‘AGNIPATH’ SCHEME



Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with three services chiefs during a press conference at National Media Centre in New Delhi  
Rajan Dimri | Pioneer

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Vice Chiefs of Army and IAF on Wednesday defended the new 'Agnipath' scheme for recruitment of jawans into the armed forces after several veterans criticised it and a protest broke out in Bihar against it. The Vice Chiefs said the recruits called 'Agniveers' will be equipped with unique skills sets during the four-year military service and the forces will have a

younger profile with fitter soldiers. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday had rolled out the 'Agnipath' policy and termed it as transformative. The recruitment of nearly 46,000 jawans including women will start after 90 days. The jawans will serve on a contract basis and will be demobilized after four years.

Only 25 percent of the Agniveers will be retained for a permanent stint of 15 years or more. The first batch of 'Agniveers' will be ready by July

next year. The veterans slammed the policy and said no pilot project was initiated to test the efficacy of the scheme. They described the Agnipath as the "death knell" of the forces as it will impact the operational efficiency and professionalism of the forces.

Defending the scheme, IAF Vice Chief Sandeep Singh told NDTV while there were initial apprehensions, the issues have been resolved. "I can assure you that the skilling process or the training process for the

Women induction will depend upon service's operational requirement, says Vice admiral

**NEW DELHI:** Vice Admiral Ajendra Bahadur Singh, FOC-in-Chief Western Naval Command, on Wednesday, said induction of women will depend on the service's operational requirement. "There's a provision that if service wants, we can recruit (women). No percentage has been decided, will be finalized as we go along," he said. **PNS**

Agniveers would be phased and progressive," he said. On the concerns that in the case of IAF where very skilled trades people like mechanics and technicians — those who handle cutting edge state-of-the-art systems — are trained, can we then afford to lose them after just four years, Air Marshal Singh said they will give these recruits a shorter training, which will basically be a capsule on essential military training and then certain trade or branch-specific preliminary training.

"We'll send them on the field to use them along with a mix of experienced regular people. Therefore, that detailed training for more complex systems aircraft, where they do

## Edu Min to recognise in-service training as credits for IGNOU prog

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Education on Wednesday said it will recognise in-service training received by Agniveers, or youth selected in the Agnipath recruitment scheme, as credits for a graduation programme designed by IGNOU. Under IGNOU's specially-designed degree programme this in-service training will count for 50 per cent of credit.

The programme will also allow for multiple entry-exit points with appropriate certification. This will enable Agniveers to follow civilian

courses, said a Education Ministry Press release. The ministry will launch a special, three-year skill-based bachelor degree programme for serving defence personnel that will recognise the skill training received by them during their tenure.

The programme, designed by IGNOU, will be executed by them too. Both technical and non-technical skill training received by the Agniveer will amount to 50 per cent of the credits required for a graduate degree.

The rest of the 50 per cent will come from a basket of courses including subjects like languages, Economics, History,

Political Science, Public Administration, Sociology, Mathematics, Education, Commerce, Tourism, Vocational Studies, Agriculture, Jyotish, ability enhancement courses on Environmental Studies and Communication Skills in English.

The IGNOU programme will be aligned to UGC norms and National Credit Framework/National Skill Qualification Framework (NSQF). The Agniveer could also exit after completion of the first year course and receive an Undergraduate Certificate, and receive an Undergraduate Diploma on

successful completion of the first and second year courses. If they complete the full three-year course, they will receive a Degree.

All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and National Council for Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) and UGC have all recognised the framework of the programme.

The Degree – BA, BCom, BA (vocational), BA (Tourism Management) – will be awarded by IGNOU as per UGC, and will be recognised both in India and abroad. IGNOU will sign MoUs with the three armed forces for implementation of the scheme.

be done pan India so that we get people from all over," he said. He stressed that the quality of new recruits will not suffer just because of the four-year duration of service.

On why youngsters would opt for four-year service over joining Central Armed Police Forces or paramilitary where they can have full careers with a pension, the Vice Chief said a salary or pension is not only criteria for the youth to join 'Agnipath'. "I think that enough surveys has been done that there are many people who would find this limited four years engagement more attractive because they will go back

with skill sets with the services. And that's unique. Along with traits of leadership, camaraderie, and teamwork they get when they go back, along with certain certificates which we give them, they will be job-ready. So I think it would meet best of both requirements," he said.

Army Vice Chief B S Raju said the scheme faced hurdles over the last two years due to the corona pandemic.

Talking to ANI, he said "Ninety days from now, first of the recruitment rally will take place. About 180 days from now, first of the recruits will be in our training centres. And

about a year from now, we'll have first of Agniveers coming into our battalions." "The average age of a soldier is about 32-33 years.

With Agnipath, in about 8-10 years, we'll be able to lower the profile of soldiers to about 26 years. It'll make the Army fitter. We'll be able to handle more challenging situations in difficult areas that troops operate in," he said.

"Beauty of this scheme is that it's going to be introduced very slowly. In first year, we're getting around 40,000 recruits. These recruits will be selected pan-India, and will go through six months of training.

## ASEAN, India review ties, fight against corona

**RAHUL DATTA ■** NEW DELHI

India and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) on Wednesday reviewed the entire gamut of their ties and ongoing fight against the corona pandemic besides the situation in the Indo-Pacific.

Giving details of the parleys, the ministry of external affairs said here the relations were reviewed under the aegis of the 24th ASEAN-India Senior Officials Meeting (SOM), a day ahead of the foreign ministerial dialogue that is expected to focus on further expansion of trade and strategic ties as well as cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

Singaporean Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan, Vietnam's Bui Thanh Son and Indonesian Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi have already arrived in the national capital for the India-ASEAN talks on Thursday. India is hosting the foreign ministers of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) nations from June 16

to 17 to mark the 30th anniversary of its relations with the 10-nation grouping. Secretary (East) Saurabh Kumar co-chaired it with Permanent Secretary of Singapore Albert Chua here. The Meeting saw the participation of Senior Officials from other ASEAN Member States.

The SOM reviewed the ASEAN-India strategic partnership and its future direction. As India and ASEAN celebrate the 30th anniversary of their Dialogue Relations, the SOM leaders made their assessment on the progress of cooperation under all three pillars of Partnership – political-security, economic and socio-cultural, the ministry statement said.

The Meeting also deliberated on the steps for further implementation of ASEAN-India Plan of Action (2021-2025). The two sides also exchanged views on regional and international issues of mutual interest including COVID-19 pandemic and post pandemic recovery. India welcomed the positive contribu-

tions and continued support of Singapore in strengthening

ASEAN-India Relations as the Country Coordinator.

## Jaishankar holds bilateral talks with Spanish counterpart Bueno

**PNS ■** NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Spanish counterpart Jose Manuel Albares Bueno on Wednesday held wide-ranging talks on bilateral cooperation in areas of defence, trade and culture beside the ongoing Ukraine-Russia war. Albares is on a day-long visit to India.

"Warm and productive discussions with Foreign Minister @jmalbares of Spain. Discussed our growing engagements in political, defense, economic and cultural domains.

Envisage enhanced collaboration to support self reliance and resilient supply chains," Jaishankar tweeted. India and Spain enjoy close and friendly relations. The bilateral ties got

a fresh impetus after Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Spain in 2017.

On his part, Albares described India as a global power and an important partner of Spain. In a tweet in Spanish, he said the meeting with Jaishankar was excellent and that both sides will continue to work to deepen the bilateral relations and signed a declaration for cultural and academic cooperation.

On Tuesday, the Ministry of External Affairs said that Albares's visit would be an opportunity to review the entire gamut of our bilateral relations and further deepen the partnership across various areas including trade, defence, science and technology and climate change.

## SC adjourns plea over fixing tenure of NCLT members

**PTI ■** NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Wednesday adjourned a plea filed by the NCLT Bar Association challenging the notification fixing the tenure of the members of the National Company Law Tribunal as three years.

A vacation bench of Justices J K Maheshwari and Hima Kohli asked Solicitor General Tushar Mehta to submit two sets of resolutions of the committee headed by the Chief Justice of India.

"Only one copy for two judges? We'll have it tomorrow, we didn't expect this," the bench said while posting the matter for Thursday.

The Centre had earlier told the top court that a committee chaired by the Chief Justice of India had held a meeting on April 20 in which question regarding the tenure of 23 members of National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) has been deliberated upon.

## Cong resorting to violent protests to ‘hide’ its graft: BJP

**PNS ■** NEW DELHI

Accusing Congress of resorting to violent protests to "hide" its corruption, the BJP on Wednesday said Opposition party's stir shows its progressive decline and claimed that covering up Gandhi family's alleged graft is "true satya" of its "satyagraha". BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi invoked Mahatma Gandhi's decision to call-off Congress's non-coop-

eration movement due to violence, and claimed that tparty's "violent protests" now for opposing probe in a case of corruption shows how small party has become.

Addressing a press conference, Trivedi noted that Rahul Gandhi, who is being questioned by ED in National Herald case, is neither his party's president nor leader of opposition as he questioned Congress's show of strength for him. The

Congress has now become solely a family party, he claimed. The BJP's attack on Congress came as Gandhi appeared before Enforcement Directorate on Wednesday for third consecutive day of questioning in National Herald money laundering case.

Both chief ministers of party — Ashok Gehlot of Rajasthan and Bhupesh Baghel of Chhattisgarh—and most of its MPs are in the national cap-

ital as part of Congress' protests against ED's summons to Rahul Gandhi, he observed. Are two chief ministers not "betraying" mandate given to them by their states by camping in national capital, asked Trivedi.

"Violence that Congress is resorting to cover up blatant corruption of their leadership is exposing true 'satya' of their so-called 'satyagraha'," he said on protests by Congress. There are reports of Congress workers

engaging in arson and violence in different parts of country, he said. Taking a swipe at opposition party over the allegation that Gandhi family "grabbed" assets of Associated Journals Limited, which publishes National Herald, through Young Indian, the BJP spokesperson said it was a strange case in which leadership of a party has engaged in corruption by allegedly capturing assets linked to their own organisation.

## NIA conducts searches in cross-LoC trade, terror financing case in J&K

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) conducted searches at four places in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday in connection with a case related to cross-LoC trade and terror financing.

The searches were conducted at three locations in north Kashmir's Baramulla district and one in Handwara under Kupwara district, the NIA said in a statement.

The case relates to generation of additional profits through trade across the Line of Control (LoC) between Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and using the proceeds for fomenting terrorist activities in the Union territory. The case was registered on December 16, 2016, it said. The cross-LoC trade started in 2008 via two trade facilitation centres in Baramulla and Poonch.vThe trade has been suspended since April 2019.

"During the searches conducted today digital devices along with incriminating documents

have been seized. Further investigation in the case continues," the agency added.

## ED arrests 2 in ₹425-cr money laundering case

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has arrested two persons, Vikas Kalra and Sidhant Gupta, in a money laundering case in which around Rs 425 crore were fraudulently remitted outside India using 19 dummy Indian entities.

The ED had initiated money laundering investigation on the basis of FIR registered by Punjab National Bank against 19 entities which opened accounts with their Mint Street, Chennai branch and in a span of six months remitted Rs 425 crore to various entities in Hong Kong and UAE. On verification, the

Indian entities were found to be non-existent and the real beneficiaries were found to be the promoter directors of entities outside India who are being brought to book, the ED said in a statement.

"In this regard one Vikas Klara had incorporated three entities in Hong Kong of which he was the sole director and had used the same for the purpose of laundering Rs 18.95 crore.

On similar lines, Sidhant Gupta had incorporated an entity in Hong Kong using which Rs. 2.5 crore was laundered," it said. The Special Court (PMLA) has sent both the accused to judicial custody for 15 days. Further investigation is in process, it added.

## Without Budgetary support draft policy for disabled toothless: Activist

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

Disability rights activists have expressed their disappointment with the draft National Policy for Persons with Disabilities, saying merely having a policy document without budgetary support and monitoring mechanisms is like a piecemeal approach towards the sector.

"A genuine attempt to inject new directions and initiatives seems to be missing" in the draft policy, the National Platform for the Rights of the Disabled (NPRD) said, two days after the Union Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry invited public feedback till July 9 on the new draft document, which proposes interventions in disability prevention, education, healthcare, social security and accessibility.

Promoting Atmanirbhar Bharat in the disability sector, bringing out a dynamic database to provide information on

a real-time basis and better engagement of Ayush research and care to address this sector are among the salient features of the draft policy.

However, the activists from the NPRD rued that major portions of the 100 pages draft policy are devoted to reiterating what is already spelt out in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities or mandated by the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPD Act) or programmes/schemes already operating.

The NPRD said the draft should have called for remedying the situation. "However, it does not do so, even while implementation of the mandates of the RPD Act would require substantial allocations.

No increase in the Centre's contribution towards disability pension is recommended, which continues to be at a pittance of Rs. 300 per month," it noted. Even while connection between poverty and disability is acknowledged in draft.

## Without Budgetary support draft policy for disabled toothless: Activist

a real-time basis and better engagement of Ayush research and care to address this sector are among the salient features of the draft policy.

However, the activists from the NPRD rued that major portions of the 100 pages draft policy are devoted to reiterating what is already spelt out in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities or mandated by the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPD Act) or programmes/schemes already operating.

The NPRD said the draft should have called for remedying the situation. "However, it does not do so, even while implementation of the mandates of the RPD Act would require substantial allocations.

No increase in the Centre's contribution towards disability pension is recommended, which continues to be at a pittance of Rs. 300 per month," it noted. Even while connection between poverty and disability is acknowledged in draft.

The ICMR was then asked to extract data from the National Vaccine Tracker Platform to determine the

## Conduct special round to fill up remaining super-specialty seats, Health Ministry asks NMC

**New Delhi:** The Union Health Ministry has asked the National Medical Commission (NMC) to consider conducting a special mop-up round to fill up the remaining super specialty seats. There are 930 super specialty seats which include 534 D.M/M.Ch and 396 DNB seats are still lying vacant after two rounds of counselling and one mop-up round of counselling.

The Ministry has also decided to lower the cut off percentile for additional rounds of counselling.

This came after the Ministry found that many seats have been left vacant due to the high cut off marks. Hundreds of seats belonging to coveted posts such as DM cardiology, oncology and neurology among a few others. "The matter was examined in the Ministry in consultation with Dte.GHS, and it has been

decided to conduct a special mop-up round to fill up the remaining super specialty seats after reducing the percentile appropriately," reads the letter sent to NMC. "After conducting two rounds of counselling and one mop-up round of counselling, 930 super specialty seats (534 D.M/ M.Ch and 396 DNB seats) are still lying vacant.

All these seats are clinical super specialty seats including some from Government medical colleges," said Chandan Kumar, Under Secretary to Government of India in the letter. The Ministry has sought comments on this to proceed further in the letter.

"You are therefore requested to have the matter examined and to provide comments thereon at the earliest to enable this Office proceed further", said Kumar in the letter issued on Tuesday. **PNS**



## Covaxin booster effective against Delta, Omicron variants BA.1.1, BA.2

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

A study by ICMR and Hyderabad-based Bharat Biotech has said that the administration of Covaxin as a booster dose enhances vaccine effectiveness against Covid-19's Delta variant and gives protection against Omicron variants BA.1.1 and BA.2.

The findings of the study, however, have not been peer reviewed. It is published on bioRxiv, a preprint server. The protective efficacy of Bharat Biotech's Covaxin following two and three-dose immunizations against the Delta variant and the efficacy of the Covaxin against Omicron variants were studied in a Syrian hamster model (animal model to study human-associated diseases), it said.

