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APPEASEMENT IN CONGRESS DNA

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RUSSIA PUMMELS ODESA'S PORT IN ATTEMPT TO DISRUPT SUPPLIES

MONEY 10

QUOTING PAN, AADHAAR MUST TO DEPOSIT, WITHDRAW ₹20 L

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY MAY 12, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3



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SC puts sedition law on hold; no FIR till 'relook'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a major victory for right activists and civil society crusaders, the Supreme Court on Wednesday put on hold the 152-year-old colonial sedition law till an "appropriate" Government forum re-examines it and directed the Centre and States to not register any fresh FIR invoking the offence.

Overruling the Centre's stand on the status of law during the interregnum, a bench headed by Chief Justice NV Ramana also ordered that all ongoing probes, pending trials and proceedings under the sedition law across the country be kept in abeyance. The persons currently facing the sedition charges can approach the courts for bail, said the apex court.

Taking note of the concerns of the Centre, the apex court said the "rigours of Section 124A (sedition) of the IPC is not in tune with the current social milieu" and permitted reconsideration of the provision.

"We expect that, till the re-examination of the provision is complete, it will be appropriate not to continue the usage of the aforesaid provision of law by the Governments," said the bench, also comprising Justices



548 held under sedition law between 2015 and 2020

As per National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report, 356 cases of sedition under section 124A of IPC registered and 548 people arrested between 2015 and 2020, out of which only six were convicted.

■ A 21-year-old Bengaluru-based environment activist, Disha Ravi, was arrested by the Delhi Police on February 14, 2021 for creating and disseminating a "toolkit" against farm laws.

■ In 2016, a group of students from Jawaharlal Nehru University booked on sedition charges for holding a poetry session to mark the third anniversary of the hanging of 2001 Parliament attack case convict Afzal Guru.

■ Three Kashmiri students of RBS Engineering College, Agra were arrested on October 28 last year for posting a WhatsApp status praising Pakistani players after their victory against India in a T20 cricket match.

■ Some noted journalists like late Vinod Dua faced the wrath of

the draconian sedition law for views expressed by them on social media against the Government's handling of the Covid crisis.

■ Kerala-based journalist Siddique Kappan was arrested in UP while he was on his way to report of rape of a Dalit woman in Hathras on Oct 5, 2020.

■ Booker Prize winner and activist Arundhati Roy was booked along with Hurriyat leader Late Syed Ali Shah Geelani, in 2010 for their alleged "anti-India" speech at a seminar.

■ Student leader from JNU Sharjeel Imam is facing charges under the sedition law for making inflammatory speeches during the protests against the CAA and the NRC in 2019.

Surya Kant and Hima Kohli. Any affected party is at liberty to approach concerned courts, which are requested to examine the reliefs sought taking into the consideration the present order, the apex court said.

"This court is cognizant of the security interests and integrity of the State on one hand, and the civil liberties of citizens on the other. There is a requirement to balance both sets of considerations, which is a difficult exercise. The case of the petitioners is that this provision of law... pre-dates the Constitution itself, and is being misused..." said the Bench, listing the matter in the third week of July.

The order referred to the Centre's affidavit, which accepted there were divergent views on the law and had also quoted Prime Minister Narendra Modi's views about protection of civil liberties and respect for human rights. "In view of the above, it is clear that the Union of India agrees with the prima facie opinion expressed by this Court..." In light of the same, the Union of India may reconsider the aforesaid provision of law," it said.

The order said the interim stay granted to some petitioners by the apex court would continue to operate. "All pending trials, appeals and pro-

Ongoing probes, trials in courts on hold till Govt re-examines Act, says apex court

ceedings with respect to the charge framed under Section 124A of IPC be kept in abeyance. Adjudication with respect to other Sections, if any, could proceed if the courts are of the opinion that no prejudice would be caused to the accused," said the SC.

If any fresh case is registered, the affected parties are at liberty to approach the courts and the courts are requested to examine it, taking into account the present order passed as well as the clear stand taken by the Centre, it said.

The bench did not agree with the Centre's suggestion that a superintendent of police rank be made responsible for monitoring the registration of FIRs for the offence of sedition. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, had also said the registration of FIRs on the matter cannot be prevented as the provision dealt with a cognisable offence and was upheld by a Constitution bench in 1962.

With regard to pending sedition cases, the Centre suggested that hearing on bail pleas in such matters may be expedited as the Government did not know the gravity of the offence in all the cases and they may have terror or money laundering angles.

Continued on Page 2

Delhi HC split on marital rape crime

Both judges allow parties to move SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Wednesday delivered a split verdict on the issue of criminalisation of marital rape with one of the judges favouring striking down the provision, the other holding it was not unconstitutional. The division bench granted leave to the parties to file an appeal before the Supreme Court.

While Justice Rajiv Shakdher, who headed the division bench, favoured striking down the marital rape exception, Justice C Hari Shankar said the exception under the IPC is not unconstitutional and was based on an intelligible differentia. The petitioners had challenged the constitutionality of the marital rape exception under Section 375 IPC (rape) on the ground that it discriminated against married women who are sexually assaulted by their husbands. Under the exception given in Section 375 of the IPC, sexual intercourse by a man with his wife, the wife not being minor, is not rape.

While delivering the verdict, Justice Shakdher said "as far as I am concerned, the impugned provisions — exception 2 to section 375 (IPC) ...



are violative of Articles 14 (Equality before law), 15 (prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth), 19(1) (A) (right to freedom of speech and expression) and 21 (right to life and personal liberty) of the Constitution and are hence struck down." He said this declaration will operate from the date of its pronouncement.

However, Justice Shankar said, "I have not been able to agree with my learned brother" and added that these provisions do not violate Articles 14, 19 (1) (A), and 21 of the Constitution.

He said the courts cannot substitute their subjective value judgment for the view of the democratically elected legislature and the exception is based on an intelligible differentia. He said the challenge to the provisions by the petitioners cannot sustain.

The court's verdict came on PILs filed by NGOs RIT Foundation, All India Democratic Women's Association, a man and a woman seeking striking down of the exception granted to husbands under the Indian rape law. In its 2017 affidavit, the Centre had opposed the pleas, saying that marital rape cannot be made a criminal offence as it could become a phenomenon that may destabilise the institution of marriage and an easy tool for harassing husbands.

However, the Centre told the court in January that it was "re-looking" at its earlier stand on the petitions as that was brought on record in the affidavit filed several years ago. In February, the Centre had urged the court to grant more time to enable it to State its stand on the issue after a consultative process.

Continued on Page 2

UP DGP shunted out for 'neglect'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a surprise move, Uttar Pradesh police chief Mukul Goel was on Wednesday shunted out from his post for neglecting his duties and not taking interest in work.

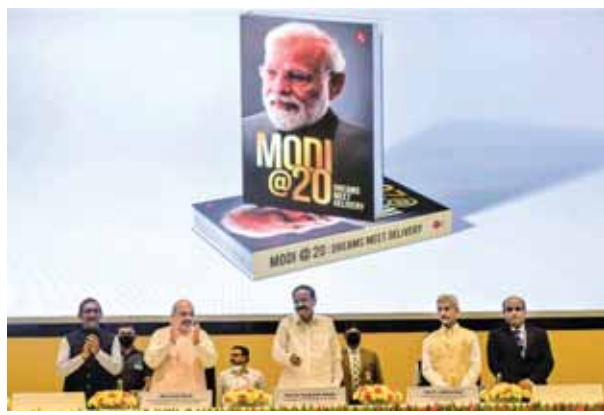
Goel, who assumed the charge as the UP's Director-General of Police (DGP) in June 2021, will now be posted as DG, Civil Defence.

Goel was removed from the top post for disregarding Government duties and not taking enough interest in departmental work. ADG (Law and Order) Prashant Kumar will take over the charge of DGP till the Government appoints a new DGP. DG Intelligence DS Chauhan is said to be the front runner for the top UP police post.

Sources said that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath was not happy with Goel as the DGP was not taking interest in taking action under UP Gangsters Act or in bulldozing the properties of mafia.

For the past few weeks, Goel, after being not satisfied with the Government's style of functioning, had stopped attending meetings of even the CM.

Modi broke myth BJP Hindi-speaking people's party: Shah



Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu launches the book 'Modi@20: Dreams Meet Delivery' in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, in New Delhi on Wednesday

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday asserted that Prime Minister Narendra Modi broke the myth that the BJP worked for the "Hindi-speaking people" and asserted that under his (Modi's) lead-

ership it became the largest party in the world.

Speaking at a book release function, Shah said Modi was the only leader who has been working with "equally great dedication" both in the party as well as in the Government.

Continued on Page 2

Reports of India sending troops to Lanka false, says Centre

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/COLOMBO

As tension persisted in Sri Lanka, India on Wednesday rejected reports that it could send troops to the island nation. New Delhi also denied as "fake and blatantly false" social media reports there that former Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and his family had escaped to India.

"The High Commission would like to categorically deny speculative reports in sections of media and social media about India sending her troops to Sri Lanka. These reports and such views are also not in keeping with the position of the Government of India," the Indian mission said on Twitter.

In another tweet, the High Commission referred to Ministry of External Affairs' statement on Tuesday that India is fully supportive of Sri Lanka's democracy, stability and economic recovery," it said in another tweet.

Continued on Page 2

Rlys removes, forces 20 top officers to retire

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ NEW DELHI

In an unprecedented step, the Indian Railways on Wednesday removed from service 20 top class one officials, including eight joint secretary level officers, and top electrical and mechanical engineers.

With this, around 100 top level officers have either been dismissed or forced to opt for Voluntary Retirement Services (VRS) in the last 10 months. They include three secretary rank level officers.

While a general manager rank officer was 'advised' to opt for VRS to make an honourable exit from the services on Tuesday, the largest employer of the country dismissed 20 officers who had adverse vigilance reports against them.

The railways invoked rule 56(J) of the Department of Personnel and Training service rules which says a Government

employee can be forced to retire or be dismissed after being served a minimum of three months' notice or a similar period's pay.

The move is part of the Union Government's efforts to weed out non-performers. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, after he took over the office in July 2021, has repeatedly warned officials "to take VRS and sit at home" if they do not perform.

Railway Ministry sources said the 20 people against whom the 56(J) were invoked include four officials each from the electrical and signalling services, three each from medical and civil, two from personnel and one each from stores, traffic and mechanical.

Under the VRS scheme, an employee is paid a salary equivalent to two months' pay for every year of service left.

Continued on Page 2

J'khand Mining Secy arrested under PMLA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday arrested Jharkhand Mining Secretary Pooja Singhal in a money laundering case linked to alleged embezzlement of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) funds and other suspicious financial transactions.

Singhal, a 2000-batch IAS officer, was taken into custody under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) after two consecutive days of questioning by the ED's Ranchi zonal office.

During questioning, Singhal was "evasive" in her replies, leading to her arrest, sources said.

The ED will produce her before a local court here seeking her remand to subject her



to custodial interrogation.

Singhal reached the ED's office in the Hinoo area of Ranchi at 10:40 AM for the questioning and was arrested at 5 PM. Singhal was at the ED office for about nine hours on Tuesday where her statement was recorded under PMLA.

The statement of her businessman husband, Abhishek Jha, too has been recorded in the case on at least three occasions, the sources said.

Continued on Page 2

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FIR lodged against man for forging Prez's letterhead

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police's Special Cell has registered an First Information Report (FIR) against a man for allegedly forging the President's letter-heads to promote a fake digital university in Delhi.

