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A SILENT PRAYER
FOR SREBRENICA

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RUSSIA BECOMES BIGGEST
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INDIA FACING NEAR-TERM
CHALLENGES: REPORT

NEW DELHI, TUESDAY JUNE 21, 2022: PAGES 12 ₹3

the pioneer

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VERSTAPPEN
WINS CANADIAN
GRAND PRIX
11 SPORT

India inc hails Agnipath

Agniveers have
large job potential
in corporate sec:
Industry leadersPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Days after the Home and Defence Ministries announced 10 per cent reservation for demobilised “Agniveers” in the paramilitary forces and the defence public sector undertakings (PSUs), Indian business magnates on Monday said the Agnipath scheme has a large potential for employment and offered to recruit Agniveers in the corporate sector.

This support to the scheme, which has led to unrest in many States, came against the backdrop of some State Governments also assuring a secure future for Agniveers after the mandatory four-year stint in the armed forces.

Industry leaders, including Mahindra Group chairman Anand Mahindra, RPG Enterprises chairman Harsh Goenka and Biocon Ltd chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw on Monday came out in support of the Agnipath scheme.

Mahindra also expressed dismay over the violence against the scheme while asserting that the farm equipment to aerospace conglomerate welcomes the opportunity to recruit trained, capable and young people under the programme.

Expressing his opinion on the scheme, Mahindra said there is a large potential for employment of Agniveers in the corporate sector. “Saddened by the violence around the #Agnipath program. When the scheme was mooted last year I stated and I repeat the discipline and skills Agniveers gain will make them eminently employable,” he tweeted.

The Mahindra Group welcomes the opportunity to recruit such trained and capable young people, he further said.

When asked by a Twitter user on what post will be given by the Mahindra Group to Agniveers, he responded, “Large potential for employment of Agniveers in the corporate sector.

With leadership, teamwork and physical training, Agniveers provide market-ready professional solutions to industry, covering the full spectrum from operations to administration and supply chain management.”

Responding to Mahindra’s tweet, Goenka said, “The RPG group too welcomes the oppor-

tunity to employ the Agniveers. I do hope other corporates will also join us to take this pledge and assure our youths of a future.”

Expressing similar views, Mazumdar-Shaw tweeted: “I firmly believe that Agniveers will have a distinct advantage in recruitment in the industrial job market.”

Apollo Hospitals Group joint managing director Sangita Reddy said in a tweet: “I firmly believe the discipline and skills that #Agniveers will gain will provide market-ready professional 4 R industry I sincerely hope the industry supports recruiting such capable young people...”

TVS Motor Company managing director Sudarshan Venu had on Friday said the Agnipath scheme will have a significant positive impact on the society, and contribute greatly to nation building. “Agniveers will play a key role in furthering economic growth and strengthening society in the coming years,” Venu had said in a statement.

Executive vice chairperson and founder of Info Edge — the parent company of job portal Naukri.com — Sanjeev Bikhchandani hailed the Agnipath and said that if a person serves in the armed forces for four years, they will finish as a disciplined and trained professional with a college degree.

Some reforms may look unfair at first,
but help nation in the long run: ModiPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Against the backdrop of countrywide protests and stinging Opposition criticism over the Agnipath military recruitment scheme, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said some reforms “may look unfair” at first, but will help in nation-building later.

The three services chiefs are set to meet the Prime Minister on Tuesday to brief him on the Agnipath recruitment scheme. Navy chief Admiral R Hari Kumar is scheduled to meet Modi first, according to sources.

The three services have already issued notifications to begin recruitment of Agniveers under the new military scheme.

As the Opposition leaders sought to put the Government on the mat over the Modi Government’s new recruitment policy which seeks to recruit youths to the Army, the Navy and the Air Force for four-year-term, the Prime Minister made comments in Bengaluru with-



Prime Minister Narendra Modi receives a memento from Karnataka CM Basavaraj Bommai during the launch of railway and road projects, in Bengaluru on Monday

PTI

out referring to the Agnipath but apparently alluding to it.

“Several decisions look unfair at present. In time, those decisions will help in building the nation,” Modi said at a pub-

lic address in Karnataka’s Capital.

“Reforms may be unpleasant temporarily but beneficial over time. The path of reforms can alone take us towards new

targets and new resolve,” he said after inaugurating or laying the foundation for various developmental works in Karnataka.

Continued on Page 2

Army starts hiring process,
online application mustPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

As protests continue against the Agnipath scheme, the Army on Monday set the ball rolling by issuing a formal notification for recruitment of jawans known as Agniveers and said it is mandatory to apply online on its website.

The IAF and the Navy will issue a similar notification on June 24 and 25. The Navy will also induct women as Agniveers in the first batch. More than 46,000 jawans will be recruited for the three Services in the first batch under the Agnipath scheme.

Army Chief General Manoj Pande said the Agnipath scheme was a win-win for both the youth and the Army and urged aspirants not to be misled by wrong information.

Meanwhile, releasing the notification, the Army made it clear online registration on its website

www.Joinindianarmy.Nic.In is mandatory for all job aspirants and registration will begin

from July.

The Army also said the Agniveers will form a distinct rank in the force. This rank will be different from the existing ranks in the Army. The Agniveers will wear a “distinctive insignia” on their uniform during their service period and that detailed instructions on it will be issued separately.

The notification said the Agniveers will be barred from disclosing classified information gained during the four-year service period to any unauthorised person or source under the Official Secrets Act, 1923.

“With the introduction of this scheme, the enrolment of soldiers in the regular cadre of the Indian Army, except technical cadre of the medical branch, will be available only to those personnel who have completed their engagement period as Agniveers,” it said.

The Army also clarified the release of an Agniveer at own request prior to completion of terms of engagement is not permitted. Continued on Page 2

Road, rail commuters
bear brunt of protests,
612 trains cancelled

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The day-long Bharat Bandh protest against the Agnipath military recruitment scheme on Monday led to disruption of road and rail traffic in some States amid stepped up security and curbs in the wake of days of unrest on the issue.

Amid the ongoing disruptions, the railways cancelled 612 trains, including 223 mail/express trains and 379 passenger trains, the railways said in a statement. The bandh call was given on social media and did not name the organisations behind it, officials said.

The national Capital witnessed massive traffic jams as restrictions were in place due to the bandh and the satyagraha protest by the Congress over the Agnipath scheme and the questioning of Rahul Gandhi by the ED

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, party’s leader in

the Lok Sabha Adir Ranjan Chowdhury, senior leaders Sachin Pilot, Salman Khurshid, Mallikarjun Kharge and KC Venugopal took part in the protest at Jantar Mantar.

Indian Youth Congress workers stopped a train at the Shivaji Bridge railway station in Delhi. Sixteen protesters were detained and the track was cleared by security personnel after about half an hour, sources said.

Commuters from Noida and Gurugram to Delhi were stuck in traffic snarls as the Central Delhi remained the hub of the protests.

Other States like Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Assam and Rajasthan had also put in place heightened security measures and imposed prohibitory orders in some districts to thwart possible protests and violence during the strike.

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Cong leaders meet Kovind,
call for rollback of AgnipathPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Congress continued to put pressure on the Centre for the rollback of the controversial Agnipath scheme. After a sit-in protest at Jantar Mantar, the party leaders on Monday met President Ram Nath Kovind and demanded immediate rollback of the scheme that has triggered countrywide protests for the several days.

The grand old party also cited late Gen Bipin Rawat’s 2020 proposal to raise the retirement age of soldiers and officers and asked if the new recruitment plan was not an insult to India’s first Chief of Defence Staff.

In their meeting with Kovind, the leaders also raised the issue of alleged ill-treatment of the party MPs by police during their protest against the ED questioning of former party chief Rahul Gandhi.

The Congress delegation



Congress leaders Ashok Gehlot, KC Venugopal, Mallikarjun Kharge, Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, P Chidambaram and Bhupesh Baghel address the media after meeting President Ram Nath Kovind in New Delhi on Monday

PTI

comprised Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, leader of the Congress in the Lok Sabha Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel, senior leaders P

Chidambaram, Jairam Ramesh and KC Venugopal.

The leaders along with the party MPs earlier took out a solidarity march from Parliament House to Vijay Chowk, where they were stopped by the Delhi Police.

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Modi to lead Yoga Day from Mysore

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

After two tumultuous years of the Covid-19 pandemic, India tends to celebrate the eighth edition of International Day of Yoga (IDY) on June 21 on Tuesday, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi leading the world by participating in a mass yoga demonstration at Mysore Palace ground in Karnataka.

It is expected that over 15,000 participants will participate in the yoga event along with the Prime Minister at Mysore, with cores of people joining various IDY 2022 programmes across India and the world.

Modi is already on a two-day visit to Karnataka from Monday, wherein, he will launch several developmental projects and also take part in the International Yoga Day on Tuesday. Integrating the “Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav” with the yoga day, the Prime Minister Office (PMO) said mass yoga demonstrations will be organised at 75 iconic loca-



Army, ITBP and NCC personnel perform yoga 'asanas' on the eve of the International Day of Yoga at Gangotri on Monday

PTI

tions across the country under the leadership of 75 Union Ministers, with Modi attending the event at Mysore. An expo on yoga has also been held on the premises.

The yoga demonstrations will also be held by various educational, social, political, cultural, religious, corporate and other civil society organisations, and will be attended by crores of people across the

country, it said.

Modi’s yoga plan is a part of the novel “Guardian Yoga Ring” programme, which is a collaborative exercise between 79 countries and United Nations Organisation along with Indian missions abroad to illustrate yoga’s unifying power beyond frontiers.

As the sun moves from the east to the west across the globe, the mass yoga demon-

strations in the participating countries, if seen from any point on the earth, will take place one after another, almost in tandem, thus underlining the idea of “One sun, one earth,” the PMO said.

The theme for this year’s Yoga day is “Yoga for Humanity”. The theme portrays how yoga served humanity in alleviating sufferings during the Covid pandemic, it noted.

This flagship event of the Ministry of Ayush is being co-organised with the Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga.

Thaawarchand Gehlot, Governor of Karnataka, Basavaraj S Bommai, Chief Minister of Karnataka, Union Minister for Ayush, Ports, Shipping & Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal, and official of Ministry of Ayush and Government of Karnataka and other dignitaries will perform Yoga in the main Mysore yoga event.

Sonowal said, “The enthusiasm and excitement, which has been created in 100 days through 100 organisations, 100 cities campaigns, will lead to record participation not only in India but across the world.” Various embassies and diplomats besides NRIs will perform yogas at their respective countries, he added.

The digital yoga exhibition will showcase the latest technologies like virtual reality (VR) to project the history and wisdom of yoga.

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Suicide pact! 9 of
family found dead

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a shocking incident of suspected mass suicide, nine members of a family were found dead in two different houses at Mhaisal village in Miraj taluka of Sangli district in western Maharashtra on Monday morning.

The deceased-comprising two brothers Dr Manik Yellappa Waghmare and Popat Yellappa Waghmare, their mother, wives, and their four children -reportedly committed suicide by consuming some poisonous substance on Sunday night, in what appeared to be fallout of a suicide pact reached among them.

The two brothers used to live in different houses. “Of the nine bodies, we found three bodies at one place, while we recovered the remaining bodies at different places in the house,” Sangli Superintendent of Police Dikshit Gedam said.

The preliminary probe has revealed that they had consumed some poison simulta-

neously on Sunday night.

While it was not known as to what had prompted them to commit mass suicide, speculation had it that the two brothers had borrowed heavily and were finding it difficult to repay the debt.

The investigators have a strong reason to believe that the nine members of a family — living in two houses — had reached an understanding about ending their lives simultaneously.

The nine deceased Waghmare family members comprised two brothers Dr Manik, Popat, their mother, and six other members. While Dr Manik is a veterinary doctor, Popat is a teacher.

The police identified the deceased as Dr Manik Waghmare, his mother Akkatai, wife Rekha Manik Waghmare, children Pratima Waghmare, Aditya Waghmare; Popat Waghmare, his wife Archana Waghmare and their children Sangeeta Waghmare and Shubam Waghmare.

BJP wins 5, Sena
2, NCP 2, Cong 1
in Maharashtra
MLC elections

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Just ten days after it sprang a nasty surprise on the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) the Rajya Sabha polls, the Opposition BJP on Monday evening jolted the ruling MVA once again by winning five out of the ten Maharashtra Legislative Council (MLC) seats for which elections were held earlier in the day.

The BJP candidates — Praveen Darekar, Ram Shinde, Shrikant Bharatiya, Uma Khapre and Prasad Lad — romped home in the Council polls, while the ruling NCP and the Shiv Sena won two seats each and the Congress could bag just one seat.

The ruling Congress — which had fielded two candidates managed to win only one seat in the polls. Ironically enough, Congress’ first preference candidate Handore suffered a humiliating defeat.

Detailed report on P2

NCR PULSE

3 CONGRESS LEADERS JOIN AAP
New Delhi: Influenced by the work being done by the Aam Aadmi Party Government in all areas including schools, hospitals, electricity, water, roads, women's safety and free bus travel for women and WiFi, Congress leader Pradeep Kaushik, Jitendra Chaudhary, and Janak Kaushik joined the AAP on Monday in the presence of Rajinder Nagar by-elections candidate Durgesh Pathak.

DSEU ANNOUNCES COLLABORATION WITH SAP
New Delhi: The Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University on Monday announced collaboration with SAP. The collaboration of the two entities is focused on development of the youth skilling ecosystem through course and curriculum development in areas of emerging technologies, DSEU focuses on skilling the future workforce and SAP's strategy is to help every business run as an intelligent, sustainable enterprise.

LG MEETS DELEGATION OF SANITATION WORKERS
New Delhi: A delegation of safai karamchari workers led by former MLA and senior Dalit leader Jai Kishan on Monday met Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena, urging him to improve working conditions of safai karamchari in the national capital. The Congress leader has also demanded to increase the salary of safai karamchari and regularize them. "There was no recruitment of safai karamchari in the last three years," he said.

MOTHER-DAUGHTER ARRESTED FOR BLACKMAIL
Gurugram: A mother-daughter has been arrested in Gurugram for blackmailing a man and trying to extort Rs 50 lakh for withdrawal of a rape case. The woman and her daughter have been arrested by the Women police station Sector-51 on charges of extortion following a complaint by the victim's brother. The complainant told the police that the duo accused had allegedly demanded 50 lakh from his brother to withdraw the rape case. But his brother cited an inability to pay that amount and later the deal was struck at Rs 30 lakh rupees in installments.

SISODIA APPEALS TO RAJINDER NAGAR TO VOTE FOR AAP
New Delhi: Appealing to the residents of Rajinder Nagar to vote to AAP candidate in the upcoming assembly polls, Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said, "This time people of Rajinder Nagar should use their vote to choose to increase the pace of development of Delhi." He said that on June 23, the people of Rajinder Nagar should elect an honest, true and dedicated leader like Durgesh Pathak. Sisodia said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, splendid work has been done to improve education, health, electricity, water, and basic infrastructure.

ABVP, DUSU MEET DU VICE-CHANCELLOR
New Delhi: A joint delegation of Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) and Delhi University Students Union (DUSU) met the university's Vice-Chancellor Yogesh Singh on Monday and submitted a memorandum requesting him to set up an 'Incubation Center' to guide students in various fields. They also urged the VC to launch the 'Earn while Learn' initiative, under which 10,000 students should be provided paid internships, the RSS-affiliated ABVP said in a statement.

YOGA WEEK TO BE ORGANISED AT DU
New Delhi: A yoga week will be organised at the Delhi University starting Tuesday to commemorate the 8th International Day of Yoga, officials said. As a part of the yoga week, a programme will be organised in the Multipurpose Hall of the University Stadium on June 22.

NATIONAL CONTEST FOR ASPIRING WRITERS
New Delhi: Byrge, an online app for readers created by Notion Press, has launched a 'National Writing Contest' for aspiring writers, to identify the best fiction writers in India who write in English or any other Indian language. The registration process has begun and the last date for submission is July 10, 2022. The winning writer will be awarded Rs 25,000. "The contest will motivate aspiring writers to finally pen down stories that they have been longing to share," said Naveen Valsakumar, CEO and co-founder of Notion Press.

Maha council polls: BJP pips ruling MVA again

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Just ten days after it sprang a nasty surprise on the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), the Opposition BJP on Monday evening jolted the ruling MVA once again by winning five out of the ten Maharashtra Legislative Council (MLC) seats for which elections were elections were held earlier in the day. The BJP candidates - Praveen Darekar, Ram Shinde, Shrikant Bharatiya, Uma Khapre and Prasad Lad - romped home in the Council polls, while the ruling NCP and Shiv Sena won two seats each and the Congress could bag just one seat.

While the NCP's Ramraje Nimbalkar and Eknath Khadse emerged victors, the Shiv Sena nominees -- Aamshya Padavi and Sachin Ahir -- won in the polls. The ruling Congress -- which had fielded two candidates -- Bhai Jagtap and Chandrakant Handore -- managed to win only one seat, as Jagtap was elected in the polls.

Ironically enough, Congress' first preference candidate Handore suffered a humiliating defeat.

In the 288-member State Assembly, 285 cast their votes. One of the members -- Shiv Sena MLA Ramesh Latke -- had died last month, while two incarcerated former ministers and MLAs Anil Deshmukh and Nawab Malik -- who are currently judicial custody in separate money laundering cases -- were not allowed to vote, as the court denied them temporary bail to exercise their voting rights.

The Opposition BJP -- which has 106 MLAs in the state Assembly votes -- pulled off an impossible feat in the polls, as it bagged all the five seats for which it had put up candidates.

In the State Assembly, the Shiv Sena has a strength of 55 MLAs, while its allies the NCP and Congress have 51 and 44 seats each respectively. Independents and MLAs from smaller parties collectively account for 29 MLAs

On paper, the BJP needed 24 additional votes to get its five candidates elected while the Congress needed eight additional votes to ensure the victory of both of its candidates to the Council. The Sena, which had the full quota of 52 votes to ensure the victory of both of its candidates, had three surplus votes. The NCP was short of just one vote to take its tally to 52 votes and get both candidates elected.

Earlier in the day, the counting of votes -- which was originally scheduled to start at 5 pm, was delayed by over two hours after the Congress raised an objection to the votes cast by BJP MLAs Mukta Tilak and Laxman Jagtap.

The ailing BJP MLAs had cast their votes with the help of assistants, which was objected to by the Congress, a key constituent of the ruling Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA). However, the Election Commission of India (ECI) rejected the Congress' objection and gave a go ahead to counting of votes.

Muslim boy mentioned in PM's blog settled in Australia, says Modi's brother Prahlad

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Abbas Ramsada, the Muslim boy who had lived for over three years at Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Vadnagar home in the early 70s and became like a family member, is now enjoying his retirement life with his son in Sydney, the PM's younger brother Prahlad Modi said on Monday.

Abbas Ramsada found a mention in the blog written by PM Modi on the occasion of his mother Hiraba entering the 100th year of her life on Saturday.

Abbas was a classmate and friend of Pankaj Modi, the youngest of the Modi siblings.

"Abbas became an integral part of the Modi family," Prahlad Modi, president of the Gujarat Fair Price Shop Owners Association, told PTI.

In his blog, the prime minister mentioned how his father Damodardas had brought his friend's son Abbas to their home after the death of Abbas' father.

"A close friend of my father used to stay in a nearby village. After his untimely death, my father brought his friend's son, Abbas, to our home. He stayed with us and completed his studies. Mother (Hiraba) was as affectionate and caring towards Abbas just like she did for all of us siblings. Every year on Eid, she

used to prepare his favourite dishes" the PM had written.

According to Prahlad Modi, Abbas Ramsada was a native of Kesimpa village near Vadnagar town in the Mehsana district and was a classmate of Pankaj Modi at Shree BN High School in Vadnagar. "When Pankaj learnt that Abbas might have to leave his studies mid-way due to the untimely death in his family, Pankaj urged my parents to do something for his friend. Without any hesitation, my father brought him to our house to ensure that he finishes his education. He stayed with us till the completion of his matriculation," said Prahlad Modi.

According to him, Abbas

Parwanoo cable car gets stuck for 6 hrs, 11 rescued

PTI ■ SHIMLA

Eleven people were stranded for hours after a cable car was stuck mid-air at Parwanoo Timber Trail in Himachal Pradesh's Solan district, officials said on Monday.

All of them were rescued after a six-hour-long operation, they said.

Eleven people were stranded mid-air in a cable car at Parwanoo Timber Trail in Solan as rescuers began bringing them to safety one by one, a state disaster management official said.

All 11 tourists were rescued, the officials said, adding the incident was reported around 11 am.

Earlier, Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur said that the rescue operation was going on at Parwanoo Timber Trail in Solan. "I will also reach the site soon. Teams from NDRF and district administration are at the spot and all the passengers will be rescued," Thakur said in a tweet in Hindi.

One of the rescued persons told the media that all 11 tourists were from Delhi.



According to Solan Superintendent of Police Virendra Sharma, another cable car trolley was deployed to rescue the people.

A National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) team

also reached the spot.

Earlier, State Disaster Management Director Sudesh Mokhta said eight people were stuck in the timber trail due to some technical snag in the cable car.

DCW issues notice to Indian Bank seeking withdrawal of guidelines preventing 3-month pregnant woman from joining service

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Commission For Women (DCW) has issued a notice to the Indian Bank seeking withdrawal of its new recruitment guidelines which prevents a woman, who is three or more months pregnant, from joining service.

An immediate reaction regarding the move, which has invited criticism from various quarters, was not available from the public sector lender.

Earlier in January, the country's largest lender SBI had put in place new rules which said a woman candidate with more than three months pregnancy

will be considered "temporarily unfit" and can join the bank within four months after delivery.

After criticism from various quarters, the SBI suspended the revised guidelines on the recruitment of pregnant women.

In its notice, the DCW said the alleged action of the Indian Bank is "discriminatory and illegal" as it is contrary to the Maternity Benefits provided under 'The Code of Social Security, 2020'.

"Further, it discriminates on the basis of sex which is against the fundamental rights guaranteed under the Constitution of India," the DCW said.

Some reforms may look...

From Page 1
"We have opened up the space and the defence sector which for decades were under the government control," Modi further said.

Opposition political parties and organizations have announced protests against the scheme saying it is an "insult" to the brave soldiers defending the country.

Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge questioned the Prime

Minister's "silence" on the Agnipath issue. A day after a tri-services media briefing at the Defence Ministry took place on the Agnipath, Kharge said, "For the first time in 75 years, service chiefs are being fronted to defend a policy decision by the Government." "Why are the Prime Minister, the Home Minister and the Defence Minister quiet on the Agnipath scheme?" the senior Congress leader tweeted.

Road, rail commuters bear...

From Page 1
Heavy deployments of police personnel were made at railway stations, including those in Ambala, Rewari and Sonipat in Haryana and Ludhiana, Jalandhar and Amritsar in Punjab to prevent any untoward incident, officials said. Protests were reported in some parts of Haryana, Punjab and Jammu.

"Bharat Bandh call was given on social media though no group had owned it. The police were on alert since Monday morning with elaborate arrange-

ments being made with vast deployment of the force," Uttar Pradesh Additional Director General of Police (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar said.