The antibody response, clinical observations, viral load reduction and lung disease severity after virus chal-

lenge were observed, it added. "In the Delta infection study, where we compared the protective response between the two and three-dose regimens, we could observe the advantage of the booster dose vaccination in the protection. Although the neutralising antibody levels were comparable among the groups, lung disease severity was found more reduced after the three dose vaccination.

"The virus shedding and viral organ load were considerably reduced in both the two dose and three-dose immunised animals indicating the vaccine efficacy against Delta variant," the study said.



# HC orders CBI to form SIT to probe Bengal TET scam

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A day after expressing disgust at the slow functioning of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) probing a multitude of school-level recruitment scams, the Calcutta High Court on Wednesday directed the central agency to form a dedicated Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate the alleged corruption in the recruitment of primary level school teachers.

More popularly known as the Teacher's Eligibility Test scam it would be investigated under the court's supervision.

Retired Joint Director of the CBI, Upen Biswas who had successfully probed the Bihar animal husbandry scam was made a party to the instant case — after he told media channels that he, too, was approached by some agents with "offers" from the recruitment racketeers.

Biswas reportedly requested the Court of Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay to form a SIT

for better handling of the case. Justice Gangopadhyay had earlier ordered a number of CBI probes into a multitude of recruitment scams that took place in the past several years.

Biswas a former Trinamool Congress Minister came into the picture after he alleged that a person had approached him with offers and offered to help the CBI if he was asked to do so. In the same context the Court asked the "respected" retired officer to help the CBI. "There are thousands of such agents ... the CBI has to catch the "spider" in the middle of the cobweb," Biswas said.

The Judge directed the CBI to form a SIT of at least 15 officers under a Joint Director who would investigate the TET scam only and submit a report before the Court on June 17.

The same Court had a few days ago dismissed from services 269 teachers who had secured their jobs through "backdoor."

The Court had earlier

ordered CBI probe into the appointment of Group D, Group C, Secondary and Higher Secondary teachers (conducted by the School Service Commission) and directed the Agency to even to take into custody the ministers and top bureaucrats if required to hasten the probe process.

The Judge had dismissed Ankita Adhikari — the daughter of junior Education Minister Paresch Adhikari — who was working as a teacher teaching political science in Class XI and XII at a school in Coochbehar.

Though the CBI had interrogated senior Bengal Minister Partho Chatterjee and Adhikari, apart from some senior bureaucrats and chairmen of various Boards the Judge looked unhappy with the slow progress of the investigation and expressing disgust earlier said: "I expect the CBI will do exemplary work in the probe process. I hope that this investigation does not face the same fate as the Saradha chit

fund scam. My only wish is that those deprived because of corruption get proper employment scope."

The lawyers representing the CBI however told the court that results in the teacher recruitment cases will soon be visible as a new joint director has joined the Kolkata office.

N Venugopal replaced Pankaj Srivastava as joint director on Monday.

Srivastava was investigating Sharada, Narada and other cases.

The court had earlier set up a judicial commission led by retired Justice RK Bag. The Commission had submitted a damaging report implicating the Ministers and bureaucrats and suggested that criminal cases be registered against them.

Meanwhile, CBI officials, on Wednesday afternoon conducted a raid at the office of the West Bengal Board of Primary Education (WBBPE) and seized all the documents pertaining to the recruitment.

# VBA to hit Mumbai streets to demand arrest of Nupur, Jindal

The VBA's peace morcha will begin from its Madanpura office and culminate at downtown Azadan Maidan in south Mumbai on Friday. The activists of several Muslim organisations will join the morcha.

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Vanchit Bahujan Aghadi (VBA) and various Muslim organisations, led by Dalit leader Prakash Ambedkar, will take out a massive morcha to the Azadi Maidan on Friday to demand the arrest of suspended BJP spokesperson Nupur Sharma and expelled former Delhi BJP media unit head Naveen Kumar Jindal for his alleged remarks against Prophet Mohammad.

The VBA's peace morcha will begin from its Madanpura office and culminate at downtown Azadan Maidan in south Mumbai. The activists of several Muslim organisations will join the morcha.

Announcing this, VBA's state president Rekha Thakur

said: "The issue involving Nupur Sharma is no longer the country's internal matter. It has assumed an international dimension. Nupur Sharma's remarks against Prophet Mohammad have triggered backlash in the Middle-East and European countries. This development will have an impact on the Indians living there and also on the Indian economy."

"Lakhs of Indians live in different parts of the world. The Kuwait government has already indicated that it would deport Indians living there. Currently, as many as 90 lakh people live in the Gulf countries. Of the money received from Indians working abroad, 55 per cent remittances come from the Gulf countries. In 2020, India received remittances amount-



ing to a staggering Rs 5,78,800 crore from Gulf countries. In this backdrop, the utterances by Nupur Sharma and Naveen Jindal will have a severe adverse impact on the Indian economy," she said.

"In national interest, we have decided to take up the issue. Because, just to protect two of its party functionaries, the ruling BJP is holding the entire country to ransom. We are taking out a peace morcha tomorrow to demand the arrest of Nupur Sharma and Navi Jindal and demand the enactment of Hate Speech Prohibition law proposed by VBA," she said.

Thakur said that her party front had given letters to the heads of the three Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) constituents – Shiv Sena, NCP and Congress, urging them to support her organisation's morcha.

VBA convenor Prakash Ambedkar rooted for stern action against Nupur Sharma "Stern action should be taken against Nupur Sharma. Suspending her from the party is not a strict action. If anyone says anything against Prime Minister Narendra Modi, then strict action is taken against the person immediately. Why not in this case?,"

Ambedkar, who is the grandson of late Dr. B R Ambedkar, said that there was a threat to the lives of Indians living abroad due to the statements by Nupur Sharma and the leaders who supported her.

Meanwhile, anticipating a huge turnout at the morcha being taken out from Madanpura to Azad Maidan by VBA on Friday, the city police have made elaborate security arrangements to ensure against untoward incidents during the morcha.

# As Covid cases rise, Yogi for speeding up booster jab drive

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With a spurt in Covid cases in Uttar Pradesh in the last fortnight, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath stressed the need to expedite the process to give booster doses to youth over 18 years of age and also asked people to exercise caution.

During a review meeting here on Wednesday, Yogi said that new cases of novel coronavirus infection were increasing in different states of the country hence the people should be made aware of the importance of booster dose and booster vaccination centres.

In the last 24 hours, UP recorded 318 fresh COVID-19 cases – highest in the last one month. During this period 178 COVID-19 patients recovered. At present, there are 1,645 active cases in the state. Over 93 per cent of these patients are



undergoing treatment at home.

So far 33.40 crore doses of Covid vaccine have been administered in the state. With this, 94.79 per cent people of the state have taken both the doses of the vaccine.

The government record claims that 98.72 per cent adolescents in the age group of 15-17 years have received the first dose of Covid vaccine and 82.57 per cent adolescents have received the second dose.

In the age group of 12-14 years, 92.54

per cent children received the first dose of the vaccine and 52.12 per cent children have received the second dose. Besides, more than 33.43 lakh preventive (booster) doses have also been provided.

The chief minister said that there was a need to further increase the fleet of advanced life support ambulances.

"All mobile medical vans should be functional. Technical support should be taken to keep their response time to a minimum," he said and added that the facilities of trauma centres in medical institutions of the state should be further strengthened.

The chief minister said that the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur had prepared a model to ensure availability of sound health facilities in rural areas and an action plan should be submitted after studying it.

# Companies keen to invest in UP, Singapore envoy tells CM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Singapore High Commissioner Simon Wong Wie Kuen, on Wednesday, met Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and proposed Singapore to be the first partner country in the Uttar Pradesh Global Investors' Summit.

In the courtesy meeting held at the chief minister's official residence between a delegation from Singapore led by the Singapore High Commissioner and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, discussions were held to further improve the bilateral relations and cooperation in existing fields and ways to expand it, particularly concerning the state of Uttar Pradesh.

During the talks, Singapore High Commissioner



Wong informed the chief minister that various companies from Singapore had invested about USD 250 million in Uttar Pradesh and most of the investments were in Noida and adjoining regions.

Expressing confidence in the leadership of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and lauding the better connectivi-

ty and the Ease of Doing Business in UP after 2017, Wong said that many companies from Singapore were interested in investing in Uttar Pradesh.

"We are encouraging our investors to invest in Lucknow and other parts of the state. The Global Investors' Summit will be a good opportunity for

these companies. It will be a pleasure to collaborate with Uttar Pradesh in various areas of urban development and planning, including water management. Singapore is willing to work in Uttar Pradesh as per the intention of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," Wong said.

Terming Uttar Pradesh as his 'second home', Wong said that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath had established a very favourable atmosphere in the state.

Taking forward the cooperation between Singapore and UP in various fields, Wong discussed the proposed skill university in the state. He said that if Singapore could become a partner in this project in some way, it would be useful in further improving the relations between the two countries.



A hungry crow catches a chameleon by its tail, in Surat on Wednesday.

PTI Photo

# Presidential election: 11 file nominations on day one

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Eleven candidates filed their nominations on the first day Wednesday for the July 18 presidential polls, and the paper of one of them was rejected for want of proper documents, sources said.

The nomination process began with the issuance of the notification on Wednesday calling electors to fill up the vacancy at the country's highest constitutional post. The nomination process would continue till June 29.

Parliamentary sources said a person named Lalu Prasad Yadav from Saran in Bihar was among those who filed their papers.

The nomination of one of

the candidates was rejected as the person had not attached a certified copy of the entry showing his or her name in the current electoral roll for the parliamentary constituency in which the candidate is registered as an elector.

The candidates who filed nominations on Wednesday were from Delhi, Maharashtra, Bihar, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

A nomination paper of a candidate for the election has to be made in the prescribed format and has to be subscribed by at least 50 electors as proposers and at least 50 electors as seconders.

The security deposit for the election of Rs 15,000 should also be deposited.

# GBC-3 to change landscape of healthcare in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Large-scale investments in the healthcare and allied field in Uttar Pradesh are going to change the landscape of this sector in the coming years, as is emerging from the proposals presented at the third groundbreaking ceremony (GBC-3) held in Lucknow earlier this month.

The sectors include healthcare, pharmaceutical production and medical supplies sector. A look at sector-wise distribution of proposals indicates that there are 65 projects in the pharmaceutical and medical supplies and eight mega projects in the healthcare sector, with proposed investment going up to Rs 800 crore. The projects with total investments of Rs 2,205 crore are slated for various districts of

the state. The projects in pharmaceuticals and medical supplies sector have a total investment of Rs 1,088 crore, thus bringing the total investment in healthcare and allied sectors to Rs 3,293 crore.

This means that in the coming years, several new hospitals, diagnostic centres, pharmaceutical production and medical supplies units will start functioning in different parts of the state. With the increase in the number of medical colleges all over the state, this will lead to tremendous improvement in healthcare, including availability of hospital beds, medicines, oxygen and other things.

The Yashoda Foundation proposes to set up two big facilities. The first is Yashoda Foundation's Mediciiti Super Speciality and Cancer Hospital

in Ghaziabad, at a proposed investment of Rs 800 crore. This Yashoda Medicity will be a 500-bedded, quaternary care super specialty and cancer hospital. Slated to be completed by January 2024, it will create 4,250 jobs.

The second project is Yashoda Foundation's Biotech Park proposed in Greater Noida. This project includes Yashoda Hospital and Research Centre with a hospital and bio-tech park which would include a biotech and information technology (IT) hub, a 250-bedded tertiary care super specialty hospital, commercial and residential buildings etc. The proposed investment on this project is Rs 525 crore. There will be a creation of 450 jobs when the project is completed by March 2024.

# Rohingya living as Imam held with fake documents in Aligarh

PNS ■ ALIGARH

A Rohingya living in Aligarh with the help of forged documents has been arrested by the team of ATS Lucknow. He had been living as an officiating priest in a mosque in Bhujpura area of the city for nearly seven years and had come to live on rent in Johrabagh area of Civil Lines only two months ago. After his arrest, the ATS has now taken him on remand on the orders of the Lucknow court. Now he is being questioned about his contacts and family. It is to be noted that even before this, Rohingyas living on fake forms have been caught from the city.

On the basis of confidential information, the ATS Lucknow unit, which is engaged in surveillance of Rohingyas who have come to

India illegally crossing the Bangladesh border, raided here. A person named Khaleq Ahmed, who was living on rent in a house in Johra Bagh area of Civil Lines of the city, was arrested. According to the information, Khaliq Ahmed is originally a resident of Wali Bazar town located in Mangadu police station area of Akyab district of Myanmar. He came to India in the year 2015 and was living in Aligarh by getting Indian identity card made with the help of fake forms. He has got the Indian Identity card made. He was working as an officiating priest in a mosque in Bhujpura Colony here.

It also came to the notice that earlier he had also taught in the madrassas of Deoband and Muzaffarnagar. On this information, the team laid siege there. During this siege, news

was received that he was returning from Jammu to Aligarh and was arrested as soon as he came to Aligarh. After this, the team took him directly to Lucknow, where a case has been registered against him under sections 419, 420, 467, 468 and 471 in addition to 14 Foreigners Act in ATS police station Lucknow.

Here, the ATS applied for remand against Khaleq, on which he was granted 10-day police custody remand. Now ATS will inform him about getting admission in India, preparing fake forms and family etc. At the same time, in the interrogation till now, it has come to know that Khaleq till now lived in a room near the mosque in Bhujpura itself. But now he started living on rent in a house in Johra Bagh Civil Lines. He had rented this room only two months back.







FIRST COLUMN

CGHS IS AILING, IT MUST BE REVIVED QUICKLY

The Govt should look at the recommendations made earlier



V K **BAHUGUNA**

The Central Government Health Scheme (CGHS) is one of the best employees' welfare schemes devised by the Government after Independence. Introduced in 1954, the scheme covers 4,073,638 beneficiaries, comprising 2,514,937 serving employees and 1,535,788 pensioners. The scheme benefits all Central Government employees and pensioners, current and former Members of Parliament, governors and Lt. governors, a few selected autonomous organisations, and the journalists accredited by the Press Information Bureau. The treatment provided is based on the nominal monthly charges. The treatment is through CGHS wellness centres and empanelled private hospitals and diagnostic centres. This writer has been monitoring the implementation CGHS from close quarters and knows for sure what ails this unique health care scheme. The trigger to write this article is the recent meeting held by the empanelled private hospitals and diagnostic centres in which they warned the Government to clear their bills totaling more than ₹1,000 crore. In Delhi, Dehradun and all other places hospitals like Max have refused to entertain patients with CGHS cards. At the dispensary level, overall satisfaction among the patients is average. The scheme has, however, become patient-friendly after registration was made online, thus allowing the patient to approach any dispensary anywhere in the country. One of the reasons for poor patient perception is the shortage of doctors and para-medical staff. Not the entire staff is trained for the purpose. Further, the number of cashless beneficiaries in the form of pensioners is increasing every month. The Chief Medical Officers are by and large well behaved but remain



aloof to patient welfare. They are also under strain because of the lack of proper infrastructure. But the real problem is at the headquarters in New Delhi and regional offices. The scheme fighting for survival, thanks the incompetence and negligence by some officers and doctors who are in charge of monitoring and supervision. Several doctors managing the scheme have wrapped the scheme in red tape. The senior civil servants who are responsible for its supervision are equally responsible for its pitiable condition, otherwise how could they explain the huge dues of private hospitals pending for payment. The political class anyway gets VIP treatment.