A case under Sections 465 (forgery), 468 (forgery for purpose of cheating, and 471 (Using fraudulently or dishonestly any document which he knows or has reason to believe to be a forged document) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) has been registered at Special Cell police station on April 2. The police said the accused claimed he runs the university, Vikramshilla University, and created a website claiming the institute is India's first digital varsity. The matter came to light during social media monitoring by a police officer in Delhi.

According to FIR, during social media monitoring, it was found that a person namely Amardeep Singh has used letter head of 'President of



India' under his own signatures to promote his Vikramshilla University is going to be inaugurated shortly.

"Two mobile numbers, a website- www.vikramshilauniversity.com and an address of Nehru Place was mentioned on the letter. During inquiry, details of mobile numbers were obtained and notice has been sent for registrant details of above mentioned website," stated the FIR.

"From the contents of complaint and enquiry conducted so far, an offence under section

465/468/471 IPC has been made out," the FIR further read.

The website — www.vikramshilauniversity.com — claims that the institute is India's first digital varsity and also has a message from its founder and CEO Amardeep Singh.

The University on its website claims to offer courses like Nuclear Science and Technology, Nanotechnology, Geo Informatics & Remote Sensing etc. under its graduate programme.

Police book man for bid to stir trouble in Jahangirpuri

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police on Wednesday has booked a 48-year-old man for targeting one community in the clashes torn northwest Delhi's Jahangirpuri area. The accused has been identified as Shiv Kumar, a resident of Jahangirpuri.

According to Usha Rangnai, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), North West District, at around 6:15 AM, a police control room (PCR) call was received at the Mahendra Park police station in which the caller reported breaking of glasses of vehicles by some boys of a particular community.

Seeing the sensitivity of the situation, police teams were dispatched for the spot, where they found some people gathered around two cars whose rear windscreens were broken. "Accused Shiv Kumar was found targeting one specific

community without verification of facts, and trying to give a religious colour to a mischievous act of some persons and provoking the crowd that was gathered there," said the DCP.

During the enquiry, CCTV footage was analysed in which the miscreants were identified as three minor boys and action under Section 427 of the Indian Penal Code was initiated against them.

"In view of the prevalent sensitivity owing to the recent incident in the adjacent block of Jahangirpuri and the provocative behaviour of the caller which could have affected the peace and tranquility of the area, preventive action under Section 107/151 of the CrPC was taken against accused Shiv Kumar," said the DCP.

"He was also medically examined at the BJRM Hospital before his production before the Ld. SEM court, North West District," said the DCP.

Will continue to question Kejriwal: Bagga

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Days after the dramatic arrest of BJP leader Tajinder Pal Singh Bagga that saw the police forces of Punjab, Haryana and Delhi in a tussle, Bagga on Wednesday said that he will continue to question Arvind Kejriwal about his promise to act against those who dishonoured the Guru Granth Sahib in Punjab.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is in power in Delhi and Punjab, with Kejriwal the chief minister in the national capital and Bhagwant Singh Mann the chief minister in the state.

In the first conference since his arrest at Delhi BJP headquarters, Bagga said that he will continue to ask Kejriwal questions whether one or 1,000 cases are registered against me.

"I was arrested like a terrorist. Was it my fault to ask Kejriwal about his promise to arrest accused in Guru Granth Sahib sacrilege, was it my fault to ask him about action against drug mafia and separatists raising slogans of Khalistan in Punjab," said Bagga.

NCR PULSE

MODI TO ADDRESS 'UTKARSH SAMAROH' VIRTUALLY
New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will address via video conferencing the "Utkarsh Samaroh" in Gujarat's Bharuch on Thursday to mark the 100% saturation of four key State schemes in the district which will help provide timely financial assistance to those in need.

INDIA ELECTED AS CHAIR OF AAEA UNANIMOUSLY
New Delhi: India has been unanimously elected as the new Chair of the Association of Asian Election Authorities (AAEA) for 2022-2024, the Election Commission said on Wednesday.

BOY STABBED BY THREE JUVENILES
New Delhi: A 17-year-old boy was allegedly stabbed by three juveniles over an old enmity in north east Delhi's Karawal Nagar area. On Monday around 8 pm, Karawal Nagar police station received information regarding a quarrel and reached the spot where it was found that the injured was shifted to GTB hospital. The victim was identified as Sangam, a resident of Shiv Vihar, Karawal Nagar.

OFFICIALS ASKED FOR FILES ON COURT ORDERS
New Delhi: Delhi Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar has directed principal secretaries and senior government officials to submit files related to compliance of court orders on time to avoid an embarrassing situation in courts. In an order, the chief secretary said during the past week, it was being observed that files relating to compliance of court orders and submission of ATRs (Action Taken Reports) to courts were being sent to this office at the last minute.

CALLS RECEIVED BY US HAVE DOUBLED: DCW
New Delhi: Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) on Wednesday said that the helpline number on the Truecaller app, since it started, the numbers of calls received by the commission has doubled. On March 7, Truecaller App started displaying the women's safety helpline number - 181 - on its dialler, as part of its campaign on preventing crimes against women and girls - under the #ItsNotOk.

MPS PARTNERS WITH IB
New Delhi: To develop curiosity, knowledge and confidence among students, the Modern Public School (MPS) in Shalimar Bagh on Wednesday has partnered with the International Baccalaureate (IB), the global leader in International Education. The Principal of Modern Public School, Alka Kapur, said, "The association of MPS with the IB Board would give the young minds an edge over the challenges with high-grade skill-developing programs and personality development activities that will make them ready for the challenges of tomorrow."

WORKSHOP ON 'NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY DAY' HELD
New Delhi: An online workshop to celebrate 'National Technology day' was organized at Delhi Technical University (DTU) in the national Capital. More than 100 participants joined online. The participants include UG/PG and Ph.D students, faculty members from DTU as well as from various reputed Institutions.

AAP MLA IS CHAIRMAN OF SC/ST WELFARE PANEL
New Delhi: After AAP legislator, Vishes Ravi was appointed as Chairman of Committee on Welfare of SC/STs Delhi Legislative Assembly, a first meeting of the House Committee on Welfare was held on Wednesday.

DJB TO AUTOMATE 116 SEWAGE PUMPING STATIONS
New Delhi: With an aim to improve the wastewater management in the national capital, the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) has decided to automate 116 Sewage Pumping Stations (SPS) across the capital by installing Internet of Things (IoT) devices to prevent overflowing of sewage. The IoT will allow timely discharge from these pumps into sewage treatment plants.

SOCIAL & BEHAVIOUR CHANGE PRIMER DEVELOPED
New Delhi: The NFSSM Alliance has developed the Social and Behaviour Change (SBCC) Primer which was released in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs at the launch of the National Behaviour Change Communication Framework for Garbage Free Cities. Aligning with the government's vision of shifting from IEC (information, education, and communication) tools to SBCC, the SBCC Primer aids the on-ground implementation of behaviour change to achieve inclusive sanitation outcomes. The event was organised at Nirman Bhavan.

Delhi HC...

From Page 1

The request was however turned down by the bench on the ground that it was not possible to defer an ongoing matter endlessly.

While the petitioners had said that marital rape was the biggest form of sexual violence against women, the Delhi Government had said this Act was already covered as a "crime of cruelty" under IPC.

NGO Men Welfare Trust (MWT), which is opposing the batch of petitions seeking criminalisation of marital rape, had argued that sexual intercourse between a husband and wife cannot be treated at par with that in non-marital relationships as the issue of consent cannot be divorced from the context of a marriage. It had submitted that the Domestic Violence Act was specifically promulgated for recognising spouse sexual violence.

From Page 1

But the similar benefit is not available in compulsory retirement.

Under the provisions relating to pre-mature retirement in the Fundamental Rules (FR) and the CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972, the appropriate authority has the absolute right to retire a Government servant under FR 56(j), FR 56(l) or Rule 48 (1)(b) of the CCS (Pension) Rules, 1972 as the case may be, if it is necessary to do so in public interest.

However, the 75 officials who put in their papers and decided to opt for VRS are those who have been denied promotion or sent on leave or circumstances have been created to force them to opt for

SC puts...

From Page 1

"Ultimately, pending cases are before the judicial forum and we need to trust courts," the law officer told the bench.

The bench, which rose for a few minutes to discuss the orders after taking note of the Centre's response, came back to pronounce the directions and said it has considered the issues elaborately. On Tuesday, the bench had asked the Centre to make clear within 24 hours its stand on keeping pending sedition cases in abeyance to protect the interests of citizens already booked and not registering fresh cases till the government's re-examination of the colonial-era penal law is over.

Asking the Centre to take a clear stand after it had posed the two specific queries, the top court had agreed that a re-look of IPC's Section 124A be left to the Government.

Rlys removes...

From Page 1

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MSME Minister inaugurates Centre of Excellence for Khadi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Centre of Excellence for Khadi (CoEK) hub in New Delhi and its units in Gandhinagar, Shillong, Kolkata and Bengaluru were inaugurated by Minister of MSME, Narayan Rane, at NIFT Campus in New Delhi on Wednesday.

Seeking to make Khadi trendier by diversifying its fabrics and clothing line and up-skilling the Khadi Institutions to upgrade the quality standards, Khadi and Village Industries Commission has collaborated with National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) to set up Centre of Excellence for Khadi.

Minister of State for MSME, Bhanu Pratap Singh Verma, Minister of State for Textiles, . Darshana Vikram Jarodsh, Secretary MSME, iBB Swain and Secretary Textiles, iUP Singh were also present on the occasion.

Rane said Khadi has a big responsibility of contributing to nation's development and fulfilling the goal of "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" and, at the same time, the designers have the responsibility of introducing new designs in Khadi and making it appealing for the youths. "Chairman KVIC, Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena, who could not attend the inaugural function, congratulated the entire team of KVIC and NIFT for setting up the CoEK and said it would contribute significantly in making Khadi trendier and globally popular.

South Korean national thrashes cook in G'gram

PNS ■ GURUGRAM

In a bizarre incident, a South Korean national thrashed his cook from Nepal when he returned home after missing his train, the police said.

The complainant Ravinder Rawat originally hailed from Nepal stated in his police complaint that he used to work as a cook at Ju Young a South Korean house located at Phinacke society in Sector-43 of Gurugram for about a year.

According to the police the complainant had left for his home on Tuesday but he missed his train and returned to his employer's flat.

"On Tuesday around 2 am Ju Young asked me why do not you go your home, I told him I missed my train and I will go tomorrow on Wednesday after this he got angry and thrashed him with utensils and when I run away from the spot Young follow me with an old stick. Somehow I escape the spot and hide somewhere and reached the police station," Rawat told the police.

NFSSM Alliance develops Social and Behaviour Change Primer

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The NFSSM Alliance has developed the Social and Behaviour Change Primer which was released in collaboration with the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs at the launch of the National Behaviour Change Communication Framework for Garbage Free Cities.

Aligning with the government's vision of shifting from IEC (information, education, and communication) tools to SBCC (social and behaviour change communication), the SBCC Primer aids the on-ground implementation of behaviour change to achieve inclusive sanitation outcomes.

The event was organized at Nirman Bhavan, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), New Delhi in the presence of key dignitaries including Roopa Mishra, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Modi broke myth...

From Page 1

Speakers, including Vice-President M Venkaiah Naidu and Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, also praised the leadership of Modi and his contribution to national development and growth.

The Vice President said while Mahatma Gandhi took the freedom struggle out of the hands of the elite to turn it into a mass movement, Modi had converted developmental initiatives into mass movements.

He said that Modi put to effective use his valuable learning to write a development script for his State of Gujarat as its Chief Minister and scaled up the same at national level as Prime Minister.