As many as 151 companies of State and Central paramilitary besides the civil police were deployed, he said adding that no untoward incident has been reported from anywhere.

"There has been no impact of the Bharat Bandh call anywhere in the State," he said.

Over 5,000 security personnel were deployed in Jharkhand and schools remained shut across the State in view of the bandh.

Army starts hiring...

From Page 1
"However, in most exceptional cases, personnel enrolled under this scheme may be released, if sanctioned by the competent authority," it said.

The Army said the new recruits will be subjected to the provisions of the Army Act, 1950, and will be liable to go wherever ordered by land, sea or air.

Based on organisational requirements and policies, the Agniveers, on completion of their engagement period in each batch, will be offered an

opportunity to apply for enrolment in the regular cadre.

"These applications will be considered in a centralised manner by the Army based on objective criteria, including performance during their engagement period and not more than 25 per cent of each specific batch of the Agniveers will be enrolled in regular cadre post completion of their four-year engagement period," the notification said.

"Agniveers so enrolled as regular cadre would be required to serve for a further

Cong leaders meet Kovind, call...

From Page 1
Speaking at the sit-in at Jantar Mantar, Gehlot attacked the Government, saying it spoke about bringing back black money and promised jobs but nothing materialised.

"They're selling off every asset of the country instead. They're trying to scare Congress and Rahul Gandhi by misusing the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the ED and the Income Tax

department. But it is the BJP and the NDA Government who are scared. Everyone is worried and no one knows where this country is headed," Gehlot said.

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel demanded the withdrawal of the Agnipath scheme and alleged that the Centre is behaving "disgracefully" with those who protect the borders of India.

Gopalkrishna says no to Prez...

From Page 1
The polls, if necessary, will be held on July 18 and the counting on July 21. Meanwhile, Asaduddin Owaisi-led AIMIM will also attend the Opposition meeting called by Sharad Pawar on Tuesday to discuss the candidate for the presidential election. Several other parties such as the Shiromani Akali Dal and the YSR Congress are likely to skip the meeting. This will be

the second such meeting of the Opposition parties.

On June 15, TMC supremo and West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had called a meeting to discuss the candidate for the July 18 presidential poll, which was attended by 17 parties, including the Congress, the Samajwadi Party, Left parties, and the Shiv Sena among others. The AIMIM did not participate in the meeting.

Modi to lead Yoga Day from...

From Page 1
The static exhibition consists of 146 stalls that have been taken up by yoga institutions, Ayush institutions under the ambit of the Karnataka Government.

It is expected that as many as 25 crores people will participate in 'International Day of Yoga 2022' celebrations across the world, said an official from the Ayush Ministry.

He also said that the Prime Minister's Award for Outstanding Contribution towards the Development and Promotion of Yoga has been announced for the year 2021 to two persons namely, Bhikkhu Sanghasena Leh from Ladakh and Marcus Vinicius Rojo Rodrigues, Sao Paulo, Brazil; while the two organizations to be conferred this award are The Divine Life Society, Rishikesh, Uttarakhand and the British Wheel of Yoga, United Kingdom.

Citing the development projects the Prime Minister will launch during his two-day visit, the PMO said, Modi will lay the foundation stone of Bengaluru Suburban rail project (BSRP) which will connect Bengaluru city with its suburbs and satellite towns.

Union Territory of JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
SPECIAL SUB DIVISION GUREZ
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
3rd Call e-NIT No (78) EE/SSDG/2830-392022-23 Dated:-18-06-2022
For and on behalf for Lt. Governor UT of J&K, Executive Engineer Special Sub Division Gurez invites-tenders from reputed and resourceful Bidders/Firms/ Companies/of all classes registered in JKPWD/CPWD/Railways or any other state Government for below mentioned works at various Water Supply schemes of Special Sub Division Gurez of Kashmir Province of UT of J&K, under NABARD. The bidding process shall be completed online on www.jktenders.gov.in in two covers viz. Cover 1" consisting of General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications and Cover 2" consisting of Financial Bid on overall **Percentage** basis, in the prescribed BOQ.
Sr.No 1. Particulars of the work :- Construction of 0.10 MGD slow sand filtration plant, Construction of intake chamber of head site, construction of crate protection work at sports, laying /fitting of MS flanged pipes/DI pipes and Providing laying of G.I Pipes for WSS Checknallah Markoot "Under NABARD)
Estimated Cost (Lacs):- 145.00. **Tender fee (in Rs) :-** 2600 **Earnest money Deposit :-** 290000 **Time of Completion of work (days) :-** 90 Days, **Class of Contract :-** AAY
Position offer under : Approved Under NABARD
The tender inviting authority is Executive Engineer, Special Sub Division Gurez.
The awarding authority is District NABARD.
Critical Dates:
I) Publish Date :- 18-06-2022 at 9.00 AM
II) Document Download Start Date :- 18-06-2022 at 4.00 PM
III) Clarification Start date :- 20-06-2022 from 10.00 A.M
IV) Clarification End date :- 28-06-2022 up to 4:00 P.M
V) Bid submission Start date :- 18-06-2022 from 4:00 P.M
VI) Bid submission End date :- 29-06-2022 at 4:00 P.M.
VII) Date of Bid opening :- 29-06-2022 at 5:00 P.M.
1. Bid documents can be accessed and downloaded from the website www.jktenders.gov.in
2. The whole bidding process shall be completed online on tender portal www.jktenders.gov.in. The intending bidders can download the bid document from the tender portal and can submit their bids by uploading the month e-tender portal.
3. The valid bids received shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Special Sub Division Gurez Bids must be accompanied by bid security and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 4 & 5 of the table and shall be payable at Sinagar.
A. The cost of tender documents should be in form of DD/TR/e challan in favour of **Executive Engineer Special Sub division Gurez.**
4. The hard copies of cost of tender document in shape of TR/e-challan, Earnest money in shape of CDR/FDR/BG and other relevant documents shall be obtained from the bidder who is declared as 1st after opening of financial cover.
5. The bid shall remain valid for a period of **120 days** from the last date of submission of bids. If any bidder withdraws his bid before the said period or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid, the same shall be considered to be in violation of bid security declaration and shall be dealt with accordingly and the bid shall be declared non-responsive.
6. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website www.jktenders.gov.in
7. Queries by email if any should be made at _____
No. DIPK-4371/22
Dated:- 20-06-2022
Sd/- Executive Engineer
Special Sub Division Gurez

GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA, "e"-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
WORKS DEPARTMENT
E-mail : ceworldbankprojects@gmail.com
B-290
1.'The Chief Engineer (World Bank Project), Odisha on behalf of Governor of Odisha inviting percentage rate bid in double cover system in ONLINE MODE firm eligible contractors for construction of Road & Bridge works as detailed in the table below :
2. Nature of work :- ROB work
3. No. of work :- 01 no.
4. Tender cost :- Rs.10,000.00
5. Class of Contractor :- Super Class Contractor
6. Available of bid document in the website :- From 10.00 AM of 20.06.2022 to 5.00 PM of 12.07.2022
7. Pre-Bid meeting :- Dt.27.06.2022 at 11.30 AM
8. Date of opening of Bid :- Dt.13.07.2022 at 11.30 AM
9.The Bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: <https://tenderodisha.gov.in>. Anyaddendum/corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website.
Sd/- Chief Engineer
World Bank Project, Odisha
OIPR : 34003/11/0014/2223
PUBLIC NOTICE
ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005
The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Manoj Kumar Grover, Anjali., Flat No.606 Building No.C3, Pwo Complex, Sector 43 Near Huda Metro Station Gurgaon Haryana. A/c No. LBZM000002009140	Flat No. G-11, 7th Floor Palm Heights Galaxy Developers, Sec-125 New Sunny Enclave Behind Air Force Naval Housing Society Kharar Mohali Punjab	18/05/2022 Rs. 38,20,562/-	08/02/2022
2.	Manoj Kumar Grover, Anjali., Flat No.606 Building No.C3, Pwo Complex, Sector 43 Near Huda Metro Station Gurgaon Haryana. A/c No. LBZM000002009640	Flat No. G-11, 7th Floor Palm Heights Galaxy Developers, Sec-125 New Sunny Enclave Behind Air Force Naval Housing Society Kharar Mohali Punjab	18/05/2022 Rs. 38,20,515/-	08/02/2022

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 21, 2022
Place : Gurgaon
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

Monday morning blues made worse by traffic snarls



Barricades put up by cops amid Bharat Bandh call over Agnipath led to jams on roads leading to Delhi from Gurugram, Faridabad, Noida

STAFF REPORTER/PARVESH SHARMA ■ NEW DELHI/GURUGRAM/ NOIDA

Commuters had a harrowing time as traffic crawled for several hours on key arterial stretches entering Delhi from the neighbouring cities of Gurugram, Faridabad, Ghaziabad and Noida, due to the barricades put up by the police amid the Bharat Bandh call given by some outfits against the Agnipath Defence recruitment scheme. Delhi and Gurugram police intensified vehicle checking at the Delhi-Gurugram border on National Highway 48, near the Sirhaul border which resulted in a major traffic jam.

The Delhi Police has put up its barricades at the borders and only a few lanes were open for the traffic entering the city which led to massive traffic jams at Delhi's borders, including the entry point from Noida via DND, Chilla border and Ghazipur.

Inside the Capital, Lutyns' Delhi, which was the epicentre of the protests, remained chock-a-block and commuters were left stranded at a number of locations such as Connaught Place, Jantar Mantar, Barapullah corridor, Ring Road, Vikas Marg, and ITO. Several roads were also heavily barricaded in Lutyns' Delhi, which forced commuters to opt for alternate routes, thereby leading to more chaos on the roads. Videos of long queues of vehicles at Delhi's borders

Senior Cong leaders, workers protest against Agnipath at Jantar Mantar

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leaders and workers held a protest at Jantar Mantar here against the Centre's Agnipath defence recruitment scheme and the questioning of party leader Rahul Gandhi by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case. Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, party's leader in the Lok Sabha Adir Ranjan Chowdhury, senior leaders Sachin Pilot, Salman Khurshid, Mallikarjun Kharge and KC Venugopal took part in the protest.

However, police also detained 178 party workers and leaders, including Ganesh Ghogra (MLA, Rajasthan), under section 65 of Delhi Police (DP) Act. According to Dr Sagar Preet Hooda, the

Special Commissioner of Police, Law and order, a request was received from the Secretary, All India Congress Committee (AICC) for grant of permission to hold a Satyagraha at the Jantar Mantar, New Delhi on June 20.06.2022 and the permission was granted for gathering up to 1,000 party workers with certain conditions.

"The AICC supporters exceeding the permitted numbers were directed to leave the area in view of the prohibitory orders under section 144 CrPC in force," said the Special CP. Meanwhile, several organisations on Monday also held a demonstration against the Agnipath scheme at Jantar Mantar.

All the member organisations of Sanyukt Rojgar Andolan Samiti (SRAS) includ-

ing Desh Ki Baat Foundation, Chatra Yuva Sangharsh Samiti (CYSS), Revolutionary Youth Association (RYA), Students' Federation of India (SFI) and the Aam Aadmi Party youth wing participated in the "peaceful" demonstration, the SRAS said. "The Agneepath scheme by the Modi government betrays the youth and weakens the army," it alleged.

Delhi Minister Gopal Rai expressed solidarity with the SRAS protest. "Today, peacefully protesting at Jantar Mantar is banned. It is the murder of democracy, but it cannot barricade the voice against the Agneepath scheme."

The comment by the BJP leader Kailash Vijayvargiya yesterday that BJP will give security jobs to Agniveers in BJP offices shows the mindset of the BJP," he said.

Expressway also witnessed heavy traffic jam due to the Bharat Bandh call. The officials of the Gurugram traffic control room said that the traffic movement on the expressway is slow due to Delhi police putting up barricades on the Delhi-Gurugram border and near the Rajokri flyover.

"Police are updating people about the traffic situation in Gurugram through the official

social media handles," said Ravinder Kumar Tomer, DCP (traffic) adding that while regular vehicles can pass, checks are likely to slow traffic down or lead to jams. More than 1,100 traffic cops have been deployed at all major points," he said.

"The Gurugram police are already on high alert amid the demonstration. The strength of the personnel has already been

IYC workers stop train at Shivaji Bridge railway station

NEW DELHI: Indian Youth Congress (IYC) workers on Monday stopped a train at Shivaji Bridge railway station near Connaught Place here to protest against questioning of Rahul Gandhi's by Enforcement Directorate and to push for their demand for a rollback of Agnipath defence recruitment scheme.

Police said that 16 protesters were detained as police personnel tried to remove them from tracks and station.

However, the track was cleared by police and security personnel and train movement resumed after about half an hour. In a tweet, the IYC said, "Members of youth Congress stopped train at Shivaji Bridge while demonstrating against illegal investigation of Rahul Gandhi by ED and 'Agnipath Scheme' of Central

Government."The organisation's national president, Srinivas BV, said IYC will keep fighting for unemployed youth of the country. "The government needs to rollback Agniveer scheme. Youth Congress will fight for unemployed youth this country who want to serve country. The IYC stopped train in Delhi to attract attention of autocratic Government," Srinivas B V said.

The police said a group of IYC protesters had gathered at Shivaji Bridge railway station. They stopped a train there after coming on railway tracks from where they were removed later, police said. IYC members also staged a protest at nearby CP. Gandhi on Monday appeared before ED for fourth day of questioning in National Herald money laundering case.

increased at all the connecting borders of the district. Traffic advisory had been also issued," he said. A massive pile-up was seen on the expressway near the Sirhaul border as the Delhi Police was inspecting every vehicle before it entered the Capital, to ensure law and order. The gridlock began around 8:30 A.M. and grew worse during the peak hours. Delhi Police warned of

strict action against those trying to disrupt the law and order situation, however, no untoward incident was reported.

Since Monday morning, there was heavy security deployment at railways stations across the national Capital and the Government Railway Police Force was also coordinating with its units in the neighbouring States.

India's security will be compromised: AAP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Aam Aadmi Party AAP on Monday claimed that the Agnipath scheme will not only make the future of recruits uncertain but also "compromise" with India's security, and exhorted the protesters to shun violence and prepare a plan to sustain the "movement" against the new military recruitment plan.

Addressing a press conference, Rajya Sabha MP and national spokesperson Sanjay Singh asserted that the

Narendra Modi Government will have to eventually withdraw the scheme if the protest against it continues in a democratic manner sans violence.

The AAP has already taken to the streets to protest the new military recruitment scheme and will also "firmly" raise the issue in Parliament during the upcoming Monsoon Session, he added.

"I want to tell the youth that you prepare a plan to sustain your movement for a longer period so that pressure is built on the (Union) Government."

20 including dozen Congress workers detained in Noida

NOIDA: The Gautam Buddha Nagar police on Monday detained over 20 people, including around a dozen Congress leaders and workers, while they were moving towards Delhi to participate in anti-Agnipath protests.

Police personnel, including senior officers, were deployed at the border points of Gautam Buddha Nagar district, adjoining Delhi, and inspection of vehicles intensified in view of the call for the strike, the officials said. The

intensified checking led to slowing down of vehicular movement at Delhi-Noida border points like DND and the Chilla routes, with traffic snarls impacting hundreds of cars and two-wheelers including those of office-goers. Gautam Buddha Nagar Police Commissioner Alok Singh also hit ground to oversee security deployment in western Uttar Pradesh district, which had witnessed violence last week in week of Agnipath scheme's announcement. SR

Jain admitted to LNJP Hosp, condition stable

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi minister Satyendar Jain, who is currently in judicial custody in a money laundering case being probed by the ED, was on Monday admitted to the LNJP Hospital here, and his condition is stable, sources said.

Jain, 57, was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate on May 30 under criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

"He was brought from Tihar Jail to GB Pant Hospital first, and then shifted to the LNJP Hospital. His condition is stable," a source said. Jain, a minister without portfolio in the Kejriwal government, is being probed by the agency under the PMLA on charges of



alleged hawala dealings. In April, the ED had attached assets worth Rs 4.81 crore of Jain's family and companies "beneficially owned and controlled" by him as part of the probe.

In 2017, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has filled its first information report (FIR) lodged against the Delhi minister for his involvement in case of money laundering case.

3 arrests made in Moose Wala's murder case

A large cache of arms, ammunition, including a grenade launcher, recovered from possession of accused

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Special Cell has arrested three criminals, including two shooters, in connection with the killing of popular Punjabi singer 28-year-old Sidhu Moose Wala. Police said that they have also recovered a large cache of arms and ammunition, including a grenade launcher, from the possession of the accused.

The accused have been identified as Priyavrat alias Fauji (26), a resident of Sonipat in Haryana, Kashish (24), also from the State's Bhajjar district, and Keshav Kumar (29), a res-



ident of Bhatinda in Punjab. Police said that the trio was nabbed after specific inputs were received on June 19 that some shooters, involved in Moose Wala's murder, were hiding in Mundra, Kutch area of Gujarat.

"Acting on the inputs, the team was deployed, and all the three accused were arrested are around 6 A.M. in a swift and a

brisk operation," said HGS Dhaliwal, the Special Commissioner of Police, Special Cell.

The local court on Monday also sent them to police custody for custodial interrogation for two weeks. According to the Special CP, the shooter Priyavrat led a team of shooters and was in direct touch with the Canada-based gangster

Goldy Brar at the time of the incident. "He is the main shooter and executioner of the murder," Dhaliwal said. Brar has claimed responsibility for the killing of the popular singer.

On Priyavrat's instance, police have also recovered eight high explosive grenades along with "Under Barrel Grenade Launcher" which can be mounted on AK-47 assault rifles, from a house in village Kirmara near Hisar, Haryana.

"Beside this, the police team has also found nine electric detonators, one assault rifle along with 20 rounds, three sophisticated star pistols of .30 bore, 36 rounds of 7.62 MM of star pistols and part of AK-series assault rifle from the house," said the Special CP.

Priyavrat could be seen in a CCTV footage of a petrol pump prior to the incident.

Commuters thrilled as Delhi's first 1.3-km-long road tunnel saves time, fuel

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The newly-inaugurated tunnel of the Pragati Maidan Integrated Transit Corridor project was thrown open for traffic on Monday. For a few days, traffic movement has only been allowed between 8 A.M. and 8 P.M. to observe how the facility is responding to the traffic load and also to stabilise the traffic pattern.

Officials of the India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO) on Monday said that vehicular movement in the tunnel started in the morning. The Traffic Police and well as PWD officials will keep a close watch on the movement of vehicles to ensure that everything goes smoothly. A small prayer was also done before the opening of the tunnel and commuters were given sweets. Commuters welcomed the opening of the tunnel. "Today

I used the newly-built tunnel and it was a breezy ride to India Gate. Because of the tunnel I could ditch the traffic jam at Bhairon Marg, ITO and reached my destination on Janpath quickly," said Shishir Srivastava, resident of Patparganj in east Delhi. Earlier, commuters had to face bottlenecks at ITO, Mathura Road, Bhairon Marg and Ring Road as well while going towards central Delhi areas.

Deepak Rastogi, a commuter to Connaught Place, said he saved around 10 minutes on Monday through the tunnel. "Today I travelled through the tunnel to reach my office in Connaught Place. It was a smooth ride as I bypassed traffic snarls of ITO and Bhairon Marg. The tunnel takes you directly to India Gate passing underneath Pragati Maidan. I saved around 10 minutes," he said.

Ashima Gaur, a resident of Indirapuram in the NCR, said the tunnel will help commuters save a lot of time. "Opening of the tunnel was a dream of every motorist passing through ITO and nearby areas. We will now be able to avoid traffic snarls and reach our destinations in comparatively less time," she said.

Another commuter, Pradeep Kumar, said the tunnel will not only help people save time and money but also reduce pollution in the city. The Pragati Maidan Integrated Transit Corridor, comprising Delhi's first 1.3-km-long road tunnel and five underpasses has been built over four years. The construction work of the tunnel started in March 2018 and was scheduled to be completed by September 2019. The deadline was extended to June 2020 due to the complexities involved in construction work.



The main tunnel of the newly-inaugurated Pragati Maidan Integrated Transit Corridor Project, in New Delhi on Monday
RANJAN DIMRI | PIONEER



Congress leaders Mallikarjun Kharge, KC Venugopal, P Chidambaram, Rajasthan CM Ashok Gehlot and others during the party's satyagraha against the ED's probe against party leader Rahul Gandhi in the National Herald case, at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Monday

RANJAN DIMRI | PIONEER

MLC polls: SC nixes Deshmukh, Malik plea for release for voting

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday declined the plea of jailed Nationalist Congress Party leaders and MLAs Nawab Malik and Anil Deshmukh seeking temporary release from prison to cast their votes in the Maharashtra Legislative Council election.

A vacation bench of Justices CT Ravikumar and Sudhanshu Dhulia, however, issued notice to the Maharashtra Government and others in the case and agreed to examine the issue relating to the interpretation of Section 62(5) of the Representation of the People Act 1951, which bars jailed persons from voting.

"In view of the larger question with respect to interpretation of Section 62(5) of



Representation of the People Act 1951, we are of the view that matter has to be heard in detail. It's open for the parties to complete the pleadings within four weeks.

"On the question of interim relief taking note of the fact that the constitutional validity of Section 62(5) was upheld by the Supreme Court in the Anukul Chandra Pradhan Vs Union of India case and S Radhakrishnan Vs Union of



India, we are not inclined to grant interim relief," the bench said. Senior advocate Meenakshi Arora, appearing for the jailed lawmakers, submitted that not permitting the two from voting in MLC elections will effectively impact the rights of all voters who had elected the two lawmakers.

The senior lawyer said rather than being a statutory right, the right to vote is also a constitutional right.

Shah calls for robust cyber security network

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday called for building a robust cyber security network for the development of India. Addressing a conference on 'cyber safety and national security', Shah said, "We all know how important cyber security is and how it can contribute to the development of India. India's progress is not possible without cyber security. Cyber security is integral to national security and the Modi government is committed to making it robust."

The Home Minister said everyone knows that the misuse of cyber space is not new and various kinds of cyber crimes are seen very often that include malware attacks, phishing, attacks on critical infrastructure, data theft, online economic frauds, child pornography among others. Such

Rahul at ED's door again

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate on Monday questioned Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for over eight hours for the fourth day in connection with a money laundering case linked to the National Herald newspaper. The agency has summoned him again for questioning on Tuesday.

A day after his 52nd birthday, Gandhi arrived at the ED headquarters here at 11.05 AM with his "Z+" category CRPF security escort.

A huge contingent of police and paramilitary personnel was deployed around the agency's office even as Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) was imposed in the adjoining area like last week in the wake of the

Satyagrah call by the Congress. The Congress MP left the ED office for over an hour-long break after being quizzed for over four hours. He rejoined the investigation at around 4:45 PM and continued past 9 PM. Gandhi, also a former Congress president and the current MP from Kerala's Wayanad, has spent over 35 hours at the ED office during these four days, where he was questioned over multiple sessions and his statement was recorded under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA).