The babus managing the scheme forget that they too would need healthcare after retirement. A few years ago, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare sought suggestions to improve the scheme, but most of the recommendations have been consigned to the dustbin. This writer recently, at the behest of a large number of people, wrote to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya, requesting them to take action to bring the scheme back on track. Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya has the reputation of setting things right. The Director-General of the CGHS needs to take remedial action on priority. First and foremost, arrangements should be made for a sufficient budget and timely clearance of the dues owed to the private hospitals. One of the reasons for delays in payment is that the funds are surrendered, so these get reduced in the next year's Budget. Those responsible for delays never get punished; this is the biggest problem at the Central secretariat office. The empanelment process needs a relook. Innovative efforts need to be made to meet the challenges in the implementation of welfare schemes. Hospitals run by unscrupulous people quote very low prices and unsustainable rates, and then find it difficult to deliver. Medicines should be allowed on the basis of scientific facts. The Health Ministry should also review the suggestions it received years ago. In nutshell, the scheme needs a thorough relook.

*(The writer is the Chairman of Centre for Resource Management and Environment. The views expressed are personal.)*

# Latin America's pink tide may reach Colombia

Pink tide denotes rise of social democrats in contradistinction with 'red tide' of Communist and other hard-left militants

Corruption isn't fought with slogans on TikTok," complained veteran Colombian presidential candidate Gustavo Petro. But social media can win elections, and a Rightwing dark horse called Rodolfo Hernández, who calls himself the 'King of TikTok', may crush Petro's hopes of becoming Colombia's first-ever leftist president next Sunday (19 June).

It did seem that Petro's moment had finally arrived. Going into the first round of the presidential election last month, he was well ahead of the establishment candidate, Federico Gutierrez, a serviceable replica of outgoing president Iván Duque—but the runner-up was actually Hernández, whose social media skills make him a real threat to Petro. Hernández is a wealthy 77-



GWYNNE **DYER**

*(Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'The Shortest History of War'. The views expressed are personal.)*

# CCP focuses on the erasure of memories

The memories of Tiananmen demonstrations have been well documented, Communist Party of China is trying to erase them

The Communist Party of China (CCP) prioritises political allegiance to itself over the country. As a result, Chinese national pride is now closely linked to the CCP. For instance, Premier Zhao Ziyang was removed just before the 1989 Tiananmen massacre and spent his last 16 years isolated in the party's headquarters, the period in which he was not allowed to meet people and his sympathisers.

The philosophy of crushing different voices results in the various discourses and narratives of memories and counter-memories. Although the memories of punishment and imprisonment related to the Tiananmen democracy demonstrations have been well documented in international history, there have been deliberate attempts by the CCP to ban the commemoration of the violent suppression.

Until recently, Hong Kong and nearby Macao were the only places where the massacre could be remembered, but bans have been imposed lately there too. The last few decades witnessed the commemorations in Hong Kong and elsewhere by the people and various social groups such as the 'Tiananmen Mothers', raising the questions about the future democratisation and demanding legitimacy for the Chinese citizens' right to protest.

In the realm of national and international politics, the memories of ruthless suppression by the armed forces shape up the region's geopolitics. The attempts of the CCP to change the national emotional landscape by setting up new narratives by intellectually and ideologically denying permission to observe memorial services for the June 4 incident need to be analysed from the perspective of crushing democracy.

From the history textbooks to the ban on the candle marches to mark the suppression of democratic rights of the people, Xi is leaving no stone unturned to erase the memories, fears of democratisation and questioning by the younger generation. This has led to the stifling of political dissent.

The CCP has ensured that profound contradictions prevail in the Constitution itself. The right to peaceful protest without resorting to arson and creating difficulties for other people has been widely recognised in almost all democratic countries. In China too, it is recognised as the "right to freedom of expression" and enshrined in Article 35. However, at the same time, Article 33(4) speaks of citizens' "duties prescribed by the Constitution and the law," thereby giving a legal loophole to the CCP to formulate laws to erase memories.

Thus, what the world witnesses is the formulation of laws such as the 'National Security Law' (2020) for Hong Kong, which has substantially reduced the autonomous powers of Hong Kong. Interestingly, the law also applies to the "non-permanent residents" and people "from outside [Hong Kong]... who are not permanent residents of Hong Kong," thus giving sweeping powers to the CCP, while



IN 2021, 'XI JINPING THOUGHT' WAS INTRODUCED IN THE CURRICULUM FROM THE PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVEL TO THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL. ONE OF THE THOUGHTS EMPHASISES UPON 'ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY OF THE PARTY OVER THE PEOPLE'

*(The writer is an Assistant Professor at Central University of Punjab, Bathinda. The views expressed are personal.)*



violating the system of "one country, two systems," which was previously agreed upon in 1997.

Document 9 (2013) issued by the CCP prohibited a range of activities such as advocating the Western concept of constitutional democracy, neoliberalism and its idea of journalism, questioning the reforms introduced by the CCP, and undermining the history of CCP and advocating for a 'new China.' Additionally, education is actively used as a tool for "socialist material civilisation and spiritual civilization," which leaves no room for doubt that the political objectives of the CCP are far more superior to the people's fundamental freedom of speech and expression.

Further, the 4th Plenum of the 18th Central Committee (2014) reiterated that the CCP's leadership over the socialist legal system prevailed and required the people to submit to the party leadership.

Thus, a ban on dissent or protest assumes a geopolitical significance. The CCP has increased its attempts to restrict public speech on media and the internet, as they have shown less tolerance for public dissent and opposition. Article 306 of the Criminal Law and Article 42 of the Procedure law allows for the criminal charges levied against those lawyers who submit counter-arguments against the state.

Further, the code of practice of the All-China Lawyers Association obligates all the lawyers to be faithful to the party and then the state. Thus, the mass arrests and harsh punishment of human rights lawyers exemplify how the CCP has systematically silenced the voices of dissent. The '709 crackdown' that

was initiated in 2015 is notoriously known for arresting various lawyers, apart from the social and the legal activists such as Li Qiaochu and Xu Zhiyong to name a few. Cai Xia, a former Central Party school teacher who equated the CCP to a "political zombie" got a lengthy prison sentence of 18 years.

The CCP's propensity to stifle voices and use force did not subside even during the critical periods of the Covid pandemic. The international media witnessed the horrifying visuals of the repressive measures adopted for its 'Zero Covid' policy. The CCP recently reiterated its resolve to "fight against any speech that distorts, questions or rejects our country's Covid-control policy."

In China and at international platforms, there have been demands for independent investigations into the handling of the outbreak. Of course, as expected, such demands have been categorically rejected by the Chinese authorities.

Nevertheless, the cultural genocide, mass detention, and illegal organ harvesting of the Uyghurs, apart from denying them their constitutional right to protest against the state levied atrocities, have been raised many times in the international media and on various platforms such as the Amnesty International and United Nations.

The Kazakhs and other predominantly Muslim minorities in Xinjiang too are subject to inhuman and degrading treatment. The minorities, human rights activists, and lawyers have been meted out the most inhuman treatment.

From a critical perspective, the same measures that were used

for crushing political dissent are being used by Chinese President Xi Jinping to take over the CCP's leadership for life by actively using rectification campaigns. In 2021, 'Xi Jinping thought' was introduced in the curriculum from the primary school level to the university level.

One of the thoughts emphasises upon "absolute authority of the party over the people," thereby distorting the fundamental values of armed forces to safeguard the nation. Instead, the PLA is now ensuring the interests of Xi Jinping and the CCP. Ideally, the people worldwide owe their allegiance to the nation or the motherland; not so in the case of China. Deliberate distortions thus mark the formulations of the laws in China.

A pertinent question that has to be asked is how the CCP can erase the memories of the stringent laws and their application, whether of the Tiananmen Square massacre or the Wuhan, Beijing and Shanghai restrictions during Covid-19? Have not the harsh quarantine measures forever embedded in the minds of the Chinese people? Such truths would be told and retold from one generation to another in the private sphere.

How many more decades can the bubble of authoritarianism survive, as it needs to regularly suffocate the voices of dissent, which becomes a vicious circle? The CCP's mindset to prioritise loyalty to the party over loyalty to the nation has been largely the cause of its wrongdoings. Building legitimacy through counter-memories does not lead to long-term loyalty; it sometimes can lead to disastrous results instead.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THE UNION GOVERNMENT IMPOSED AN UNDECLARED EMERGENCY IN THE ENTIRE CENTRAL DELHI AREA. THE GOVT IS SHAKEN BY THE CONGRESS. — CONGRESS LEADER **RANDEEP SINGH SURJEWALA**



THE IMPASSE BY CONGRESS LEADERS AND WORKERS ISN'T AN ATTEMPT TO SAVE DEMOCRACY... BUT TO PROTECT THE GANDHI FAMILY'S ASSETS. — UNION MINISTER **SMRITI IRANI**

Corruption isn't fought with slogans on TikTok," complained veteran Colombian presidential candidate Gustavo Petro. But social media can win elections, and a Rightwing dark horse called Rodolfo Hernández, who calls himself the 'King of TikTok', may crush Petro's hopes of becoming Colombia's first-ever leftist president next Sunday (19 June).

It did seem that Petro's moment had finally arrived. Going into the first round of the presidential election last month, he was well ahead of the establishment candidate, Federico Gutierrez, a serviceable replica of outgoing president Iván Duque—but the runner-up was actually Hernández, whose social media skills make him a real threat to Petro. Hernández is a wealthy 77-



GWYNNE **DYER**

*(Gwynne Dyer's new book is 'The Shortest History of War'. The views expressed are personal.)*

year-old businessman whose resemblance to Donald Trump is more than skin-deep. He flaunts his ignorance proudly, his speeches consist mostly of slogans and abuse, and he almost never discusses actual policies. But he does promise to kick out the corrupt politicians.

"Almost all of them are robbers, thieves, scoundrels, delinquents," he claims, and he's about half-right. Indeed, he may be one himself: he faces a graft investigation from his time as mayor of the city of Bucaramanga. But it's the usual populist strategy: target small-time crooks while serving and protecting the rich and powerful.

Hernández is not a new phenomenon in Latin America: Brazil's President Jair Bolsonaro has been doing a Trump tribute



act for years. And while he may manage to deflect the 'pink tide' from sweeping across Colombia, it will still cover most of the region by the end of this year.

It's called 'pink' to distinguish it from the 'red tide' of Communist and other hard-left militants who made major inroads in Latin American politics in the latter half of the 20th century.

In most Latin American countries these revolutionary movements were stamped out by US-backed military coups. In a few countries—Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela—they live

on as stagnant and impoverished dictatorships. But with the end of the Cold War, the passion gradually went out of politics, and the extremists faded away on both sides.

What's left is a 'pink tide' of non-violent social democrats, competing in democratic elections with conservative parties that defend the interests of the local establishments. There's nothing uniquely Latin American about this, nor about the fact that the conservatives are increasingly resorting to populist strategies.

The difference is that Latin American countries are much more unequal than those in other parts of the West (except the United States), which probably explains why there is a 'pink tide' of social-democratic governments coming to power in

Central and South America.

That tide began to run around the turn of the century, with the elections of Ricardo Lagos in Chile (2000), Luiz Inácio 'Lula' da Silva in Brazil (2003), and Néstor Kirchner in Argentina (2003). Its most recent successes have been Luis Arce in Bolivia (2020), Pedro Castillo in Peru (2021) and Xiomara Castro in Honduras (2022).

Not to mention the election of Mexico's first socialist president, Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) in 2018, and the likely return to power of Lula da Silva in the Brazilian election next November. Those two countries alone account for more than half of Latin America's population.

Colombia, with 50 million people, is third-biggest, and it may also turn pink this month.

In the first round Gustavo Petro got 40 per cent of the votes and Rodolfo Hernández only 29 per cent. The populist Rightwinger will probably pick up more votes from the candidates who were eliminated in the first round than Petro will, but it's heading for a photo-finish.

Either way, Colombia is heading for major change. If Hernández wins, he's proposing to declare a state of emergency for 90 days and suspend all judicial and administrative functions "in order to address corruption." He will rule by decree, in other words, and he gets to choose who is arrested. It could end up as a populist dictatorship.

Unlike Hernández, Petro is a known quantity, active in politics for the past thirty years. He's not really radical, but he would be Colombia's first-ever presi-

dent from the left, so for some Colombians his policies would seem extreme: things like expanding social programs, ending oil and gas exploration, and investing in agriculture.

To pay for all that, he's planning to raise taxes on the country's 4,000 richest people and on the mining industry. He will be making enemies of some powerful people, and the head of the Colombian army has already expressed his concern.

Colombia has a long, unbroken tradition of 'conservative' rule, and an almost equally long history of low-level civil wars. Change there is especially risky, and what is on offer from the right this time may be even more destabilising than what is being offered by the left.

But in general, the pink tide is still rising.



# Russia targets ammunition depot in western Ukraine

AP ■ KYIV

The Russian military said Wednesday that it used long-range missiles to destroy a depot in the western Lviv region of Ukraine where ammunition for NATO-supplied weapons was being stored. Those strikes came as fighting raged for the city of Sievierodonetsk in the eastern Donbas area, the key focus of Russia's offensive in recent weeks.

Russia-backed separatists accused Ukrainian forces of sabotaging an evacuation of civilians from the city's besieged Azot chemical plant, where about 500 civilians and an unknown number of Ukrainian fighters are believed to be sheltering. It wasn't possible to verify that claim.

A humanitarian corridor from the Azot plant had been announced a day earlier by Russia. The Ukrainian governor of Luhansk Serhiy Haidai on Wednesday refused to comment on Russian statements regarding a humanitarian corridor, but told The Associated Press that "heavy fighting in Sievierodonetsk continues today as well." The situation in the city is getting worse, Haidai admitted, because the Russian forces have more manpower and



weapons.

"But our military are holding back the enemy from three sides at once," Haidai said. "The enemy is advancing because of significant advantage in artillery and people, but the Ukrainian army is holding on to its positions in the city."

Russian Defense Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said that Russian forces used high-precision Kalibr missiles to destroy the depot near the town of Zolochiv, which is in the Lviv oblast near the border with NATO member Poland.

Konashenkov said M777 howitzers, a type supplied by the United States, were being stored there. He said that Russian

airstrikes also destroyed Ukrainian "aviation equipment" at a military aerodrome in the southern Mykolaiv region, he said.

The strikes came as Ukraine keeps up its pressure on Western country to deliver more arms, and as NATO countries pledge more heavy weapons for Ukraine.

In recent days, Ukrainian officials have spoken of the heavy human cost of the war, with the fierce fighting in the east becoming an artillery battle that has seen Kyiv's forces outgunned and outnumbered.

"The losses, unfortunately, are painful, but we have to hold out," Ukrainian President

Volodymyr Zelenskyy said late Tuesday in his nightly video address. "The more losses the enemy suffers there, the less strength it will have to continue the aggression. Therefore, the Donbas is key to determining who will dominate in the coming weeks."

Mykhailo Podolyak, an adviser to Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, tweeted Wednesday that he gets a daily message from the Ukrainian defenders there saying: "We are holding on, just say: when to expect the weapons?" He said that is the same message he has for NATO leaders.

Meanwhile, the deputy chair of Russia's Security Council and former president Dmitry Medvedev suggested that Russia appears intent on the destruction of its neighbor.

In a Telegram post, he wrote that he saw reports that Ukraine wants to receive liquefied natural gas in a deal from its "overseas masters" with payment due in two years.

He added: "But there's a question. Who said that in two years Ukraine will even exist on the map of the world?"

Medvedev, the former president, has been making harsh statements against Ukraine and the West since the war began on Telegram.

# NATO Defence Ministers to discuss weapons for Ukraine



AP ■ BRUSSELS

NATO defense ministers attending a two-day meeting starting Wednesday will discuss beefing up weapons supplies to Ukraine, and Sweden and Finland's applications to join the trans-Atlantic military alliance, Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg said.

The meeting, less two weeks before a summit of NATO leaders in Madrid, comes with Kyiv imploring the West to send more and heavier weapons to help fend off Russia's onslaught in eastern Ukraine.