Addressing the gathering after releasing the book "Modi@20 Dreams Meet Delivery", Naidu said Modi's vision, his dreams and Mission India have been shaped by his extensive travels and insightful, experiential journey.

"This is the fundamental differentiator that makes Modi

unique in several ways. There is probably no other public figure in contemporary times who has had a comparable experiential journey as Modi," said Naidu.

Edited and compiled by BlueKraft Digital Foundation and published by Rupa, "Modi @ 20: Dreams Meet Delivery" looks into 20 years of Modi's model of governance in Gujarat and at the Centre.

It is a compilation of chapters authored by the likes of Shah, Ajit Doval, Sudha Murty, Nandan Nilekani, Arvind Panagariya, S Jaishankar, Lata Mangeshkar, P V Sindhu and Nripendra Misra among others.

On his part the Home Minister elaborated Modi's contribution to the party and the nation saying under his leadership the BJP reached every nook and corner of the country and broke several myths like it was a party of Hindi-speaking people and had influence only in urban areas and not a party of farmers.

Asserting that Modi Government did not take decisions to please the people but did so for their greater good without any political consideration, Shah said, "Getting such a huge mandate (in 2014), without any surprise, without any family background, without political upbringing, and again people giving him another mandate (in 2019) as Prime Minister is significant. It shows that people of India accepted Modi as their leader and loves from the bottom of their hearts. He won people's trust."

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR LOST OF DOCUMENTS

To be known to all that I, Monika Singh d/o late Sh. Sarvan Kumar Sethi, R/o, A-10/310, Sahara Grace Apartment, M. G. Road, Gurgaon-122002 (joint owner of commercial Plot No.1, Pkt.: 7, Sector-B (NH Plot), LSC, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi has applied for conversion of the aforesaid Plot from leasehold to freehold online through IDLI portal in DDA. That the original perpetual Lease Deed of the above property have been lost. An FIR Vide LR No: 236973/2022 against this effect has been lodged in P.S. Crime Branch Delhi.

Any persons claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents may write contact with above named person at above address/phone No. 9810904704 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property, can personally inform or write to Dy. Director (CL) or Director (CL), A-Block, 1st floor, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi-110023.

Edu Min gives guidelines to schools on combating heatwave

Closing schools due to the heatwave is not an option as offline classes have started from new session after two years due to Covid-induced pandemic, Experts told Govt

HOW TO BEAT THE HEAT

- Modification in school timings and daily routine
- School buses/vans must not be overcrowded and must be parked in a shaded area
- In every period, teachers should remind students to sip water
- Children carrying home food may be advised not to carry food that can turn stale quickly
- School should ensure that all fans are functional
- Students may be allowed to wear loose and light-coloured cotton material dress
- Provisions of sachets of ORS solution, or salt and sugar solution
- Windows in dormitories of residential schools be provided with curtains

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Ministry of Education on Wednesday issued guidelines to schools for combating the heatwave, asking them to modify timings and reduce the number of school hours each day.

Schools can also relax uniforms norms and allow canvas shoes instead of leather ones, the order stated.

The Ministry asked the schools to ensure that fans were functional and there was power back-up. Restricting outdoor activities, stocking up on ORS and glucose sachets

and constantly motivating children to stay hydrated are among the steps schools are taking because of the heatwave assailing Delhi-NCR.

However, closing schools due to the heatwave is not an option as offline classes have started from the new session after nearly two years due to the Covid-induced pandemic.

Regarding school transportation, the Government has advised that buses and vans should not be overcrowded and students coming to school on foot/rickshaws/bicycles should be advised to keep their heads covered. School buses



Delhi to get 2 new campuses of Ambedkar Univ

Built at a cost of ₹2,306.58 cr, the two campuses will come up at Rohini, Dheerpur

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With the aim to accommodate over 26,000 students in the coming years, the Delhi Government has sanctioned funds worth Rs 2,306.58 crore for the two new campuses of the State-run Ambedkar University at Rohini and Dheerpur. On Wednesday, Delhi's Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia approved funds worth Rs 2,306.58 crore for creating state-of-the-art infrastructure at upcoming campuses of Ambedkar University. According to Government officials, the Ambedkar University campus that is coming up at Rohini will be built at a cost of Rs 1,107.56 crore. The campus will be spread over 1,64,130 sqm and

will accommodate over 10,000 students.

The Dheerpur campus, spread over 2,00,759 sqm, will be built at the cost of Rs 1199.02 crore and will have the capacity to accommodate over 16,000 students.

"Both the campuses will have multi-storey academic blocks and auditoriums along with health centres, convention blocks, MLCP, administration blocks, library blocks, amphitheatres, guest houses, separate hostels for girls and boys," said the official adding that residential units of different types will also be constructed at both campuses. While reviewing the project, Sisodia, who also holds the education portfolio, said that the Arvind Kejriwal Government is focused on creating such innovative educational spaces which can help students learn comfortably and achieve their goals swiftly. "New campuses of Ambedkar University will have ultra-modern infrastructure for students,

to address all their educational needs," he said.

"Every year more than 2.5 lakh students pass out from Class 12 and apply for various universities. But not everyone gets admission in the prominent universities, despite having the talent and capability,"

said Sisodia. "To cater to the educational needs of such a large population of students, the new campuses are designed to ensure the most conducive environment to facilitate collective engagement, spaces for self-growth, knowledge production and dissemination,

community living and inclusive culture," said Sisodia.

Sisodia added that the varsity's present sanctioned student strength is more than 4,000 and after the creation of the two new campuses at Dheerpur and Rohini, it will increase to 30,000 students.



and vans should be parked in a shaded area. It also suggested that parents should be sensitised to pick-up the students themselves, to the extent pos-

sible, to avoid public transport and minimise their time out in the sun. In regards to the Exam Centres for ongoing secondary school examinations, it asked

the schools to allow children to bring their own transparent water bottle in the examination hall besides examination centres should ensure availability

of potable drinking water which is easily accessible to the candidates at the centres. In addition to the above, residential schools should take addi-

tional measures like essential medicines for common ailments related with the summer season should be available with the school nurse. Students may

Facilities at AU's Rohini and Dheerpur campuses

- Auditorium
- Convention Centre
- Research Centre
- Seminar & Conference facilities
- Library
- Cafeterias
- Students Centre
- Indoors/Outdoors sports facilities
- Guesthouses
- Health Centre
- Display and Performance areas
- Convenience/utility Centre
- Crèche Facility

be made aware regarding prevention of heat stroke; windows in the dormitories should be provided with curtains; lemon, butter milk and seasonal fruits with high water content should be included in the diet and spicy food should be avoided.

SDMC continues demolition drive for second day

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The South Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on Wednesday continued its demolition drive in

Madhuvihar, Chaukhandi, Janakpuri, Chhatarpur and Meerchand market in Lodi Road area, during which several structure were demolished and 128 articles were impound-

ed. The North MCD also wrote a letter to Station House Officers of Rohini and Prem Nagar Police Station, demanding the adequate police force including policewomen to

remove the unauthorised encroachment in the area. During demolition drive, the South MCD team uprooted a tree in New Friends Colony. In a statement the civic body said that information pertaining to uprooting of tree has been provided to deputy conservator of forests via a letter dated May 10 wherein it has "assured the forest department to undertake 'compensatory afforestation of 10 number of trees' in lieu of the uprooted tree or take measures as directed by the forest department.

The locals of Lodhi Colony and Mehar Market gathered together since morning amid a tense atmosphere. The fear was palpable as people prayed for cancellation of the drive or for divine intervention to save them from the rage of bulldozer.

During the drive in central zone, the road measuring 1.2 kilometres in length was made

encroachment free. Apart from this, two vehicles were impounded while as many as 25 items were confiscated. SDMC's central zone chairman, Rajpal Singh, said that the demolition drive took place in the Lodhi Road colony and Mehar Chand market to clear the encroached area.

We are not conducting this drive to snatch the livelihood of the people instead the civic body is helping people by removing the encroachment, as after the removal there will be no more jam in the area, the school buses will easily reach the houses of the students, etc.

"The drive started around 2:12 in the afternoon and continued till 4:30 pm. 35 civic officials were present on the spot along with the adequate police force," he said.

"Those who have not encroached need not fear. We will raze the encroachments. People of political parties are

working to intimidate people. We talk about unity, integrity and development of the country," said Rajpal.

Congress MLA, Abhishek Dutt, also reached the spot and said that this bulldozer is a political move to shape the upcoming elections, it's a bulldozer of inflation, the prices of petrol is skyrocketing, the cost LPG cylinder is around Rs 1000, instead of easing the burden of inflation, the civic body is creating more hardships for the people with this move.

A similar action was taken in the West Zone where illegal encroachments were removed from District Centre, Chhoti Sabzi Mandi, Janakpuri, Chaukhandi and adjoining areas. During the action, an area of about 1800 meters was made encroachment free. The SDMC team also seized a total of 71 items and impounded one vehicle lying unattended.

Left-wing organisations protest against anti-encroachment drive

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Various Left-wing organisations carried out a citizen march on Wednesday to the Delhi Lieutenant-Governor Anil Bajjal's residence to protest against anti-encroachment drives being carried out by Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD).

The march commenced from Kashmere Gate and was proceeding towards Bajjal's residence when police intervened and stopped them. According to police, the protestors were carrying out banners such as 'Stop Communal Attacks on Muslims', 'Unite Against Casteism and All forms of Capitalist Exploitation', and

also shouted slogans of "Halla Bol" as they braved the scorching heat. There were about 70 protesters. Civic agencies on Wednesday continued their anti-encroachment drive in Najafgarh zone, central zone and other areas in south Delhi, as bulldozers razed the encroachments in the city. On Monday, in Shaheen Bagh hundreds of locals protested and foiled a demolition drive of the South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC).

With hundreds of locals besides the Congress and the AAP workers staging a protest, the SDMC had to call off its drive to raze alleged encroached structures in the area under its first phase of demolition drive.

Health platform holds Covid study in Delhi-NCR

Claims 55% of families had one or more members down with one or more symptoms in April-May

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A study by an online health platform claimed that 55 per cent of the families residing in Delhi and its neighbouring cities have had "one or more members" down with one or more Covid-like symptoms in April and May.

The LocalCircles recently conducted a survey and sought responses from residents in Delhi-NCR to a prepared questionnaire.

According to the statement issued by LocalCircles, one of questions is: "When you or someone else in the family was unwell in April or May, (with symptoms like fever, sore throat or cough, cold or

congestion, fatigue or body ache, stomach ache, diarrhea, nausea, breathing difficulties, uneasiness, etc.), did you/they take any type of Covid-19 test?" In response, the majority, 66 per cent of the residents said, "No". Only 22 per cent said, "Yes, once", and another 12 per cent said, "Yes, multiple times."

"This means, of Delhi-NCR families that had one or more members exhibiting Covid-like symptoms in April-May, two in three did not take Covid test. This question in survey received 11,235 responses," the statement read.

The survey also found that of the people who were getting tested, 42 per cent of them were opting only for Rapid Antigen Test, it said in a statement.

LocalCircles has attempted to understand section of people who are having Covid-like symptoms but are choosing not to take test at all.

Split verdict on marital rape disappoints women

Marital rape is a reality and it is high time action is taken against it, says DCW chief Maliwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Terming the Delhi High Court's (HC) split verdict on the issue of criminalisation of marital rape "disappointing", some women activists here expressed hope that Supreme Court will exercise "much more wisdom" in matter, saying current provisions are discriminatory against one category of rape victims.