The fourth day of questioning was deferred from June 17 to Monday after Gandhi requested the agency for postponing it as he wanted to be with his mother and Congress president Sonia Gandhi, who is undergoing treatment at a hos-

pital here for post-Covid issues.

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

The ED questioning is broadly revolving around the incorporation of the Young Indian Private Limited, operations of the National Herald, the loan given by the party to the newspaper's publisher Associated Journals Limited (AJL), and the transfer of funds within the news media establishment as also his role in the connected decision making with respect to the media entities promoted by the party, officials said.

He was also quizzed about the assets owned by AJL, the publisher of the National Herald and the questions cover

a period starting from 2011 when Young Indian Private Ltd. was incorporated. His mother and Congress President Sonia Gandhi has also been summoned by agency for questioning in case on June 23. The role of Gandhi and his detailed statement in case is vital as he is a "major shareholder" (38 per cent) in Young Indian Private Limited and an "important person" in affairs of AJL and National Herald, sources said.



Sonia Gandhi discharged from Ganga Ram hosp

New Delhi: Congress president Sonia Gandhi was discharged from the Sir Ganga Ram Hospital on Monday evening. She has been advised to rest at home. Sonia Gandhi, 75, was scheduled to appear before Enforcement Directorate (ED) in a money laundering case on June 8 but had sought more time from the probe agency in view of her Covid infection.

The agency has issued a fresh summons to her for appearance before it on June 23 and according to the party sources she will have to seek another date for appearance due to ill health. She was admitted to hospital on June 12, days after she tested positive for Covid-19 on June 2.

"Congress President Sonia Gandhi has been discharged from Sir Ganga Ram Hospital and advised to rest at home," party general secretary Jairam Ramesh said.

Australia Deputy PM calls India one of closest security partners in Indo-Pacific

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With an eye on China, Australia on Monday said India is one of the "closest" security partners and is keen to work closely with it for an open and inclusive Indo-Pacific.

Australia Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles, who is also Defence Minister, said "Australia and India are Comprehensive Strategic Partners. I am committed to strengthening Australia's defence and security cooperation with India."

During his India visit from June 20 to 23, Marles is scheduled to hold wide-ranging talks with Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. "I am looking forward to meeting with my counterpart, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, and holding our first bilateral defence ministers' meeting," Marles said, according to a statement by the Australian Government on Monday.

India is one of Australia's closest security partners, and his government is focused on revitalising the country's historically deep engagement with its partners across the Indo-Pacific, he said. "The rules-based international order that



has brought peace and prosperity to the Indo-Pacific for decades is experiencing pressure, as we face shifts in the geostrategic order," he said.

"Australia stands ready to work closer with India in support of an open, inclusive and resilient Indo-Pacific," he added.

Marles said Rajnath has been instrumental in advancing India-Australia defence ties and he was looking forward to working with him to enhance the defence pillar of the comprehensive strategic partnership between the two sides.

It is the first high-level visit to India from Australia after Prime Minister Anthony Albanese's center-left Labor Party came to power last month defeating predecessor Scott Morrison's conservative coalition in the parliamentary

elections.

Marles said the rules-based international order that has brought peace and prosperity to the Indo-Pacific for decades is experiencing pressure, seen as an oblique reference to China's growing assertiveness in the region.

The visiting Deputy Prime Minister will also meet External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and interact with national security and defence policymakers and personnel.

The ties between India and Australia have strengthened in the last few years. In April, the two countries inked a trade pact to diversify bilateral trade.

In June 2020, India and Australia elevated their ties to a comprehensive strategic partnership and signed a landmark deal for reciprocal access to military bases for logistics support.

The Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA) allows the militaries of the two countries to use each other's bases for repair and replenishment of supplies, besides facilitating scaling up of overall defence cooperation. The Australian Navy was part of the Malabar naval exercise hosted by India in November 2020 as well as last year.

India reports 12,781 Covid cases in last 24 hours

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With India reporting more than 12,000 new Covid-19 cases for the fifth straight day on Monday, the country now has over 76,000 active cases, the latest health bulletin shows.

In the last 24 hours, 12,781 cases were registered, according to the health ministry's daily bulletin. Maharashtra remained the major contributor of the surge followed by Kerala and Delhi.

India on Monday logged 12,781 fresh COVID-19 cases that pushed its infection tally to 4,33,09,473, while the daily positivity rate went past 4 per cent after 130 days, according to Union health ministry data.

The death toll climbed to 5,24,873 with 18 new fatalities. The number of active cases increased to 76,700, the data updated at 8 am stated. The daily positivity rate was recorded at 4.32 per cent and the weekly positivity rate at 2.62 per cent, the ministry said.

The active cases comprise 0.18 per cent of the total infections. The national COVID-19 recovery rate was recorded at 98.61 per cent, it said. An increase of 4,226 cases has been recorded in the active

Covid-19 caseload in a span of 24 hours. The 18 new fatalities include 11 from Kerala, three from Delhi and one each from Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab and West Bengal. The daily positivity rate was recorded at 2.89 per cent and the weekly positivity rate at 2.50 per cent, the ministry said.

On the vaccination front, the officials said that India's cumulative Covid-19 vaccine coverage exceeded 196.18 crore on Monday, with over 3.57 crore first doses being administered to the age group of 12-14 years. Over 4.15 crore precaution doses have been administered so far.

Meanwhile, the officials said that the government's platforms for vaccination of children, organ and blood donation are expected to be ready in six months but data required to be seeded on these platforms may take some more time.

Co-WIN chief and National Health Authority CEO R S Sharma told a news agency that parents of children will need to provide information related to birth and vaccination of children for tracking their vaccination schedule and other agencies will also need to populate their data like vaccination centres etc for it to be ready for use.

EC delists 111 unrecognised parties for flouting rules

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

After taking actions against 2,100 registered unrecognised political parties (RUPP), the Election Commission (EC) on Monday delisted 111 RUPP for flouting rules and found them to be "non-existent" during a verification exercise aimed at cleaning up the system.

According to the EC, its action came after chief electoral officers (CEOs) of states had reported that these "registered unrecognised political parties" either have been found to be "non-existent" on verification or the letters issued by authorities to verify their addresses and communication details had been returned as undelivered by the postal department.

Subsequently, the EC decided to withdraw various benefits accorded to these parties under the Symbols Order (1968), including allocation of common election symbol.

The sources said the Apna Desh Party from Sultanpur in Uttar Pradesh had two different persons as president. In the verification format, one name is mentioned as president, but the sign was by another person. Quoting details, they said the party also failed to provide the

mode of donations received by it. Similarly, they cited the example of the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Party in Maharashtra whose balance sheets of two consecutive years were not matching. The party, the sources said citing details on the website of the CEO Maharashtra, was investing in gold.

The Bharatiya Rajnitik Vikalp Party received around Rs 28 crore donations in two years, but no annual audit accounts were available on the website of the CEO Bihar. For the Jan Sangharsh Virat Party in Madhya Pradesh, the auditor certified a one-line profit and loss statement without any detail, they said.

In a statement, the EC said any registered unrecognised political party (RUPP) aggrieved by the decision can approach the CEO concerned within 30 days along with all evidence of existence, year-wise annual audited accounts, contribution report, expenditure report and updated list of office-bearers.

Sources in the EC shared specific details of various parties that have flouted laws and rules on disclosure of funds and donations. These details are in public domain and are available

on the websites of state chief electoral officers. The EC said a reference has also been sent to the Department of Revenue for necessary legal and criminal actions against three such parties involved in serious financial impropriety.

A list of RUPPs that have not submitted their contribution reports in FY 2017-18, 2018-19 and 2019-20 has been shared with the Revenue Department for taking all consequential action as per Representation of the People Act read with the relevant provisions of the IT Act 1961, it said.

Another list of 66 RUPPs which have claimed income tax exemption without submitting contribution reports as mandated under law has also been shared with the Revenue Department.

There are nearly 2,800 registered unrecognised political parties in India. The poll panel had been pushing the government to allow it to de-register political parties. On multiple occasions, it has written to the Law Ministry to amend the election law to give it the power to de-register so that it can deter the parties that indulge in financial and other irregularities.

BJP to observe Yoga Day at 75K locations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

BJP on Monday announced that the party will observe 'Yoga Day' at over 75,000 places across the country on Tuesday, saying the country is leaving its strong imprints on the global culture as it lashed-out at Congress for "hateful comments" against the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi would be leading the mega-yoga-event at Mysuru in Karnataka where over 15,000 people are expected to do Yoga exercises along with him. BJP president JP Nadra would be at Noida for the 'Yoga day' functions, and union home Minister Amit Shah will be in the National Capital.

Addressing a press conference here, BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi said India is the only country which has

spread its cultural influence globally saying in the past even explorer Columbus ushered into his sea-voyage to discover India but landed in America where the original Indians are called 'red-Indians'.

'Yoga' is an extension of Indian cultural foot-prints across the globe, he said, informing that BJP would observe the 'Yoga-day' in 75,000 places in the country. Trivedi also said that all Union Ministers, BJP Chief Ministers, MPs, MLAs, party members, and functionaries would participate in the Yoga events across the country.

While saying that under Prime Minister's leadership, 'Yoga' has been accepted and wholeheartedly supported by most of the countries, Trivedi slammed Congress for its 'hateful' comments against the Prime Minister over the years and sought to know if it has



expelled or taken any disciplinary action against anyone. There are more than 80 such instances, he said. The BJP spokesperson took on the Congress after Senior Congress leader and former Union minister Subodh Kant Sahai alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is behaving like Adolf Hitler and

"will die like Hitler" if he follows the path of the German dictator. The Congress, however, distanced itself from the statement made at the party's 'Satyagrah' protest at Jantar Mantar here against the Centre's Agnipath scheme, saying it does not endorse any indecent remarks against the Prime Minister.

Tel Aviv varsity offers unique AIDS treatment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A new study from Tel Aviv University offers a unique treatment for AIDS — a vaccine or a one-time treatment for patients with HIV. The study examined the engineering of type B white blood cells in the patient's body so as to secrete anti-HIV antibodies in response to the virus.

The study was led by Dr. Adi Barzel and his student Alessio Nehmad, both from George S. Wise faculty of life sciences and the Dotan Center for Advanced Therapies in collaboration with the Sourasky Medical Center (Ichilov).

Published in the journal Nature, the study was conducted in collaboration with additional researchers from Israel and the US. Dr. Barzel explains: "Until now, only a few scientists, and we among them,



had been able to engineer B cells outside of the body, and in this study we were the first to do this in the body and to make these cells generate desired antibodies.

The genetic engineering is done with viral carriers derived from viruses that were engineered so as not to cause damage but only to bring the gene coded for the antibody into the B cells in the body.

"Additionally, in this case we have been able to accurately introduce the antibodies into a desired site in the B cell genome. All model animals who had been administered the

treatment responded and had high quantities of the desired antibody in their blood. We produced the antibody from the blood and made sure it was actually effective in neutralizing the HIV virus in the lab dish."

The genetic editing was done with CRISPR, a technology based on a bacterial immune system against viruses. Alessio Nehmad says, "we incorporate the capability of a CRISPR to direct the introduction of genes into desired sites along with the capabilities of viral carriers to bring desired genes to desired cells. Thus, we are able to engineer the B cells inside the patient's body.

We use two viral carriers of the AAV family, one carrier codes for the desired antibody and the second carrier codes the CRISPR system. When the CRISPR cuts in the desired site in the genome of the B cells it

directs the introduction of the desired gene: the gene coding for the antibody against the HIV virus, which causes AIDS." Currently, the researchers explain, there is no genetic treatment for AIDS, so the research opportunities are vast. Dr. Barzel concludes: "we developed an innovative treatment that may defeat the virus with a one time injection, with the potential of bringing about tremendous improvement in the patients' condition."

When the engineered B cells encounter the virus, the virus stimulates and encourages them to divide, so we are utilizing the very cause of the disease to combat it.

Furthermore, if the virus changes, the B cells will also change accordingly in order to combat it, so we have created the first medication ever that can evolve in the body and defeat viruses in 'arms race'."

32 foreign ultras killed this year: IGP Kashmir

3 terrorists killed in Pulwama, Kupwara ops

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

A joint team of security forces on Monday eliminated three more terrorists in two different operations in Kupwara and Pulwama districts without suffering any major collateral damages.

So far seven terrorists have been eliminated in the last 24 hours taking the total tally of killed terrorists to 114 this year so far. Of these 114 terrorists, 32 were foreign terrorists, Inspector General of Police, Kashmir range Vijay Kumar said while patting the back of the security forces for successfully conducting anti-terrorist operations to ensure peaceful conduct of the



Amarnath yatra.

According to police, a total number of four terrorists, including three foreign terrorists from Pakistan were gunned down in Lolab area of Kupwara, two in Kulgam while one terrorist was eliminated in Pulwama.

These operations were launched only after receiving the pin pointed information about the presence of terrorists hiding in the thickly populated/dense forest areas. To prevent loss of civilian lives the security forces demonstrated utmost restraint

and delayed operations during the night keeping their safety in mind. These men in uniform also risked their lives to evacuate innocent civilians stranded in the line of fire.

To ensure peaceful conduct of the yatra, the Union Home Ministry had already deputed around 350 companies of the para military forces to plug the gaps in the three tier security ring in and around yatri niwas, base camps along two different routes of Pahalgam and Baltal, shelter points, community centres, yatra trek etc.

Assam flood situation critical, CM reviews state of affairs

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

With the flood situation in Assam remaining critical on Monday and affecting a population of nearly 43 lakh in 33 of its 35 districts, Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma directed air dropping of food and other relief materials in areas where there is heavy inundation, officials said.

Sarma gave the direction after a review meeting with his Cabinet colleagues and senior district officers during the day.

The toll in the ongoing flood and landslides in the state increased to 73 on Monday. The dead included two policemen, including an officer in-charge of a police station in Nagaon district who had gone to help marooned people but were swept away. Their bodies were fished out in the early hours of Monday, officials said.

Sarma, who held a virtual meeting with his ministers, senior state government officials and deputy commissioners, directed that top priority must be given to relief and rescue operations and there should be no delay citing procedural rules.

"Airdropping of relief

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Monday said a Central team will visit the flood-affected areas of Assam and Meghalaya to assess the damage.

materials must be done in areas where there is heavy flooding and army, NDRF or SDRF boats have not been able to reach", he said.

The chief minister said that for the next few days the district officials should not concern themselves with procedural rules but concentrate on providing relief to the affected people.

"If certain areas are not covered in the relief manual, we will ensure that they are covered under State Owned Priority Development schemes and CM's Relief Fund".

He directed deputy commissioners to keep ready static teams of the health department and ensure daily visits of doctors to relief camps set up for the flood affected. Ambulances should be kept on the standby to shift patients who are in serious condition to nearby hospitals.

Night shifts must be aug-



mented in all district hospitals and special care must be taken of senior citizens, women and children, he said.

Sarma directed the authorities to plan circle-wise mega health camps with the help of the nine medical colleges in the state to ensure that post-flood diseases are effectively dealt with. He also directed the deputy commissioners of the districts to start immediate

assessment of damages as soon as the flood waters begin to recede and complete the work at the earliest.

All guardian ministers and secretaries, except those required for urgent flood related work at the state secretariat, should be in their respective district headquarters to oversee flood relief work, he added.

The state has been reeling under devastating floods for

the past one week with 127 revenue circles and 5,137 villages affected in 33 districts, according to a bulletin of the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA).

Nearly 1.90 lakh people have taken shelter in 744 relief camps. Relief materials have been distributed from 403 temporary centres to affected people who have not moved into the camps.

Kashmiri Pandits intensify agitation for relocation to safer areas

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Intensifying their 38 day long agitation in support of their one point demand of 'relocation to safer areas', outside the Kashmir valley, Kashmiri Pandit employees on Monday warned the Union government if they will not fulfil their genuine demand they will approach international human rights organisations for asylum.

"We are not going to become scapegoats. We are determined to fight for our rights and we appeal to the government of India to review the policy under which kashmiri migrants were recruited and deployed in different parts of the Kashmir valley", protesting employees said in one voice.

These migrant employees, recruited under PM Package, have been sitting on protest dharna since May 12 -the day revenue department employee Rahul Bhat was shot dead

inside his office in Chadoora tehsil of Budgam district. Killing of another lady teacher Rajni Bala, a Scheduled caste employee hailing from the Samba district of Jammu division forced them to intensify their agitation in support of their demand.

On the occasion of International Refugee day, these migrant employees made a desperate bid to wake up the Union Territory administration from their deep slumber. The migrant employees claimed after holding only one meeting no one from the UT administration approached us to resolve the issue at hand. We want to resolve the issue amicably in consultation with the UT administration but after holding only one meeting with the LG Manoj Sinha we have not been approached by them to sit across the table and discuss the matter.

"LG Manoj Sinha had him-

self promised to keep the doors of dialogue open with the minority employees. But these doors have been shut. Issues cannot be resolved in one meeting. We are willing to take 10 steps but let the government at least take two", Sanjay Kaul, a leader of the All Minority Employees Association Kashmir (AMEAK), told reporters at Sheikhpora Migrant colony in Budgam. Representatives from Vessu, Mattan and Baramulla also attended the protest demonstration.

"We demand that our elected government relocate and attach us with the office of Relief Commissioner Jammu till the situation in Kashmir improves"

He said if the government failed to address their demand for relocation, the employees will be forced to appeal to the international community and human rights organisations to

come to their aid.

Right now we have hopes with our elected government. If it fails in ensuring our safety, which can only be achieved by relocating us, we will be forced to appeal for asylum, Kaul said.

Asked if the employees will resign from the service if the government did not agree to their demand for relocation, Kaul said, We will announce our future action in due course of time.

For the time being, we are organising protests from Kashmir to Kanyakumari.

Kaul claimed that 70 per cent of the 4,800 PM Package employees have fled Kashmir since Bhat's killing.

The government claims on providing accommodation to minority employees are all lies. Only 1,200 employees have been provided accommodation while the rest are living in rented accommodations, he claimed.

'BJP creating own armed cadres through Agnipath'

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday broke her silence against Centre's Agnipath scheme wondering why an employment programme meant for the Defence Ministry needed to be announced by the Home Minister.

The Chief Minister while speaking inside the Bengal Assembly said referring to a statement made by saffron leader Kaliash Vijaybargiya that "the BJP is trying to create its own armed cadre base through this scheme" adding "this job is for four years ... what will happen next these trained youth with license to use guns ... what will they do with this training ... it is clear that the BJP is trying to create its own armed cadres."

Asking "why where a scheme meant for the Defence Ministry was announced by the

Home Ministry Banerjee said," the entire scheme was planned with an eye on the 2024 elections. Saying that the scheme was nothing more than a "four-year lollipop given to the country's youth" before leaving them to fend for themselves Banerjee said "this is nothing but an insult to the armed forces of the country."

Her nephew and party general secretary Abhishek Banerjee too came down heavily on the saffron government for promising 2 crore yearly jobs but coming out with a "big bluff" for the country's youth.

Attacking the top saffron leadership the Diamond Harbour MP said "BJP leaders' sons would become the secretary of the BCCI, some other leaders' (read Vijaybargiya) sons would become MLAs and beat up public servants in public and the sons of poorer people will work as security guards at the BJP offices freely trained by



the Army." Wondering why Vijaybargiya was not expelled from the party for suggesting that the retired Agniveers would be employed as security guards in BJP offices the junior Banerjee said "had it been any Trinamool Congress leader we would have immediately expelled him for insulting the armed forces like this."

Saying that each and every scheme launched by the Narendra Modi was unplanned so as to bring hardship for the people he said "from

Notebandi (demonetization) to GST to farmers' bill and now to this one whatever the BJP has done has led to problems for the people in general."

Nupur seeks four weeks' time from Kolkata Police

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

BJP leader Nupur Sharma accused of making allegedly objectionable remarks against Prophet Muhammad on Monday sought four weeks' time to appear from the Narkeldanga Police Station in Kolkata.

An FIR was earlier filed against her at the Narkeldanga Police Station in North Kolkata. Sharma was earlier suspended from her party for her remarks in a television channel.

Sharma wrote in her e-mail to the Kolkata Police that she was apprehending threats to her life and hence would require some time --- in this case four weeks --- to respond to the summons of the



Narkeldanga Police station. Another FIR was also filed at an East Midnapore police station sources said.

Large parts of Bengal had witnessed massive protests after Sharma's comments went viral. Thousands of people protesters jammed roads leading in and out of Kolkata. Trains were attacked in Nadia district while public properties too were destroyed.

Bharat Bandh call against Agnipath passes off peacefully in UP

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Amidst tight security arrangements and high alert, the Bharat Bandh call given in protest against the launch of Agnipath system for army recruitment passed off peacefully in Uttar Pradesh with only some rail passengers bearing the brunt due to cancellation of trains.

In the National Capital Region, some traffic snarls were witnessed due to strict checking in the wake of the bandh call on Monday morning.

The police increased checking on the Delhi-UP border, due to which there was a traffic jam on the Chilla border.

Reports said that in protest against the Agnipath scheme, the youth had given a call for Bharat Bandh on Monday. During this, the Uttar Pradesh Police remained on high alert in view of the possibility of fierce demonstrations.

The Railways also cancelled many trains due to which the passengers suffered at the railway stations in UP. The Indian Railways cancelled 181 mail express and 348 passenger trains across the country. According to the Northern Railway, 31 trains arriving at various railway stations in Delhi and Ghaziabad were cancelled.

Police and the Government Railway Police increased vigil in Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath's home district Gorakhpur. Railway Protection Force Inspector-General Tariq Ahmed said that GRP, RPF, civil police were deployed for the security of railway stations and railway property.

He appealed to the youth not to fall prey to anti-social elements. On the problems being faced by the passengers due to cancellation of trains, IG Tariq Ahmed said that timely announcements were made regarding the movement and

Uttar Pradesh Police remained on high alert in view of the possibility of fierce demonstrations in the State

cancellation of trains.

In view of the Bharat Bandh, the UP Police tightened security in the border areas. Prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the Criminal Procedure Code were enforced in Gautam Buddha Nagar. Due to this, there was heavy traffic jam on the Chilla border of the Noida-Delhi link road.

ADCP Ranvijay Singh said that the police had many instructions and inputs regarding the bandh due to which a close watch was kept on public transport. He said that the police were checking the border to ensure that no protesters passed through there. The police officers of UP co-ordinated with the Delhi Police.

Heavy security arrangements also remained in place at

all important railway stations. Intensive checking was made for the security of the railway station and the ID cards and luggage of the passengers were also checked at several places.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya, on Monday, said that the bandh would not be successful, adding that youngsters were already aware that it was a conspiracy by a few political parties.

The UP deputy chief minister said the youngsters know that the opposition to Agnipath was a conspiracy hatched by some political parties. He appealed to the youngsters to not get involved in protests and vandalism. "Most getting caught belong to political parties," he said.

Speaking to the media, UP's Additional Director General (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar said in view of the police deployment, the Bharat Bandh call had negligible impact in UP.

"It was fine as long as students were there in the protests over the Agnipath scheme, but later anti-social and political elements got involved in it. Now, it is not being looked at sensitively. Anybody found to be spreading misinformation over the scheme, and promoting violence is being dealt with strictly, and is being arrested," he added.