"Allies are committed to continue providing the military equipment that Ukraine needs to prevail, including heavy weapons and long-range systems," Stoltenberg said. He added that Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy would be invited to address the

June 29-30 Madrid summit, either in person or by video-conference. Increased arms supplies can't come soon enough for the Ukrainian forces battling to keep Russia from taking control of their country's industrial east after more than 3½ months of war. In his nightly address to the nation, Zelenskyy pleaded Tuesday for more and faster deliveries of Western arms, specifically asking for anti-missile defense systems.

U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin is hosting a meeting Wednesday of about 50 nations at NATO's Brussels headquarters to discuss weapons deliveries to Ukraine. Ukrainian Deputy Defense Minister Hanna Malyar said Tuesday that the invaded nation's military had received only around 10% of the Western weapons it had requested "to create parity with the Russian army."

"No matter how much

effort Ukraine makes, no matter how professional our army, without the help of Western partners we will not be able to win this war," Malyar said in a televised news conference.

She said Ukraine uses 5,000 to 6,000 artillery rounds a day, while Russia uses 10 times more.

The NATO meeting opens with a working dinner Wednesday evening at which ministers will speak with their counterparts from Ukraine, as well as Georgia, Sweden, Finland, and the European Union.

"This will be an opportunity for Defense Minister (Oleksii) Reznikov to update us on what Ukraine urgently needs. And for NATO allies to make new announcements of support to Ukraine," Stoltenberg said.

The defense ministers meeting this week also plan to discuss moves to beef up forces along NATO's eastern flank and elsewhere, which have gathered pace since Russia invaded Ukraine.

"This will mean more presence, more capabilities and higher readiness, with more NATO forward deployed combat formations to strengthen our battle-groups in the East, more air, sea and cyber defenses, pre-positioned equipment and weapon stockpiles," Stoltenberg said.

# US expected to send \$1bn more in aid to Ukrain

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The US is expected to announce Wednesday that it will send about \$1 billion in military aid to Ukraine, the largest single tranche of weapons and equipment since the war began, in an effort to help stall Russia's slow but steady march to conquer the eastern Donbas region, US officials said.

According to officials, the aid is expected to include anti-ship missile launchers, howitzers, and more rounds for the High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems that US forces are training Ukrainian troops on now. Officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss details not yet made public. The aid comes as US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin convened a meeting in Brussels of more than 45 nations to discuss support for Ukraine.

At the start of the meeting, Austin warned that the West must step up weapons deliveries to Ukraine and prove its commitment to helping the country's military fight along a 1,000-km (620-mile) front line in a grinding war of attrition with Russia. And he urged the participating nations to demonstrate "our unwavering determination to get Ukraine the capabilities it urgently needs to defend itself.

# Macron hints of Ukraine visit to carry 'message of support'

AP ■ BUCHAREST (ROMANIA)

French President Emmanuel Macron suggested on Wednesday that he would soon go to Kyiv to meet with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy but said he would not publicly discuss details about such a trip.

Answering a journalist's question during an official visit to Romania, Macron said the timing was right for a visit to Ukraine's capital but that he would not "enter into logistics".

Ukraine has been at war since Russia invaded the neighbouring country more than 3 1/2 months ago.

"We are in a moment where we need to send clear political signals - us, Europeans, us, the European Union - toward Ukraine and the Ukrainian people," Macron said after meeting with Romanian President Klaus Iohannis at an air base in southeastern Romania.

The two presidents met in preparation for a June 23-24 European Union leaders' summit in Brussels and a June 29-30 NATO summit in Madrid. France currently holds the EU's rotating presidency.

Macron said a "message of support" must be sent to Ukraine before EU heads of state and government "have to

make important decisions" at their Brussels meeting.

The leaders are scheduled to consider Ukraine's request for EU candidate status.

The French president also mentioned the need to find ways to allow Ukrainian grain exports. "All these reasons ... Justify deep discussions and new steps," he said.

News outlets have widely reported rumours of Macron preparing to travel to Kyiv with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and Italian Premier Mario Draghi.

The German government has refused to confirm or deny the media reports, while Draghi's office would not comment publicly on an imminent visit.

Macron also met with NATO troops stationed at the Romanian air force's Mihail Kogalniceanu Air Base on Wednesday, a day after he said they could serve as a "powerful deterrent" on the alliance's eastern flank.

# Chinese President Xi expresses readiness to help settle Ukrainian crisis



PTI ■ BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Wednesday expressed his readiness to play a "constructive role" to help settle the Ukrainian crisis, according to the Chinese state-TV.

In a telephonic conversation with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, Xi said, "All parties concerned must take a responsible stance, thus promoting the correct settlement of the crisis in Ukraine."

"China is prepared to keep playing its constructive role," the Chinese state-TV quoted Xi

as saying.

Xi asserted that Beijing was taking an independent position on the Ukrainian issue, "taking into account the facts and historical realities".

"We actively contribute to preserving peace on the global scale. Likewise, we contribute to maintaining a stable economic order in the world," he stressed.

However, it is not yet clear whether Xi has offered to mediate to end the Russia-Ukraine war, shedding Beijing's earlier reluctance to do so.

China, a close ally of Russia, steadfastly declined to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine ever since Putin launched a "special military operation" which led to the United States and its allies imposing sweeping sanctions on Russia stepping up weapons supplies to Kiev. ]

# Satellite spots huge burst of methane from Russian coal mine

AP ■ BERLIN

A private company that uses satellites to spot sources of methane emissions around the globe said Wednesday that it detected one of the largest artificial releases of the potent greenhouse gas ever seen, coming from a coal mine in Russia earlier this year.

Montreal-based GHGSat said one of its satellites, known as Hugo, observed 13 methane plumes at the Raspadskaya mine in Siberia on January 14. The incident likely resulted in about 90 metric tons of methane being belched into the atmosphere in the space of an hour, the company calculated.

"This was a really, really dramatic emission," Brody Wight, GHGSat's director of energy, landfills and mines told The Associated Press.

Cutting down methane emissions caused by fossil fuel facilities has become a priority for governments seeking to take quick, effective steps against climate change. That is because methane is powerful heat-trapping gas second only to carbon dioxide, which stays in the atmosphere for longer.

GHGSat said the plumes



detected at Raspadskaya may have been released intentionally, as a safety measure, since the gas can seep out of mines and ignite with potentially deadly outcomes. Two methane explosions and a fire killed 91 people at this mine in 2010, one of the worst such disasters in post-Soviet times.

Companies can prevent the uncontrolled release of methane through best practices. Captured gas can be burned as fuel, lessening its global-warming impact.

GHGSat said it measured further plumes over the mine during subsequent flyovers the following weeks, though these didn't reach the same "ultra emission" scale seen on January

14. "Even if it is only for a short period of time it doesn't take long for this to be a significant emission," said Wight.

Manfredi Caltagirone, who heads the International Methane Emissions Observatory at the UN Environment Program, said he was not aware of any bigger release of methane from a coal mine.

"If this event is the result of an accumulation of methane that has been then released all at once instead of over several days, the environmental impact would be the same as if a smaller plume was to be released constantly over several days," said Caltagirone, who wasn't involved in the GHGSat observation.

# In Ukraine, mines take lives even after fighting moves on

AP ■ KYIV

The truck driver had the radio on, his daughter's stuffed toy keeping him

company, and was bouncing his lumbering vehicle down one of the innumerable dirt tracks in Ukraine that are vital thoroughfares in the country's vast

agricultural heartlands.

Then the right rear wheel hit a Soviet-era TM-62 anti-tank mine. The explosion blew Vadym Schvydchenko and his daughter's toy clean out of the cabin. The truck, and his livelihood, went up in flames.

Astoundingly, the 40-year-old escaped with just minor leg and head wounds. Others haven't been so lucky. Russia's war in Ukraine is spreading a deadly litter of mines, bombs and other explosives.

They are killing civilians, disrupting planting, complicating the rebuilding of homes and villages, and will continue taking lives and limbs long after the fighting stops.

Often, blast victims are farmers and other rural workers with little choice but to use mined roads and plow mined fields, in a country relied on for grain and other crops that feed the world.

Schvydchenko said he'll steer clear of dirt tracks for the foreseeable future, although they're sometimes the only route to fields and rural settlements. Mushroom-picking in the woods has also lost its appeal to him.

"I'm afraid something like this can happen again," he said.

Ukraine is now one of the most mined countries in Europe. The east of the country, fought over with Russia-backed separatists since 2014, was already contaminated by mines even before the Feb. 24 invasion multiplied the scale and complexity of the dangers both there and elsewhere.

Ukraine's State Emergency Service said last week that 300,000 square kilometers — the size of Arizona or Italy — need to be cleared. The ongoing fighting will only expand the area.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform public in general that Kotak Mahindra bank Ltd has organized an auction in below mention respect of Vehicles. VEHICLES FOR SALE

- 1) TATA MOTOR ULTRA 1518  
UP14HT4779-YOM -2018  
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 723000
  - 2) CB TATA LPS 3518 FULLY BUILT  
TRAILER-HR38S3571-YOM -2012  
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 500386
  - 3) TATA MOTORS LTD. -CB\_TATA  
LPT 909-DL1M9283-YOM -2017  
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 433378
  - 4) CB\_TATA XENON  
HR55AG3807-YOM -2019  
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 331369
  - 5) CB\_TATA LPT 1518  
UP17AT6198-YOM -2018  
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 691798
  - 6) ASHOK LEYAL1616FBGD  
HR55V2314-YOM -2015  
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 347755
  - 7) TATA 909  
DL1MA4418-YOM -2019  
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 664180
  - 8) EICHR\_VECVVE1110FB  
UP81CT5745-YOM- 2019  
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 626974
  - 9) TATAMOTORSLEPT1412  
UP17AT5844-YOM -2018  
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 554730
  - 10)CB\_MAHINDRA\_FURIO\_11\_FULLY  
BUILT-UP14HT8805-YOM -2019  
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 648652
  - 11) TLPT1109FB  
UP14HT7369-YOM -2019  
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 540653
  - 12) BOLERO\_MUV  
UP14JT5634-YOM -2020  
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 250027
  - 13) SM\_SAMRAT  
UP14JT0863-YOM 2019  
MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 455049
- UNDER HYPOTHECATION WITH M/S KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK IS UNDER SALE IN ITS "AS IS WHERE IS CONDITION" INTERESTED PARTIES CAN GIVE THEIR QUOTATIONS (ONLINE/OFFLINE) WITHIN 15 DAYS FROM THIS PAPER PUBLICATION IE. ON OR BEFORE 30.06.2022 (PLEASE NOTE THAT CLOSING AUCTION DATE WOULD NOT BE A WEEKLY OFF / HOLIDAY).
- BRANCH ADDRESS:  
KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD.,  
PLOT NO.7 INSTITUTIONAL AREA,  
SECTOR-125 NOIDA NEAR DELL  
CAMPUS NOIDA (U.P) UP-201313  
OR CONTACT :ABHINAV LAL/  
RAJESH ANTIL  
KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD.  
CONTACT/T/ 07126685775 /  
09711173320  
EMAIL-abhinav.lal@kotak.com/  
rajesh.antil@kotak.com

### PUBLIC NOTICE

**ICICI Bank** Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, Landmark Building, 4th Floor, 228A, AJC Bose Road, Kolkata 700020  
CIN No: L65190G1994PLC021012, www.icicibank.com

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.	Bunty Kumar/ Kamesh Kumar/ Gopi Chand Prasad/ H No. 4 Manglam Vihar Colony Rukanpura Near Tata Guinra Motor Bihar Patna- 800014/ LBPTN00005129775	Residential Vacant Plot No. 070, Block SD Sec 63 A, Dist Goutam Budh Nagar, Noida, Uttar Pradesh (Admeasuring An Area of 217.60 Sq. Mtr.	May 19, 2022 Rs. 76,39,948/-	06.02. 2022

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

Date : June 16, 2022  
Place : Delhi/ NCR/ Uttar Pradesh,

Authorized Officer  
ICICI Bank Limited

### Police Headquarters, Chhattisgarh

### Sector-19, Nava Raipur Atal Nagar, 492002

### 2nd Tender Notice Inviting for Cooling Centrifuge

No. PHQ/P&P/MOD/2415/2022 Nava Raipur, Dated: 13/06/2022

Sealed tenders are being invited by the Director General of Police, Chhattisgarh on behalf of Governor of Chhattisgarh from Original Equipment Manufacturers(OEM) or authorized by OEM for the following Item -

Sl. No.	Name of Items	Qty	EMD in Rs.
(1)	Cooling Centrifuge	01	12,000/-

The tender offer in the prescribed tender form along with all the relevant documents sealed and completed in all the respect, must be submitted as per the schedule below -

#### SCHEDULE FOR TENDER

(a)	Address for submission of tender document :-	AIG of Police (P&P), Police Headquarters, Chhattisgarh, Sector 19, Nava Raipur-Atal Nagar, Chhattisgarh, Pin - 492002
(b)	Last Date, Time and Place of Submission of Bids	04/07/2022 till 02:00 pm Block No - 03, Room No. 309, Police Headquarters, Chhattisgarh, Sector-19, Nava Raipur-Atal Nagar,
(c)	Place, Time and Date of opening Technical Bid :-	04/07/2022 at 03:00 pm Block No - 03, Room No. 309, Police Headquarters, Chhattisgarh, Sector-19, Nava Raipur-Atal Nagar, Pin-492002
(d)	Place, Time and Date of opening Financial Bid :-	Shall be intimated later.
(e)	Date till which the Bid to remain valid	180 days from the scheduled date of submission of the Bid.

Notes:-

7. Tender documents can be downloaded from our website: [www.capolice.gov.in](http://www.capolice.gov.in) and at the time of submission of document tender fee 5,000/- will be paid in the form of DD of State Bank of India/Scheduled Bank (other than cooperative Bank) payable at Raipur in favour of Director General of Police PHQ, C.G. Raipur Or State Govt. Challan of Rs. 5,000/- to be deposited in the Head of A/c 0055- Police, 800- other receipt. Tender fee is non refundable and can't be exempted in any condition.
8. If any bidder sends tender documents through Courier/Speed post, the tender documents will be accepted till 02:00 pm on 04/07/2022 at Block No. 03, Room No. 309 Police Headquarters, Chhattisgarh, Sector-19, Nava Raipur-Atal Nagar only. Received tender documents in any other address at PHQ on stipulated date and time, will not be accepted.
9. The purchaser shall not be responsible for any postal delay resulting into non-receipt/non-delivery or late receipt of tender documents.
10. In case of tender opening date being declared as holiday, tenders will be opened on next working day.
11. Modification/Amendments/Corrigendum, if any shall not be advertised on the news paper but shall be published in the aforesaid web site only and the time of submission of bid will also be extended if required.
12. Quantity will be variable at any stage without assigning any reason.

Sd/-  
(Manish Sharma)  
AIG of Police (P&P)  
For - Director General of Police

R. O. No.- 92140/4  
R. O. Date - 15/06/2022



# 'I2U2 grouping of India, Israel, UAE, US to re-energise American global alliances'

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The new I2U2 grouping of India, Israel, the UAE and the US will hold its first virtual summit next month as part of the Biden administration's efforts to re-energise and revitalise American alliances across the world, according to the White House.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, US President Joe Biden, Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett and UAE President Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan would attend the first-of-its-kind virtual summit of the I2U2 grouping next month for discussions of the food security crisis and other areas of cooperation, it said on Tuesday. The virtual summit of the four countries would take place during Biden's trip to the Middle East region from July 13 to 16, a senior administration official told reporters during a conference call.

President Biden looks forward to this unique engagement



ment with Prime Minister Bennett, Prime Minister Modi and President Mohammed bin Zayed, the official said.