Following verdict, the Delhi Commission for Women (DCW) chief Swati Maliwal said that marital rape is a reality and it is high time that action was taken against it. "Don't know how many more years we will have to wait to change a British era law! Marital rape is a reality and it's

high time we take strongest action against it!" she tweeted. Noting that HC has "simply passed buck" to the Supreme Court in matter, All India Progressive Women's Association member Kavita Krishnan said: "The verdict by High Court is very disappointing and upsetting."

"The legal issue is very clear and it is discriminatory against one category of rape victims —wives. I hope that Supreme Court will show courage and clarity needed for removing this shameful law."

The Delhi High Court delivered a split verdict on issue of criminalisation of marital rape with one of judges favouring striking down the provision, and other holding it was not unconstitutional. The Division Bench granted leave to the parties to file an appeal before Supreme Court. Vani Subramanian, a member of women's group Saheli Trust, questioned that if domestic violence is a crime, then how

is it that marital rape not a crime. She also pointed out that just because a woman got married, does not mean that she has given consent once and for all.

"It is a very sad day. If this (marital rape) has happened, we need to acknowledge it, we cannot only consider the cases where it is very brutal. A woman's consent is central to this and the idea of equality, of bodily integrity."

There needs to be some clarity on violence, that violence is violence wherever it happened. This is also a part of domestic violence. So domestic violence is a crime so how come rape is not a crime. I hope the Supreme Court will exercise much more wisdom," Subramanian said. Meanwhile, anti-rape activist Yogita Bhayana is content that at least a discussion around marital rape has begun. She believes as the matter has been referred to a Bench of the Supreme Court, there will be a robust discussion

on the matter."I am happy that it has been referred to Supreme Court Bench because now the order will be unbiased. The discourse around the matter has started. One year ago, people were not even talking about this. Now they have started discussing it," she said.

The petitioners had challenged the constitutionality of the marital rape exception under Section 375 IPC (rape) on the grounds that it discriminated against married women who are sexually assaulted by their husbands.

Under the exception given in Section 375 of the IPC, sexual intercourse or sexual acts by a man with his wife, the wife not being minor, is not rape.

While Justice Rajiv Shakdher, who headed the Division Bench, favoured striking down the marital rape exception, Justice C Hari Shankar said the exception under the IPC is not unconstitutional and was based on an intelligible differentialia.

Passenger faints at Delhi airport

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a shocking incident at the Delhi airport, a passenger apparently fainted when she was not allowed to board Air India's Delhi-Vadodara flight for being late, and her relatives alleged that she was not provided medical assistance immediately. However, the airline refuted the claim and said that doctor had arrived at

the spot "immediately" but the passenger was already feeling better. When asked about this incident, Arun Kumar, the chief of Indian aviation regulator DCA, said, "We are seeking a report from the airline concerned." On social media, a video circulating shows a middle-aged woman lying on floor near boarding gates and her relatives are arranging water for her.

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd.
(A Govt. of India Enterprise-Mini Ratna)
CIN NO - L74899DL1999GOI01707

Notice Inviting Open E-Tender- CO/INT/FP-FFU/2022/04

IRCTC invites open E-tender for Setting up, Operation and Management of **Food Plazas and Fast Food Units**. Last Date for submission of Tender for Food Plaza at "Varanasi Cantt." is **26.05.2022 up to 15:00 Hrs.** and Last Date for submission of tender for remaining 33 sites of FPFUUs is **02.06.2022 up to 15:00 Hrs.**

Pre-Bid meeting for the tender of Food Plaza at Hazrat Nizamuddin railway station will be held on **20.05.2022** at 15.00 hrs. at IRCTC Corporate Office at address given under.

Tender document downloading & participation can be done on website:- www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC.

In case of any corrigendum/addendum issued on the above advertisement, it will be published only on IRCTC's website www.irctc.com and www.tenderwizard.com/IRCTC

Office Address:- GGMP&T, 11th Floor, Statesman House, B-148, Barakhamba Road, Connaught Place, New Delhi-110 001, E-mail: fp_hu@irctc.com, Tel.011-23311263-64 Fax:011-23311259.

Nadda to kick off 15-day campaign on May 30 to mark 8th anniv of Modi Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

To mark the 8th anniversary of the Modi Government, BJP president J P Nadda will kick off a 15-day campaign themed “8 Years: Service, Good Governance and Welfare of the Poor” on May 30 by releasing a book titled 'A Report to the Nation' with a special focus on reaching out to minorities and scheduled castes and scheduled tribes tribes.

Elected members of the party, including MPs and MLAs, will participate in the public outreach programmes from booth to national level during which rallies and 'Prabhat Pheri' will be organised across the country and a report card on the performance of the Modi government released.

The campaign will be attended by all top party leaders, including Union ministers.

It will be followed by a public outreach programme over 10 days though the celebrations will continue for five days more. Each day of the exercise has been dedicated to specific segments of the society such as farmers, women, SCs, STs, OBCs, weaker sections, urban poor and others.

Under the campaign, the BJP has earmarked three days each for highlighting the welfare programmes focusing on minorities and tribals.

From June 6 to 8, the party will reach out to minorities under the programme-- 'Interacting with Minorities'. The party's minority cell members will meet people from minority communities and inform them about the community specific welfare programmes undertaken by the Modi government.

From June 3 to 5, 'Birs Munda Vishwas Rally and



Tribal Mela' will be held in Ranchi, where BJP's tribal leaders, including MPs, will highlight the government's efforts for the uplift of the tribal communities. Tribal fairs will be organised in all scheduled tribe dominated districts across the country, according to a party booklet. The BJP's youth wing, Bharatiya Yuva Janata Morcha will organize 'prabhat pheri' during which young volunteers will hold early morning processions highlighting the achievements of the Modi government. The BJYM will also take out 'Vikas Tirath' bike rallies in all districts where local MLAs and MPs will also participate.

The party will interact with the Scheduled Caste community with a rally in Mhow city of Madhya Pradesh where framer of the constitution and Dalit icon B R Ambedkar was born.

3-day Chintan Shivir of Cong to focus on time-bound restructuring of party

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/UDAIPUR

The three-day brainstorming conclave of the Congress is likely to focus on time-bound party restructuring for strengthening the organisation to take on the might of BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi in the general elections of 2024. Party sources said leaders are to discuss solutions on key issues including polarisation, Centre-state ties, forming of alliances and attempts at bringing in "uniformity", especially in the Northeast, that are confronting the country and the party.

Former Union Minister Sachin Pilot said ground-level feedback from youth leaders will be important in preparing the Congress' strategy. Youths have been prioritised by the party for its Nav Chintan Shivir with nearly half of the delegates

being under the age of 40, said Pilot, the former Rajasthan deputy chief minister.

He also said the session will reenergise the Congress and the organisational changes will be done after the Chintan Shivir. "The Nav Sankalp Chintan Shivir in Udaipur will prove to be very important in deciding the future strategy," Pilot told reporters at Jaipur.

The party is holding the Chintan Shivir at Udaipur in Rajasthan from May 13 to 15 after a gap of almost nine years while facing "an unprecedented crisis" as it remains in power on its own in just two states and has less than 100 members in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha.

Unlike in the past, when Chintan Shivirs did not set any set timelines, the Udaipur declaration will state time-bound initiation and accomplishing of structural changes in the organ-

isation at all levels. "We have to make changes which are meaningful and not merely cosmetic" in order to revamp the party, a senior leader said ahead of the session.

The last such conclave was held in Jaipur in 2013 when the Congress-led UPA was in power. It focussed on the elevation of Rahul Gandhi as vice president of the party. The earlier 'shivirs' were held in Pachmarhi in 1998 and Shimla in 2003. While stressing the importance of alignment of non-BJP forces, Congress leaders on Wednesday said the party would need to be internally strengthened first to gain a pole position in the event of an opposition understanding for the 2024 general elections.

They noted that no opposition alliance could be viable without the Congress. "But the Congress needs to revive and rebuild to gain a place of prominence at the centre of any potential anti-BJP alliance," said a senior leader.

"There will also be a discussion on what should be the Congress stand on alliances," he said, adding that the party would also delve into the growth of some regional parties like the TMC, AAP, YSRCP and the TRS.

The leader specified that the party is clear that it cannot have a tie-up with the TRS and AAP and that has already been made clear. The party will focus on issues of polarisation, center-state relations, the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, economic downturn, disinvestment of PSUs, MSP, social inequities and problems facing the youth. The conclave will begin with introductory remarks of Congress President Sonia Gandhi on May 13 and a valedictory address by Rahul Gandhi on May 15.

India, Uzbekistan review bilateral ties during 15th FoC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Uzbekistan on Wednesday reviewed the entire spectrum of their bilateral ties, including security, trade, political and connectivity during the 15th round of India-Uzbekistan Foreign Office Consultations (FoC) here.

The consultations were co-chaired by Sanjay Verma, Secretary (West) and Furkat Sidikov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The last round of FoC was held in virtual format in November 2020.

During the consultations, both sides undertook a comprehensive review of the state and prospects of bilateral cooperation including political, security, trade-economic, connectivity, development partnership, humanitarian and cultural spheres.

The talks particularly focused on greater economic cooperation and steps to enhance connectivity between India and Uzbekistan. Both sides agreed to exploit the full potential of Chabab port for trade between the two countries, the ministry of external affairs said in a statement.

The two sides exchanged



views on regional and international issues of mutual interest, including Afghanistan. They agreed to further enhance cooperation in the UN, SCO

and other multilateral fora.

Indian side conveyed its full support for Uzbekistan's ongoing chairmanship of the Shanghai Co-operation

Organisation (SCO). Both sides assessed the holding of the 1st India-Central Asia Summit in January 2022 and agreed to expeditiously implement its outcomes along-with other Central Asian countries.

The talks were held in the traditional spirit of friendship and understanding.

The FoC was useful in taking stock of the implementation of decisions taken during high-level meetings held in the last two years, including the Virtual Summit in December 2020. Both sides agreed to hold the next round of consultations on a mutually convenient date in Uzbekistan.

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in the second global virtual summit on Covid-19 on Thursday being hosted by US President Joe Biden. The summit intends galvanising new actions to address the challenges of the pandemic and build a stronger global health security architecture.

Modi had participated in the first global virtual summit on Covid hosted by Biden on September 22 last year.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said the Prime

Minister would deliver his remarks in the opening session of the summit on the theme 'Preventing Pandemic Fatigue and Prioritising Preparedness'.

"India is playing a key role in ongoing global efforts to combat the pandemic by supplying safe and affordable vaccines, medicines, development of low-cost indigenous technologies to test and treat, genomic surveillance, and capacity building for health care workers," it said.

"India is also proactively engaged in multilateral fora with the objective of strengthening and reforming the glob-

CBI arrests 14 persons in case related to FCRA division officials taking bribes from NGOs

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has arrested 14 accused persons, including six public servants and has recovered cash of Rs 3.21 crore, several incriminating documents and mobile phones during countrywide searches at the premises of accused at around 40 locations including in Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Himachal Pradesh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Assam and Manipur.

A case was registered on Tuesday against 36 accused including seven public servants of FCRA Division of the Union Home Ministry National Intelligence Centre (NIC) and middlemen besides representatives of various NGOs. They were booked on the allegations that some officials of FCRA

Division, in conspiracy with the promoters/ representatives of different NGOs, middlemen, were indulging in corrupt activities for getting backdoor FCRA registration/ renewal to NGOs illegally with an object to continue receiving donations despite not fulfilling the prescribed norms, the CBI said in a statement.