The ADG confirmed that no untoward incident was reported in the state till filing this report. He said that all those responsible for violence

so far were being dealt with strict hands and cases were already registered against them in several districts across UP.

So far, 39 cases have been registered in UP, in which a total of 475 people have been arrested, sources confirmed.

Despite the government allaying all fears concerning the Agnipath scheme, widespread misinformation and aggressive protests were witnessed across states, with youth demanding a complete rollback of the army recruitment scheme. Incidents of violence, vandalism, torching of railway trains, stone-pelting, and attacks on police personnel were seen in several parts of Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Telangana. Many army aspirants are unhappy with the changes introduced under the new recruitment scheme, particularly the length of service, lack of pension provisions and the age restriction that makes many of them ineligible.

UP girl killed for refusing FB friendship request

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

After being denied a friendship request on Facebook, an upset youth brutally attacked a minor girl and her mother who came to her daughter's rescue.

The sensational incident took place in Mathura where the girl died in the attack while her mother is battling for her life.

Fearing being nabbed by the locals, the accused tried to commit suicide by stabbing himself also. He too was admitted to a hospital.

"A youth in Mathura allegedly killed a 16-year-old

girl and injured her mother after the teenager did not accept his friendship request on Facebook," police said on Monday.

The accused, Ravi, is a resident of Muzaffarnagar, Superintendent of Police (City) Martand Prakash Singh said.

The incident took place in Nagla Bohra village of Mathura under Highway police station late on Sunday when Ravi came over to the girl's house with a wedding card. As the girl walked towards Ravi to collect it, he allegedly stabbed her, the SP said.

When her mother Sunita came to rescue her, the youth

attacked her as well, the officer added.

Later, the youth tried to kill himself with the knife, the SP said.

In his complaint, Tejveer alleged that Ravi killed his daughter as she did not accept his friendship request on Facebook.

Sunita and Ravi are undergoing treatment, according to Circle Officer Dharmendra Chauhan.

Station House Officer (SHO) Ajay Kaushal said a case was registered based on a complaint by the girl's father Tejveer Singh, who is a security personnel at a Faridabad factory.

Action sought for refusal to take food from Dalit delivery boy

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Social organisation Bahujan Bharat has termed the incidents of refusing to take food from a Dalit delivery boy as well as abusive behaviour with him as serious and shameful act and demanded strict action against the culprit.

The president of the organisation and former IAS officer Kunwar Fateh Bahadur said that the Government should strictly deal with those who commit such acts.

He said that despite the delivery boy filing an FIR against the accused no one had been arrested so far.

"It seems that the police and administration are refraining from taking action against those who harass Dalits and make obscene and indecent remarks against Dalit women," he said.

Bahadur said that if Dalits were being humiliated in the state capital, one could understand what was happening in the rural areas of the state.

He even questioned why the Government's "high-octane bulldozer" had so far not demolished the house of the accused.

"Police had gone to the house of the accused in Ashiyana but did not arrest the guilty," he said.



A honey bee visits a sunflower in a field, in Thiruvellore near Chennai on Monday.

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Fuelling the fire

Acute and persisting job crisis has inflamed people's passions against the Agnipath scheme

A major, if not the main, factor contributing to the agitation against the Agnipath scheme is massive unemployment all around, especially at the low-skill levels. One need not be an economist to know that. The Narendra Modi Government and its supporters may try to heap the entire blame on the COVID pandemic, but the truth is that the situation was pretty bad even before the novel Coronavirus hit India. According to the data that the Labour Ministry released in May 2019, the unemployment rate in the country was 6.1 per cent in 2017-18, the highest in 45 years. While 7.8 per cent of all employable urban youth were without a job, the unemployment rate was 5.3 per cent in villages. The pandemic worsened the situation, especially for those at the bottom of the pyramid. Thankfully, some improvement has been recorded. The quarterly periodic labour force survey that the Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation released last week showed that the unemployment rate in urban India in the January-March quarter of this fiscal fell for the fourth consecutive quarter. From 8.7 per cent in the October-December quarter, it came down to 8.2 per cent. In the July-September quarter, it was 9.8 per cent and in the April-June quarter, 12.6 per cent. The decline was sequential and sustained over the entire fiscal. Non-governmental sources seem to corroborate the official claim regarding the declining trend, if not numbers.



The Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, whose data and analysis are often seen as critical of the Government, said in the first week of April that the overall unemployment rate came down from 8.1 per cent in February 2022 to 7.6 per cent in March. The Ficci quarterly survey of manufacturing also hints at buoyancy in the job market. "There seems to be an improvement in employment creation by the sector as compared to the previous quarter (Q-3 of 2021-22), where only 25 per cent of the respondents were looking at hiring in next few months. This percentage has improved significantly to 53 per cent of the respondents in Q-1 2022-23 who are now looking at hiring additional workforce in the next three months," the survey, which was released on Monday, said. But the magnitude of the unemployment crisis is so huge that the improvements recorded appear to be too inconsequential to make a big dent to it. Unsurprisingly, a Government job — with the security of tenure, the social security benefits, etc — seems like a boon. Concomitantly, its removal, or perception of removal, looks nothing but betrayal; it becomes more painful when there is an acute paucity of jobs elsewhere. This pain is getting manifested in the stir, which has become violent in many places, against the Agnipath scheme. While short-term measures are needed to end the agitation, medium- and long-term steps are also required to address the longstanding issue of unemployment. The nation can ill afford stirs at the time of economic recovery.

PICTALK



Trade union members march during a demonstration to protest against the rising cost of living, in Brussels

AP

Ado about nothing

It now transpires that Pakistan can't take medical care of its ex-President Pervez Musharraf

Call it the fear of the unknown or the karma catching up with him, Pakistan's former military leader Pervez Musharraf is likely to stay on in Dubai, his family has hinted as the required "medical facilities are unavailable" in Pakistan. It is being claimed that the experimental drug Daratumumab, which is required to treat Musharraf's medical condition, is currently unavailable in Pakistan. The former General's ailment, known medically as Amyloidosis, is a rare disease that occurs when an abnormal protein builds up in an individual's organs and interferes with the normal functions. Earlier reports had claimed that the Pakistan military's ex-military dictator, 78, who is in a UAE hospital for the past three weeks in a critical condition with no possibility of recovery, may be brought back to Pakistan in an air ambulance as the nation's powerful Army establishment "fully stands behind" its former chief. But the family remains apprehensive and has stated that it has to consider medical, legal as well as security challenges before Musharraf's return to Pakistan. Musharraf ruled Pakistan from 1999 to 2008. He came to power in a bloodless coup in 1999, deposing the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, largely because Musharraf's relations with Nawaz Sharif were not comfortable from the outset.



He had to cope with the latter's penchant for interfering in Army postings. The former Pakistan Army chief was the main architect of the covert, though failed, Kargil war on India in 1999. Four years old during Partition, when his family moved from their Nehar Wali Haveli home in Old Delhi, Musharraf grew up in middle-class environs in Karachi, where his father served as an accountant in the Foreign Ministry and later during the latter's seven-year posting in Turkey. He studied in Forman Christian College, Lahore, before joining the Army in 1961 and ultimately rose to become the General. Facing impeachment following the elections in 2008, Musharraf was forced to resign as the Pakistan President and soon after went into self-imposed exile in Dubai. Earlier in Pakistan, he was charged with high treason and given a death sentence in 2019 for suspending the Constitution. Later, however, his death sentence was suspended. But there still lingers the threat of Musharraf facing a number of cases if he is brought back to Pakistan, as indicated by the country's federal minister Javed Latif.

A silent prayer for Srebrenica

Most of the Muslims lie dead, in graves and in numbness, questioning how many more innocent lives will be lost before justice is delivered



INDRA SHEKHAR SINGH

As July 11 passes, my heart bleeds for Srebrenica. I remember the attack on the UN-protected safe area at Srebrenica and the genocide that followed; an act so egregious that even the two international tribunals at The Hague shivered at the evidence of butchering of people. Imagine an entire civilian population, first starved, raped and finally massacred for revenge. People high on hate killed other people, political experts are quick to call the victims — Muslims and the aggressors — Serbs, but my heart tells me that the real victim was humanity, and the winner was greed. Allow me to narrate a genocide that happened between July 11 and 22, 1995, in newly independent Bosnia and Herzegovina. This is story of Srebrenica — Silver Town.

Now Srebrenica is an old mining town, where silver and other metals were mined since Roman times. Over time, it changed political overlords, but the life of people remained constant. They lived a hard mountainous mining town life as their ancestors had. But trouble started brewing with breakup of former Yugoslavia. After the 1990s, as a socialist country non-aligned country in the new bipolar world, her days were numbered. Marshall Tito's death in 1980 had Yugoslavia practically leaderless, and its federal "socialism" was threatened by new radical ethno-nationalism. 1992 to 1995 were the bloodshed years which began when Croatia and Slovenia — two most developed republics within Yugoslavia — seceded per the Yugoslavian Constitution, but Yugoslav army troops were sent in. After an armed resistance, Croatia and Slovenia reminded sovereign. But by then insurgency spread to Bosnia. The Serbian and Bosnian Serbs leadership led by Slobodan Milošević (Serbia) and Radovan Karadžić was supported by Yugoslav army from Belgrade and its proxy in Bosnia and Herzegovina Army of Republika Srpska (VRS) of Ratko Mladic to carve out another Serb republic, perhaps to complete the mythical 'Greater Serbia' destiny.



Radical Bosnian Croat political forces attempted the same, but under US pressure in 1994 allied with Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims) and created the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. After much fighting and political masquerading, Serb forces advanced and took control of major portions of the country. The coalition fought back, as a result thousands — Serbs, Bosniaks and Croats, were forced to leave homes. TV, a new medium in the 90s in Bosnia, was harnessed to spread hate propaganda. It is during the fighting years, the UN decided to create UN safe zones — the first time ever! — in vulnerable pockets to prevent genocides. Dutch peacekeepers were protecting Srebrenica near the Serbian border. The UN military officials guaranteed safety to people of Srebrenica, who had now doubled to over 60,000 due to the ongoing ethnic violence. Now Serb forces claimed that the UN safe area was being used to carry out attacks on nearby Serb village and Ratko Mladic reacted by personally leading the assault on the UN safe zone. First, Serbs stopped all supplies, starving not only the people but the UN peacekeepers of

DESPISE SREBRENICA'S UN COMMANDER'S REPEATED REQUEST FOR AIR SUPPORT AGAINST HEAVY TANKS, THE UN HIGH COMMAND DID NOTHING. WITH THE UN STRONGHOLD OVERRUN AND PEACEKEEPERS HELD HOSTAGE, SREBRENICA WAS LOST WITHOUT A BULLET BEING FIRED BY THE DUTCH PEACEKEEPERS IN ITS DEFENCE

food and medicines.

As the crisis aggravated, supplies had to be airdropped in mountains. Desperate residents risked their lives everyday just to get flour or sugar. Then Mladic's troops used Yugoslav armies' Russian tanks and artillery to shell UN posts in Srebrenica and finally moved in to capture the UN stronghold. Despite Srebrenica's UN commander's repeated request for air support against heavy tanks, the UN high command did nothing. With the UN stronghold overrun and looted, peacekeepers held hostage, residents of Srebrenica were now at the mercy of Mladic's troops. And Srebrenica was lost without a bullet being fired by the Dutch peacekeepers in its defence.

After nights of plundering, rapes and murder, women and children (12 and below) were separated from the men. The women and children were sent to inhumane prison camps and the men were starved and shot! Reportedly Serb platoons were doing seven-hour shifts shooting blindfolded, unarmed Muslims. Serb resisters were treated as Muslims sympathisers and shot, too. Thousands were killed within days and buried in mass graves. The

world watched and Srebrenica was uprooted forever.

Later, the International Criminal Tribunal for Yugoslavia (ICTY) accused and sentenced Mladic and Karadzic for war crimes, genocide included. Milošević was the first head of State accused of war crimes after WWII. He died during the trial.

Although ICTY has ended its ad hoc mandate recently, denial of genocide committed in Srebrenica became part of political "games" not only in Balkans but other pro-ultra nationalist circles. The conscious forgetting of the genocide indicates that the last phase of genocide is complete. Srebrenica today has almost no Muslims, and it's part of the Serb-majority Republika Srpska — Serb republic within Bosnia and Herzegovina. Most of Muslims lie dead, some in the graves and others numb with pain and indignation, perhaps questioning how many more innocent lives be lost before justice is delivered.

(The author writes on agriculture and environment, and is a former Director — Policy & Outreach, National Seed Association of India. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

A PROPER ANALYSIS IS NEEDED

Sir — In spite of widespread protests against the Agnipath scheme, it seems the Centre is stuck upon not rolling it back. The three service chiefs and PM Narendra Modi, with no direct reference to the scheme, said it is India's 'misfortune' that good intentions get trapped in politics. Almost 90 per cent of defence job aspirants participated in agitations against the scheme. It is ridiculous to note that Lt Gen Anil Puri, the additional secretary in the Department of Military Affairs, said that all those who want to become part of the armed forces under the Agnipath scheme will have to give a certificate that they were not part of any protest.

Even the comments made by Union Tourism Minister G Kishan Reddy and BJP leader Kailash Vijayvargiya display a poor mindset. Reddy says that those selected as Agniveers would be imparted the skills of drivers, washermen, barbers, electricians and other professionals. Vijayvargiya offered to hire Agniveers at his party's office as security guards. The youth work hard because they want to serve the country for by joining the Army, not because they want to be appointed as guards outside the BJP office.

Zakir Hussain | Kazipet

MIDAIR SCARE FOR SPICEJET PASSENGERS

Sir — The airports in India are facing the problem of bird hit as there are a number of abattoirs near their vicinity and there is a threat to flight operations. The situation is turning worse. The Spicejet aircraft took off from the Patna airport when the engine was hit by a bird and the people, seeing the plane in flames, reported the matter to the airport authorities and that helped take timely action. Thankfully, all the 185 fliers were safe as the plane returned to the airport with all security measures in place.

The aircraft landed safely in Patna and the passengers safely deboarded. Post-flight inspection showed a bird hit with three damaged fan blades. Fortunately,

Funds parked in tax havens



Ever since the Modi Government took over the reins of the nation in 2014, the much-hyped promise of bringing back black money from Swiss banks within stipulated time has remained unfulfilled. The data from Switzerland's Central bank, released recently, states that Britain topped the list while India was placed 44 on the list for foreign clients' money. It reveals a trend that has often been associated with parking money by unethical means. But there is more to it than meets the

eye. There has been a spurt in parking funds by Indian individuals and firms in Swiss banks, including through India-based branches from ₹6,625 crore in 2019 to ₹30,500 crore in 2021.

This can be attributed to their reputation for privacy and a combination of conditions that ensure returns and make them lucrative as well as a safe haven for foreign deposits. What is even more dangerous is the fact that citizens' hard-earned money flows out of the country that would have otherwise remained in India and could have been used as a key driver for the economy. Another area of concern is the moot question why even clean money is leaving the country? The phenomenon of untaxed slush funds gaining safe parking lots abroad is also baffling. A study reveals that about 8,000 high networth individuals could navigate out of India owing to stringent tax rules.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

timely action was taken to avoid a major tragedy. Fire engines were deployed at the airstrip where the emergency landing was made though the flames had, by then, come under control. The Patna air authorities should ensure strict action and see that the presence of abattoirs causing dangerous situations and the danger in causing human deaths due to plane crash at landing or takeoff is avoided. It is time to address the pathetic position of airports on priority basis.

CK Subramaniam | Navi Mumbai

CHESS HONOUR FOR INDIA

Sir — India hosted the Chess Olympiad for the first time and in Asia after 30 years, which has been organised since 1927. In reality, Russia's loss has been India's gain. Chess has always been seen as an analogy for war, but a real war, Russia's invasion of Ukraine, has sent the entire chess world into turmoil. Due to this war, the International Chess Federation (FIDE) revoked Russia's rights to host the 2022

Chess Olympiad as well as the 93rd FIDE Congress, while Russia and Belarus have also been suspended from playing in the tournament.

With 188 registered countries, India is set to witness a huge congregation of nations for a sporting event for the first time. To make India's Chess Olympiad memorable, FIDE introduced an Olympic-style torch relay tradition for its Olympiad from this year and named India as the starting flame point. FIDE President Arkady Dvorkovich handed over the torch to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who gave it to five-time world champion Viswanathan Anand and flagged off the first ever torch relay for the Chess Olympiad ahead of the 44th edition, and made a ceremonial move on the chessboard against woman Grandmaster Neru Humpy.

Bidyut Kumar Chatterjee | Faridabad

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

Our cooperation (with Bangladesh) has been taken to a higher level over the past year.



External Affairs Minister —S Jaishankar



British PM —Boris Johnson

I don't understand why non-Hindi films are called regional films, to begin with.



Actor —Aditi Rao Hydari



Javelin star —Neeraj Chopra

I was asked if I'd consider contesting (Pres poll) if a consensus was to arise.



Mahatma Gandhi's grandson —Gopalkrishna Gandhi

FIRST COLUMN

YOGA ENABLES UNITY OF BODY, MIND, SOUL


Today is the International Yoga Day

RISHABH MISHRA

Beginning in 2015, International Yoga Day is celebrated all over the world on June 21. The proposal to celebrate Yoga Day was first proposed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his address to the United Nations General Assembly on September 27, 2014.

Yoga is known for its amazing health benefits. It enables the unity of mind, body, and spirit. Different forms of yoga benefit our physical and mental health in different ways. There is mention of yoga in Indian mythology. It is said that Lord Shiva gave birth to this art, known as Adi Yogi. However, the first systematic presentation of yoga was by Patanjali in the classical period. One of the eight limbs of yoga is pranayama, which focuses on breathing. The combination of all the eight limbs of yoga is called Ashtanga Yoga. Centuries ago, Maharishi Patanjali described the eight doors of liberation, which we now call Ashtanga Yoga. Today we know only some parts of Ashtanga Yoga like Asana, Pranayama, and Dhyana. The first of the eight limbs of Patanjali Yoga is Yama, which is derived from the word 'sanyam'.

Yama also has five parts. Ahimsa: not to harm anyone by thought, word, and deed. Satya: knowledge of truth beyond illusion. Asteya:



absence of theft. Brahmacharya: keeping the conscious one with the Brahman element. Aparigraha: absence of acquisitiveness.

Niyama is the second part of yoga, which also has five parts. Shauch: inner and outer cleanliness. Contentment. Tapa: striving hard. Svadhyaya: study to understand the self-parmatma. Ishvara Pranidhana: surrender to God and renunciation of ego. The part of yoga that is most clearly manifested in our times era is Asana. Maharishi Patanjali, while explaining its state, has said, "Sthirtam sukham asanam." That is, the stability of the body, bliss, and ease of mind are the asanas. The practice of expanding the subtle life force in the body is Pranayama. The Yoga Yajnavalkya Samhita describes the combination of awareness of prana (incoming breath) and apana (outgoing breath) as pranayama. With the help of breath, we can cultivate both body and mind.

The Hatha Yoga texts say 'Chale vaate, chalam chittam', which means that our mind becomes sharp by having a strong breath, and by harmonising breath, there is peace of mind. With the awareness of breath, Siddhartha Gautama attained enlightenment. Guru Nanak told the watchfulness of every breath as the key to connecting with God.

These days, we often mistake the practice of dharana for meditation. Dharana is a practice to concentrate the mind. It has many forms like Prana-dharana, i.e., focus on breath, jyoti or bindu tratak, etc. Dharana is actually the state before meditation; it controls the flood of thoughts of the mind and gives us peace. The Yoga Sutras say that when dharana persists, meditation takes place, which is the next part of yoga. Clearly we cannot meditate; rather it happens. Whatever method or process we adopt in the name of meditation can only lead us towards dharana, i.e., concentration. Meditation is that state where the doer, method, or process is all finished; there is just an emptiness like we prepare before sleep, but this preparation is not a guarantee of sleep; it comes suddenly, i.e., it happens.

Samadhi, which is the next part of yoga, comes from the word samadhi which means equanimity. In the Yoga Yajnavalkya Samhita, the state of communion of the soul with the Supreme Soul is called Samadhi. Maharishi Patanjali says that when the yogi becomes absorbed in his real form (Sat Chit Anand Swaroop), then that state of the seeker is called Samadhi. Samadhi is the manifestation of the perfect yogic state. Expressing this state, Kabir says, "Whenever I swing, then I do parikrama." Buddha has called it Nirvana and Mahavira has called it Kaivalya.

The author is Assistant Professor, Mechanical Engineering Department, Kanpur Institute of Technology

WTO MC-12: Deft handling by India

While it was advantage developed countries all the way, India was able to avoid more harm to its interests

At the World Trade Organization (WTO), even as all decisions are taken by consensus and every member country has equal voice, when it comes to actual confabulations, there are glaring inequalities. The developed countries—the US, the European Union, the UK, Australia, etc.—exercise disproportionately greater influence. They set the agenda of meetings, and get away with what they want even as developing countries are made to concur.

The outcome of the just concluded 12th Ministerial Conference (MC12) at the WTO headquarters in Geneva (June 12-17) is broadly in sync with this trend seen in the past.

For India, the most crucial area was 'a permanent solution to the public stockholding (PSH) program for food security'. Under this program, government agencies like Food Corporation of India (FCI) buy agri-produce such as wheat, rice/paddy, and coarse cereals from farmers at the minimum support price (MSP) and distribute it at a subsidised price of Rs 1 2/3 per kg to meet the needs of India's poor and vulnerable population.

The excess of MSP plus handling, storage and distribution cost over the realisation from sale (that is, Rs 1 2/3 per kg) is paid as subsidy from the Union Budget. This includes (a) subsidy to the farmer, being the excess of MSP of, say, rice over its international price also known as External Reference Price (ERP) in WTO parlance and (b) subsidy to the food consumer, being the excess of ERP over the price paid (Rs 3 per kg rice).

The WTO is concerned with (a) branded as "product-specific" subsidies. It is also concerned with subsidies on agricultural inputs like fertilizers, seed, irrigation, power, etc., referred to as "non-product specific" subsidies.

Under the Agreement on Agriculture (AoA) of the WTO, the sum total of product and non-product specific subsidies or aggregate measurement support (AMS) is capped at 10 per cent of the value of agricultural production for a developing country. If a member country gives AMS in excess of 10 per cent, it is a violation.

At present, India enjoys protection under a "peace clause" which was sanctioned in the 9th MC held in Bali (2013). It said "if a developing country gives AMS in excess of 10 per cent, no member will challenge this until 2017, when the WTO would look for a permanent solution."

In the General Council (GC) held in December 2014, this sanction was modified to say "the peace clause will stay till a permanent solution was found."

However, the peace clause comes with several riders, such as submission of data on food procurement, stockholding, distribution and subsidies.

These also include establishing that subsidies are not "trade distorting".

This makes India vulnerable which is

66

AT WTO, DEVELOPED COUNTRIES SET THE AGENDA OF MEETINGS. THE OUTCOME OF THE JUST CONCLUDED 12TH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE (MC12) IS BROADLY IN SYNC WITH THIS TREND SEEN IN THE PAST

evident from some countries insisting on 'safeguards' and 'transparency' obligations after it invoked the peace clause in 2018-19.