State Department spokesperson Ned Price, during his daily news conference on Tuesday, told reporters that each of these countries are technological hubs.

"India is a massive consumer market. It is a massive producer of high-tech and highly sought-after goods as

well. So, there are a number of areas where these countries can work together, whether its technology, trade, climate, COVID-19, and potentially even security as well," he said.

"Part of our approach from the start is not only to revitalise and re-energise our system of alliances and partnerships around the world, but also to stitch together partnerships that did not exist previously or were not utilised to their full

extent," Price said.

"Biotechnology is also prominent. Deepening trade and economic ties between these countries is in our interest when it comes to the relationship between Israel and the UAE. That is something we have sought to deepen. These two countries have deepened their relationship in recent years, including in the economic realm," he said.

Biden will visit the Middle East region from July 13 to July 16 with stops in Israel, the West Bank and Saudi Arabia, and engagements with nearly a dozen counterparts from across the region and beyond.

"The first stop is Israel. This will be President Biden's first visit to the country as President, and it comes nearly 50 years after his first visit to Israel as a young senator," said the official.

During the trip, Biden will engage with nearly a dozen of his counterparts in three stops -- Israel, the West Bank, and

Saudi Arabia.

It is part of this clear sequence of global engagements at an important moment, the official said.

"It demonstrates, we believe, the return of American leadership to bring countries together to address common threats and challenges, something the US can uniquely do.

"And with new frameworks that aim to harness unique American capabilities to enable partners to work more closely together, which is essential to a more secure, prosperous and stable Middle East region over the long term," the official said. Biden's visit will also focus on Israel's increasing integration into the region, both through the Abraham Accords with the UAE, Morocco and Bahrain; through deepening ties between Israel, Jordan and Egypt; and also entirely new groupings of partners, including Israel, India, the UAE, and the United States -- what they call I2U2, said the official.

# NY high court nixes Donald Trump appeal, clearing way for testimony

AP ■ NEW YORK

New York's highest court rejected former President Donald Trump's last-ditch effort to avoid testifying in the state attorney general's civil investigation into his business practices on Tuesday, clearing the way for his deposition next month.

The state's Court of Appeals said there was no "substantial constitutional question" that would warrant its intervention in the matter following an intermediate appellate court's ruling last month enforcing a subpoena for Trump's testimony.

The court also dismissed a motion by Trump's lawyers to stay the subpoenas, saying that doing so would be "academic," since it wasn't taking up the former president's appeal in the first place.

Trump and his two eldest children, Ivanka and Donald Trump Jr., agreed last week to answer questions under oath starting July 15 unless the Court of Appeals decided to step in.

A messages seeking comment on Tuesday's ruling was sent to Trump's lawyer. Alan

# Rice loses House seat after impeaching Trump; Mace holds

AP ■ CHARLESTON (US)

US Rep. Tom Rice of South Carolina has been ousted from Congress in his Republican primary after voting to impeach Donald Trump over the January 6 insurrection.

He is the first of the 10 House Republicans who voted to impeach Trump to lose a reelection bid. Rice, a five-term congressman, was defeated on Tuesday by state Rep. Russell Fry, who was endorsed by Trump. Rice was a strong supporter of Trump's policies in Washington but said he was

left no choice but to impeach Trump over his failure to calm the mob that violently sought to stop the certification of Joe Biden's victory. US Rep. Nancy Mace of South Carolina also angered Trump, but she sought to make amends and won her GOP primary over her own Trump-backed challenger.

In other races on Tuesday, Democratic Rep. Dina Titus in Nevada handily defeated her progressive challenger, while Republican Rep. Mark Amodei won his primary against a son of one of the state's most famous sports figures.

Futerfas, a lawyer for Ivanka and Donald Trump Jr., declined comment. A message was also left with a spokesperson for Attorney General Letitia James. The appellate division of the state's trial court ruled May 26

that the Trumps had to undergo a deposition, upholding a lower court's ruling that James' office had "the clear right" to question Trump and certain other figures in his company, the Trump Organization.

# Israel hopes Biden trip helps tighten ties with Saudi Arabia

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Israel is looking to U.S. President Joe Biden's Mideast trip next month to bolster its efforts to normalise relations with Saudi Arabia, a country with which it does not have official ties, according to Israel's foreign minister.

Yair Lapid spoke a day after the White House announced the whirlwind trip to Israel and the West Bank followed by a flight to Saudi Arabia.

At a news conference in Jerusalem, Lapid was asked about his expectations from Biden's expected stop in the kingdom and first said he didn't want to "steal the show from the president's visit."

But he said Saudi Arabia and Israel, as well as the wider Middle East, are under threat from Iran's nuclear capabilities. "Everybody's looking to Saudi Arabia these days for several reasons," Lapid said.

"The fact that the president's going to fly directly from here to Saudi Arabia is probably signifying that there is a linkage between the visit and the ability to improve relations,"

Israeli leaders have long



said they want to add countries to the four Arab states - Bahrain, Sudan, Morocco and the United Arab Emirates --- that established diplomatic ties with Israel known as the Abraham Accords.

"There is a list of target countries: Saudi is first among them," along with other nations such as Indonesia, he told reporters.

Asked whether there would be an Israeli official on the plane to the kingdom, Lapid said he didn't know, but joked that the president's plane is "a big aircraft," so there would be room.

Israel and Saudi Arabia do not have official diplomatic relations, but have shared clandestine security ties over a shared enmity of regional arch-rival Iran.

It has long been rumoured

to be among the Arab states considering the establishment of open ties with Israel.

In 2020, then-Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu reportedly flew to Saudi Arabia for a meeting with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

That purported meeting came shortly after Israel had established full relations with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Sudan as part of the U.S.-brokered "Abraham Accords."

A similar normalisation agreement was later inked with Morocco.

Saudi Arabia's King Salman has been a longtime supporter of the Palestinians and their desire to establish an independent state in the West Bank, Gaza Strip and east Jerusalem.

# Singapore Foreign Min to attend Special ASEAN-India meet

PTI ■ SINGAPORE

Singapore's Minister for Foreign Affairs Vivian Balakrishnan will attend a Special ASEAN-India meeting in New Delhi and meet his counterpart S Jaishankar, the foreign ministry said here.

The minister will co-chair the Special ASEAN-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi with India's External Affairs Minister Jaishankar on Thursday, and deliver remarks at the Ministerial Session of the Delhi Dialogue XII.

Incidentally, the meeting marks the 30th anniversary of ASEAN-India Dialogue Relations, Singapore's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement.

The ministers will discuss ways to strengthen the ASEAN-India Strategic Partnership and exchange views on regional and international developments.

Balakrishnan, along with the other ASEAN foreign ministers and ASEAN secretary-general Lim Jock Hoi, will also call on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the statement said.

# EU launches legal action against UK over post-Brexit changes

AP ■ BRUSSELS

The European Union is launching legal action against the UK in response to Britain's unilateral moves to rip up parts of the post-Brexit deal between both sides, officials said Wednesday. But the European Commission, the bloc's executive branch, insisted it remained open to finding a joint solution outside of the courts.

The proposed UK bill seeks to remove customs checks on some goods entering Northern Ireland from the rest of the UK. That will override parts of the trade treaty that Prime Minister Boris Johnson signed with the EU less than two years ago.

The EU believes that the UK's unilateral decision is violating international law and is unacceptable. European Commission Vice President Maroš Šefčovic told a news conference in Brussels that he's willing to keep talks going with the U.K. In bringing long-term certainty to people and businesses in Northern Ireland, but



insisted solutions should be found within the so-called Northern Ireland Protocol.

The protocol is the part of the Brexit deal which keeps Northern Ireland in the EU's single market for goods.

Šefčovic, however, didn't exclude imposing tariffs on U.K. Goods in the future if the dispute can't be settled.

The 27-nation bloc said it will restart the infringement procedure launched against the U.K. Government last year after Britain unilaterally extended a grace period that applies to trade on the island of Ireland.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

It is hereby informed that the Clients Mr. Brahm Sarup Bajaj, S/o Bansilal Bajaj and his Wife Kamlesh Bajaj W/o Brahm Sarup Bajaj both R/o House No. 33, Pkt 12, Sec-24, Rohini, Delhi-110085 and at A-11685, Sec-34, Rohini, Delhi, have severed their relations with his son Sh. Abhishek Bajaj because of his bad habits and have also disowned/ debarred his son from all the movable & immovable properties. Anyone dealing with him will be at their own risk and responsibilities, my clients will not be responsible for any act/ dealing done by him.

Sd/-  
Neha Batra  
Advocate (D/886/05)  
Mob.: 9320111892

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Notice is hereby given that the original of a Conveyance Deed dated 1 September 1998 executed by President of India (Delhi Development Authority) in favour of Babu Lal Rustogi son of M. L. Rustogi in relation to property bearing No. B-2173, Safdarjung Enclave, New Delhi registered with the office of Sub-Registrar-X, Delhi bearing registration no. 2518, Volume No. 137, Page Nos. 158-159 is lost and is not traceable. Any person(s) having found the above-mentioned document is required to intimate and handover the document immediately to the undersigned.

Madhulika Rastogi  
Address: B-2173, Safdarjung Enclave  
New Delhi-110029  
Contact No. 9910801216

**EASTERN RAILWAY**

**Tender Notice No. 222-S1/N-I dated 13.06.2022.** Following e-tender is invited by Divisional Railway Manager, Sealdah for the following work: **Sl. No. 1, Tender No. TN-52-223. Name of the work: Strengthening of Foot Over Bridges at various stations under XEN (BR)/SDAH in Sealdah above. Tender Value: Rs. 1.16.36.862/- EMD: Rs. 2.08.200/- Sl. No. 2, Tender No. TN-54-223. Name of the work: At Barasat station: Provision of Sewerage Treatment Plant cum water recycling plant of 200 KLD capacity for compliance of National Green Tribunal guidelines with all other ancillary works under Sr. Section Engineer [Works]/Barasat in the jurisdiction of Assistant Engineer/Barasat. Tender Value: Rs. 54.41.327/- EMD: Rs. 1.04.900/- Cost of Tender Document (Non-refundable): Nil for Sl. No. 1 & 2. Date and time of closing of tender: For Sl. No. 1 & 2 each - 15.07.2022 at 15:00 hrs. Completion period for the work: 12 months for Sl. No. 1 and 09 months for Sl. No. 2. Tender Document and details at [www.reps.gov.in](http://www.reps.gov.in) The bidding is to be submitted through e-tendering on above website. Manual offers will be summarily rejected. Date and time of opening of tender is 15.07.2022 at 15:30 hrs.**

SDAH-48/2022-23

Tender Notice is also available at websites: [www.e.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.e.indianrailways.gov.in) / [www.reps.gov.in](http://www.reps.gov.in)

Follow us at: @EasternRailway Eastern Railway Headquarter

**UJVN LIMITED**

H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006  
Telephones: 0135- 2763808, Fax: 0135- 2763508  
CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: [www.ujvnl.com](http://www.ujvnl.com)

**Tender Notice** दिनांक: 14.06.2022

Office of the Executive Engineer (C&M) MB-II Joshiyara, Uttarkashi invites sealed Tender for the following services. Brief summary of tender is given below:

**Tender No: 05/EE(C&M)/MB-II/Joshiyara/2022-23**

**Name of work:** Up keeping and Maintenance work of Parks at Joshiyara, MB-II, Uttarkashi

**Estimated cost:** Rs. 9.91,000.00 (excluding GST)

**Date of availability of bid document on website:** 15-06-2022

**Last Date for submission of Tender:** 07-07-2022 upto 11:00 AM

For fuller & further details, kindly visit our website. The Tender documents can be downloaded from the Nigam's website "[www.ujvnl.com](http://www.ujvnl.com)"

**Executive Engineer (C&M) MB-II Joshiyara**

**"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"**

**OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, CONSTRUCTION WING, UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM**

E-32, JUDGE FARM, HALDWANI, DISTT- NAINITAL (PIN 263139)

**Letter No.: 1037/Nivida-Anubandh/Ranikhet/89 Dated : 14.06.2022**

**E-Tender Notice**

**1. Name of the work:- Construction of Play Ground at Government Inter College Machod, District Almora.**

**2. Estimated Cost:- Rs. 80.25 Lakh**

**3. Period of Completion:- 8 Month**

**4. Date and Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal:- 14-06-2022 (17.00 hrs)**

**5. Online Bid submission: End date :- 05-07-2022 (17.00 hrs)**

**6. Date & Time of Technical bid Opening :- 07-07-2022 (11.00 hrs)**

**7. Name and Address of the Officer inviting bid:- General Manager (Kumaon), Nirman Wing, Uttarakhand Pey Jal Nigam, Haldwani.**

**8. Pre-bid meeting details (if required) Date & Place:- 20-06-2022 (11.00 hrs) Project Manager Construction Unit Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam, Ranikhet.**

**9. For further details, details of subsequent Amendment / correction documentation etc. may be obtained from the e-Procurement portal [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in)**

**GENERAL MANAGER**

**OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, CONSTRUCTION WING, UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM**

E-32, JUDGE FARM, HALDWANI, DISTT- NAINITAL (PIN 263139)

**Letter No.: 1038/Nivida-Anubandh/Ranikhet/90 Dated : 14.06.2022**

**E-Tender Notice**

**1. Name of the work:- Construction of Building Work at Govt. Inter College Bhagtolia, District Almora**

**2. Estimated Cost:- Rs. 198.65 Lakh**

**3. Period of Completion:- 15 Months**

**4. Date and Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal:- 14-06-2022 (17.00 hrs)**

**5. Online Bid submission: End date :- 05-07-2022 (17.00 hrs)**

**6. Date & Time of Technical bid Opening :- 07-07-2022 (11.00 hrs)**

**7. Name and Address of the Officer inviting bid:- General Manager (Kumaon), Nirman Wing, Uttarakhand Pey Jal Nigam, Haldwani.**

**8. Pre-bid meeting details (if required) Date & Place:- 20-06-2022 (11.00 hrs) Project Manager Construction Unit Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam, Ranikhet.**

**9. For further details, details of subsequent Amendment / correction documentation etc. may be obtained from the e-Procurement portal [www.uktenders.gov.in](http://www.uktenders.gov.in)**

**GENERAL MANAGER**

**FORM G INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

(Under Regulation 36A (1) of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) Regulations, 2016)