"It was further alleged that some public servants were impersonating themselves as officers posted in FCRA Division and were indulging in said practices and obtaining bribe from NGOs for facilitating them for their registration/ renewal of registration under FCRA and for other FCRA related works," it said.

During investigation, two accused were caught while delivering and accepting the

bribe amount of Rs 4 lakh on behalf of a Senior Accountant of MHA, New Delhi. It was alleged that the delivery of bribe was done through a hawala operator and a close associate of said public servant, at Avadi (Tamil Nadu), the agency said.

The arrested accused are being produced before the Competent Court and further investigation is continuing.

The arrested public servants are Parmod Kumar Bhasin, Senior Accountant, Ministry of Home Affairs, who was earlier posted in FCRA Division; Alok Ranjan, Senior AO, PAO, MHA, earlier worked in FCRA Division (MHA); Raj Kumar, Accountant, FCRA; Md. Saheed Khan, Assistant Director, FCRA, Delhi; Md. Ghazanfar Ali, officer of MHA,

earlier posted in FCRA Division and Tushar Kanti Roy, FCRA official.

The arrested private persons Pawan Kumar Sharma alias Pareek Bhai, Ramanand Pareek, hawala operator located at Chennai (Tamil Nadu), Robin Devadass, Gandhi Nagar, Chennai (NGO-The Social Project, Keezandurai Road, Nagavedu Village, Nemili TK, Vellore (Tamil Nadu), Ravi Shankar Ambastha of Rohini, Delhi, Manoj Kumar of Secunderabad, Hyderabad (Telangana), Santosh Kumar Prasad, Director of consultancy firm Shaurya Business Solutions Private Limited, Dayanand Colony, Lajpat Nagar-IV, New Delhi and another office at CWG. Village, Akshardham, New Delhi, Amita Chandra, Director of s

Shaurya Business Solutions Private Limited, Vageesh, Chartered Accountant, working in a hospital on behalf of Ganga Orthopaedic Research & Education Foundation (GOREF), PN Pudur, Coimbatore.

The CBI action against FCRA division and NGO representatives came following inputs with the Union Home Ministry suggesting at least three networks, working closely with government officials, were charging "speed money" and "problems resolution fees" to expedite the FCRA clearance to the NGOs and resolve issues related to the application process for new registrations and renewals, officials said.

In his letter, the Union Home Secretary also conveyed to the CBI Director Subodh Kumar Jaiswal the govern-

ment's approval for a thorough investigation into the alleged fraud and requested him to take necessary action.

Bhalla sent the letter to the CBI chief after Union Home Minister Amit Shah was briefed about the development and he ordered a thorough probe into the FCRA syndicate comprising officials of the FCRA Division

under the Home Ministry, NGO representatives and middlemen. During its operation, the CBI found that several officials were allegedly involved in exchanging bribes for facilitating clearances to the NGOs in alleged violation of Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) rules, according to the CBI.



INSHORT

SC SEEKS CENTRE'S REPLY ON NEET PLEA
New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday sought the Centre's reply on a plea preferred by NEET-UG aspirants challenging the Centre's decision refusing to lower the percentile for qualification of NEET-BDS courses for the academic session 2021-22.

TALKS BETWEEN KWATRA AND US DEPUTY SECY
New Delhi: Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra on Wednesday spoke to US Deputy Secretary of State Wendy Sherman focusing on ways to further strengthen the strategic partnership between the two sides, including in the Indo-Pacific.

Congress hails SC's decision to put on hold sedition law

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday hailed the Supreme Court's decision to put on hold the sedition law, saying a clear cut message has gone to subjugators of dissent that "you can no longer suppress the voice of truth" and those critical of the government must be heard.

Former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi said "telling the truth is patriotism, not treason" and listening to the truth is 'Rajdharm', while crushing

the truth is "arrogance". Do not fear, he urged people in his Twitter post reacting to the top court's decision.

Putting on hold the sedition law, the Supreme Court stayed the registration of FIRs, ongoing probes and coercive measures on the matter across the country until an "appropriate forum" of the government re-examines the colonial era penal law.

Reacting to the development, Congress's chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said speaking truth

to power cannot be sedition for it is "true nationalism and the true test" of how committed one is to the country and to the people.

"Supreme Court has finally spoken in a historical verdict by staying the sedition law. A clear cut message has gone today to suppressors and subjugators of public opinion, of dissent, of everyone who criticises the autocratic and dictatorial rulers and their policies, that you can no longer suppress the voice of truth, dissent, those critical of government

must be heard and course corrections need to be done," Surjewala said in a statement.

"We fought against the British, the sedition law was heaped upon the crores and lakhs of Congressmen by the British and that law needs to go now," he said.

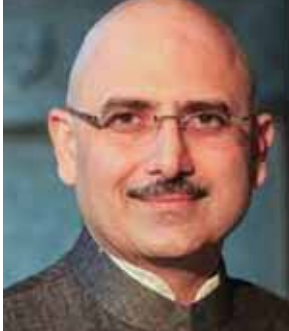
The Congress promised this in its 2019 manifesto, the Supreme Court has finally spoken and the Constitution will be upheld and the voice of truth and those speaking truth to power will finally have their way, he asserted.

SC's order must be viewed in context of positive suggestion of Govt: BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Wednesday said the apex court's order must be viewed in the context of the overall positive suggestion of the Government that it wishes to examine the matter which has been "duly accepted" by the court.

BJP spokesperson Nalin Kohli asserted that the Modi government has so far removed over 1,500 archaic and obsolete laws and over 25,000 compliances to make citizens' lives easier.



The Congress has welcomed the Supreme Court's decision, saying a clear-cut

message has gone to subjugators of dissent that "you can no longer suppress the voice of truth" and those critical of the government must be heard.

The government in an earlier affidavit had said that it was willing to consider the issues involving the law.

Referring to the affidavit, the BJP spokesperson said, "The Supreme Court order must be viewed with the overall positive suggestions of the government that it wishes to examine the matter. It has been duly accepted by the court."

Fate of several high-profile cases hangs in balance as SC stays pending trials under sedition law

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the Supreme Court staying the registration of fresh FIRs, ongoing probes and coercive measures under the sedition law, the fate of several high-profile cases registered under the draconian British-era law hangs in the balance.

According to a National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) report, a total of 356 cases of sedition -- as defined under section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) -- were registered and 548

accused persons arrested between 2015 and 2020, leading to only six convictions.

A 21-year-old Bengaluru-based environment activist, Disha Ravi, was arrested by the Delhi Police on February 14, 2021 for allegedly creating and disseminating a "toolkit" on the farmers' protests against farm laws brought by the BJP government at the Centre.

The toolkit was tweeted by Swedish environment activist Greta Thunberg on February 3, 2021. The Delhi Police registered an FIR against Ravi, who was working at a vegan store in

Bengaluru and fighting for environment issues since her student days, under IPC sections 124A (sedition), 120-B (criminal conspiracy) and 153A (promoting enmity between different groups).

Ravi was granted bail on February 23, 2021 by additional sessions judge Dharmender Rana who said that citizens are "conscience keepers" of the government in any democratic nation, and they cannot be put behind the bars simply because they choose to disagree with State policies.

Jumbos also suffer from eye disorders like cataract, partial blindness: Experts

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

One of the reasons that a Parliamentary panel chaired by Congress leader Jairam Ramesh cautioned against encouraging the sale and purchase of captive elephants hinged on the plight of the country's largest mammal which faces a range of eye-diseases/disorders such as cataract or corneal ulcers.

Jumbos also often suffer from disorders in the retina, cornea, and lenses that make the eye irreparable. Other ocular conditions that are common to rescued elephants include uveitis (eye inflammation), keratitis (inflammation of the cornea), and partial blindness.

Older elephants are more susceptible to bacterial and fungal infections, while younger elephants may develop corneal ulcers or keratitis, according to the experts from Wildlife SOS India.

Veterinary ophthalmology has not taken as many strides as other aspects of veterinary medicine have. Thus, ocular diseases and disorders in animals continue to be a field of exploration for many in India.

Wildlife SOS India.

No doubt, elephants may be known as the largest land mammal but when it comes to their eyes, particularly those in captivity. According to wildlife experts, other ocular conditions that are common to rescued elephants include uveitis (eye inflammation), keratitis (inflammation of the cornea), and partial blindness.

Older elephants are more susceptible to bacterial and fungal infections, while younger elephants may develop corneal ulcers or keratitis, according to the experts from Wildlife SOS India.

Veterinary ophthalmology has not taken as many strides as other aspects of veterinary medicine have. Thus, ocular diseases and disorders in animals continue to be a field of exploration for many in India.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF PSYCHIATRY
KANKE, RANCHI-834006, JHARKHAND

NOTICE

Director, Central Institute of Psychiatry, Ranchi invites the applications for the posts of Senior Residents. Details of vacant post are as under;
1. Senior Resident-14 Posts.
i) Psychiatry - 08 (Un-reserved-03) (Reserved Vertical) ST-01, SC-02 & OBC-01, EWS-01, (Horizontal) PH-1.
ii) Neurology - 03 (SC-01, OBC-01 & EWS-01)
iii) Anesthesiology - 01 (Un-reserved)
iv) Neuro-surgery - 02 (Un-reserved)

Desirous candidates fulfilling the qualification may appear for the walk-in-interview with their application in the prescribed format giving full details of academic records and experience along with original and attested photocopy of the relevant documents with recent photograph on 08.06.2022 at 9:30 A.M. at this institute. Details can be seen on the Institute website www.cipranchi.nic.in

Sd/-Director

Didi slams BJP on price rise; nephew attacks Congress

Abhishek Banerjee berates Grand Old Party for failure to be effective Opp

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

In presumably tactical move the Trinamool Congress on Wednesday trained its guns both at the BJP and the Congress with Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee attacking the Centre for stoking an oppressive price regime and her nephew and TMC general secretary targeting the Congress for failing to make a viable opposition against a "safron tyranny."

While Banerjee attacked the Centre for tormenting the people of the country by "extorting the people through tel (fuel) and toll" her nephew picked on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for resorting to Twitter war instead of fighting the battle against the BJP on the streets.

"They (BJP Government) has increased the price of 800 medicines," Banerjee said adding, "the price of tel and toll (toll tax) is going up by the day

whereas the (political) courtesy is getting devalued." The TMC earlier said that in a country where the essential items were getting dearer by the day the government was raising prices of medicine and giving tax cut to movies. The Chief Minister said that the Centre had no sympathy for the common people who are suffering greatly due to the rising prices.

"At a time the country is suffering from unprecedented inflation this Government is minting money at the cost of the common people by hiking the price of tel (fuel) and toll (increasing toll taxes)," she said adding no humane government would have increased the price of essential medicines the way the BJP Government did. The Chief Minister had earlier urged the Centre to suspend the toll tax for a while and put a cap on the rising fuel prices. While the Chief Minister attacked the Centre her nephew and Diamond

Harbour MP concentrated on the Congress even as he went to Guwahati to inaugurate the TMC's State party office.

Saying that the Congress party had failed to live up to the expectations of the people junior Banerjee whose outfit has an eye on the massive Bengali vote bank in Assam said without naming the Congress leader, "though we have come out of the Congress like many other party have but the big difference between the Congress and the TMC is that we have not confined ourselves to the twitter war only ... if we have to raise our voices against fuel price hike we are descending on the street because Twitter does not win you battles"

For winning battles "you have to take it to the streets, get beaten up by the powers that be ... you cannot win wars without taking part in it" he added saying the difference between his party and the Congress was

that "in the past 8 years we have always defeated BJP whereas the BJP has always defeated the Congress ... this raises our credibility level ... we are not afraid of anything ... that is what Mamata Banerjee has taught us."