Against this backdrop, India was looking for a "permanent solution." It had asked for "total exemption for support to PSH for food security." Alternatively, it sought to rework the formula for computation of the AMS by removing flaws under the AoA. The flaws include (i) taking ERP for the year 1986-88; (ii) not excluding subsidies given to the resource-poor farmers; (iii) using the entire output instead of quantity procured for PSH.

These flaws "artificially" inflate the AMS thereby pushing Indian subsidy beyond the 10 per cent threshold, hence vulnerable to violation of its obligations under the WTO.

Despite its overwhelming importance to India and other developing countries, the issue was not even put on the table (it has been deferred to the next ministerial). Meanwhile, the MC-12 decided against any export restrictions on World Food Programme (WFP) purchases for food security in other countries. For India, the only saving grace is that it may restrict exports for "domestic food security."

The second major issue was India's demand of Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) waivers for all Covid-related therapeutics and diagnostics, besides vaccines. Against this, the MC-12 has granted a patent waiver (albeit 'temporary' and 'limited') only for Covid-19 vaccines which will allow India to authorise production of patented vaccines without taking consent of the patent holder for domestic requirements and exports.

War against the Covid pandem-



ic has to embrace all the three critical dimensions—testing, tracking, and treatment. Apart from the vaccine, diagnostics and therapeutics too need to be supplied at affordable rates.

To say "A decision on these would be taken in six months" is neither here nor there.

Even for the vaccines patent waiver, putting a time limit of five years is too restrictive considering that Covid- 19 is here to stay and a host of new variants popping up every now and then, and even the World Health Organization (WHO) cautioning people against occurrence of the pandemic every six months.

As for the third issue on fisheries subsidies, in sync with the principles of "polluter pays" and "common but differentiated responsibilities," India had proposed that developed countries abolish their subsidies over the next 25 years even while exempting developing countries from over-fishing subsidy prohibition within these 25 years.

The MC-12 has decided that "no subsidies will be given for fishing in areas outside EEZ (exclusive economic zone) or RFMOs (regional fisheries management organization); these are inter-governmental organizations having competence to adopt legally binding conservation/management measures regarding fisheries especially in the high seas as set out in the 1982 UN Law of the Sea Convention and described further in the 1995 UN Fish Stocks Agreement."

It has also agreed to check illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing and mooted "very strict controls" on overfishing so that fish stocks are restored.

This is a path-breaking decision that should help in curbing fishing (rather over-fishing) by big players in the deep ocean. However, it would have been better if time lines were agreed upon for abolishing such subsidies and mechanisms laid down for its enforcement and monitoring.

These decisions don't impact us, as the curbs are only on subsidies for IUU fishing and fishing outside EEZ or RFMOs, and India does not indulge in any such activities.

The fourth issue pertains to the moratorium on customs duty on e-commerce. The developed countries have been the prime beneficiaries of this arrangement in vogue since 1998. India was keen that it should go as developing countries are losing billions of dollars in duties foregone. Yet, it was decided to extend the moratorium till the next MC-13 or March 2024, whichever is earlier.


India could have used it as a bargaining chip to make developed countries agree to a 'permanent solution to the PSH program for food security'.

Here, it may be worth recalling: In the WTO-General Council (GC) meeting in Geneva (July 31, 2014), India had insisted on a time bound action plan to find a permanent solution on food security to be executed before end of 2014 co-terminus with approval of Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA)—an area of great interest to developed countries. But it let this opportunity go in December 2014. At the WTO, India has missed the bus yet again.


To conclude, at MC-12, it is advantage developed countries all the way, though India was able to avoid further harm to its interests, courtesy deft handling of the issues by the Indian team led by Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

THERE'S NO BIGGER PATRIOT THAN YOU (DEFENCE ASPIRANTS). OPEN YOUR EYES AND RECOGNISE FAKE NATIONALISTS. —CONGRESS LEADER PRIYANKA GANDHI VADRA



THERE SHOULD BE NO POLITICS ON SUBJECTS OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE... BUT IT IS HAPPENING ON THE AGNIPATH SCHEME. —BJP SPOKESPERSON SAMBIT PATRA



There are ways to make Agnipath more acceptable

Govt can offer 50 per cent posts in technical wings for a few years directly, increase DA, gratuity and insurance cover

The government's recently announced Agnipath scheme for recruitment of youth in the three wings of military—the Army, the Air Force and the Navy—has been met with violent agitation in many parts of the country.

The scheme, 'a tour of duty', usually is a period spent by soldiers in combat or in a hostile environment. This scheme precisely provides this opportunity to the patriotic and motivated youth to serve the defence forces. Many countries allow their youth to serve for a few years in the Army which brings a feeling of patriotic fervour among them. It also creates reserve combatants at the time of emergency.

In India, the government allows a 10-year service, with an option of a four-year extension,



as commissioned officers through the short-service commission. Previously—during 1948, 1962 and 1965—officers were recruited under the Emergency Commission to meet the shortage.

The Agnipathi scheme is a similar scheme for the non-officer cadre with the difference that it would be the only way to enter three Indian defence forces. If implemented properly based on merit and transparency, it will be one of the most forward-looking revolutionary steps taken by the government post-Independence for the modernisation of the defence forces.

The scheme will make the Indian military younger: the average age of soldiers, which is 32 years now, will be reduced to 26 year in due course. This will also reduce other expenditures

which can be diverted to modernise and make them technologically equipped to fight modern wars, while promoting youngsters to join armed forces for a short period.

The question is: why has the scheme become politicised? Youths have taken to the streets, with many indulging in violence and arson. There are institutions and forums to express dissent but of late hooliganism and road blockages have become the norm. Most of the time, such stirs are taken over by external as well as internal anti-national forces. Such protests cause immense hardship for the people.

The government to a certain extent must share the blame. Howsoever good a scheme may be, it must be introduced after wide consultations with the stakeholders. Especially after the experience of farmers' agitation, one would have thought that the government would learn this lesson; for good laws had to be rolled back by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

For the Agnipathi scheme the Ministry of Defence should have invited public comments and then announced it rather than the government now saying 10 per cent vacancies in Central police organisations will be reserved for Agniveers

and also increased the upper age to 23.

A few anti-social elements backed by frustrated leaders are waiting to cash in on such opportunities, as they know they can force a rollback and the police cannot take strong action even if they indulge in arson and violence.

As a student of resource management, this writer would like to suggest the Prime Minister and the Defence Minister that the concept of Agnipathi is definitely a revolutionary one which needs to be introduced in a gradual manner. We must also be aware about our socio-economic conditions.

Further, there is the possibility of the militarisation of youth. Some thought should go to a difficult question: what will happen if the energies of the youth, with four years of military training, are not channelised carefully after their return from the Army.

The government should continue to fill up at least 50 per cent posts in technical wings for a few years directly on a regular basis till the efficacy of Agnipathi is ensured. Second, there is no provision for Gorkhas of Nepal who are a very vital part of the Indian Army and a shining example of Indo-Nepal ties.

Third, the caste, religion and region-wise constitutions of regiments must not be abandoned as it has been a big motivational factor. Fourth, it should be possible to have a provision of four years' extension for the Agniveers without any pension liability. Fifth, the government must suitably enhance its monthly contribution, allow

dearness allowance and give a gratuity of 10 lakh in addition to what has been promised.

Sixth, the insurance cover of ₹44 lakh for a young Agniveer is on a lower side. It should be at least ₹1 crore.

Last but not the least, the verbal and executive instructions are pooh-poohed by political leaders and bureaucracy. Therefore, some percentage of posts in police and other uniformed services, both under the Central as well as in states and also in private sector should be reserved for eligible Agniveers by an Act of Parliament. If these suggestions are considered, the scheme may well change the future of Indian defence forces as well as the mindset of our youth.

After all, change is a must and it is inevitable.

‘It’s just hell there’: Russia still pounds eastern Ukraine

AP ■ KYIV

Russia's military machine persevered in its ferocious effort to grind down Ukraine's defences on Monday, as the war's consequences for food and fuel supplies increasingly weighed on minds around the globe after warnings that the fighting could go on for years.

In Ukraine's eastern Luhansk region, which in recent weeks has become the focal point of Moscow's attempt to impose its will on its neighbour, battles raged for the control of multiple villages, the local governor said.

The villages are around Sievierodonetsk and Lysychansk, two cities in the Luhansk region yet to be captured by the Russians, according to Luhansk governor Serhiy Haidai.

Russian shelling and airstrikes on the industrial outskirts of Sievierodonetsk have intensified, he said.

Haidai told The Associated Press on Monday that the situation in Sievierodonetsk was "very difficult," with the Ukrainian forces maintaining control over just one area - the Azot chemical plant, where a number of Ukrainian fighters, along with about 500 civilians, are taking shelter.

The Russians keep deploying additional troops and equipment in the area, he said.

"It's just hell there."



Everything is engulfed in fire, the shelling doesn't stop even for an hour," Haidai said in written comments.

Only a fraction of 100,000 people who used to live in Sievierodonetsk before the war remain in the city, with no electricity, communications, food or medicine.

Even so, Haidai said, the staunch Ukrainian resistance is preventing Moscow from deploying its resources to other parts of the country.

The British defence ministry noted that the war is not

going all Russia's way, despite its superior military assets.

Russian ground troops are "exhausted", the defence ministry said in an intelligence report on Monday. It blamed poor air support for Russia's difficulty in making swifter progress on the ground.

Across the world, drivers are rethinking their habits and personal finances amid surging prices for gasoline and diesel, fuelled by Russia's war in Ukraine as well as the global rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Energy prices are a key driver of inflation that is rising worldwide and making the cost of living more expensive.

The European Union's top diplomats gathered in Luxembourg on Monday for talks focused on Ukraine and food security.

EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell called on Russia to lift its blockades of Ukrainian ports to help deliver the millions of tons of grain waiting to be exported.

"I hope - more than hope, I am sure - that the UN will at

the end reach an agreement," Borrell said.

"It is unconceivable, one cannot imagine that millions of tons of wheat remain blocked in Ukraine while in the rest of the world, people are suffering (from) hunger. This is a real war crime ... You cannot use the hunger of people as a weapon of war."

Financial help for children displaced by the war in Ukraine was due to come from an unlikely quarter later Monday, when Russian journalist Dmitry Muratov looked to auction off his Nobel Peace Prize medal in New York.

Muratov was awarded the gold medal in October 2021. He helped found the independent Russian newspaper Novaya Gazeta and was the publication's editor-in-chief when it shut down in March amid the Kremlin's clampdown on journalists and public dissent in the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Muratov had already announced he was donating to charity the USD 500,000 cash award that came with the prize. The proceeds will go directly to UNICEF in its efforts to help children displaced by the war in Ukraine.

In other developments on Monday, a Russian governor said Ukrainian shelling of a Russian village near the border with Ukraine wounded one person. A power station was hit,

leaving parts of the village without electricity, according to Alexander Bogomaz, governor of the Bryansk region.

The Russian military said it hit an airfield in Ukraine's southern Odesa region with a missile, destroying two Bayraktar drones and a drone control station.

Defence Ministry spokesman Igor Konashenkov said a high-precision Oniks missile hit an Artsyz airfield on the Odesa region.

Earlier on Monday, the Ukrainian military said its air defence system deterred two airstrikes on the Odesa region, destroying the incoming missiles. The contradicting reports couldn't be immediately reconciled.

Russia's governor of Crimea said "enemy units" struck drilling rigs operating off the peninsula, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014.

Sergei Aksyonov said 12 people had been on the platforms at the time. Five were rescued and three were injured, he said in a brief statement on social media. It wasn't immediately clear what happened to the other four people.

He didn't say how the reported strike was conducted or how many rigs were affected. It also wasn't clear whether the platforms were drilling for oil or gas. There was no immediate comment from the Ukrainian government.



Will fight with shovels if denied Western arms: Kuleba

IANIS ■ KIEV

Ukraine will continue fighting against Russia even if it has no weapons whatsoever, so the West should speed up its shipments of arms or be responsible for the deaths of its troops, Foreign Minister Dmitry Kuleba said.

"If we don't get weapons, fine. Then we will fight with shovels. But we will keep defending ourselves because this is a war for our existence," Kuleba was quoted as saying in an interview with German public broadcaster ARD.

"The sooner we get the weapons, the sooner they will do us. If they come late, we will still thank you, but then there will be a lot of waste, and many people will have died by then," he added.

He made the remarks during a panel discussion, RT reported.

The list of guests on the

show also included the President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen and several German politicians and political experts.

Kuleba said that Russian artillery outgunned Ukraine's in Donbas 15 to 1, echoing statements that several senior Ukrainian officials have made lately.

Kiev cannot win with such an imbalance of power, the foreign minister added.

Western politicians, who believe Kiev should make concessions to Russia and agree to settle the conflict with a peace agreement due to the dire situation on the battlefield, are wrong, Kuleba claimed.

Ukraine was left with some of the largest military stockpiles among former Soviet republics when the USSR dissolved.

Now it says it's lost up to half of its heavy weapons fighting against Russia and allied forces in the east.

Russia becomes biggest supplier of oil to China

IANIS ■ LONDON

Russia has become China's biggest supplier of oil as the country sold discounted crude to Beijing amid sanctions over the Ukraine war, media reports said.

Imports of Russian oil rose by 55 per cent from a year earlier to a record level in May, displacing Saudi Arabia as China's biggest provider, BBC reported.

China has ramped up purchases of Russian oil despite demand dampened by Covid curbs and a slowing economy.

Chinese companies, including state refining giant Sinopec and state-run Zhenhua Oil, have increased their purchases of Russian crude in recent months after being offered heavy discounts as buyers in Europe and the US shunned Russian energy in line with sanctions over its war on Ukraine, BBC reported.

The imports into China, which include supplies pumped through the East Siberia Pacific Ocean pipeline and shipments



by sea, totalled nearly 8.42m tonnes last month, according to data from the Chinese General Administration of Customs.

That pushed Saudi Arabia - formerly China's biggest source of crude oil - into second place with 7.82m tonnes.

In March, the US and UK said they would ban Russian oil, while the European Union has been working towards ending its reliance on Russian gas, as the West steps up the economic response to the invasion of Ukraine.

At the time, US President Joe Biden said the move tar-

geted "the main artery of Russia's economy".

Energy exports are a vital source of revenue for Russia but the move is also likely to impact Western consumers.

Last week, a report said Russia earned almost \$100 billion in revenue from fossil fuel exports in the first 100 days of the country's invasion of Ukraine, despite a fall in exports in May, BBC reported.

The European Union made up 61 per cent of these imports, worth approximately \$59 billion.

Overall, exports of Russian oil and gas are falling and Moscow's revenue from energy sales has also declined from a peak of well over \$1 billion a day in March.

Zelenskyy Father's Day post spotlights family ties amid war

AP ■ KYIV

One photograph shows a kneeling soldier kissing a child inside a subway station, where Ukraine families shelter from Russian airstrikes. In another, an infant and a woman who appears on the brink of tears look out from a departing train car as a man peers inside, his hand spread across the window in a gesture of goodbye.

In an uplifting Father's Day message Sunday, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy posted 10 photos of parents and children set against the grim backdrop of war, praising fathers who "protect and defend the most precious."

There are scenes of childbirth, as a man and woman look toward a swaddled baby in what appears to be a hospital room where the spackled walls show scars of fighting. In another, a man lifts a child over a fence toward a woman with outstretched arms on a train platform.

"Being a father is a great responsibility and a great happiness," Zelenskyy wrote in English text that followed the Ukrainian on Instagram. "It is strength, wisdom, motivation



to go forward and not to give up."

He urged his nation's fighters to endure for the "future of your family, your children, and therefore the whole of Ukraine."

His message came as four months of war in Ukraine appear to be straining the morale of troops on both sides, prompting desertions and rebellion against officers' orders. NATO's chief warned the fighting could drag on for "years."

"Combat units from both sides are committed to intense combat in the Donbas and are likely experiencing variable

morale," Britain's defence ministry said in its daily assessment of the war.

"Ukrainian forces have likely suffered desertions in recent weeks," the assessment said, but added that "Russian morale highly likely remains especially troubled."

It said "cases of whole Russian units refusing orders and armed stand-offs between officers and their troops continue to occur."

Separately, the Ukrainian Main Intelligence Directorate released what it said were intercepted phone calls in which Russian soldiers complained about front-line conditions,

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is For Notice of The General Public that A Political Party is Proposed To Be Registered By The Name Of "Bharatiya Pravasi Janata Party" The Office of The Party is Located at 407, DLF Centre Point, Main Mathura Road, Metro Piller No. 845, Sector-11, Faridabad (DLH) NCR 121006 This Party has Submitted Application To The Election Commission Of India, New Delhi Under Section 29 A Of The Representation Of People Act, 1951 Name Of The Office Bearers Of The Party Are As follows:

1. National President: DR. AJAY TIWARI
2. General Secretary: SAPNA TIWARI
3. Treasurer: SANTOSH TIWARI

If anyone has any objection to the registration of "Bharatiya Pravasi Janata Party" they may send their objection to the reason thereof. The Election Commission Of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi: 110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice.

PUBLIC NOTICE

My client Mr. Pradeep Prakash and Mrs. Pushpa Kumari intends to purchase Leasehold Residential Plot No. J-86, in Block-J, measuring 190 Sq.Mtrs., in Village/Sector- Junpat, Greater Noida, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P. from Mrs. Savita who is registered owner of the said property on the basis of Transfer Deed dated 26.04.2022 and Original allotment Letter dated 06.07.2017 in the name of Mr. Dhanam Veer has been lost/misplaced and now my client is mortgaging the same to LIC HFL. If anybody including Bank, Financial Institutions, persons, relative has any claim, right, interest whatsoever in the said property shall inform within 7 days to the undersigned with documentary evidence. In the event of no response to this notice, then our client shall presume that title of the said property is unencumbered and clear.

Karnail Singh, Advocate,
K-8, Basement, Jungpura Extension New Delhi
Contact No. 9811163363 & 9953683363

NOTICE

General Public is hereby informed through this notice that **Dr. Attam's Nursing Home** situated at 19 Bhera Enclave, New Delhi-110087 is going to destroy its Medical admission records from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019, as per record destruction rule. If any body is interested in obtaining the records of this period. Please contact the Nursing Home within 7 day of appearance of this notice, After that administration will not be responsible for the records.

Thanks Hospital Manager

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that Raj Rani is the absolute owner of Entire First Floor without roof or lifts of Property bearing No. 4/28 Measuring 50 Sq. Yds., Out of Khassa No. 528, situated in the area of Village Chandrawali alias Shahdara, below the abadi of Gazi No. 1, Bahan Colony, Ilahia Shahdara, Delhi-110032, whereas he has lost the following Document pertaining to the said property:- Sale deed dated 08.06.2008 executed by Moti Rani Jain and Weena in favour of Geeta Jaiswal, duly registered in the office of SR Delhi, as Doc No. 7484, Book No. 1, Vol No. 3488, pages 185-186, dated 08.06.2008 in respect of Entire first floor of the said property. Sale deed dated 12.08.2008 executed by Geeta Jaiswal in favour of Anil Kumar Gupta and Laxmi Rani Gupta, duly registered in the office of SR Delhi, as Doc No. 1023, Book No. 1, Vol No. 3627, pages 147-153, dated 12.08.2008, read with an FIR dated 9/6/22. All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise however, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 10 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Karnail Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Shop No. 5 & 6, Pkt-E, CSC, Mayapuri Vihar-II, Delhi-91
911-43512822, 9961063351

NORTHERN RAILWAY

OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE

The Sr. Divisional Engineer-III, Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites E-Tender for the following work.

1	Name of work	Scour monitoring in foundations of Yamuna Bridge 249 of span 12x60.96+2x18.3m in the section of SSE/W/Yamuna Bridge under ADEN/DLI.
2	Approx Cost of Work	Rs 17,95,422.72/- (Rupees Seventeen Lakh Ninety Five Thousand Four Hundred Twenty Two & Seventy Two paise only)
3	Earnest Money to be deposited	Rs. 35900/- (Rupees Thirty Five Thousand Nine Hundred Only)
4	Cost of Tender Document	Rs. 0/-
5	Date & Time of Submission of Tender bid and Opening of Tender.	15.07.2022 @ 15:00 Hrs.
6	Website particulars where complete details of tender documents can be seen.	www.ireps.gov.in

* The tenderer/s must be registered on the Indian Railway E-Procurement system (IREPS) site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in for participating in the e-tender system. * For all terms and conditions please refer tender document. * No manual offers are acceptable. * Cost of tender document and Earnest money will be acceptable through net banking or payment gateway only.

Notice No. 128-W/280/e Tender Notice/NIT/21/2022-23/W-3
Dated: 20.06.2022 1495/2022

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

NOTICE

General Public is hereby informed through this notice that **Dr. Attam's Nursing Home** situated at 19 Bhera Enclave, New Delhi-110087 is going to destroy its Medical admission records from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019, as per record destruction rule. If any body is interested in obtaining the records of this period. Please contact the Nursing Home within 7 day of appearance of this notice, After that administration will not be responsible for the records.

Thanks Hospital Manager

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that Raj Rani is the absolute owner of Entire First Floor without roof or lifts of Property bearing No. 4/28 Measuring 50 Sq. Yds., Out of Khassa No. 528, situated in the area of Village Chandrawali alias Shahdara, below the abadi of Gazi No. 1, Bahan Colony, Ilahia Shahdara, Delhi-110032, whereas he has lost the following Document pertaining to the said property:- Sale deed dated 08.06.2008 executed by Moti Rani Jain and Weena in favour of Geeta Jaiswal, duly registered in the office of SR Delhi, as Doc No. 7484, Book No. 1, Vol No. 3488, pages 185-186, dated 08.06.2008 in respect of Entire first floor of the said property. Sale deed dated 12.08.2008 executed by Geeta Jaiswal in favour of Anil Kumar Gupta and Laxmi Rani Gupta, duly registered in the office of SR Delhi, as Doc No. 1023, Book No. 1, Vol No. 3627, pages 147-153, dated 12.08.2008, read with an FIR dated 9/6/22. All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise however, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 10 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Karnail Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Shop No. 5 & 6, Pkt-E, CSC, Mayapuri Vihar-II, Delhi-91
911-43512822, 9961063351

Russia's blockade of Ukrainian grain is real war crime: EU

IANIS ■ LUXEMBOURG

European Union foreign policy chief Josep Borrell has called the Russian blockade of Ukrainian grain exports a "real war crime," adding that the bloc's sanctions on Russia have played no part in the global food crisis, CNN reported.

Speaking to journalists on his way to a EU Foreign Affairs Ministers meeting in Luxembourg on Monday, the EU's High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy said that "it's not the European sanctions" that are "creating this crisis."

Russia's war in Ukraine could push up to 49 million people into famine or famine-like conditions because of its devastating impact on global food supply and prices, the United Nations has said.

"absolutely has weaponized food" by blockading grain exports out of Ukraine, CNN reported.