**RELEVANT PARTICULARS**

1 Name of the Corporate Debtor	VA Realcon Private Limited
2 Date of incorporation of corporate debtor	20.03.2008
3 Authority under which corporate debtor is incorporated / registered	ROC-Delhi
4 Corporate identity number / limited liability identification number of corporate debtor	U45200DL2008PTC175668
5 Address of the registered office and principal office (if any) of corporate debtor	106, Palco House, T-10 Main Patel Road, Patel Nagar, New Delhi-110008
6 Insolvency commencement date of the corporate debtor	07.04.2022
7 Date of invitation of expression of interest	16.06.2022
8 Eligibility for resolution applicants under section 25(2)(h) of the Code is available at:	Eligibility Norms: a) Minimum Net worth of INR 100,00,000 (Ten Lakh) as per the latest Audited Financial Statements for the FY 2020-21 or thereafter; b) In case of Assets Reconstruction Company, Minimum Assets under Management of INR 100,00,00,000 (Rupees One Hundred Crore Only) as per the latest Audited Financial Statements for the FY 2020-21 or thereafter; c) If any company's including holding company, subsidiary company or group company is having their amount as NPA in less than 12 months, the said company including holding company, subsidiary company or group company will be ineligible to submit the Resolution plan. d) There is no default on the part of the Company in filing the latest Audited Financial Statements and /or the income tax return and /or GST Returns (if applicable) for the FY 2020-2021 or thereafter Further detail can be sought by emailing- <a href="mailto:nazim@mnkassociates.com">nazim@mnkassociates.com</a> , <a href="mailto:crip.varealcon@gmail.com">crip.varealcon@gmail.com</a>
9 Norms of ineligibility applicable under section 29A are available at:	<a href="http://bbi.gov.in/webfront/legal_framework.php">http://bbi.gov.in/webfront/legal_framework.php</a> (Official website of IBI-Legal framework -Updated Code) Also details can be sought by emailing - <a href="mailto:nazim@mnkassociates.com">nazim@mnkassociates.com</a> , <a href="mailto:crip.varealcon@gmail.com">crip.varealcon@gmail.com</a>
10 Last date for receipt of expression of interest	01.07.2022
11 Date of issue of provisional list of prospective resolution applicants	11.07.2022
12 Last date for submission of objections to provisional list	16.07.2022
13 Date of issue of final list of prospective resolution applicants	26.07.2022
14 Date of issue of information memorandum, evaluation matrix and request for resolution plans to prospective resolution applicants	16.07.2022
15 Manner of obtaining request for resolution plan, evaluation matrix, information memorandum and further information	Details can be obtained by e-mailing at <a href="mailto:nazim@mnkassociates.com">nazim@mnkassociates.com</a> , <a href="mailto:crip.varealcon@gmail.com">crip.varealcon@gmail.com</a>
16 Last date for submission of resolution plans	15.08.2022
17 Manner of submitting resolution plans to resolution professional	By electronic mode through email <a href="mailto:nazim@mnkassociates.com">nazim@mnkassociates.com</a> , <a href="mailto:crip.varealcon@gmail.com">crip.varealcon@gmail.com</a>
18 Estimated date for submission of resolution plan to the Adjudicating Authority for approval	14.09.2022
19 Name and registration number of the resolution professional	Name: Mohd Nazim Khan Reg. No. IBB/PA-002/IP-N00076/2017-18/10207
20 Name, Address and e-mail of the resolution professional, as registered with the Board	Name: Mohd Nazim Khan Address: G-41, Ground Floor, West Patel Nagar, New Delhi-110008, Email <a href="mailto:nazim@mnkassociates.com">nazim@mnkassociates.com</a> , <a href="mailto:crip.varealcon@gmail.com">crip.varealcon@gmail.com</a>
21 Address and email to be used for correspondence with the Resolution Professional	Address: G-41, Ground Floor, West Patel Nagar, New Delhi-110008
22 Further Details are available at or with	Detail can be obtained by emailing at <a href="mailto:nazim@mnkassociates.com">nazim@mnkassociates.com</a>
23 Date of publication of Form G	16.06.2022

Sd/-  
Mohd Nazim Khan  
Resolution Professional  
IBBI Reg No. IBB/PA-002/IP-N00076/2017-18/10207

Date: 15.06.2022  
Place: Delhi

**PAN INDIA LAUNCH OF ONE STATION ONE PRODUCT SCHEME**

The PAN India launch of One Station One Product scheme around 5000 is likely to be done around First week of September, 2022.

General Public is requested to submit the proposal for Static Kiosk and Mobile Trolleys by giving their consent for the following:

- Stations for exhibiting/sale of product alongwith range.
- Requirement of number of Static units and Mobile Trolleys.

(Basant Kumar)  
Sr. Divisional Commercial Manager/PS

1451/22  
Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav  
Your Convenience - Our Concern  
Visit us at : [www.n.indianrailways.gov.in](http://www.n.indianrailways.gov.in)

**FORM G INVITATION FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

(Under Regulation 36A (1) of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy (Insolvency Resolution Process for Corporate Persons) Regulations, 2016)

**RELEVANT PARTICULARS**

1 Name of the corporate debtor	HPT CONSTRUCTIONS PRIVATE LIMITED
2 Date of incorporation of corporate debtor	18/06/2011
3 Authority under which corporate debtor is incorporated / registered	Roc-Delhi
4 Corporate identity number / limited liability identification number of corporate debtor	U70101DL2011PTC221122
5 Address of the registered office and principal office (if any) of corporate debtor	H.NO. - 102, 1st Floor, R/S, Ladhey Mohalla, Village Jonapur New Delhi South West Delhi DL 110047 IN
6 Insolvency commencement date of the corporate debtor	1st April, 2022 (Order was pronounced on 07/04/2022 by Hon'ble NCLT Principal Bench, in C.P No IB-230(PB)/2021 and copy of order received by RP through email from NCLT on 05/04/2022)
7 Date of invitation of expression of interest	16.06.2022
8 Eligibility for resolution applicants under section 25(2)(h) of the Code is available at:	Details can be sought by email at <a href="mailto:criphpt@gmail.com">criphpt@gmail.com</a>
9 Norms of ineligibility applicable under section 29A are available at:	<a href="https://www.bbi.gov.in/webfront/legal_framework.php">https://www.bbi.gov.in/webfront/legal_framework.php</a> (website of IBI) other details can be sought by mail at <a href="mailto:criphpt@gmail.com">criphpt@gmail.com</a>
10 Last date for receipt of expression of interest	01.07.2022
11 Date of issue of provisional list of prospective resolution applicants	11.07.2022
12 Last date for submission of objections to provisional list	16.07.2022
13 Date of issue of final list of prospective resolution applicants	26.07.2022
14 Date of issue of information memorandum, evaluation matrix and request for resolution plans to prospective resolution applicants	16.07.2022
15 Manner of obtaining request for resolution plan, evaluation matrix, information memorandum and further information	Eligible Resolution applicants may communicate with Resolution Professional at the address mentioned against Serial No.21 for obtain RFPF Evaluation matrix, information Memorandum and further information.
16 Last date for submission of resolution plans	15.08.2022
17 Manner of submitting resolution plans to resolution professional	In electronic form to the email ID or speed post or registered post or by hand at address given in Serial No.21
18 Estimated date for submission of resolution plan to the Adjudicating Authority for approval	On or before 01.10.2022
19 Name and registration number of the resolution professional	Rajiv Bajaj IBB/PA-002/IP-N00276/2017-18/10834
20 Name, Address and e-mail of the resolution professional, as registered with the Board	R-269, LG, Chhattarpur Enclave Phase-2, New Delhi-110074 Email: <a href="mailto:rbajaj@gmail.com">rbajaj@gmail.com</a>
21 Address and email to be used for correspondence with the resolution professional	R-269 LG, Chhattarpur Enclave Phase-2, New Delhi-110074 Email: <a href="mailto:criphpt@gmail.com">criphpt@gmail.com</a>
22 Further Details are available at or with	Other details can be sought by emailing at <a href="mailto:criphpt@gmail.com">criphpt@gmail.com</a>
23 Date of publication of Form G	16.06.2022

Date: 16.06.2022  
Place-New Delhi.

Rajiv Bajaj  
Resolution Professional  
HPT Constructions Private Limited  
IBBI/PA-002/IP-N00276/2017-18/10834



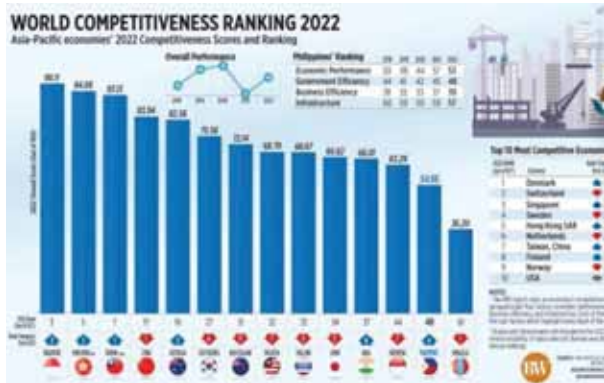
# India jumps to 37th rank on World Competitiveness Index

## Denmark tops chart; earlier India held 43rd position

**New Delhi:** India has witnessed the sharpest rise among the Asian economies, with a six-position jump from 43rd to 37th rank on the annual World Competitiveness Index compiled by the Institute for Management Development, largely due to gains in economic performance.

Denmark has moved to the top of the 63-nation list from the third position last year, while Switzerland slipped from the top ranking to the second position and Singapore regained the third spot from fifth, a global study showed on Wednesday.

Others in the top 10 include Sweden at the fourth position, followed by Hong Kong SAR (5th), the Netherlands (6th), Taiwan (7th), Finland (8th), Norway (9th) and the USA (10th).



Meanwhile, the top-performing Asian economies are Singapore (3rd), Hong Kong (5th), Taiwan (7th), China (17th) and Australia (19th).

After a stable but stagnant five years, 2022 witnessed significant improvement in the competitiveness of the Indian economy, IMD said, adding that this is largely due to gains in economic performance (from 37th to 28th).

The domestic economy has experienced a stratospheric rise from 30th to 9th position in a year, Institute for Management Development (IMD) noted.

The labour market, a key sub-factor in the business effi-

ciency parameter, moved up from 15th to 6th, while management practices and business attitudes and values also made major leaps.

“With Prime Minister Narendra Modi having made major improvements in the context of retrospective taxes in 2021, India appears to have restored the trust of the business community.

Its re-regulation of a number of sectors, including drones, space and geo-spatial mapping, also likely played a role in the country's stellar performance in the 2022 WCR,” economists at IMD World Competitiveness Centre said. **PTI**

# Sensex skids for fourth day; global markets mixed ahead of Fed decision

**Mumbai:** Sliding for the fourth straight day, the BSE Sensex shed 152 points in choppy trade on Wednesday amid mixed global cues ahead of the US Federal Reserve's policy decision.

The rupee tumbling to yet another lifetime low against the US dollar and unabated foreign capital outflows also weighed on the bourses, traders said.

The BSE benchmark oscillated between gains and losses in a range-bound session, before finally closing 152.18 points or 0.29 per cent lower at 52,541.39, an over 10-month low. The index has now lost 2,778.89 points in four days.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty declined by 39.95 points or 0.25 per cent to end at 15,692.15.

NTPC was the top laggard in the 30-share Sensex pack, declining 2.02 per cent, followed by Infosys, Reliance Industries, Wipro, HUL, Tech Mahindra, PowerGrid and ITC.

On the other hand, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, Tata Steel, Larsen & Toubro, SBI, Asian Paints and M&M were among the gainers, climbing as much as 4.24 per cent.

Telecom stocks were largely flat, with the BSE Telecom



index dipping 0.17 per cent, after the Union Cabinet approved the auction of 5G airwaves and gave its nod for setting up of captive 5G networks by big tech firms.

“Equity markets traded nervously ahead of the US Fed meet outcome. While strength was seen in morning, selling pressure in the second half dragged the indices lower. All eyes would be on the US Fed meet outcome,” said Ajit Mishra, VP - Research, Religare Broking Ltd.

Globally, investors were awaiting the US Fed's policy

decision later in the day amid expectations of an aggressive rate hike to tame red-hot inflation.

“Looming fears of stagflation and volatility ahead of the Fed meeting decision forced the market to close flat with a negative bias.

“The aggressive rate hike of 50-75 bps is mostly factored by the market but updated economic and interest rate forecasts to be detailed by the central bank will closely control the future trend,” said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services. **PTI**

# Exports rise 20.55% to USD 38.94 bn in May; trade deficit at record USD 24.29 bn



**New Delhi:** India's merchandise exports in May rose by 20.55 per cent to USD 38.94 billion, while the trade deficit ballooned to a record USD 24.29 billion, according to the government data released on Wednesday.

Imports during May 2022 grew by 62.83 per cent to USD 63.22 billion, the data showed. The trade deficit stood at USD 6.53 billion in the same month last year.

Cumulative exports in April-May 2022-23 rose by about 25 per cent to USD 78.72 billion.

Imports in April-May 2022-23 increased 45.42 per cent to USD 123.41 billion. The trade deficit during the

first two months of this fiscal widened to USD 44.69 billion against USD 21.82 billion in the year-ago period.

Petroleum and crude oil imports during May 2022 surged 102.72 per cent to USD 19.2 billion.

Coal, coke and briquettes imports jumped to USD 5.5 billion against USD 2 billion in May 2021.

Gold imports increased to USD 6 billion during the month under review from USD 677 million in May 2021.

Engineering goods exports in May increased by 12.65 per cent to USD 9.7 billion, while petroleum products exports grew by 60.87 per cent to USD 8.54 billion. **PTI**

# Start of new era for Indian Telecom: Vaishnaw on 5G spectrum auction

**New Delhi:** The spectrum auction for 5G services marks the beginning of a new era for Indian telecom, Communications Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Wednesday.

The comment assumes significance as the Union Cabinet has approved the modalities for holding 5G spectrum auction, and 72 GHz of radio waves will be put on the block by July-end.

Spectrum auction will commence on July 26, 2022. The Cabinet also decided to enable the development and setting up of 'Private Captive Networks' to spur a wave of innovation in new-age industry applications such as machine-to-machine communications, Internet of Things (IoT), Artificial Intelligence (AI) across automotive, health-care, agriculture, energy, and other sectors.

“The beginning of a new era for Indian Telecom. 5G spectrum auction announced,” Vaishnaw tweeted.

Continuing the telecom reforms agenda, development and setting up of Private Captive Networks will be enabled, he wrote. **PTI**

# GoM on GST rate rationalisation to meet on Jun 17



**New Delhi:** The panel of ministers on GST rate rationalisation is scheduled to meet on June 17 to discuss possible tweaking in tax rates, sources said.

The Group of Ministers (GoM) is likely to discuss possible changes in the tax slab, they said, adding that the final report of the panel would take some more time.

The GST Council, comprising finance ministers of the Centre and states, is likely to meet by the end of this month and will discuss, among other things, the GoM interim report on rate rationalisation.

The finance ministry sources had earlier said that

with inflation at a record high, there is hardly any scope for rationalisation of GST rates on goods and services at present.

The council had last year set up a 7-member panel of state ministers, headed by Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai, to suggest ways to augment revenue by rationalising tax rates. The GoM had last met in November 2021.

The GoM has been mandated to review items under an inverted duty structure to help minimise refund payout and review the Goods and Services Tax (GST) exempt list to expand the tax base and eliminate the breaking of the input tax credit (ITC) chain.

Under the GST, a four-rate structure exempts or imposes a low rate of tax of 5 per cent on essential items and levies a top rate of 28 per cent on luxury and demerit goods. The other slabs of tax are 12 and 18 per cent.

Besides, a cess is imposed on the highest slab of 28 per cent on luxury, demerit and sin goods. **PTI**

# WTO ministerial conference extended by one day to facilitate outcomes



**Geneva:** The four-day 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12) of the WTO has been extended by one day till Thursday to facilitate outcomes on the main issues under discussion.

According to a statement by the WTO (World Trade Organisation), following the consultations by WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala with MC12 chair Timur Suleimanov, the vice chairs and the minister facilitators, delegations were informed that the conference will be extended till June 16.

At the meeting of heads of delegations late on June 14, DG Okonjo-Iweala called on members to go the extra mile to find convergence on the various issues at stake at the ministerial gathering and to be mindful that time is running out to conclude meaningful agreements, it added.

The conference was initially scheduled to close on Wednesday. **PTI**

# Expect telcos to buy spectrum worth ₹1-1.1 lakh cr in 5G auction: ICRA

**New Delhi:** The telecom industry is expected to shell out around ₹1-1.1 lakh crore on the 5G auction, despite telcos' reservations over high spectrum prices, ICRA said on Wednesday but cautioned that sector debt level is likely to rise with upcoming auctions.

The auction of over 72 GHz of the spectrum is set to commence on July 26, 2022.

According to Icra, given the relaxed payment terms for the auction, the upfront outgo is likely to be around ₹10,000 crore for the industry.