Saying that his party would establish itself in at least 10 States of the country the Diamond Harbour MP said that his party would contest polls and win in Meghalaya and Tripura. "We will go all out in Assam and if we can win even 10 seats here then we will make the BJP's seat of power in the Centre tremble."

Reacting to his statements Congress Lok Sabha leader Adhir Chowdhury said that the TMC was in fact acting like the BJP's B team by helping it in States where the Congress was stronger — by cutting its votes.

"Remember what the TMC did in Goa ... it is trying to do the same in Assam as the agent of the BJP," he said.

Forces brace for Yatra beginning from June 30

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Even as the graph of terrorist violence is spiralling up in the run up to the 43-day long yatra beginning from June 30, the paramilitary forces are fully geared up to ensure peaceful conduct of the yatra. More than 70 terrorists have been neutralised in the Kashmir region till date across South, central and North Kashmir districts of Kashmir valley.

To ensure smooth conduct of the yatra additional companies of paramilitary forces will be deployed along the yatra route and pilgrim base camps, transit accommodations etc.

Meanwhile, to tackle the threat of random grenade throwing and 'sticky bombs' on moving vehicles the central paramilitary forces are going to sensitise their jawans to prevent such strikes along the yatra route.

Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Deputy Inspector General, Hiranagar Range, Devender Yadav, Wednesday said alertness is the key to deal with the threat of

"sticky bombs". "There is no way but alertness to deal with the problem. In our area of responsibility, security deployments will be put on alert and jawans will be sensitised about the threat". The CRPF officer was interacting with the media persons on the sidelines of a sporting event in Jammu.



was a part of newly infiltrated #terror group. Search for other 02 terrorists is in progress"

In Jammu region, P V Rama Sastry, Additional Director General, Western Command, Chandigarh BSF visited forward areas of LoC at Poonch and Rajouri and reviewed the security situation in the region.

S P S Sandhu, DIG BSF in a statement said, "BSF Sector Rajouri DIG and Battalion commanders briefed ADG BSF on the ground about complexities of management, overall deployment of BSF and domination plan of LC area under prevailing current security scenario. ADG BSF also visited the vital areas of Poonch and Rajouri Sectors and examined the operational preparedness of field formations".

People travelling abroad may get precaution jab

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Those travelling abroad may be allowed to get the Covid-19 precaution jab before the stipulated nine-month waiting period as required by the destination country, according to sources in the Union Health Ministry.

An official announcement, however, is yet to be made by the Ministry, according to a news agency.

Sources said the decision to relax the norms about the precaution dose for overseas travellers was based on recommendations by the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (NTAGI).

The advisory panel had recommended that those who need to travel overseas can take the precaution dose of Covid vaccine as required by the country they are travelling to before the mandatory nine-month gap.

As of now, all those above 18 years who have completed nine months after the second dose are eligible for the precautionary jab.

Stalin stokes Tamil pride at start of 2nd year in office

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ CHENNAI

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister K M Stalin commenced the second year of his ascension to power with an announcement that Iron Age began in the State 4,200 years ago. Quoting archaeological reports, the chief minister told the Legislative Assembly on Monday that excavations carried out in Krishnagiri and Salem districts prove that an agrarian economy existed in Tamil Nadu 4200 years ago and it makes the State distinct from other parts of India.

Stalin disclosed that the carbon dating of artefacts excavated from the sites were done at Beta Analytic in Florida, US. The statement by the chief minister is in synch with the findings about Mahabharat Battle between the Pandava and their cousins Kauravas fought for the Kingdom of Indraprastha. The Mahabharat war took place around the same period and weapons made of iron and copper were used along with chariots, according to the findings by Archaeological Survey of India excavations carried out in Baghat which was reported by The Pioneer in a report dated 5 April 2018.

"Some 60 km drive from Delhi, at Sanauli in Uttar

Pradesh's Baghat, the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has stumbled upon "royal burials" with remains of chariots dating 2000BC-1800BC.

The first-of-its-kind findings in the Indian sub-continent dating back to the Bronze Age suggest that people of that era belonged to the warrior class and were living a highly sophisticated lifestyle," said the report by Archana Jyoti.

Back in Tamil Nadu people were expecting announcements from the chief minister about some important achievements made by the DMK Government during its first year in office. But a policy note of the departments of home, excise and prohibition says that the State has seen a hike in the number of crimes against women and sexual offences against children compared to that of previous year.

There were 55,682 road accidents in 2021 in which 15,384 persons lost their lives and 55,996 were left injured. Number of crimes against women in 2021 stood at 2,421 (compared to 2,025 in 2020 and 1,982 in 2019). While there were 3090 POCSO cases registered in 2020, there were 4,469 cases registered in 2021.

Adding to the woes of the Government, former chief minister Edappadi Palaniswami said in the Legislative Assembly

that 30.45 tonnes of ganga were seized in 2021 alone and this was a shocking information. Though Stalin made light of the statement by replying that it was because of the pro-active nature of the DMK Government, the fact remains that there has been an increase in the number of crimes and violence all over the State. The reluctance of the media to highlight these issues was pointed out by columnist N Sathiyamoorthy: "A sympathetic media is not saying enough, maybe, but the social media, purportedly identifiable with the rival All India Anna DMK and Bharatiya Janata Party, is unrelenting and unpardoning," said Moorthy.

Stalin's main promises that he would bring down the fuel cost and make Tamil Nadu free of NEET remain unfulfilled. The promise of monthly honorarium of Rs 1,000 to all women home makers remains on paper. Though he undertook an official visit to UAE to invite entrepreneurs and investors to Tamil Nadu, it may take time to fructify.

The action of the Government in taking over the administration of Sree Rama Bhajana Mutt and banning the May 22 Sharmapuram Aadheenam Procession had alienated the Hindus.

Two brothers hacked by stepmother, her son

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Two brothers were found dead with their throats slit in Deoria on Wednesday, the police said.

Both the brothers were brutally hacked to death. The local police rushed to the spot and arrested the stepmother and her son on allegations that they had killed both over property dispute. A knife and a dagger were recovered from the spot.

As per Deoria's Superintendent of Police Shripati Mishra, Srinivas, a resident of Devtaha Chitai village, works in Dubai and has two wives — Mansa Devi and Kusum. He had two sons Ajay

(18) and Abhishek (15) from his first wife and one son, Raju, from his second wife.

Mishra said that the incident came into light when around 5 am on Wednesday, Mansa Devi found both her sons lying on their beds with their throats slit. Their clothes were soaked in blood. Mansa Devi immediately raised an alarm following which the local residents came and both were taken to the hospital where the doctors pronounced them dead.

Circle Officer of Rudrapur, Jilajet, who also visited the spot, claimed that the preliminary investigation showed that around 5 am in the morning, the accused stepmother Kusum

along with her son Raju and daughter-in-law Archana committed the murders when Devi was not at home.

The three accused were arrested and the bodies were sent for post-mortem.

According to a police spokesman, the motive behind the murders, revealed during preliminary investigation, was property dispute.

The father of the deceased had two wives and the dispute was between the victims, Ajay and Abhishek, and their step-brother, Raju.

Meanwhile, a pregnant woman was allegedly raped by a member of the cleaning staff in a hospital in Mirzapur.



Boxer Mary Kom with Paralympic athlete Deepa Malik during the launch of the book 'Modi@20: Dreams Meet Delivery', in New Delhi on Wednesday

Taj Mahal land belonged to Jaipur royal family: MP

PTI ■ JAIPUR

The land on which the Taj Mahal was built originally belonged to Jaipur's ruler Jai Singh and it was acquired by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, BJP MP Diya Kumari claimed on Wednesday, asserting that records are available with the erstwhile Jaipur royal family.

She also supported a petition in the Allahabad High Court, seeking a fact-finding inquiry into the "history" of the Taj Mahal and also opening of the doors of its "22 rooms" to see "the truth, whatever it is".

It should be investigated what was there before the monument was built and people have the right to know. There are records available with the Jaipur family and it would provide these, if required, Kumari, a member of the erstwhile Jaipur royal family, said.

"Compensation was given in lieu of the land but how much was it, whether it was accepted or not, I cannot say this because I have not studied the records which are there in our 'pothikhana'. But the land belonged to our family and Shah Jahan had acquired it," she told reporters here.

"Since there was no judi-

ciary, no appeal could have been made at that time. Things will be clear only after examining the records," the BJP leader said.

Referring to the petition, she said that it was a valid point that the rooms should be opened and an investigation should be done.

"People should know why the rooms are locked there. There could have been anything before the Taj Mahal, may be a temple. People have the right to know what was there originally before the 'maqbara'," Kumari said.

She said that she has not studied the records and can reach a conclusion only after examining them.

"What I am saying is on behalf of what I have learnt and heard. I have not studied the records. We can provide the records to the court if necessary. Only after examining the records, we can reach a conclusion," Kumari said.

The writ petition was filed on Saturday in the registry of the Lucknow bench of the high court by Rajneesh Singh, who is the media in-charge of the BJP's Ayodhya unit.

The petition would come up before the court for a hearing after it is passed by the registry.

UP Assembly all set to go paperless, Speaker tells parties

Mahana sought cooperation of the Opposition for smooth conduct of proceedings of the House

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Assembly Speaker Satish Mahana on Wednesday apprised the leaders of all political parties about the paperless proceedings of the House.

The Speaker briefed them about the measures being taken to pave way for implementation of e-Vidhan that proposes to bring all the legislatures on a common digital platform and make them paperless.

Presiding over an all-meeting, Mahana sought the cooperation of the opposition parties for the smooth conduct of the proceedings of the House.

The speaker said the leaders of all political parties assured to extend their cooperation for the smooth conduct of the proceedings of the House. He said the leader of opposition, Akhilesh Yadav, was not present in the meeting.

He said Akhilesh Yadav sent a letter informing him that he had to visit the family of his party ex-MLA whose mother

recently expired. He said from the Samajwadi Party, Iqbal Mehmood was present in the meeting.

The Speaker said the UP assembly, being the largest assembly in the country, set the ideals and standards for the rest of the state legislatures of the country.

The speaker, seeking the cooperation of the opposition parties, said all parties should table their point of view on different issues with the established traditions of the House and parliamentary decorum.

Parliamentary Affairs Minister Suresh Khanna assured the leaders of the opposition parties that the government was ready for meaningful debate on all issues and was committed to positively consider all issues raised by the members in the House.

Besides the Samajwadi Party member, Ajay Kumar from Rashtriya Lok Dal, Ram Nivas Verma from Apna Dal, Sanjay Nishad from NISHAD Party, Om Prakash Rajbhar from Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party, Aradhana Mishra from Congress and Umashankar Singh from Bahujan Samaj Party participated in the meeting.

All the leaders assured the speaker to extend their cooperation for the conduct of the proceedings of the House.