Borrell's remarks came after Putin said that Russia's actions in Ukraine are not responsible for the global food crisis and accused the United States of driving up food prices, in his speech to the St Petersburg International Economic Forum on Friday.

"Famine in the poorest countries will be on the conscience of the US administration and the Eurocrats," he said.

Borrell countered these claims on Monday, saying that the "the problem comes from the Russian blockade of Ukrainian grain." Countries who want to buy Russian fertilizers are free to do so, Borrell said, reiterating that the bloc's sanctions do not target food or fertilizers.

He added that he didn't see the food crisis lasting "much longer," expressing his hope that the UN "reaches an agreement" with Russia soon to unblock Ukrainian grain exports, CNN reported.

German officials seize apartments of Russian lawmaker, wife

AP ■ BERLIN

German prosecutors said on Monday that they have seized three apartments and a bank account owned by a Russian lawmaker and his wife under European Union sanctions imposed because of the invasion of Ukraine.

Prosecutors in Munich said the Duma lawmaker and his wife - identified only as L. And K. Respectively in line with

German privacy rules - jointly own two of the apartments in the Bavarian city, and continued to earn money from rent on the properties in violation of sanctions.

They said the wife, who is registered as a resident in Munich, also is the sole owner of a third Munich apartment on which she continued to collect rent. That means both are suspected of violating Germany's foreign trade law.

The seizure was ordered last week and took effect on Monday, prosecutors said. The people living in the apartments are allowed to stay, but they're no longer allowed to pay rent to the lawmaker and his wife; payments must be deposited with the Munich district court.

The bank account that was seized receives monthly rental payments of around 3,500 euros (USD 3,670), according to prosecutors.

China says midcourse missile interception test a success

launched astronauts and components to the nation's orbiting space station.

The interception test comes as China has been escalating threats against the self-governing island of Taiwan, which Beijing claims as its own territory to be annexed by military force if necessary.

A conflict over Taiwan would likely bring in the US, which is the island's main

source of weaponry and is legally bound to regard threats to it as a matter of "grave concern".

China is also engaged in territorial disputes with the Philippines, Vietnam and other governments over the South China Sea.

China is also seen as backing Russia in its invasion of Ukraine, although it has not provided material support to its actions.

Protesters demanding Gotabaya resignation block all entrances of presidential secretariat

21 arrested, including a Buddhist monk, 4 women

PTI ■ COLOMBO

A group of protesters in Sri Lanka demanding the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa for the mismanagement of the economy blocked all entrances of the presidential secretariat here, forcing the police on Monday to arrest 21 people, including a Buddhist monk and four women.

The island nation, home to around 22 million people, is currently facing its worst economic crisis in more than 70 years. Sri Lanka's economy is experiencing extreme fuel shortages, soaring food prices and a lack of medicines.

The demonstration at the GotaGoGama, a protest site at the Galle Face, entered the 73rd day on Monday.

The protesters last night blocked the two entry points to the presidential secretariat in addition to the entrance which they have been continuously blocking since April 9.

Police arrested 21 people, including



a Buddhist monk and four women. Police said the latest action by the protesters to block the two gates which provide access to the finance ministry and the government treasury was uncalled for. The police wanted to clear the two gates as an IMF team is due to visit the finance ministry.

The International Monetary Fund team is visiting Colombo to continue discussions on a possible bailout programme to support the island nation's

economic recovery.

The GotaGoGama protest demanding the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa started on April 9.

Protesters blame the government for the mismanagement of the economy, which has sent prices of goods skyrocketing and the country's reserves plummeting to levels reaching a record low.

The protest in Colombo spread to other parts of the country with wider public support.

Sri Lankan Cabinet passes 21st Amendment aimed at empowering Parliament

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan cabinet on Monday passed the 21st Amendment to the Constitution aimed at empowering Parliament over the executive president and now it will be tabled in Parliament, a top minister has said. The 21st Amendment is expected to annul the 20A to the Constitution, which gives unfettered powers to President Gotabaya Rajapaksa after abolishing the 19th Amendment that will strengthen Parliament.

"The 21 amendment was tabled and passed in cabinet today and will be tabled in @ParliamentLK soon. Like to thank @RW_UNP and @wijerajapakse for pushing it through," Minister of Tourism and Lands Harin Fernando tweeted. The 21A aims, among other reforms, at barring dual citizens from contesting elections to hold public office. A section of the ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna party (SLPP) was opposed to

bringing in 21A without addressing the current economic crisis.

Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe had battled for the 21st Amendment to the Constitution, saying it will curb the president's unlimited powers while enhancing the role of Parliament in governing the debt-ridden country which is also facing an unprecedented political turmoil. The powerful Rajapaksa family tightened their grip on power after their massive victory in the general elections in August 2020, which allowed them to amend the Constitution to restore presidential powers and install close family members in key positions.

Wickremesinghe was the main sponsor of the 19th Amendment in 2015 which empowered Parliament over the executive president. The constitutional reform was a major plank of the agreement between Rajapaksa and Wickremesinghe when he took over the job of Prime Minister on May 12.

Police: 1 dead, 8 wounded in shooting at gathering in Harlem

AP ■ NEW YORK

An early-morning shooting Monday at a gathering in Harlem left a man dead and eight other people wounded, New York City police said.

Officers responded about 12:40 am to reports of a shooting on a footpath along the FDR Drive and found five people shot, police said, citing preliminary information. They were taken to hospitals for treatment.

Four other people who were shot also arrived at hospitals for treatment, police said. A 21-year-old man was pronounced dead at a hospital, police said,

and the wounded included six other males and two females.

"This Father's Day weekend is a weekend where people were supposed to be able to enjoy themselves with their families," Police Commissioner Keechant Sewell said at a news conference. The investigation was ongoing Monday and police didn't immediately have details about the gathering or what may have led to the shooting. Information about possible suspects wasn't immediately released, but police said on Twitter that a gun was recovered from the scene. Tips were being sought from the public as part of the investigation.

Belgium authorities return Congo independence hero's tooth to family

AP ■ BRUSSELS

Belgian authorities on Monday returned a gold-capped tooth belonging to the slain Congolese independence hero Patrice Lumumba, as the former colonial power continues to confront its bloody past and look toward reconciliation.

The restitution of the relic took place after Belgium's King Philippe earlier this month expressed his "deepest regrets" for his nation's abuses in its

African former colony, Congo, which is 75 times the size of Belgium.

Following a private ceremony in the presence of relatives of Lumumba during which the federal prosecutor handed over a case containing the tooth, Belgium's prime minister Alexander De Croo told Congolese officials and Lumumba's family that the restitution came way too late.

"It is not normal that Belgium held onto the remains of one of the founding fathers

of the Congolese nation for six decades," said De Croo, who also offered apologies for the role played by his country in the assassination.

Congolese Prime minister Jean-Michel Sama Lukonde said the return of the relic will be essential for the country's national memory.

After his assassination in 1961, Lumumba's body was dismembered and dissolved with acid in an apparent effort to keep any grave from becoming a pilgrimage site.

The tooth was seized by Belgian officials in 2016 from the daughter of the Belgian police commissioner who said he took it after overseeing the destruction of Lumumba's body Two years ago, the federal prosecutor's office said there is no absolute certainty that the tooth being returned is Lumumba's since no DNA test could be conducted.

Lumumba's daughter, Juliana, agreed with De Croo the handover was long overdue.

Le Pen: Huge gains in French Parliament a 'seismic event'

AP ■ PARIS

Far-right leader Marine Le Pen said on Monday that her party's extraordinary surge in the country's parliamentary election is a "historic victory" and a "seismic event" in French politics. Many voters in Sunday's poll opted for far-right or far-left candidates, denying President Emmanuel Macron's centrist alliance a straight majority in the National Assembly.

Le Pen's National Rally got 89 seats in the 577-member parliament, up from a previous total of eight. On the other side of the political spectrum, the leftist Nupes coalition, led by hardliner Jean-Luc Melancon, won 131 seats to become the main opposition force.

Macron's centrist alliance Together! won the most seats - 245 - but fell 44 seats short



of a straight majority in the National Assembly. France's most powerful house of parliament.

The outcome of the legislative election is highly unusual in France and the strong performance of both Le Pen's National Rally and Melancon's coalition - composed of his own hard-left party, France Unbowed, the Socialists, Greens and Communists - will make it harder for Macron to implement the agenda he was reelected on in May, including tax cuts and raising France's retirement age from 62 to 65.

Gotabaya thanks Xi for 'continued friendship' during 'trying times'

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan President Gotabaya Rajapaksa on Monday expressed his appreciation for China for its 'continued friendship, particularly during these trying times', as he thanked his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping for wishing him on his birthday.

Rajapaksa was born on June 20, 1949. "Thank you President Xi Jinping for the warm birthday wishes. Along with all of #Ika I also want to thank #China for her continued friendship, particularly during these trying times. May the ties between our two

nations grow from strength to strength," he tweeted, referring to the worst economic crisis faced by the island nation and Rajapaksa's bid to restructure debts owed to Beijing.

It is estimated that Lanka owes debt payments to China in the region of \$ 1.5 to 2 billion this year. China's loans and investments in Sri Lanka were estimated to be more than USD eight billion in the last few years. China's takeover of the Hambantota port on 99 years' lease for \$1.2 billion debt swap drew international concerns over Beijing acquiring strategic assets far away from home by providing heavy loans.

PUBLIC NOTICE
General public is hereby informed that Mrs. Rajani W/o Mr. Kalu is intending to sell Part of Residential House Plot No. 130, area measuring 35 Sq. Yds., i.e. 29.26 Sq. Yds. out of Khazra No. 194, situated in the Village Duhai, Pargana Jalabab, Tehsil & District Ghaziabad, U.P. to Mr. Saraj Kumar S/o Mr. Jajpal to be financed by the said Finance Ltd. Branch Mehta The Original Sale Deed Regd. No. 5537, In Book No. 1, Vol. No. 6987, Page No. 369-390, Dated 15-04-2013, SFO-II, Ghaziabad, pertaining to Mrs. Rajani to the aforesaid property has been lost and FIR L.A.R. No. 202200020289894 has been registered on 20.06.2022 with Police Unit, State Crime Record Bureau, Lucknow. Any person(s) found in possession of aforesaid original sale deed, then, kindly contact the undersigned along with original property document, within 07 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid sale deed shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.
Rajani Thani, Advocate
Ch. 830, Patiala House Courts, New Delhi - 110001
Mob.-91 9071835229

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of Fullerton India Home Finance Company that Mrs. Jasbir Kaur is claiming owner/attorney holder of Property bearing No. T-42, area measuring 51 Sq. Yds., out of Khazra No. 8, Situated in the area of Village Khazra, in the area of Vashnu Garden in Block T, New Delhi (the said property), by virtue of Regd. G.P.A. Agreement and regd. will all dated 22.05.1984, executed by Mr. Swarn Singh. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned claiming owner/attorney holder want to sell the said property to Mohd. Hashim / his nominee who is taking loan from Fullerton India Home Finance Company for purchase of the said property, if anybody has any objections on the ownership of above owner/attorney holder over the said property, its sale Mortgage/litigation, and of any kind of objections, please inform the undersigned in writing, or on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.
Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
20, 1st Floor, 33, Shaheed Nagar, New Delhi-110012
Ph: 011-4112527-28, 4112529-30, 4112530-31, 4112532-33
www.kumarassociatesadvocates.com

Public Notice
SARV PRIYA MAHAJAN CO-OPERATIVE GROUP HOUSING SOCIETY LTD 202, Vardhman Avon Shopping Plaza, LSC-C-Block Market, Saraswati Vihar, Pitampura, Delhi-110034
In pursuance to rule 19(2) of DCS rules, 2007, applications are invited from general public of Delhi who fulfill the conditions laid down in rule-19 and 20 of DCS Rules, 2007 for filling up one vacancy in Sarv Priya Mahajan CGHS Ltd. (Regd. No. 1384-GH) for three bedroom flat (Tentative cost of flat 1.5 Crore) (having Approximate 90.88 meter carpet area, which has arisen due to resignation of members, Interested persons can collect the application form in person from society office i.e. 202, Vardhman Avon Shopping Plaza, LSC, Saraswati Vihar, Pitampura, Delhi-34 between 10.00 am. to 4.30 p.m. free of cost and the same have to deposited along with the amount of Rs. 61,00,360/-which includes Share money, admission fee/land & Construction money through Pay order/ Demand Draft within 15 days of issue of this notice in favour of Sarv Priya Mahajan Co-operative Group Housing Society Ltd. Applicant at the time of applying membership, sufficient has to deposit the Equalization charges as prescribed in the DCS Act & Rules President-Sarv Priya Mahajan CGHS Ltd

PUBLIC NOTICE
Plot No.A-11/22, admeasuring 420 Sq.Mtrs. (502.32 Sq.Yds.) situated in Village Chakkarpur, forming part of Colony Known as DLF City Phase-1, Teh. & Dist. Gurgaon (Haryana) registered in the names of Smt. Sudha Selot, (2) Smt. Amita Selot (3) Smt. Swati Selot vide Sale. Deed dated 18th day of May/2010, duly registered as Document No.4333, in Addl. Book No.1, Volume No.11991, on pages 7 to 8, Bahi No.1, Jild No.945, Page No.109, on 18.05.2010, registered in the office of the Sub-Registrar, Gurgaon. That Late Smt. Sudha Selot who has expired on 10.10.2011 and Late Mrs. Amita Selot who has expired on 11.10.2011 leaving behind no Will and accordingly the names of (1) Mr. Nikhil Selot S/o Late Shri G.S. Selot (Girja Shankar Selot) R/o S-478, Ground Floor, Greater Kailash Part-1, New Delhi-110048 and (2) Mr. Niraj Selot son of Late Shri G.S. Selot (Girja Shankar Selot) (3) Mr. Parth Selot S/o Shri Niraj Selot (4) Mr. Amesh Selot S/o Shri Niraj Selot all R/o S-20/53-89-90 Buddha Vihar Colony, Behind Hotel Clark, The Mall Road Cantonment, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh-221002 are being notified in DLF's record in respect of the captioned plot. If anybody has any objection to this, he/she/they may approach M/s DLF Ltd or the undersigned within 21 days of publication of this notice.

Nareesh Gupta (Advocate)
C-75, Greater Kailash Part-I, New Delhi-110048
Tel: 29235175, 40568077

Public Notice
This is to inform general public that Mr. Parveen Kumar Narula is the owner of the Land area measuring 499 Sq. yds. out of Khazra & M.J. No. 9/19/1, Situated at Gorchhi, Sub-tehsil Gorchhi, Distt. Faridabad, Haryana vide Transfer Deed in Book Relation dated 31.12.2021 (Doc. No. 1341). Mr. Parveen Kumar Narula has misplaced the below mentioned documents:
A. Original Sale Deed dated 01.09.1961 executed by Mr. Ratan Lal in favour of Mr. Gulshan in respect of Entire property, B. Original G.P.A. AT&S & Will dated 22.05.1984 executed by Mr. Gulshan in favour of Mrs. Nirmal in respect of said property, C. Original Sale Deed dated 26.07.1983 executed by Mr. Gulshan through G.P.A. Nirmal in favour of Mr. Surinder Kumar in respect of said property area measuring 500 sq. yds. D. Original Sale Deed dated 15.01.1984 executed by Mr. Tara Chand in favour of Mr. Surinder Kumar in respect of said property area measuring 500 sq. yds.
Anyone who find the above said documents shall handover the same to the Manager of UGRU Capital Limited having its office at 1st Floor, Sarvika Tower, 99 Pusa Road, New Delhi-110005. Now, Mrs. Narula Textile & Mr. Parveen Kumar Narula & Mr. Surinder Kumar are availing loan on this property from UGRU Capital Limited by mortgaging the said property. In case anyone has any objection regarding mortgage of the said property, the same may be raised within 10 days of this publication to Mr. Munesh Dhanraj (Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocate), Law Veritas North, Unit no 907, 9th Floor, GD-TL Tower, (B-08), Netaji Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9066707172/ 9818228635 (M).

Public Notice
NOTICE is hereby given that Mr. Rohit Rana (hereinafter referred to as the said Mortgagee/ Borrower) is purchasing Flat Bearing No. P-1, on 5th Floor, without roof right, "Sail Flat" area measuring 124.415 Sq. Mtrs., Park View Apartment-Phase-II, Situated at Residential Colony, Gandhi Nagar, under revenue Village Raia Pargana Loni Tehsil & Distt. Ghaziabad from Mr. Tarun Kumar Sharma, Mr. Siddharth Sharma, Mr. Siddharth Sharma who are Legatees of Late Aka Sharma as per SMC Certificate no. 1925 dated 13.11.2017. And whereas Mrs. Aka Sharma was owner of the said property vide Sale Deed dated 21.12.2005, Doc. No. 8899. Now, Mr. Rohit Rana has agreed to create mortgage in respect of the said property in favour of our client IDFC FIRST Bank Limited. Further, if any person, body, individual, Institution, having any claim, title, interest and/or objection in respect of or against or relating to or touching upon said property or part of the property by way of sale, exchange, lease, lien, mortgage, charge, encumbrance, gift, trust, easement, maintenance, inheritance, testamentary disposition or otherwise or having in their custody any title, documents pertaining to the said property shall communicate the same to the undersigned at below mentioned address within 10 days from the publication of this notice with documentary evidence in support thereof, failing which all the claim, of such person shall be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned. Any objections raised after the completion of the 10 days shall not be binding upon the said property or my Client & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 10 days of this publication to Mr. Manish Dhanraj (Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocate), Law Veritas, Unit no 907, 9th Floor, GD-TL Tower, (B-08), Netaji Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9066707172/ 9818228635 (M).

Punjab State Power Corporation Limited
(Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, Patiala-147001)
Corporate Identity Number U40109PB2010SGC033813
Website: www.pspcl.in
Contact Number: 96461-07205

E-Tender Enq. No. 384/P-1/EMP-W-11995 Dated 17-06-2022
Dy. Chief Engineer/ Headquarter (Procurement Cell-1) GGSSTP, Roopnagar invites E-Tender ID No. 2022_POWER_86918_1 for Routine cleaning of Tech & Non-Tech building and Boiler Area including toilets and cleaning of sewerage line at GGSSTP, Rupnagar.
For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from 17-06-2022/ 06.00 PM onwards.
Note:- Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in>
76155/12/936/2021/15054 **RTP-44/22**

Office of the Project Manager, Construction Unit
Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam
Lohaghat (Champawat)

Letter No. 02/Camp Haidwani **Date : 20.06.2022**

E-Tender Notice

1. Name of the work:- Construction of Lab at Atal Utkrishi G.I.C. Chaumel, District - Champawat
2. Estimated Cost:- Rs. 34.31 Lakh
3. Period of Completion:- 8 Month
4. Date and Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal:- 20-06-2022 (17.00 hrs)
5. Last date/Time of receipt of bids in the portal:- 30-06-2022 (17.00 hrs)
6. Date & Time of Technical bid Opening :- 02-07-2022 (11.00 hrs)
7. Name and Address of the Officer inviting bid:- Project Manager, Construction Unit, Uttarakhand Pey Jal Nigam, Lohaghat (Champawat).
8. For further details, details of subsequent Amendment / correction documentation etc. may be obtained from the e-Procurement portal www.uktenders.gov.in **PROJECT MANAGER**

NORTHERN RAILWAY
E-TENDER NOTICE
E-TENDER NOTICE NO. 196-S/7/12019-20/TENDER NOTICE/TSO-III/BALP
Dated: 20.06.2022
In pursuance to and on behalf of the President of India, Pr. CE, Northern Railway, Headquarters Office, Baroda House, New Delhi-110001 invites the following tenders through E-Procurement System:
Tender No. TS225038A Due on 19.07.2022

Description of Item	Manufacturing & Supply of Blown Aluminium Powder as per Northern Railway Tender Portion Plant Lucknow's Standard Specification TPP/BALP/2021 (As amended up to date)
Tender Value	Rs. 5,20,55,388.62
Tender Document Cost	Rs. Nil
Earnest Money	Rs. 10,41,110/-
Completion period	12 Months
Time of Submission of Tender	Up 19.07.2022 at 14:30 IST
Date & Time of Opening of Tender	On 19.07.2022 at 14:30 IST
Validity of Offer	180 days

Note: The complete information of above E-Procurement tender is available on website www.irops.gov.in and www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in. **1499/22**

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Colombia picks 1st leftist prez in tight runoff contest

AP ■ BOGOTA (COLOMBIA)

Colombia will be governed by a leftist president for the first time after former rebel Gustavo Petro narrowly defeated a real estate millionaire in a runoff election that underscored people's disgust with the country's traditional politicians.

Petro's third attempt to win the presidency earned him 50.48% of the votes Sunday, while political outsider Rodolfo Hernández got 47.26%, according to results released by election authorities.

The election came as Colombians struggle with rising inequality, inflation and violence - factors that led voters in the election's first round last month to punish long-governing centrist and right-leaning politicians and pick two outsiders for the runoff contest.

Petro's win in Latin America's third most populous nation was more than a defeat of Hernández. It puts an end to Colombia's long stigmatization of the left for its perceived association with the country's half century of armed conflict. The president-elect was once a rebel with the now-defunct M-19 movement and was granted amnesty after being jailed for his involvement with the group.

Petro issued a call for unity during his victory speech Sunday night and extended an olive branch to some of his harshest critics, saying all members of the opposition will be welcomed at the presidential palace.

Philippine Govt attorney fatally shot in Philadelphia

AP ■ PHILADELPHIA

A government attorney for the Philippines was fatally shot in an Uber while visiting Philadelphia, officials said.

John Albert Laylo was heading to Philadelphia International Airport with his mother to board a flight and was stopped in the Uber at a red light near the University of Pennsylvania around 4:10 am Saturday, officials said.

Several rounds were fired into the Uber from a black car behind it, police said. The black car then pulled up alongside the Uber and fired several more rounds into it, police

said in a news release.

Laylo was shot in the back of the head and taken to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead Sunday, police said. No one was arrested, and no weapon has been found, police said. Authorities did not offer a suspected motive or say whether Laylo, his mother or the Uber driver were intentionally targeted. Homicide detectives are investigating and are looking for surveillance video.

The consulate general of the Philippines said the victim was an attorney for its government, Philadelphia's KYW-TV reported. It wasn't clear whether the Uber driver or

Laylo's mother were injured, but the latter posted to Facebook on Sunday, indicating she had been hit by shrapnel and saying she had been on vacation with her son, whom she referred to as Jal and said was 35 years old.

"Never did I imagine or dream that ... The end of our vacation will be like this!" Leah Bustamante Laylo wrote in a post accompanied by snapshots of her and her son touring sites in New York, Washington and Philadelphia. "We travelled together and we are supposed to go home together! I will bring him home soon in a box!"

Lawyers call on int'l court to investigate Uyghur treatment

AP ■ THE HAGUE

Lawyers on Monday renewed calls for the International Criminal Court to open an investigation into China's treatment of Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim groups in China's Xinjiang region as they presented a dossier of evidence to prosecutors. Activists and lawyers accuse Beijing of crimes against humanity and genocide against the groups. China's ruling Communist Party has vehemently denied all reports of human rights violations and genocide in Xinjiang. Monday's filing is the latest attempt to have the global court open an investigation into widespread allegations of abuse against Uyghurs by Chinese authorities.