It said industry ARPU (Average Revenue Per User) is expected to increase to ₹170 by

**ICRA'S COMMENTS CAME IN THE WAKE OF THE CABINET APPROVAL FOR THE AUCTION OF AIRWAVES CAPABLE OF OFFERING FIFTH-GENERATION OR 5G TELECOM SERVICES, INCLUDING ULTRA-HIGH-SPEED INTERNET**

the end of FY2023, driven by tariff hikes and consistent upgradation of subscribers.

“While telecom operators consider reserve prices to be very high, nonetheless Icra expects telcos to buy spectrum worth around ₹1-1.1 lakh

crore in these auctions, which will be primarily towards developing 5G capabilities but also plugging other gaps,” it said in a statement.

While the upfront payment may remain low as Trai has recommended an elongated payment plan, the total debt on the industry is likely to increase, which is expected to keep the debt metrics subdued, the rating agency explained.

ICRA's comments came in the wake of the Cabinet approval for the auction of airwaves capable of offering fifth-generation or 5G telecom services, including ultra-high-speed internet. **PTI**

# Govt looks for new Nabard chairman

**New Delhi:** The Government is looking to hire a new chairman of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) to replace GR Chintala, who will be demitting office on August 1. Chintala was appointed as the Nabard Chairman in May 2020.

Even those working in private sector banks and financial institutions and organisations in agriculture, cooperative and rural development sectors, with relevant experience will be eligible for the appointment. **PTI**

# Gold marginally higher; silver climbs ₹304

**New Delhi:** Gold prices in the national capital rose by ₹3 to ₹50,304 per 10 grams in line with a jump in international precious metal prices, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the yellow metal settled at ₹50,301 per 10 grams.

Silver also gained ₹304 to ₹60,016 per kg from ₹59,712 per kg in the previous trade.

In the international market, gold was trading higher at USD 1,820 per ounce and silver was trading flat at USD 21.35 per ounce.

“Gold prices traded firm



with spot gold prices at COMEX trading up at USD 1,820 per ounce on Wednesday. Gold prices halted decline with weaker dollar and fall in US bond yields,” said Tapan Patel, Senior Analyst (Commodities) at HDFC Securities. **PTI**

# Petrol, diesel sales jump in June

**New Delhi:** India's petrol consumption jumped by 54 per cent and that of diesel soared by 48 per cent in the first fortnight of June from a year earlier with continuing demand recovery from a relatively low base in 2021 when the world's third-biggest oil user was in the grip of the second wave of Covid-19.

Petrol sales by state-owned fuel retailers, which control roughly 90 per cent of the market, at 1.28 million tonnes between June 1 and 14 was 54.2 per cent higher than the same

period last year when a devastating second Covid-19 wave wreaked havoc on the economy.

This consumption was 48.2 per cent higher than the demand in the first fortnight of June 2020 and 25 per cent more than the 1.02 million tonnes of sales in the pre-Covid June 2019. Month-on-month sales were up 0.8 per cent, preliminary industry data showed on Wednesday.

Diesel, the most-used fuel in the country, saw sales jumping 47.8 per cent year-on-year



to 3.4 million tonnes between June 1-14. This was 37.3 per cent higher than the corresponding period of June 2020 and 20.3 per cent more than the

sumption in June was higher because demand returned after high prices in the previous month impacted sales. Also aiding the demand was the start of the harvesting season.

Another factor was the low base effect.

Cooking gas, whose prices were hiked by ₹103.50 per cylinder since March, saw sales rising by 4.21 per cent to 1.06 million tonnes in the first fortnight of June. This was 20.3 per cent higher than 2020 and 28.1 per cent more than June 1-14, 2019. **PTI**

# JSW Steel crude steel production jumps 31% to 17.89 L tonnes in May



**Kolkata:** JSW Steel crude steel production in May on a stand-alone basis jumped 31 per cent to 17.89 lakh tonnes, the company said on Wednesday.

The crude steel output in May of FY'21 was 13.67 lakh tonnes. The flagship company of the USD 22 billion JSW Group stated that production of flat-rolled products also expanded by 29 per cent to 12.84 lakh tonnes for the month compared to 9.99 lakh tonnes

in the same month last fiscal. While the production of long items rose by 25 per cent on y-o-y basis to 3.86 lakh tonnes for the month of May 2022. The production in the same month last year was 3.09 lakh tonnes.

Currently, JSW Steel has an installed annual crude steel capacity of 18 million tonnes in India, which comprises 12.5 MTPA of flat products and 5.5 MTPA of long products. **PTI**





# Germany equal their biggest win over Italy

AP ■ MOENCHENGLADBACH

Germany equalled their biggest ever win over European champions Italy as Timo Werner scored twice in a thumping 5-2 Nations League victory on Tuesday.

The result in Moenchengladbach matched the Germans' 5-2 triumph over the Azzurri at Berlin's Olympic Stadium back in 1939.

An early goal by Joshua Kimmich and Ilkay Gundogan's penalty at Borussia Park put the hosts 2-0 up before the floodgates opened early in the second half. Thomas Müller scored his 44th goal for Germany on his 116th international appearance before Werner scored twice in quick succession.

Italy's consolation goals came late on through 18-year-old striker Wilfried Gnonto and Alessandro Bastoni.

The result sees Germany move second in Group A3 as previous leaders Italy dropped to third, with Hungary top after a shock 4-0 win over England in Wolverhampton.

Germany could only scramble a 1-1 draw thanks to a late Kimmich goal when the sides last met in Bologna in early June, but this was a vastly improved performance.



Italy coach Roberto Mancini paid the price for making nine changes from the team which drew with England last weekend as only Gianluigi Donnarumma and David Frattesi kept their places in an experimental side.

German coach Hansi Flick made five alterations to the team which drew with Hungary in Budapest last Saturday as Gundogan seized his chance on his return.

The Manchester City star bossed the Italian midfield, creating more space up front.

Germany took the lead when Werner and Hoffenheim's David Raum combined to set up Kimmich, who fired in on 10 minutes.

Italy conceded again just before half-time when Bastoni brought down Jonas Hofmann and Gundogan swept the resulting penalty past Donnarumma.

Müller grabbed Germany's third goal when he drilled a sloppy clearance into the Italian net.

Werner punished the visitors with two goals inside a minute, as Serge Gnabry provided both assists after slicing through the Italy defence.

Germany goalkeeper Manuel Neuer, who had been outstanding all night, was finally beaten when he blocked a shot by Federico Dimarco into the path of Gnonto, then Bastoni headed in.

AP ■ WOLVERHAMPTON

England are staring relegation from the top tier of the Nations League in the face after a 4-0 thrashing by Hungary on Tuesday inflicted the Three Lions' heaviest home defeat since 1928.

Hungary secured their first win over England for 60 years in Budapest 10 days ago and followed that up with their first win on English soil since a famous 6-3 win at Wembley in 1953.

A double from Roland Sallai and late goals from Adam Nagy and Daniel Gazdag kept Hungary on course to reach the Nations League finals next year.

Marco Rossi's men are not headed to the World Cup in Qatar, but lead Germany by a point, with European champions Italy two points behind the group leaders with two games to go. England are three points adrift at the bottom of the section and need a revival in September away to Italy and home to Austria to avoid relegation.

However, of greater concern for Gareth Southgate will be his side's form just five months away from the World Cup.

Southgate was the target for much of the scorn of the

## ENGLAND TROUNCED BY HUNGARY

### Three Lions fail to score again and remain at bottom after suffering embarrassing 4-0 home loss against Hungary

home crowd in Wolverhampton despite his record of leading England to a first major tournament final for 55 years at Euro 2020 and the semi-finals of the 2018 World Cup.

The only goal Southgate's men have scored in four Nations League matches this month was Kane's late penalty in a 1-1 draw in Germany a week ago.

The return of a crowd at Molineux after Saturday's goal-less draw with Italy was played behind closed doors did little to spark England into life.

Fatigue at the end of a long season that began just weeks after losing the Euro 2020 final to Italy has been blamed for England's lacklustre form.

However, there are major defensive issues for Southgate to address before the World Cup.

John Stones rounded off a miserable evening when he was harshly sent off for a second yellow card eight minutes from time. The Manchester City cen-

tre-back was also at fault for the opening goal as he turned a free-kick into Sallai's path, whose shot had too much power for Aaron Ramsdale.

Sallai produced another deadly finish to double Hungary's lead 20 minutes from

time when he latched onto Martin Adam's inch-perfect pass to fire in between Ramsdale's legs. Kane saw a looping header come back off the bar as England briefly stirred.

But they were cut open at ease on the counter-attack in the

closing stages as Hungary secured a memorable win.

Nagy drilled home a powerful shot from the edge of the area. Stones was then given his marching orders before Gazdag broke clear to rub salt in England's wounds.



## Depay grabs thrilling victory for Dutch

AP ■ ROTTERDAM

Memphis Depay scored an injury-time winner just seconds after Gareth Bale had equalised for Wales as the Netherlands snatched a 3-2 Nations League victory on Tuesday. The win in Rotterdam keeps Louis van Gaal's men three points clear of Belgium, who won 1-0 against Poland in Warsaw, at the top of Group A4.

Noa Lang put the Dutch in front in the 17th minute with his first international goal and Cody Gakpo quickly made it two.

Brennan Johnson completed a spell of three goals in eight-and-a-half minutes by

pulling one back, before Bale came off the bench and scored a 92nd-minute penalty.

But home substitute Depay had the final say as the Netherlands made it three wins from four matches in the tournament.

Club Brugge forward Lang gave the hosts an early lead with a fine individual strike, turning the Welsh defence and drilling a powerful shot past goalkeeper Wayne Hennessey.

The advantage was doubled midway through the first half as Gakpo scored after his initial effort was blocked.

But Wales hit back less than three minutes later, as Dan James won the ball and fed Nottingham Forest forward Johnson to score

for the second time in four days.

Wales manager Robert Page introduced Bale and Aaron Ramsey for his team who are still looking for a first win in the group.

Bale netted a spot-kick after Connor Roberts was fouled to score his 39th international goal and spark wild celebrations on the away bench.

But Wales, who had also levelled in the return fixture against the Dutch in stoppage time last week and then lost, did the same again.

The visitors were caught out as a ball into the box was flicked on and Barcelona's Depay reacted quickest to score.

## Costa Rica claim last WC place



AP ■ DOHA

Costa Rica became the last team to qualify for this year's World Cup as Joel Campbell's early goal gave the Central Americans a nervy 1-0 win over New Zealand in a play-off on Tuesday.

Former Arsenal forward Campbell netted in the third minute in Doha and New Zealand, who were reduced to 10 men

in the second half, could not find an equaliser despite dominating for long periods.

Costa Rica will face Germany, Spain and Japan in a tough Group E at the tournament which starts in Qatar in November.

Victory put Costa Rica into their third straight World Cup and sixth in total. Their best effort so far was a surprise run to the quarter-finals in 2014.

New Zealand striker Chris Wood had what he thought was a leveller ruled out by VAR shortly before half-time at the Ahmad bin Ali Stadium due to a foul earlier in the move.

The Kiwis also saw Kosta Barbarouses sent off, barely eight minutes after coming on as a substitute, for a challenge on Costa Rica's Francisco Calvo. That decision was also changed by VAR after he had initially been shown a yellow card.

Both sides had suffered badly from the pandemic upheaval.

The whole Oceania qualifying group, that New Zealand won to reach this play-off, was held behind closed doors in Qatar this year because of the coronavirus.

Costa Rica star Bryan Ruiz went down with Covid-19 two weeks before Tuesday's game and the team had to deny accusations that they played two infected players against Jamaica in January.

New Zealand's neighbours Australia took the 31st qualifying spot in the same stadium on Monday when they beat Peru 5-4 on penalties.

The first World Cup in an Arab nation starts in Qatar on November 21, with the final on December 18.

## UEFA consider new four-team mini-tourney for start of season



AP ■ PARIS

UEFA are considering introducing a four-team mini-tournament at the start of each season, just before the Champions League group phase begins, European football's governing body confirmed on Tuesday.

French sports daily *L'Equipe* reported that UEFA were weighing up the idea of a competition involving the winners of the previous season's Champions League along with three other

leading clubs. *L'Equipe* reported that the idea was included in the invitation to tender for the broadcast rights for the new, expanded Champions League from 2024 to 2027.

UEFA said "it is an idea mentioned in the call for bids, but nothing is decided".

A source with knowledge of the proposal said the mini-tournament would not necessarily mean more games.

The Champions League group stage is being expanded from the 2024/25 season to feature 36 clubs, up from the current 32.

They will all be together in one pool with each team playing eight matches, all against different opponents, compared to eight groups of four teams playing six matches each at present.

Last month UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin said that talks had taken place about transforming the UEFA Super Cup to make it a four-team competition rather than the current one-off match between the Champions League winners and Europa League winners.

Real Madrid will play Eintracht Frankfurt in this year's Super Cup in Helsinki on August 10.

## Equal pay to be given to Spain's men and women's teams

AP ■ MADRID

Spain's women will have the same pay for representing their country as men, the Spanish football federation announced on Tuesday.

The agreement will be for the next five years and while salaries are not paid for playing for Spain, the deal ensures male and female players enjoy the same terms regarding bonuses and image rights.

Working conditions will also be made equal, including provisions for travel, food and accommodation.

"From now on, the players of the national team will have an advance on bonuses, exactly the same as for the men's team. We have closed an agreement for the next five years," said the federation's president Luis Rubiales.

## US Open to allow Russia, Belarus players to play under neutral flag



AP ■ NEW YORK

Russian and Belarusian players will be allowed to compete at the US Open this year but only as neutrals, the United States Tennis Association (USTA) announced on Tuesday, a decision that stands in stark contrast to Wimbledon which banned them.

Wimbledon's decision prevents players such as men's world number one Daniil Medvedev of Russia from playing at the All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) but the

USTA said Russian and Belarusian players would be welcome at Flushing Meadows.

"Alongside the other Grand Slams, the ITF, the ATP and the WTA, the USTA, which owns and operates the US Open, has previously condemned, and continues to condemn, the unprovoked and unjust invasion of Ukraine by Russia," the USTA said. "The USTA... supported the banning of the Russian and Belarusian Tennis Federations from the ITF, and therefore all international team competitions, and the directive for players from those countries to play under a neutral flag when competing outside of international team competitions."

The USTA's decision will allow Medvedev to defend his maiden Grand Slam title after he beat Novak Djokovic in the final last year to deny the Serb a calendar year Grand Slam.

Players from Russia and Belarus were allowed to play at the French Open too.

## 'Liverpool showed decisiveness & ambition to land Nunez'

AP ■ LIVERPOOL

Jurgen Klopp said Liverpool had shown "decisiveness and ambition in equal measure" to land Darwin Nunez for a fee that could rise to a club-record 100 million euros (£85 million, \$105 million).

The Champions League finalists have splashed an initial 75 million euros on the 22-year-old, with an extra 25 million in performance-related add-ons according to figures released by Benfica.

That could take Nunez's move beyond the £75 million Liverpool paid for Virgil Van Dijk in January 2018 and make him the fifth most expensive transfer in Premier League history.

The Uruguayan scored 34 goals in 41 appearances last season, including twice against Liverpool in the Champions League quarter-finals.

"This is super news, really super news," Klopp told the Liverpool website. "I'm very grateful to everyone at the club for making it happen. We've



shown decisiveness and ambition in equal measure.

"Darwin is a wonderful

player, already really good but so much potential to get even better. That's why it's so exciting,

to be honest. His age, his desire, his hunger to be even better than he currently is. His belief in our project and what we are looking to do as a club."

Liverpool narrowly missed an unprecedented quadruple of trophies last season.