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आज़ादी का
अमृत महोत्सव

“सेवाभाव की अद्वितीय मिसाल, निःस्वार्थ जनमानस की सेवा में जीवन समर्पित करने वाले व कोरोना महामारी के दौरान निडरता से कर्तव्य निभाते वाले प्रत्येक नर्सिंग ऑफिसर को अंतर्राष्ट्रीय नर्स दिवस की हार्दिक बधाई”

- मनोहर लाल

स्टाफ नर्स पोस्ट का नाम बदलकर किया नर्सिंग ऑफिसर

वर्ष 2014 में एक नर्सिंग कॉलेज से बढ़कर वर्ष 2022 में हुए 9

अंतर्राष्ट्रीय नर्स दिवस
की
हार्दिक शुभकामनाएं
बीवार, 12 मई, 2022

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PAPER WITH PASSION

A welcome step

There was a need to balance the interest of citizens with that of the state

The Supreme Court's decision to put on hold the much-abused sedition law is a welcome step. It goes a long way in assuring the people that the top court of the country is keeping its eyes and ears open and doing everything within its jurisdiction to prevent the state from trampling on the right of a citizen. The SC must be complimented for allowing the centre time to re-examine and reconsider the law with a rider that in the interval the colonial law will be kept in abeyance. Rejecting the Centre's argument that several accused under the sedition law may be involved in terror and money laundering cases, the SC also gave relief to those rotting in jails under the law and said they can approach courts for bail. The Centre looked desperate to cling to the law when it told the Court that cases under Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) cases under sedition law be registered only when the area Superintendent of Police spelled out the reason in writing. The centre contended that it was not right to prevent the registration of a cognizable offense and a responsible officer should be there for scrutiny for filing of cases under the sedition law. The court did not agree with this view and altogether put the law in abeyance. It is good to see the Centre taking cognizance of public opinion and judicial nudge to revisit a law that has been repeatedly abused to scandalize and persecute mainly political opponents and right activists.



There are dozens of cases where journalists have been booked under the draconian law for exposing cases of corruption and crime against powerful politicians. Similarly, filmmakers, poets, and political activists have also been accused of committing offence against the state under the sedition law and booked for waging or attempting to wage war or abetting waging of war against the Government (Section 121 of the IPC), conspiracy to commit offences punishable by Section 121 (Section 121A) and collecting arms to wage war against the government (Section 122). The law has been so blatantly misused that during five years between 2-14 and 198, of the 326 cases of sedition filed against people in different parts of the country, the state could secure conviction only in six cases. The SC's decision has not gone down well with the Government. Shortly after the order, Union Law Minister Kiren Rijiju said while he "respected the court and its independence", there is a "Lakshman Rekha" that cannot be crossed. It's not clear what the minister meant by the 'Lakshman rekha' because the court was well within its right to review or put on hold any law. On his part, Chief Justice N V Ramana rightly said that there was a need to balance the interest of civil liberties and the interests of citizens with that of the state.



A commuter drags her two-wheeler through a water-logged street after rainfall in Agartala

Appeasement in Congress DNA

Over the years, minority appeasement has been the most obsessive pursuit and political agenda of the Congress

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot's political 'Karmabhoomi' Jodhpur is seething with anger. The city has seen incidents of stone-pelting, violent attacks on police personnel and innocent people, besides riotous fury of mobs, while the administration helplessly knotted their hands for want of an order from the Chief Minister.

The communal fuse was lit in Jalori Gate in Jodhpur on May 3 when groups clashed on a day the city celebrated Eid-ul-Fitr and Akshaya Tirtiya, with reports showing that the mobs disgraced the freedom fighter Bal Mukund Bissa's statue. But that wasn't the one-off incident, since the embers of the communal tension had been flaring with the Karauli incident when a procession of the Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh (RSS) came under the attack of stone-pelting, while the CCTV footage holds the evidence of sabre rattling by the mobs, chasing innocents with swordson April 3. The Jalori Gate and Karauli incidents are separated by about a month, but share a close bond in the fact that the Chief Minister on both the occasions chose to remain a benign protector of the riotous mobs.

Ashok Gehlot is a Congress veteran. His deeds as the Chief Minister of Rajasthan aren't isolated, for they truly symbolize Congress' age-old Muslim appeasement politics, while no cost is too big for the party to stick with the legacy of the political instrument to nurse the minority vote base.

The administration has the wherewithal to make the cost too high for the participants in the mobs that perpetrate violence. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath by rolling out his law and order machinery without any communal colour has demonstrated the efficacy of the administration. UP in the first term of Yogi Government and thereafter too remained free from communal violence, and the fear of the administration is visible among the goons let loose by the proponents of minority appeasement.

The Congress Governments



cannot be expected to give free hand to rule of law. Minority appeasement in the past seven decades has become the core of the DNA of Congress. The party worked closely with the Britishers, and after Independence it didn't shed the legacy of 'divide and rule' that it inherited from the colonizers by nursing fear among Muslims.

For Jawaharlal Nehru, the reconstruction of Somnath Temple was Hindu-revivalism, as noted in his letter to Rajendra Prasad, even while it was reclaiming the national glory for Sardar Patel. Despite Rajendra Prasad and other luminaries calling for Uniform Civil Code, Nehru kept perpetuating that Muslims needed 'extra protection', and presided over enactment of Hindu Code Bill, and others to push the minority community into a silos and make them a separate class.

Under the watch of Indira Gandhi, Muslim Personal Law Board came into existence, much against the spirit of Article 44 of the Constitution, which called for uniform civil code. Rajiv Gandhi scripted the Muslim Women Protection on Divorce Act, solely to overturn the Shah Bano judgment of the Supreme Court. For Congress'



CONGRESS KNOWS ITS LIFE-BLOOD IS MINORITY APPEASEMENT, BUT ENACTS DRAMA TO BOARD HINDUTVA, AS SEEN IN ACTS OF RAHUL GANDHI IN GUJARAT (2017) AND MADHYA PRADESH (2018) ASSEMBLY POLLS AND OTHER STATE ELECTIONS

appeasement politics, sanctity of the Supreme Court, and women mattered least.

The economist-turned-politician Manmohan Singh helped radicalization of Congress further by declaring unabashedly that the minorities, particularly the Muslims, have the first right on the national resources.

Congress' political journey over the decades saw the party sucked by the politics of minority appeasement. Its leaders, including Digvijay Singh, Salman Khurshid, questioned the Batla House encounter to the shock of many.

Compulsive practice of minority appeasement by the grand old party, besides radicalizing Congress, has pushed India to face monsters of illegal infiltrators in Assam and West Bengal, which changed demography, while also causing decades of insurgencies. Impact is visible on Muslims seemingly carrying the pre-Independence socio-political outlook that they're a separate class in the country.

Congress is also accountable for democratizing its compulsive politics of minority appeasement. Not only its Chief Ministers swore by it, even the political offshoots, including Samajwadi Party,



SUMET BHASIN

Rashtriya Janata Dal, Trinamool Congress, Telangana Rashtra Samithi, have been as radical as the grand old party in sowing the crop of Muslim appeasement to harvest secured vote base.

Muslims constitute a large chunk of the beneficiaries of Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna, PM Garib Kalyan Anna Yojna and others. None of the schemes of the Government-led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi is directed for any particular community, for they're for all the people without any discrimination. Inclusive governance is the cornerstone of PM Modi's statecraft. This is seen in his mantra of 'Sabka Sath, Sabka Viswas, Sabka Prayas'. Besides, PM Modi has taken the popular mandate in his both the terms to unshackle the Muslim women by freeing them from the curse of triple talaq, and promoting the ecosystem for them to benefit from education. In Jammu and Kashmir, PM Modi-led Government has taken the benefits of several schemes, besides reservation, to the socially marginalized sections, just by undoing Congress' decades of politics of minority appeasement.

PM Modi's inclusive politics has hit Congress hard - electorally and psychologically. Congress is without the status of the main opposition party in Lok Sabha, and it's racing to the same fate in Rajya Sabha soon.

Psychologically, Congress knows its life-blood is minority appeasement, but enacts drama to board Hindutva, as seen in acts of Rahul Gandhi in Gujarat (2017) and Madhya Pradesh (2018) Assembly polls and other state elections, when he launched himself on temple hopping spree. That reveals chaos in Congress, and also admission that people have seen through its radicalization.

(Sumet Bhasin is Director of Public Policy Research Centre, and he can be followed at @sumetbhasin. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NAGARAJU MURDER: TRS SILENT

Sir — The recent barbaric honour killing of Hindu youth Nagaraju in Hyderabad for marrying a Muslim woman is not only horrifying but also questions the religious harmony in this country. The shocking murder visuals have revealed the apathy of the crowd who watched the man being slaughtered but didn't try to save the victim. Though the honour killing case of Nagaraju is being discussed by people all over India, the Telangana Government did not give any statement in favour of the victim nor did it take any serious steps to address this issue publicly. Some speculate that the Government's silence is strategic as the TRS doesn't want to disturb alliance with the AIMIM.

We, the people of Telangana, are demanding justice for Nagaraju by raising the Telangana Police department's prejudice. We will keep on questioning the authorities until justice is served.

Shravani Mudhiraj | Hyderabad

COST OF CM POST

Sir — Former Union Minister Basangouda Patil Yatnal is a dissident in the BJP in Karnataka. For a fact, lust for the coveted post of Chief Minister may influence an ambitious but undeserving leader to indulge in conspiracy and dis-sidence. It is not new that Yatnal has been casting aspersions on the BJP leadership, both at the Centre and the State. This time, he has leveled serious allegations against the Delhi leaders alleging that they demanded a sum of Rs 2,500 crore for the post of Chief Minister. However, he has not mustered courage to name the leader or leaders and therefore it seems he is making false allegations.

For the ability to pay a huge sum of money for a desired post, the wealth of a person should be many times more than the amount he can (afford to) pay. If the post of Chief Minister can be sold for Rs 2,500 crore and if there are potential buyers, every State in India would have seen a Chief Minister every year or the same Chief Minister would have paid

Blame opp for its weakness



India is the largest democracy in the world and the secret of the strength of this democracy is its democratic system. Ever since the BJP came to power in 2014, the question is being raised time and again whether India is moving towards a one-party system. This question needs to be asked in the context of a republic like India. A democratic system remains democratic only as

long as it has a strong opposition, but in the absence of Opposition, the danger of the democratic system being weakened increases. The Congress and UPA parties kept the power of the country in their hands for almost 60 years. Was this question "Indian democracy is moving towards a one-party system" raised even once during these 60 years? No. Therefore the question being raised during the BJP Government has no justification and it is a biased observation.

The Congress itself is responsible for its present condition. The internal strife within the Congress has brought a party with the potential of a strong opposition to the level of a regional party. The BJP has only strengthened its base. It is not fair to call the majority that BJP gets as a one-party system. If the Congress or other parties wish to face the formidable BJP as a strong opposition, they need to broaden their base, rather than concocting a false narrative.

Rajender Kumar Sharma | Rewari

that amount to remain in power for the whole 5 years. Allegations made without concrete proof provide food for the Opposition parties to seek a probe, but the allegations should appear to be true for instituting an enquiry.

KV Seetharamaiah | Bengaluru

RAJAPAKSAS MUST GO

Sir — Sri Lanka is in the news for being in a state of political turmoil and economic crisis like never before. The situation is so grave that it is hard to tell how the neighbouring country is going to grapple with it and emerge with a measure of success. It is a self-evident truth that the youth-driven anti-government protests have been fuelled by acute food, medicine, and fuel and cooking gas shortage, long hours of power cuts and job losses and enormous foreign debt load brought about by Gotabaya Rajapaksa regime's economic mismanagement of the worst kind. Since the

decisions that led to the present dire situation were all taken by the Rajapaksa brothers, the buck ought to stop with them. People cutting across the traditional boundaries of ethnicity and religion are now up in arms against the Rajapaksas.

The Rajapaksa dynasty finally seems to meet their nemesis; Mahinda Rajapaksa had to quit as Prime Minister and seek protection in a naval base; Gotabaya's ejection from power appears to be imminent. Nevertheless, more important than the fate of the Rajapaksa is the future of Sri Lanka. The island nation needs political stability and economic recovery, goals that are not unachievable, provided its people and political leadership show enough will and wisdom, for a return to normality.