UK set for national rly strike as last-ditch talks fail

AP ■ LONDON

Britain is facing its biggest rail strikes for decades after last-minute talks between a union and train companies failed to reach a settlement over pay and job security.

Up to 40,000 cleaners, signallers, maintenance workers and station staff are due to walk out for three days this week, on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. The strike is expected to shut down most of the rail network across the country, with London Underground subway services also hit by

a walkout on Tuesday.

The Rail, Maritime and Transport Union branded employers' latest offer "unacceptable" and said "the strike action scheduled this week will go ahead."

Secretary-General Mick Lynch said rail companies had "proposed pay rates that are massively under the relevant rates of inflation, coming on top of the pay freezes of the past few years."

Unions are warning of a summer of strikes as soaring inflation hits the pay packet of workers across the economy.

Millions of people in Britain, like those across Europe, are seeing their cost of living soar. Salaries have not kept pace with inflation, which has hit 9% and is forecast to rise further, as Russia's war in Ukraine squeezes supplies of energy and food staples including wheat. Prices were already rising before the war, as the global economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic fueled strong consumer demand.

At the same time, UK passenger numbers remain below pre-pandemic levels and train companies are

seeking to cut costs and staffing.

Talks on resolving the dispute have faltered, and unions are calling on the government to get involved. They accuse Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative administration of standing on the sidelines so it can blame unions, and the left-of-center opposition Labour Party, for the disruption. Johnson's spokesman, Max Blain, said it would not be "helpful" for the government to get involved. "Inserting ourselves at the last minute would be a distraction," he said.

India facing near-term challenges: Report

Better placed to deal with them: FinMin report

New Delhi: India is facing near-term challenges in managing its fiscal deficit, sustaining economic growth, reining in inflation and containing the current account deficit but the country is relatively better placed to weather these headwinds compared to other nations, the finance ministry said in its monthly economic report.

Near-term challenges need to be managed carefully without sacrificing the hard-earned macroeconomic stability, the Monthly Economic Review said.

"Many countries around the world, especially developed countries, face similar challenges. India is relatively better placed to weather these challenges because of its financial sector stability and its vaccination success in enabling the economy to open up," it added.

India's medium-term



growth prospects remain bright as pent-up capacity expansion in the private sector is expected to drive capital formation and employment generation in the rest of this decade, as per the report.

Observing that the capex budget for 2022-23 is expected to underpin growth, the report said an upside risk to the budgeted level of gross fiscal deficit has emerged following cuts in excise duties on diesel and petrol.

An increase in the fiscal deficit may cause the current account deficit to widen, compounding the effect of costlier imports, and weaken the value of the rupee thereby, further

aggravating external imbalances, creating the risk (admittedly low at this time) of a cycle of wider deficits and a weaker currency, it said.

"Rationalising non-capex expenditure has thus become critical, not only for protecting growth supportive capex but also for avoiding fiscal slippages.

Depreciation risk to rupee, however, still remains as long as net Foreign Portfolio Investor (FPI) outflows continue in response to the increase in policy rates and quantitative tightening in advanced economies as they wage a prolonged battle to calm inflation," it said. **PTI**

Markets halt 6-day losing streak; Sensex jumps 237 points in choppy trade

Mumbai: Snapping a six-day losing run, equity indices settled in the green after a highly volatile session on Monday, with the Sensex climbing 237 points amid positive cues from European markets.

The BSE benchmark gained 237.42 points or 0.46 per cent to settle at 51,597.84. During the day, it hit a high of 51,714.61 and a low of 51,062.93.

The NSE Nifty ended 56.65 points or 0.37 per cent higher at 15,350.15.

From the Sensex pack, Hindustan Unilever, HDFC, Wipro, UltraTech Cement, Asian Paints and HDFC Bank were among the biggest gainers.



On the other hand, Tata Steel, IndusInd Bank, Reliance Industries, M&M, NTPC and State Bank of India were among the major laggards.

In Asia, markets in Tokyo, Seoul and Shanghai settled lower, while Hong Kong ended with gains.

European markets were trading in the green in mid-session deals.

Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude gained 0.06 per cent to USD 113.2 per barrel.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) remained net sellers in the capital market, as they sold shares worth Rs 7,818.61 crore on Friday, as per exchange data. **PTI**

Adverse global events may lead to USD 100 bn portfolio outflows: RBI article

Mumbai: Portfolio flows in India are the most sensitive to shifts in risk sentiment globally and in an adverse scenario, potential portfolio outflows can average up to 3.2 per cent of GDP or USD 100 billion (Rs 7.8 lakh crore) in a year, an RBI article said.

The article, titled 'Capital Flows at Risk: India's Experience' published in the RBI's latest bulletin, further said in a 'black swan' event comprising a combination of shocks, potential portfolio outflows can rise to 7.7 per cent of GDP, highlighting the need for maintaining liquid reserves to quell such potential bouts of instability.

With the spate of emerging market crises since the 1990s and the experience with the global financial crisis and its aftermath, attention has turned from the benefits associated with capital flows to their consequences such as accentuating financial vulnerabilities, aggravating macroeconomic instability and spreading contagion, it said.

"For India, portfolio flows are the most sensitive to shifts in risk sentiment globally and spillovers," it said.

"Applying a capital flows at



risk approach, it is observed that in an adverse scenario, potential portfolio outflows can average up to 3.2 per cent of GDP," said the article authored by RBI Deputy Governor Michael Debabrata Patra, along with Harendra Behera and Silu Muduli.

"In response to shocks to each of the determinants of a size that is at least equal to what has been observed in the historical experience, potential portfolio outflows can be in the range of 2.6 to 3.6 per cent of GDP, averaging to 3.2 per cent of GDP (or USD 100.6 billion in a year)," the article said.

It further said there is a 5 per cent chance of portfolio outflows from India of the

order of 3.2 per cent of GDP or USD 100.6 billion in a year in response to a COVID-type contraction in real GDP growth, or a GFC (global financial crisis) type decline in interest rate differentials vis-a-vis the US.

A 'black swan' event could be characterised by a combination of all adverse shocks experienced in Indian history coming together, leading to a perfect storm.

Aggressive rate hike by the US Federal Reserve, coupled with elevated inflation and high valuation of equities continued to keep foreign investors at bay from the Indian stock market as they pulled out Rs 31,430 crore in this month so far. **PTI**

Rupee gains 7 paise to close at 77.98 against US dollar

Mumbai: The rupee appreciated by 7 paise to settle at 77.98 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday as crude oil prices retreated from elevated levels. However, unabated foreign fund outflows restricted the appreciation bias in the rupee, forex dealers said.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened strong at 77.98 against the greenback and witnessed an intra-day high of 77.87 and a low of 78.03.

It finally settled at 77.98, a rise of 7 paise over its previous close of 78.05. "Rupee consolidated in a broad range despite volatility in domestic and global equities. Fed projection showed economic growth slowing to a below-trend rate of 1.7 per cent," said Gaurang Somaia, Forex & Bullion Analyst, Motilal Oswal Financial Services. **PTI**

Sebi forms advisory panel on hybrid securities to facilitate greater retail participation

New Delhi: Markets regulator Sebi has set up an advisory committee on hybrid securities, which will make recommendations for giving a fillip to the growth of such instruments, including measures focusing on ease of issuance and attracting domestic and global capital.

The 20-member committee will be chaired by K V Kamath, Chairperson of National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development, an update with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) showed.

In addition, the committee comprises top level officials of infrastructure investment trusts (InvITs), real estate investment trusts (REITs), finance as well as legal experts and representatives of Sebi. REITs and InvITs are classified as hybrid securities and they are relatively new investment instruments in



the Indian context but are extremely popular in global markets. The committee has been given the task of advising Sebi on issues related to development and regulation of primary and secondary markets of hybrid securities in the country.

Further, it will identify use case scenarios of hybrid securities in the context of the infrastructure financing needs of the Indian economy and make recommendations for developing instruments to meet the needs of the infrastructure sector. **PTI**

Duty-related steps to slash steel exports by 40%, says CRISIL

New Delhi: India's steel exports is expected to come down by 40 per cent to 12 million tonnes (MT) in the ongoing fiscal, as a result of the duty-related measures taken by the government last month, according to CRISIL.

The export of finished steel had reached a record high of 18.3 million tonnes in the 2021-22 financial year and the prices were at their all-time high, the agency said on Monday.

On May 21, the government announced waiving of customs duty on the import of some raw materials, including coking coal and ferromanganese, used by the steel industry. Also, the duty on exports of iron ore was hiked by up to 50 per cent and for a few steel intermediaries to 15 per cent.

"India's steel exports will drop 35-40 per cent to 10-12 million tonnes this fiscal following the 15 per cent export duty imposed on several finished steel products last month. Exports of iron ore and pellets will also fall this fiscal, and lower domestic prices," the CRISIL research analysis said.

Steel exports had reached a record high of 18.3 MT last fiscal. However, it will continue to see momentum because of the disruptions caused by the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict, and Russia is a key exporter of steel, coking coal and pig iron.

In addition, the European Union's (EU) move to raise India's export quota – amid a widening differential between steel prices in the two geographies – benefited domestic steel makers, and limited the impact of a 25 per cent tariff on steel imports imposed by the EU, the report said.

But while steel firms enjoyed fat realisations overseas, domestic demand grew 11 per cent year-on-year, driving domestic prices to all-time highs. This led to soaring construction costs and multiple price hikes by makers of automobiles, consumer appliances and durables to pass on the increase. The hike in export duty was aimed at curbing this inflation.

Hetal Gandhi, Director, CRISIL Research said "The duty-driven price correction will improve availability of steel in the domestic market as finished steel exports dwindle. This will directly impact India's export volume in the current fiscal.

Steelmakers will attempt to skirt the duties by bumping up exports of alloyed steel and billets, but that is unlikely to compensate for the loss of finished steel exports." CRISIL further said the combined export volume of iron ore and pellets is expected to see a massive drop from 26 MT last fiscal to 8-10 MT in the current one, and bring about a sharp correction in domestic prices. **PTI**

Auto ancillaries' revenue may grow 8-10 pc in FY23 on stable demand, easing supply-chain woes

Mumbai: Auto ancillaries' revenues are expected to grow 8-10 per cent in 2022-23 on the back of a stable demand and likely easing of supply-chain concerns in the second half of the year, Icrta said on Monday.

At the same time, the sector's coverage metrics is also likely to remain comfortable in 2022-23, benefitting from healthy accruals and relatively low incremental debt funding requirements, the rating agency said in a release.

In last fiscal year, 31 auto component companies with cumulative revenues of over Rs 1,75,000 crore had registered a 23 per cent year-on-year growth in revenues, driven by domestic original equipment manufacturers (OEMs), replacement, export volumes and pass-through of commodity prices.

Though the growth came on a relatively low base of FY21, the actual revenue



expansion was better than Icrta's estimates, partly on account of better-than-expected exports and increase in realisations to pass on the impact of higher commodity inflation and freight costs, it said.

Icrta's estimation of operating margins for FY2022 had factored in operating leverage benefits.

However, the unprecedented inflation in raw material costs and freight costs in H2 FY2022 (October-March) and inability to pass on the same completely and in a timely manner impacted the profit margins in previous fiscal year, according to the release. **PTI**

Inox Green Energy Services files fresh draft papers with Sebi for ₹740-crore IPO

New Delhi: Inox Green Energy Services, a subsidiary of Inox Wind, has filed fresh preliminary papers with capital markets regulator Sebi to raise Rs 740 crore through an Initial Public Offering (IPO).

The IPO comprises fresh issuance of equity shares worth Rs 370 crore and an offer-for-sale of equity stocks aggregating to Rs 370 crore by promoter Inox Wind, according to the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) filed on Friday.

Besides, the company may consider a pre-IPO placement. If such placement is completed, the fresh issue size will be reduced.

Proceeds from the fresh

issue will be used for payment of debt and general corporate purposes.

Inox Green Energy Services is engaged in the business of providing long term Operation and Maintenance (O&M) services for wind farm projects, specifically for Wind Turbine Generators (WTGs) and the common infrastructure facilities on the wind farm, which support the evacuation of power from such WTGs.

Earlier, the company had filed the DRHP for its proposed IPO in February with the Sebi. However, the draft offer documents for the IPO were withdrawn in late April without disclosing any reason. **PTI**

Need to protect consumers amid consolidation of internet-economy in hands of a few: Govt

New Delhi: Expressing concern over growing consolidation of internet-based economic activities among a few companies in many sectors, the government on Monday said there is a need to protect the consumers' interest and prevent them from being exploited.

The government also said consumer complaints related to online transactions are rising and pointed out that of the total complaints registered last month on the National Consumer Helpline (NCH), 38-40 per cent pertained to e-commerce trade.

Addressing a national workshop for effective and speedy consumer disputes redressal, Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Piyush Goyal

said that consumer commissions are the only hope for consumers who are need of justice.

However, growing pendency of cases and delayed justice is a cause of concern which need to be addressed with "collective effort," he said.

The minister suggested that reducing the number of adjournments, augmenting infrastructure in district courts, promoting mediation, e-filing and e-disposal should help reduce the pendency of cases.

Asserting that consumer courts have greater role to play in safeguarding the consumer rights amid growing consolidation of internet-based economic activity, Consumer Affairs Secretary Rohit Kumar Singh said: "With the consolidation, the power of major players is increasing and there is imbalance in power towards consumers."

When internet came in 2000, it was felt it would lead to democratisation and decentralisation but today all economic activities are slowly getting consolidated, he said.

For example in e-commerce, taxi aggregators, food and beverages businesses, there are two-three major players. In telecom services too, there are four major players, he said.

To ensure the growing power imbalance of major players does not affect consumers' interest, the secretary said, "... It is important for us to stand firm beside consumers." **PTI**

Anupam Agarwal OVL's new Director (Finance)

New Delhi: Anupam Agarwal has taken over as Director (Finance) of ONGC Videsh Ltd, the company said on Monday.

"Agarwal was recommended to the position by Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) on February 28, 2022 and has (now) been appointed to the post by the President of India," the company said in a statement.

He took over on June 18. Prior to this, Agarwal served as Executive Director (Finance) in Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) - OVL's parent firm - since January 2020. **PTI**

Airlines' losses globally will be down to USD 9.7 bn this year: IATA DG

Doha: The airlines' losses globally are expected to be down from USD 52 billion in 2021 to USD 9.7 billion this year and industry-wide profit should be on the horizon in 2023, Director General of IATA Willie Walsh said here on Monday.

International Air Transport Association (IATA) represents some 290 airlines comprising 83 per cent of global air traffic.

Walsh, in his inaugural speech at the 78th annual general meeting of IATA here, said that while the outlook for airlines globally is positive, the business environment remains challenging.

Listing all the challenges,

he said inflation topped 9 per cent in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) - a group of 38 developed countries - in April.

"Our outlook expects (global) GDP to grow 3.4 per cent this year. Not bad but down on earlier forecasts," Walsh noted.

The World Bank expects energy prices to soar 50 per cent compared with 2021, he added. "Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine has destabilised globalisation, threatened the world's food supply, and recreated a geopolitical divide not seen since the Cold War," he said. **PTI**

Maruti Suzuki new Brezza bookings open; to be launched at month-end

New Delhi: The country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India on Monday announced opening of bookings for the upcoming new version of its compact SUV Brezza.

The new Brezza, to be launched at the end of the month, will come with features such as electric sunroof along with an array of sophisticated new-age tech, comfort, convenience and connected features, the company said in a statement. It will also have a next generation powertrain with 6-speed automatic transmission option, it added without disclosing details.

Customers can pre-book the new Brezza with an initial payment of Rs 11,000 at any of the company's Arena showroom or from its website, it said. Since its launch in 2016, Brezza started a new trend of compact SUVs in the country,



Maruti Suzuki India Ltd (MSIL) Senior Executive Director (Marketing & Sales) Shashank Shrivastava said.

"With over 7.5 lakh units sold in just 6 years, Brezza commands a strong market share in the compact SUV segment in the country. Today we are happy to share that we will be introducing the most-awaited compact SUV in an all-new avatar," he added. **PTI**

Crude oil futures gain on spot demand

New Delhi: Crude oil prices on Monday rose by ₹94 to ₹8,467 per barrel as participants widened positions on a firm spot demand.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange, crude oil for July delivery traded higher by ₹94 or 1.12 per cent at ₹8,467 per barrel in 3,978 lots.

Analysts said the raising of bets by participants kept crude oil prices higher in futures trade.

Globally, West Texas Intermediate crude oil was up by 0.07 per cent at USD 109.64 per barrel, and Brent crude traded 0.06 per cent higher at USD 113.19 per barrel in New York. **PTI**

Telcos flag concerns over captive network issue at pre-bid conference ahead of 5G spectrum auction

New Delhi: Telecom players raised technical queries related to 5G spectrum auction, and flagged their concerns over issue of private captive networks, during the pre-bid conference held by DoT on Monday.

The auction related pre-bid conference was attended by telecom operators Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea, sources said.

The industry representatives attended the pre-bid conference in hybrid mode, with some company executives physically present at the meeting held in the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) and others attending the meeting, virtually.

Sources said that one of the major issues flagged by the telcos in the Monday meeting

related to the issue of private captive networks.

Telcos also sought more clarity on matters related to network roll-out obligations, and also manner in which spectrum will be reserved.

Reliance Jio, Bharti Airtel and Vodafone Idea -- the three mobile players operating in the 114-crore subscriber Indian telecom market -- are gearing up for the launch of 5G services.

The government will auction, next month, about Rs 4.3 lakh crore worth of airwaves capable of offering fifth-generation or 5G telecom services.

It has also given a nod for setting up of captive 5G networks by the tech firms, much to the dismay of telcos. **PTI**

Kia Sonet crosses cumulative sales milestone of 1.5 lakh units

New Delhi: Automaker Kia India on Monday said its compact SUV Kia Sonet has crossed the cumulative sales milestone of 1.5 lakh units since launch in September 2020.

The model has contributed over 32 per cent of the company's total sales and commands almost 15 per cent share in the highly competitive compact SUV category, Kia India said in a statement.

"The Sonet has won several accolades not only for its design, performance, and practicality but also by creating favourability for iMT (intelligent manual transmission) and introducing the only Diesel AT in the segment," Kia India Chief Sales Officer Myung-sik Sohn said. **PTI**

At \$20K, Bitcoin above psychological threshold

Oakland: The price of a bitcoin inched above USD 20,000 on Sunday after the broader crypto selloff dragged it below the significant psychological threshold a day earlier. The price of the world's most popular cryptocurrency was USD 20,129.70 as of Sunday afternoon. On Saturday, bitcoin had plunged as much as 9.7 per cent to less than USD 18,600 by late afternoon on the East Coast, according to the cryptocurrency news site CoinDesk. At some points during Saturday, it was below USD 18,000.

On Sunday, though, the volatile cryptocurrency climbed higher, though it is still more than 70 per cent below its November 2020 all-time high of nearly USD 69,000. Many in the industry had believed it



would not fall under USD 20,000 again.

Ethereum, another widely followed cryptocurrency that has been sliding in recent weeks, took a similar tumble Saturday to well below USD 1,000 but also regained ground Sunday, adding nearly 11 per cent to USD 1,101.81.

The cryptocurrency industry has seen turmoil amid wider turbulence in financial markets. **PTI**

Verstappen wins Canadian GP

AP ■ MONTREAL

World champion Max Verstappen increased his lead in this year's Formula One title race on Sunday when he drove his Red Bull to a thrilling victory in a closely-fought Canadian Grand Prix.

The 24-year-old Dutchman controlled a tactical race from pole position through three safety car interventions and resisted intense late pressure from Ferrari's Carlos Sainz to win by under a second.

Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton, who on Friday declared his car as "undriveable", came home third for Mercedes to claim his second podium of a difficult season ahead of team-mate George Russell in fourth.

It was Verstappen's first Canadian victory in his 150th career start, his sixth this year and the 26th of his career, hoisting him 46 points clear of his rivals in the championship.

"I was giving it everything," said Verstappen. "But so was Carlos. He was pushing, charging, pushing, charging. Naturally, it's easier to charge with DRS! I had fun today."

Sainz said: "We were quicker, faster all race, but it's difficult to overtake round here. I'm particularly happy with the race pace and with the pressure we put on Max."

Hamilton, a record seven-time winner in Montreal, cheered the big crowd - part of a weekend attendance of 338,000 - and said he was "overwhelmed to get third place. It's been quite a battle, but we've never given up. I've been inspired by my crew."

Ferrari's Charles Leclerc, who started at the back of the grid after taking a penalty for a new engine, finished fifth ahead of Esteban Ocon of Alpine.



Valtteri Bottas and his Alfa Romeo team-mate Zhou Guanyu were later promoted to seventh and eighth after Fernando Alonso in an Alpine was penalised five seconds for his defending against Bottas.

The Spaniard slipped to ninth with Lance Stroll 10th for Aston Martin.

After Saturday's deluge, the race began with a mixed-up 'wet' grid - with Leclerc, Perez and several others out of their normal race positions - as Verstappen made a clean start from his 15th pole position to take control.

Behind him, Kevin Magnussen made a dazzling departure from fifth to challenge Hamilton, but the Briton resisted and retained fourth as the order settled, Russell making his move early to pass Mick Schumacher for seventh.

'I'VE LOST THE ENGINE'

On lap three, Sainz passed Alonso, who had been unable to deliver the attacking start he promised, to take second and begin his pursuit of Verstappen.

Perez suffered ill-luck on lap nine when, battling in midfield after starting 13th, his Red Bull lost drive at Turn 13.

Sainz led again, 7.5 seconds ahead of Verstappen, with 20 laps to go when Yuki Tsunoda crashed his Alpha Tauri at Turn Two and a full Safety Car was deployed.

Sainz pitted, followed by both Alpines and Bottas, all opting for mediums.

Verstappen regained the lead, but faced a close scrap with the Spaniard when the action resumed, after a 10-minute delay, with a final dash to the flag.

'I'm feeling young again': Hamilton after 3rd place

AP ■ MONTREAL

Lewis Hamilton said he was "ecstatic" on Sunday after claiming his second podium of the season with a strong third place ahead of Mercedes team-mate George Russell in the Canadian Grand Prix.

The seven-time world champion, who had complained his car was "undriveable" on Friday, said his success had been rejuvenating.

"I'm back to feeling young again," said the 37-year-old Briton who suffered acute back pain and struggled to climb from his car after last week's Azerbaijan Grand Prix in Baku.

"Honestly, I am ecstatic," he said at the Circuit Gilles Villeneuve.

"I didn't expect this coming into this weekend. It's my second podium of the year and it feels really special - especially as it is where I got my first Grand Prix win.

"I love it here in Montreal." Hamilton claimed his maiden F1 victory in Montreal in 2007 and holds the joint record of seven wins at the Canadian race.

"We have had such an awesome crowd here this weekend. It's been quite overwhelming honestly to get this third place as it has been such a struggle this year with the car and for the team.