Klopp's men lifted the League Cup and FA Cup, but lost out on the Premier League title to Manchester City by one point and were beaten 1-0 by Real Madrid in the Champions League final.

And Nunez said he wants to write himself into the club's storied history.

"I'm really happy and delighted to be here at Liverpool. It's a massive club," said Nunez.

"When I arrived at the training ground, I was really surprised to see the set-up and the structure and all the trophies here. You can then imagine yourself winning more trophies and then later on when you come here again and see the trophies on display, you can say, 'Look, I was a part of that, I was there at that time, winning tro-

phies.' That's one of the reasons why I came here to Liverpool - to win trophies and titles."

His arrival continues Klopp's overhaul of Liverpool's attacking options.

Luis Diaz made a huge impact in the second half of last season after a January move from Porto, while Diogo Jota has scored 34 goals in the past two seasons.

City have already signalled their intent to maintain their dominance of the Premier League under Pep Guardiola by beating Europe's top clubs to the signature of prolific Norwegian striker Erling Haaland from Borussia Dortmund.

Liverpool will hope Nunez can match Haaland's impact as they aim to take the title off City next season.

"He plays without fear, he's powerful. I know he will excite our supporters," said Klopp.

"He has all the pieces we look for. He can set a tempo, he brings energy, he can threaten space from central and wide areas. He is aggressive and dynamic with his movement."



# IPL performance has raised expectations: Rutu

PTI ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

He hasn't been able to translate his IPL form into national colours but India opener Ruturaj Gaikwad is not too worried as for him it is all about "staying consistent mentally" and "trusting the process".

The 25-year-old from Maharashtra has amassed 1207 runs in 36 IPL matches so far but managed just 120 in six T20Is, including the maiden fifty that he scored in the third T20 against South Africa here on Tuesday.

Asked if life is on the edge for him, Gaikwad said: "Not really on the edge, it is just part and parcel of the sport.

"Last year I had a really good year so people come with a lot of expectations when you have a great year even in IPL and domestic."

His form was patchy in the IPL this year as well before he turned things around, scoring 368 runs, including three fifties in 14 matches for Chennai Super Kings.

"In the IPL, the wicket was slightly bowler-friendly. There was no flat wicket, it was two-paced, the ball was turning, and there was some swing.

"So 3-4 games in IPL, I got out to good balls where in some dismissals, some good shots went to the fielder's hand, it is part of T20 cricket.

"You will have off days and really bad days. It is a matter of staying consistent mentally, trusting your process."

In the first two games, Gaikwad scored 23 and 1 to once again raise questions on his ability as an opener. However, he delivered when it mattered most, slamming a 35-ball 57 studded with seven fours and



two maximums.

"Coming into the series as well, the first two wickets I felt were on the tacky side. It was stopping a bit batting first in the last two games but here the wicket was good, ball was coming into the bat, so I played my game.

"I changed nothing, my thought process, everything was the same."

In the second T20I, India had scored 148 for six with batters going for their shots despite losing wick-ets.

Shreyas Iyer had said that the team will look to keep attacking even if it loses wickets.

Gaikwad said: "Going after the bowlers was not about being reckless or playing rash shots. I think we as a batting unit have some strength, certain shots we play as individuals. It is about backing ourselves and putting pressure on the bowlers.

"Just making sure that you are showing the intent, no matter if you are playing first ball or second ball, or you are set, even if you are bat-

ting at 30-40, if it is there in your area, in your strength, just have to go for it, that is what the thinking is about."

There was hardly any time between the second and the third game and Gaikwad said the team just looked to stick to what worked for it and be slightly more conscious about its bowling.

"The conversation was about staying positive. We played really well in both the games. There were just some crunch moments where they played really well and

## KL to miss England series, Hardik to lead Men in Blue during Ireland T20Is

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Senior opener KL Rahul is all set to miss the 'fifth' Test against England in Birmingham next month as he is unlikely to recover from a groin injury that forced him out of the ongoing T20I series against South Africa.

"Rahul has not recovered from his groin injury. The Test squad members are assembling in Mumbai today and will fly out midnight. Rahul is not travelling with the team. He will take some more time to recover although he might appear in a fitness test during weekend. Chances of recovery aren't looking bright," a BCCI official said.

All the players, except Pant, are leaving for England early Thursday for the July 1-5 contest, notable being skipper Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Cheteshwar Pujara, Jasprit Bumrah and Mohammed Shami.

It is understood that since there is only one Test match, which is a spill-over from the 2021 series, the selectors are still not thinking about KL Rahul's replacement as of now.

"You have Shubman Gill, who has opened in most of his Test matches. Else, Cheteshwar Pujara can also open the batting, in case there is any fitness issues for any of the two openers. It was a 17-mem-

ber squad and 16 will be going. So that's not a problem," the source added.



overtook us. So it was just that they batted really well, but today they had a batting collapse.

"Coming here, we just wanted

to stick to what we did in the last two games and look to improve as a group. Bowling-wise, we were slightly more aware of the game,

than 400 runs for Sunrisers Hyderabad.

Pandya, who is Rishabh Pant's deputy in the current T20I series against South Africa, was elevated to the leadership role and will join the Test squad in England after the completion of the home series.

Sanju Samson, whose profligacy has been well documented over the years, gets another shot at redemption, as he made a comeback for the series, having guided Rajasthan Royals to the IPL final.

Bhuvneshwar Kumar has been named vice-captain for the series.

there was more awareness and that worked well for us."

India will face South Africa in the 4th T20 on Friday.

## Maxwell leads Oz to win like never before



AP ■ PALLEKELE

Australia pull off its greatest ODI run chase against Sri Lanka.

Maxwell's unbeaten 80 helped Australia chase down a rain-revised target of 282 runs in a two wickets victory in Wednesday's series opener in Pallekele.

Australia had never chased down more than 267 against Sri Lanka in an ODI before. The visitors started out chasing a total of 301 in 50 overs but a 90-minute rain break reduced the innings to 44 overs with the visitors requiring 282 under DLS.

Maxwell, playing in his first ODI in 18-

months smashed six fours and six sixes to score 80 not out off 51 balls after the visitors stuttered against the bowling of spinner Wanindu Hasaranga who bagged four wickets.

Australia lost opener David Warner for a duck in the second over, leg before wicket to Maheesh Theekshana.

Fellow opener Aaron Finch scored 44 off 41 balls before he was caught behind by Kusal Mendis off Hasaranga.

When rain halted play, the visitors were 73 for two with Steve Smith and Marnus Labuschagne at the crease.

After play resumed, Labuschagne fell for 24. Marcus Stoinis scored 44 off 31 balls. Smith made 53 before he was clean bowled by Dunieth Wellalage.

Alex Carey scored a quick 21 off 22 balls and Pat Cummins, playing his first ODI after 18 months with an injury, fell for a duck.

But Maxwell saw his team home, ending the match with two consecutive sixes.

"I tried to be there as long as I could. I thought it was a good opportunity to get the run rate down against the young spinner," Maxwell said.

Sri Lankan skipper Dusan Shanaka bemoaned too many short balls and full tosses.

"300 is a winning total on this ground, but our bowling cost us the game," Shanaka said. Earlier in the day, the hosts began their innings with solid batting performances by openers Danushka Gunathilaka and Pathum Nissanka, who scored half centuries in their opening stand of 115.

Both men hammered an Australian fast-bowling attack plagued by injuries before the visitors caught Gunathilaka short of his crease with a direct hit by Stoinis.

Nissanka top-edged a reverse sweep to Ashton Agar to hand Finch a simple catch two overs later.

Mendis anchored the innings with an unbeaten 86 off 87 balls to take the hosts to 300.

The second ODI on Friday morning is at the same venue.

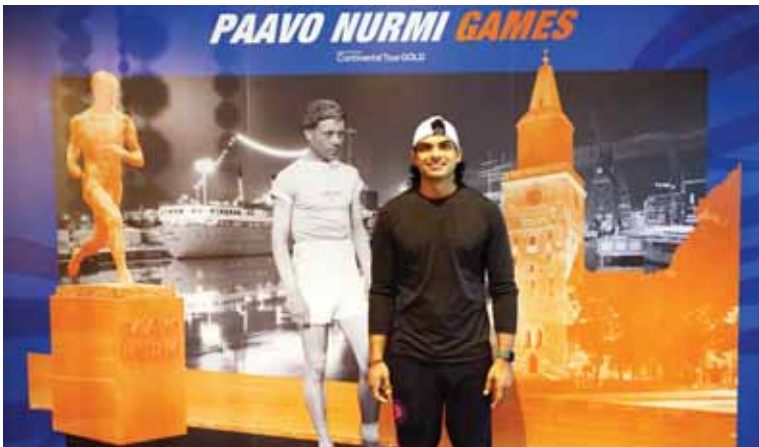
## Neeraj Chopra shatters own national record

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's superstar javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra made a spectacular return to competition after his historic Gold in the Tokyo Olympics, a stunning throw of 89.30m shattering his national record and placing him second in a star-studded field at the Paavo Nurmi Games in Turku, Finland, on Tuesday.

The 24-year-old Chopra's first competitive event after just over 10 months was nothing short of extraordinary as he nearly touched the coveted 90m mark, considered the Gold standard in the world of javelin throw.

Chopra's earlier national record was 88.07m which he had set in Patiala in March last year. He had won the Tokyo Olympics Gold with a throw of 87.58m on August 7, 2021. He opened with an impressive 86.92m before sending the spear to 89.30m. His next three



attempts were fouls while he came up with 85.85m in his sixth and final throw.

Finland's 25-year-old Oliver Helander, who has a personal best of

88.02m and season's best of 80.36m, was the surprise Gold winner with a best throw of 89.83m which he produced in his second attempt.

## Root new No.1 batter in Tests

PTI ■ DUBAI

India opener Ishan Kishan climbed up 68 places to grab the seventh spot among batters, while the bowling duo of Bhuvneshwar Kumar and Yuzvendra Chahal also made gains in the latest ICC T20 rankings released on Wednesday.

Kishan, who has been one of India's consistent performers in the ongoing T20I home series against South Africa, aggregating 164 runs in three matches including two half-centuries, has made a massive jump to enter the top 10 among T20 batters.

The 23-year-old is the lone Indian batter in the top 10 with KL Rahul occupying the 14 spot.



Among bowlers, Bhuvneshwar is up seven places to 11th while leg-spinner Chahal has climbed up four places to 26th.

Australia's Josh Hazlewood

has regained his number one spot among T20 bowlers, while Maheesh Theekshana of Sri Lanka is up 16 places to eighth in the list.

In the Test rankings, pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah has moved a spot to third, behind compatriot Ravichandran Ashwin, who remains static on number two.

England's Joe Root is back at the top after smashing a second successive century in the ongoing ICC World Test Championship series against New Zealand.

Root, who had reached within striking distance of Marnus Labuschagne after the first Test, has wrested back the top spot from the Australia batter, whom he now leads by five rating points.

## Indonesia Open: Lakshya, Srikanth out in first round

PTI ■ JAKARTA

India's Lakshya Sen and Kidambi Srikanth crashed out in the opening round of the Indonesia Open badminton tournament after losing in straight games, here on Wednesday.

While world No 8 Sen lost to compatriot H S Prannoy 10-21, 9-21 in an all-India first round clash, world No 11 Srikanth, who was making a comeback after nearly a month, was stunned by 41st ranked Brice Leverdez of France 21-23, 10-21.

Sen, who is in red hot form, clinched his first-ever Super 500 title this year. The 20-year-old reached the finals of the pres-

tigious All England Championships and was also part of the Indian men's team that lifted the historic Thomas Cup crown.

In the doubles action, the duo of M R Arjun and Dhruv Kapila opened their account with a win, getting the better of higher ranked Japanese pair of Kelichiro Matsui and Yoshinori Takeuchi 27-25, 18-25, 21-19.

However, it was curtains for the women's duo of Ashwini Bhat and Shikha Gautam, losing 9-21, 10-21 to China's Zhang Shu Xian and Zheng Yu in just 28 minutes.

The campaign also ended for another women's pairing of Haritha M Harinarayan and Ashna Noy.

## Tamore's 115 helps Mumbai post 393 against UP

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Wicket-keeper batter Hardik Tamore hogged the limelight with a stroke-filled 115 to propel Mumbai to 393 in their first innings on the second day of their Ranji Trophy semifinal against Uttar Pradesh, here on Wednesday.

In reply, Uttar Pradesh were reeling at 25 for two at stumps, having lost opener Samarth Singh (0) and Priyam Garg (5) early.

While the first day belonged to young Mumbai opener Yashasvi Jaiswal, who had hammered his second first-class hundred, it was Tamore show on Wednesday at the Just Academy ground.

Tamore, who was roped as replacement for injured Aditya Tare, reposed the faith of the team management, and along with all-rounder Shams Mulani (50) frustrated the UP attack after play commenced late due to wet outfield.

But the UP bowlers, particularly left-arm spinner Saurabh Kumar



(3/107) made a remarkable comeback as Mumbai lost their last four wickets for 47 runs.

Earlier, Tamore and Mulani duo took their time to settle down and only punished the loose deliveries.

Mulani, resuming at his overnight score of 10, played the perfect second fiddle to Tamore, who notched up his second first-class hundred.

Right-handed Tamore, who resumed on unbeaten 51, anchored the innings after the domestic giants began from their overnight score of 260 for five. He and Mulani forged a crucial 113-run stand for the sixth wicket before Karan Sharma bagged his third wicket to dismiss the latter.

Tamore, in his 233-ball knock, hammered as many as 12 boundaries and one maximum, while Mulani struck five boundaries in his 50-ball knock before being caught by Madhav Kaushik.

Once Mulani fell, Tamore was devoid of partners as Tanush Kotian (22), Dhawal Kulkarni (0), Tushar

Deshpande (1) failed to provide him support.

Tamore was the last man to be dismissed after he fell to Kumar.

For UP, Karan Sharma (4/46) snared four wickets while Kumar grabbed three.

**MP HOLD UPPER-HAND**

**Alur:** Manoj Tiwary, veteran of many-a-fightback, in company of utility man Shahbaz Ahmed, kept Bengal alive as they reached 197 for five after a top-order collapse against Madhya Pradesh, here on the second day.

At stumps, Tiwary (84 batting, 182 balls) played his best knock of this season, while Shahbaz (72 batting, 149 balls) was equally defiant as they joined forces at a precarious 54 for five and added 143 runs for the unbroken sixth wicket.

This was after a 64-run seventh wicket stand between centurion Himanshu Mantri (165, 372 balls) and Puneet Datey (33) took Madhya Pradesh to a more than respectable first inning score of 341.

## Navi Mumbai to host FIFA U17 Women's WC final

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai will host the summit clash of the U-17 Women's World Cup on October 30 while the semi-finals will be played in Goa, FIFA and Local Organising Committee (LOC) announced on Wednesday.

Bhubaneswar is set to host India's three group stage matches beginning on October 11.

The official draw will take place on June 24th.

The 24 group stage games will conclude on October 18 and the matches will be shared among all three host states - Odisha, Goa and Maharashtra.

The quarter-final round of games will be held on October 21 and 22 following which the semi-finals will be held on October 26.

The Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar will see hosts India

compete in all three group stage games on October 11, 14 and 17.

Meanwhile, the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai and the Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Fatorda will equally share the four quarterfinal games.

A total of 32 games contested by 16 teams will decide the winner of the seventh edition of the biennial youth tournament over 10 match-days, with each venue hosting double headers on each match-day.

Promoting women in leadership, the LOC has equipped the Indian footballing ecosystem with 162 female coaches in the grassroots through its legacy initiative, the Coach Education Scholarship Programme. Further editions of both, the coaching programme and the football carnival, are planned in the lead up to the 11th October kick off.