"But we have continued to stay vigilant and to stay focussed and never giving up. That's something I am so proud of and I am inspired by my crew.

"So a big shout out and thanks to all the team, the men and the women, back at the factory and here at the circuit. They all work so hard."



Indian women's team looks to address grey areas against USA

PTI ■ ROTTERDAM

With the World Cup just over 10 days away, the Indian women's hockey team would look to utilise its last FIH Pro League double-header tie against lowly USA, starting here on Tuesday, to address its weak areas ahead of the marquee event to be co-hosted by the Netherlands and Spain.

The Indian women produced a remarkable performance in their debut FIH Pro League season, occupying the third spot in the standings with 24 points from 14 games behind Netherlands (32 points from 14 matches) and Argentina, who have already clinched the title with 42 points from 16 games.

Belgium are close on the heels of India with 22 points from 14 matches and the Savita Punia-led Indian side would be eyeing to sign off the campaign with wins over the Americans to finish a creditable third.

The second match of the double-header will be played on Wednesday.

In their last Pro League tie, India registered a 2-1 shoot-out win (2-2 in regulation time) and a narrow 2-3 loss to Olympic silver medallist team Argentina here over the past weekend.

The two matches against the USA will provide the Indians a perfect platform to measure their strength ahead of the World Cup beginning on July 1.

"For us, the most important thing is that we could execute our plans and put up an improved performance over the weekend against Argentina. However, we could have done better, but I feel these matches are a confidence booster for us ahead of the World Cup," India captain Savita said.

"There is still room for improvement for us and we look forward to plugging the loopholes in the matches against the USA. We've gained good momentum and hopefully, we will finish our debut Pro League campaign with good results," she added.

With the World Cup just around the corner, Savita said the team is shaping up really well for the quadrennial tournament.

"We are glad that we have got a good opportunity of playing in Europe just a few days ahead of the World Cup, so the build-up towards the big event has been really great. The team is shaping up really well for the World Cup."

India vice-captain Deep Grace Ekka said the team is confident of outclassing USA, who lies at the bottom of the FIH Pro League standings with just five points from 12 games.

"The matches were really tough against Argentina, but we are glad that we stuck to the plans and did really well against a strong team. We are looking forward to the last set of matches of our memorable Pro League campaign. We are confident of getting positive results against the USA," she said.

In the World Cup, the Indian women's hockey team is placed in Pool B along with England, China and New Zealand. India will kick off their campaign against England on July 3 in Amstelveen, Netherlands.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India on Monday named a full-strength 18-member senior men's hockey squad for the Commonwealth Games with Manpreet Singh returning as captain and dragflicker Harmanpreet Singh as his deputy.

Hockey India (HI) had initially decided to send a second-string team to the CWG due to the short turnaround time between the Birmingham event and the Hangzhou Asian Games, which is a qualifier for the 2024 Paris Olympics.

However, with the Asian Games now postponed to next year owing to the COVID-19 situation in China, HI decided to pick a strong team for the prestigious event, scheduled to begin from July 28.

The Indian team has been grouped in pool B along with England, Canada, Wales and Ghana.

The two-time former Silver medallists will begin their campaign on July 31 against Ghana.

Manpreet had led the Indian team to a historic Bronze medal at the Olympic Games in Tokyo last year and he will take over the reins from Amit Rohidas, who was the captain for the

Manpreet to lead full-strength Indian team in Birmingham CWG



FIH Pro League tour of Belgium and the Netherlands.

Harmanpreet, who has been

named the deputy, emerged as the highest goal scorer of the FIH Hockey Pro League.

Ancelotti key to Real move: Rudiger

AP ■ MADRID

Antonio Rudiger said on Monday Carlo Ancelotti was instrumental in his decision to join Real Madrid from Chelsea this summer.

Rudiger has moved to the Santiago Bernabeu on a free transfer after choosing not to extend his Chelsea contract. The 29-year-old defender has signed a four-year deal with the reigning Spanish and European champions.

Rudiger, speaking at his presentation ceremony at the club's training ground in Valdebebas, said he made his decision in April, after a conversation with the Italian coach.

"The first time I got in contact, not really me, my agent, was early September. The second time, I spoke with Mr Ancelotti, that was in April," Rudiger said.

"That was the most important moment, to speak with Mr Ancelotti. That was when I



made my choice, that I wanted to play for this club under him.

"He said he wanted me, trusted in my abilities, that I could be very helpful to the team, and at my age, that's enough. At the end of the day,

it's Mr Ancelotti. You always know at Madrid that nothing is guaranteed. You have to fight for your place. I'm ready to do that."

As well as turning down the chance to stay at Chelsea, Rudiger said there was also

interest in him from Barcelona. "There was interest from Barcelona but I told my brother, it's Real or nothing," Rudiger said.

The German will be competing with Eder Militao and David Alaba for a spot in Madrid's central defence next season, although Ancelotti could also switch to a back three in defence to accommodate an impressive trio of options.

After the departures of Sergio Ramos and Raphael Varane last year, Militao and Alaba formed a superb partnership, becoming an essential part of Madrid's success last term.

"Real Madrid is stacked with very, very good players, also in my position," said Rudiger.

"But I'm looking confidently going into this. What do I bring? Competition, which is healthy for everyone. It keeps everyone going and I'm looking forward to the challenge."

West Ham sign Rennes defender Aguerd

AP ■ LONDON

West Ham announced the signing of Rennes defender Nayef Aguerd on Monday in a deal worth a reported £30 million (\$37 million) once add-ons are included.

The Morocco international, 26, who spent two seasons with the French Ligue 1 club, has signed a five-year contract with David Moyes' side.

"I was really excited when I heard about West Ham United's interest," said the left-sided player.

"When I heard about it, I knew I needed to go to the Premier League, because



it's a dream for every player.

"West Ham is a historic club. I saw a few of their games this year, and I saw the fans and the atmosphere were fantastic."

Moyes, whose side finished seventh in the Premier League last season, said Aguerd had been on the club's radar for some time.

"I am delighted to welcome Nayef to West Ham United," said the Hammers manager.

"We have tracked his progress for some time and I'm very pleased that we have been able to complete the signing. He's a great addition that will add to our defensive options."

Berrettini confident of doing well in Wimbledon



AP ■ MILAN

Matteo Berrettini is quietly confident he can win Wimbledon after retaining his Queen's Club title over the weekend to join an elite group of players and continue an impressive return from injury.

World number 11 Berrettini defeated Serbia's Filip Krajinovic 7-5, 6-4 in Sunday's final of the warm-up event for the grass court Grand Slam to claim his second straight title in London, a week after beating Andy Murray to the honours in Stuttgart.

The 26-year-old Italian lost to Novak Djokovic in last year's Wimbledon final and is keen to go one better this year after bouncing back from a near three-month injury lay-off to win two tournaments in a row.

"I don't know if I'm the favourite as Novak and Rafa (Nadal) are always there; Rafa has already won two Slams and no-one expected him to win in Australia," said Berrettini in an interview with Sky Sport Italia broadcast on Monday.

"I don't feel like I'm the

favourite but I know I can do it, I can't pull the wool over people's eyes. My aim is to have a big tournament at Wimbledon and I hope it will be two intense weeks."

Sunday's victory meant Berrettini joined John McEnroe, Jimmy Connors, Boris Becker, Ivan Lendl, Lleyton Hewitt, Andy Roddick and Murray as the only players in the Open era to win back-to-back Queen's titles.

Before his two recent wins Berrettini had gone through a difficult few months, dropping out in Acapulco with abdominal problems in February and then missing the entire European clay court swing following hand surgery.

"After a really good week in Stuttgart it would have been easy to not exactly take my foot off the gas but let my problems overwhelm me," he said.

"Instead I found the right energy levels and to win such a prestigious tournament is really very special."

Wimbledon begins next Monday.

KARTHIK OPENS UP LOT OF OPTIONS GOING INTO T20 WORLD CUP: DRAVID

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Dinesh Karthik as an "enforcer" opens up a lot of options going into the T20 World Cup, says India head coach Rahul Dravid, who wants to identify a core group of 18-20 players by the end of England series.

For Dravid, to be a part of the World T20 set-up, it won't be enough to just the "knock the door". Anyone who wants to stake a claim in that squad of 15 will need to "bang it down".

"It was really nice to see Karthik come off and do what he has been picked to do. That was good and it opens up a lot more options for us, going forward," Dravid said after the five-match series against South Africa ended in a 2-2 draw.

The last game was abandoned due to rain. "He was picked for what he has been doing exceptionally well for the last two or three years (in IPL) and kind of indicated in the sense that it almost came together in the game at Rajkot," Dravid spoke about the Tamil Nadu dasher's 27-ball-55 that was crucial in India restoring parity in the series.

For Dravid, Karthik and Hardik Pandya are the two "enforcers" in the death overs.

"We needed that big performance in last five overs to make a par score and he and Hardik batted beautifully. Both of them are enforcers for us at the end," Dravid spelt out what role the team management has in mind for Karthik.

The coach had no hesitation in admitting that Karthik has made a good case for himself going into the T20 World Cup.

"I was telling guys that you have to start banging the door down and not just knocking the door down and innings like that (Rajkot fifty) means he is knocking very hard."

WANT TO GET HANG OF CORE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE

Dravid doesn't want to put a time line but by the end of the England T20s, he wants to have a fair idea about the 18 to 20-odd players he would be looking at ahead of World Cup in Australia.

India and England will clash in six white-ball games (July 7-17) after one-off Test.

"As you come closer and closer to the event, you want to firm up your final squad or if not, obviously you want to have some contingencies in the kind of world we live in today. Obviously you want to take only 15 to the WC but (need to identify) top 18



'Rishabh is very big & integral part of our plan'

PTI ■ BENGALURU

India head coach Rahul Dravid has made it clear that the under-fire Rishabh Pant is a "big" and "integral" part of the set-up heading into the T20 World Cup in Australia.

"Personally, he would have liked to score a few more runs but it is not concerning him. Certainly, he is a very big part of our plans going ahead in next few months," Dravid said during the post-match press conference.

He was categorical that he won't judge someone based on one series — whether it is batting form or captaincy. "I just don't want to be critical. In the middle overs, you need people to play slightly attacking brand of cricket, to take the game on a little more. Sometimes it's very



hard to judge it based on two or three games," the head coach said.

Pant's is a high risk game that comes with a price and the coach is ready to pay the price looking at the bigger picture.

"In the process (of playing an

attacking game), he might go wrong in a few games but he remains an integral part of our batting line-up with the power he has and the fact that he is a left-hander is important to us in the middle overs, he played some good knocks," he said.

About his captaincy, Dravid felt that Pant did well considering that he led the side back in the series from 0-2 down.

"To bring a team back from 0-2 down and to level it at 2-2 and give us a chance to win was good. Captaincy is not about wins and losses only. He (Pant) is a young captain, growing as leader. It is too early to judge him and you don't want to do that after one series," Dravid was clear in his thought-process.

"It was nice to see he has got opportunities to lead, keep and bat. He had a lot of load on him but gaining from that experience and credit to him for ensuring that we went from 0-2 down to 2-2," the coach was all praise for the stand-in skipper.

really positively for us. Ruturaj in one innings showed what he has got. We are not disappointed with anyone," Dravid once again showed the dogged defence of his playing days.

ATTACKING BRAND OF CRICKET

"As a group, we wanted to play a certain brand of cricket and we were trying to play a slightly more positive and attacking brand of cricket right from beginning and we knew when you try and do that, it is not always going to come off. But we are certainly clear about the kind of cricket we want to play," he said.

EVEN BIG BASH STATS NEEDS TO BE LOOKED AT BEFORE WORLD T20

Dravid is known to rely a lot on data analysis and he would love to gather information on playing conditions and oppositions before the tournament proper.

"Lot of our boys have played in Australia and we certainly will be having conversations with them on what kind of tactics and strategies work," he said.

"In terms of data and analysis, we will look at all games being played in Australia and obviously they are international games, there is Big Bash and I mean we will do all our research and background things that happens in terms of analysis.

"And of course, we don't have a series against them (Australia in Australia), so we can't change that. I guess we have to make do with two weeks we have in the lead up to the World Cup and make best use of it."

WILL BE A DIFFERENT ENG TEST SIDE

Rahul Dravid loved playing Test cricket in England and loves coaching a Test team. He reckons that the one-off 'fifth Test' against the hosts will be a different proposition from last year when the team under Virat Kohli led 2-1 before Covid-19 cases in India camp forced the cancellation of the final game.

"England are playing well at the moment and it is going to be a bit different from last year when England were probably a little bit on backfoot. They have played some good games and we have a pretty good side as well," Dravid said, referring to Ben Stokes' side's series win against New Zealand.

"Loved playing Test cricket, love watching it and love coaching in Test cricket and so you know, looking forward to it," he concluded.



Bhuvi was special in whole series: Boucher

PTI ■ BENGALURU

South Africa head coach Mark Boucher termed India seamer Bhuvneshwar Kumar's performance in the series as "special" while ruing the absence of Aiden Markram, who he feels could have made a lot of difference for the Proteas over the course of the five T20Is.

Bhuvneshwar, who now only plays white-ball cricket, got six wickets in four completed games and gave away only 85 runs in 14 overs at an economy rate of almost six runs per over.

"Bhuvi was special in this whole series as we came up against some quality bowling. He put us under pressure in Powerplays and barring one game (Delhi), where we got off to a good start, they have dominated us with both ball and bat in Powerplays," Boucher said after the series ended in 2-2 despite Proteas going 2-0 up at the onset.

However, losing Markram due to COVID-19 at the start of the series had a huge impact, felt the former glovesman.

"It was tough losing Aiden Markram even before we started the first game. We wanted to play six batters with Aiden being our sixth option and we couldn't do that," Boucher added.

The long IPL did make the players tired and that also had an effect on the final outcome, he said.

"We didn't play our best cricket and it was quite tough on our IPL players to stay throughout the whole IPL and then come to India back-to-back as well," he explained.

"Guys are little bit tired as well. So they will all enjoy the break and (having learnt a) lot

of lessons in World Cup year. And see, if we can plug a few gaps going into Australia albeit in different conditions."

While stars like Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Jasprit Bumrah were rested for the series, Boucher lauded the depth of the Indian cricket system created by the IPL.

"I know there weren't a lot of top (India) players over here but the depth that Indian cricket has at the moment largely due to the IPL, they can take lot of confidence as well."

"You just can't walk up in India and expect to win a series as well. So, we played a couple of good games and two bad games and there are a couple of reasons for that, but you can't get too much into it," he added.

However in Australian conditions, South Africa will have a different gameplan.

"Plans will change when in Australia and we are aware of that. We tried a few options in these conditions and saw if they worked or not."

"And I think, we asked a few questions and we got some good answers."

Boucher made no bones about the fact that South Africa need to improve upon their Powerplay batting.

"We struggled to get going in few of the games and we speak about it after every game and may be see how we can change our mindset and intent, specially after third game, when we went after with the intent we needed," he said.

"And our bowling at certain stages was very good and at certain stages, we looked rusty and sort of understand that couple of guys coming into the series after IPL and may be a bit tired," he added.

Bajrang ready to shed defensive approach

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

It's 8'o clock in the morning and one by one, all the wrestlers sneak out of training hall after the regular 90-minute session. But not Bajrang Punia.

Drenched in sweat, Bajrang gets ready for a 'plyometric' workout and slogs for another 45 minutes. An athlete uses speed and force of different movements to build muscle power through plyometric workouts.

His new-found energy and enthusiasm come from encouraging results from a few tests he underwent -- Technobody Assessment, Functional Movement Screening Body Composition Analysis and Vo2max.

There is nothing wrong with his body, these tests affirm and help in getting rid of a "mental block" that had straight-jacketed the Tokyo Olympics bronze medallist on the mat.

It was this mental block that had tied him to an ultra-defensive approach ever since he suffered a knee injury ahead of the Tokyo Games last year.

He appeared in the CWG trials in New Delhi and just about managed to beat his compatriots. A few days later, he competed at Bolat Turlykhanov Cup in Almaty and lost a bout - against Uzbekistan's Abbas Rakhmonov - that he had in his grasp.

All because of his defensive tactics, that had triggered speculations that Bajrang is past his prime. Even Bajrang himself began to doubt his worth.

"I told my coach that I will attack more and play my old style but the body did not support me in Almaty. There is no lack of effort, I was actually putting in extra effort but was not getting performance and

results," Bajrang said. "At times I thought I will never be able to repeat those stupendous performances. I felt my body has slowed down. Something was amiss in my body and it was consistently playing in my mind," he shared his doubts.

But he is quick to remind that he has overcome that self-doubting phase.

"Now I feel my best is yet to come and you will see that."

"After coming back from Kazakhstan I underwent a few medical tests on the advice of

my physio Anand Dubey to assess power, speed, body balance, stamina and endurance. The results are 'super' if not excellent.

"After seeing the encouraging test results, I analysed that I am doing better in training. Perhaps a mental block was there. It's broken."

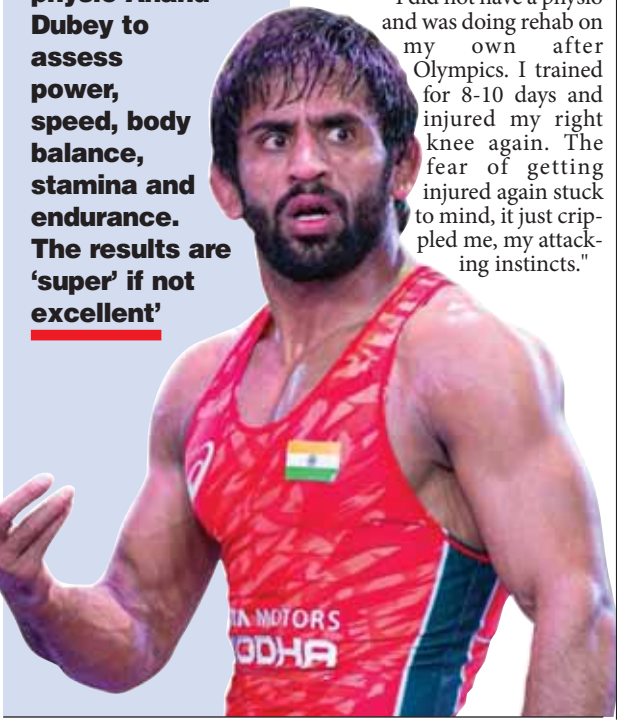
Bajrang reveals that even an athlete of his calibre can start doubting himself if the mind gets clogged or if the fear of injury grips the mind.

The 28-year-old earned a podium finish in each and every tournament he entered in last five years. But all of that didn't matter.

"I was disturbed, I know media was also calling me out of concern (in Russia), but I did not need media at that time but rehabilitation. There was more load on left knee because of injury in right knee.

"I did not have a physio and was doing rehab on my own after Olympics. I trained for 8-10 days and injured my right knee again. The fear of getting injured again stuck to mind, it just crippled me, my attacking instincts."

'After coming back from Kazakhstan I underwent a few medical tests on the advice of my physio Anand Dubey to assess power, speed, body balance, stamina and endurance. The results are 'super' if not excellent'



AP ■ AMSTELVEEN

England beat off a plucky attack by the Netherlands on Sunday to defeat the hosts by six wickets in a shortened second ODI at VRA cricket ground outside Amsterdam.

The win by the world champions give them an unassailable 2-0 lead in the series, with the final match to be played at the same venue on Wednesday.

The Netherlands won the toss and opted to bat, setting Eoin Morgan's men a target of 236-7 in 41 overs.

Heavy rain overnight delayed the start of the match with officials waiting for wet patches to dry next to the batting-friendly pitch and on the outfield.

England opener Phil Salt slapped 77 off 54 balls before falling to Dutch youngster Arjan Dutt, who also claimed the scalp of fellow opener Jason Roy.

Roy, who scored a single run in England's record total of 498 on Friday, redeemed himself by hitting 73 off 60 balls.

Dutch skipper Seelaar announces retirement due to back injury

AGENCIES ■ AMSTELVEEN

After missing out the second AODI match against England, Netherlands skipper and batter Pieter Seelaar on Sunday announced his international retirement, citing persistent back problems.

The 34-year-old made his debut for the Netherlands team in 2005, eventually taking over from Peter Borren in the leadership role in 2018. Starting his career as solely a left-arm orthodox spinner, Seelaar's batting became more vital for the side, and he moved up the batting order as a result.

"Since 2020 my back problems got worse to such an extent that - much to my regret - I am no longer able to give everything I've got," said Seelaar in a statement.

Seelaar played 57 ODIs and

England beat Netherlands by 6 wickets in 2nd ODI, seal series



Unlike Friday's run-fest which was peppered with sixes, Sunday's match was a more demure affair, with England's first six only coming in the 15th over when Roy smacked Dutt over midwicket to clear the boundary.

Salt survived an early scare when an attempted off-side cut sent the ball into the air, only to fall between two Dutch fielders -- none of whom decisively nominated for the catch.

The Welsh-born Salt never really seemed troubled after that, celebrating his half-century with a stylish four off the bowling of Bas de Leede.

Dutt however had the last laugh when Salt attempted to play around the ball and was beaten, seeing the bails flying off

the stumps behind him.

England however scored freely, smacking 29 fours despite the fall of Morgan and Liam Livingstone's wickets in quick succession.

"I'm delighted," Morgan told Sky Sports after the match.

"With the ball, Brydon Carse came into the game and hit the series with plenty of pace and with something we haven't seen before."

"And with the bat again Phil Salt contributed for the second time doing what he does. Jason Roy did well in his 100th cap," Morgan said.

The Netherlands earlier posted a solid 235-7 against a blistering England attack led by David Willey and Carse on a deck that mainly stayed low.

Archer Deepika set for India comeback at Paris

PTI ■ PARIS

Sidelined after the Tokyo Olympics debacle, star Indian archer Deepika Kumari is all set to make a India comeback in the upcoming Stage 3 of the World Cup beginning here on Tuesday.

Exactly a year after she won an individual Gold here in the same tournament last year, the 28-year-old world number three will look to redeem herself after failing to win a medal at the Tokyo Games.

That the Olympics is slated in two years at the same venue will be an added motivation for Deepika, who also has won a World Cup Final Silver medal here in 2013.

Having returned empty-handed from her third Olympics campaign last year, Deepika



saw a slump in form along with her husband and country's top male archer Atanu Das and failed to make the Indian team.

The duo also could not qualify for the team for the Asian Games which was later postponed as the Archery Association of India conducted a fresh trial of the top-eight

archers for the Stage 3 of the World Cup.

Earlier the same squad was to compete in both the World Cup Stage 3 and the Asian Games but after the postponement Deepika and Pravin Jadhav, who were in the top-8 of the earlier conducted trial, got a fresh opportunity and made the cut.

Das, however, missed out having finished outside top-8 in the earlier conducted trial.

Deepika made the cut at the expense of Komalika Bari, while her Tokyo Olympic mixed team partner Jadhav ousted Sachin Gupta to complete the World Cup Stage 3 lineup.

Deepika was last seen in action for India in the Yankton World Cup Final in September 2021 where she finished fourth.