G David Milton | Tamil Nadu

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Dwell on dwelling

Planned colonies for the poor are the answer, not bulldozers

The issue of urban encroachments should be seen on a wider socio-political canvas and not just through the narrow confines of communal politics. While the word 'bulldozer' eases into our frame of political discourse, the attention should be on the uncontrolled anarchy of habitation that afflicts our metropolises, cities, and towns. The poorer and poorest sections of society live in temporary structures with cardboard roofs and tins-sheet walls amid unhygienic conditions and take the brunt of municipal efforts to clear unauthorised encroachments. Who get away scot-free are the super-rich who too inhabit unauthorised colonies with their sprawling bungalows and where the bulldozers do not tread at all. Municipal data of a decade ago says just under a fourth of Delhi's population lives in planned colonies. The rest live in illegal constructions and slums. Government estimates for 2019 show 1,700 illegal colonies across the national capital. The situation in, say, Mumbai, is probably worse. Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, Ahmedabad, and Kolkata have their own stories. What India is witnessing today is a surge of aspirations in the countryside driving thousands of educated youth and daily-wage labourers, and landless peasants toward the cities. The whole of Maharashtra is turning into a semi-urban landmass.

In other states, the divide between the urban and rural areas is getting blurred. Unfortunately, the civic consciousness of the authorities is also blurry. The inability to take a holistic view of encroachments and ham-handed, reactive measures are the root cause of the problems. There is no effort to provide shelter to urban migrants. The poor take care of the poor and the new-comers also end up living in slums. Many of them occupy pavements to sell vegetables or trinkets, clothes or utensils and drive autos or rickshaws. They come to the attention of the political parties only at election time when it is also the time to grant permits to illegal dwellings, regularise unauthorised colonies, or permit vegetable carts along busy roads. The bulldozers should target the unauthorised colonies inhabited by the rich. The focus must be on providing for low-income housing - the PM UDAY Yojana has a lot of backlogs to cover - in a time-bound manner and give the illegal residents welfare benefits and job opportunities. Unauthorised colonies cannot be left to municipalities to resolve. They should become part of the urban development process for legal living.

SOUND BITE

Even the Prime Minister's detractors have to concede he (Modi) is a phenomenon.

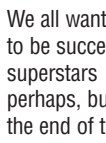


Vice-President — M Venkaiah Naidu



This is the time for all Sri Lankans to join hands as one, to overcome the economic, social & political challenges.

Sri Lankan President — Gotabaya Rajapaksa



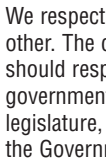
We all want to be successful superstars perhaps, but at the end of the day you have to take chances as that's the whole point of the profession.

Actor — Arjun Kapoor



We're thankful for our many years of great partnership with FIFA.

CEO of Electronic Arts — Andrew Wilson




We respect each other. The court should respect the government, the legislature, so as the Government also should respect the court.

Union Law Minister — Kiren Rijiju

FIRST COLUMN

NORTHERN IRELAND: BAD TIMING

Sinn Fein has a long way to go despite historic win



GWYNNE DYER

Four months ago, Jonathan Powell warned that the ‘Good Friday’ agreement of 1998 that ended thirty years of killing in Northern Ireland was at risk. “What worries me is the casual political vandalism. They really don’t seem to care (about) the damage they are doing to the very fragile political settlements in Northern Ireland.” ‘They’ are the British government led by Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who has never shown any concern for the subtle and delicate peace deal that former Prime Minister Tony Blair and Powell, his chief of staff, wove a quarter-century ago. Indeed, it’s doubtful that Johnson even understands it. For the first time in Northern Ireland’s 101-year history, last weekend’s election saw Sinn Féin, a Catholic, ‘Nationalist’ party that is pledged to unify Northern Ireland with the ‘Republic of Ireland’ that occupies the rest of the island, win the largest number of seats. This dismayed the three political parties that split the votes of the former Protestant ascendancy between them, but it didn’t surprise them. A higher Catholic birthrate has already produced a Catholic majority in Northern Ireland’s schools, and perhaps by now in the whole population as well. But a lot of people in Northern Ireland are scared, and not just Protestants. Twenty-five years of peace is not long enough to forget the previous thirty years of what was effectively a civil war, when people only a few streets over might see you as the enemy and sectarian bombings and murders were a daily occurrence. The old fears and hatreds are clearly diminishing in Northern Ireland among the generation born since 1998 (and in some of their elders too). But many believe that it’s too soon to gamble on a peaceful transition to a post-sectarian all-Ireland republic.

It would only take a few dozen diehard ‘Loyalists’ (Protestants) to derail such a process: there are undoubtedly plenty of guns and explosives still hidden away. The militants would lose in the end, but only after years of violence and a whole new wave of fear and hatred. Unfortunately, Northern Ireland may be starting down this road, because the Good Friday deal says that any Northern Irish government must be a power-sharing entity in which a ‘first minister’ and a ‘deputy first minister’ are drawn from the two biggest parties. No government can be formed without both. In a deliberate act of sabotage, the biggest Protestant party, the Democratic Unionist Party, is refusing to accept the ‘deputy first minister’ role. The rules say that if no government can be formed, there must be another election within twelve weeks. None of this is inevitable, but the great project of the English nationalist party, the Conservatives, makes it much more likely. That project was Brexit, which automatically required the re-creation of a real border in Ireland between Northern Ireland, part of the United Kingdom, and the Republic of Ireland, still a member of the European Union. The magical part of the Good Friday deal was to make that border invisible: no customs check, no passports, nothing. So Catholic Nationalists could pretend they already lived in a united Ireland, while Protestant Loyalists could pretend that ‘power-sharing’ didn’t really mean things had changed. But when the UK left the EU, that fiction died. The Loyalists feel betrayed and abandoned, and they’re right. Secretly, most English politicians have wanted to unload them for decades now, so unification will still happen eventually. The problem with trying to do that now, before generational turnover has done its work, is that there may be one more round of violence before it happens.

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

India’s critical need for cyber doctrine

Cyber power projection will deter the adversary from initiating attacks on India in the first place



NISHTHA KAUSHIKI



“

THE PROLIFERATION OF OFFENSIVE CYBER CAPABILITIES OF OUR ADVERSARIES AND THEIR EASY ACCESS EVEN TO NON-STATE ACTORS HAS CREATED TACTICAL ISSUES OF AN ASYMMETRIC POWER STRUGGLE

The news regarding attempts of Chinese hackers in December 2021 and January 2022 to attack State Load Dispatch Centres (SLDCs) near the LAC was considered by many as routine. Of course, the military establishment would have taken a serious note. However, the people of India should understand the more significant consequences of cyber-attack, which do not remain restricted only to disruption in internet connectivity or financial transactions.

From a security point of view, such cyber-attacks aim to collect information to prepare for any future activity by the People’s Liberation Army. China’s ‘Science of Military Strategy’, published by the PLA’s Academy of Military Sciences, speaks of “winning local wars under the conditions of informationization” (2013). China has modernised its cyber warfare units through this initiative, thereby possessing both offensive and defensive technologies. Combined with its wolf-warrior diplomacy and its eyes on Ladakh and Arunachal, it leaves no room for doubt that in the future, China will have intentions and the power to unleash cyber-warfare against both civilian and military establishments in India.

How can a future warfare situation look? Malware can be unleashed on an adversary’s Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) that can go undetected for months or probably years until the system is on a very high operational level in times of an open conflict. Alternatively, the electrical grids that supply electricity to the military bases, hospitals, and print and online media could be cut off just before a major offensive. Even AI can be used to create fake videos and deliver them to infinite end users of the internet. Such videos can attempt to disturb the internal peace and security of the country. It might occur even before retaliatory attacks are initiated, or the country comes to terms with the new realities. Future warfare would thus be swift, intense, and of a relatively shorter duration of 5-6 hours or maybe of a few days. Such an attack blurs the lines of distinction and neutrality as outlined by the International Humanitarian Law.

The proliferation of offensive cyber capabilities of our adversaries and their easy access even to non-state actors has created tactical issues of an asymmetric power struggle. Such weaponisation makes space as well as non-space-based communications mechanisms vulnerable to cyber-attacks. Currently, in the realm of cyber deterrence, the government possesses passive deterrence or the deterrence by denial in which the cyber-attacks are thwarted. In this scenario, cyber security experts focus on building resilient networks to secure the digital infrastructure and minimise the attacks. To ensure a double safety mechanism and hence success, the operational domain should be expanded to include active deterrence, ensuring an equal and proportionate cyber retaliation. More retaliatory or disruptive capabilities should be incorporated into the armed forces’ operational domain. Such technologies can be a relatively inexpensive affair to protect the indigenously developed missile systems, which have taken years of hard work of our scientists and others who have contributed to it.

At the highest level, the armed forces should be able to disable the military command and structure system and create alternate pathways to their missile command system. Active deterrence will ensure a scenario wherein adversary’s missiles would not be able to take off, or their trajectories can be altered to secure the country. Strategic communication of our deterrent declaration is a must to ensure the credibility of our response which should be able to instil fear in the perpetrator’s mind. Cyber power projection will deter the adversary from initiating attacks in the first place. Additionally, they can be coupled with the active use of artificial intelligence and other propaganda and psychological warfare techniques.

As it is clear that we need to prepare for a mix of open hostilities and hybrid warfare, we can consider what other countries are doing for their cyber defence. Washington’s National Security Presidential Directive No. 54 (2008) adopted a comprehensive approach to cyber security. Later, in 2010, the National Security Strategy of the US prioritised the digital infrastructure as a strategic national asset and hence warranted a national policy to ensure its safety. Further, the U.S. missile defence strategy has actively included a ‘left-of-launch’ strategy in which pre-emptive action is taken to prevent the adversary from launching missiles. This has been used actively against Iran for its national security interests. On the lines of the US, NATO adopted an enhanced policy and action plan on cyber defence in 2014.

In the context of Russia, its Information Security Doctrine (2000) had enlisted threats endangering information support and had mentioned threats of propaganda and psychological warfare that “the propaganda of specimens of mass culture based on the cult of violence or on spiritual and moral values contrary to the values adopted in Russian society”. It also paved the way for adopting different measures to enhance the security of systems related to “informa-tizing weapons and military equipment, security of troop and arms control systems, and the security of management systems for environmentally hazardous and economically important enterprises”. The ongoing conflicts between Russia and Ukraine have actively used AI maliciously apart from the cyber-attacks.

Through its National Cyber Security Policy (2021), Pakistan has treated cyber-attacks at par with attacks on the core aspects of national security and hence speaks of “active defence” in a very camouflaged manner. Further, its doctrine of ‘full spectrum’ deterrence (2013) that replaced ‘minimum deterrence’ seeks to “plug the gaps” ranging from “sub-conventional to strategic levels” surely has components of cyber-attacks. Although India has taken maiden steps in the right direction by institutionalising bilateral research with Australia to improve regional cyber resilience by creating a joint ‘Centre of Excellence for Critical and Emerging Technology Policy’, much needs to be done with other strategic partners.

Two-three years from now, the geopolitical and the tactical situation will be more hostile, and if the situation demands that India revisits its NFU status in the case of its nuclear missiles, an essential condition will mandate that the missiles are loaded with the warheads and kept for ready to launch, unlike what it is today. Then in such a case, it would be a matter of extreme necessity to adopt a similar approach to the ‘left-of-launch’ strategy, which involves pre-emptive action to prevent the adversary from launching missile attacks.

For the aforesaid purpose, we should focus on the development of indigenous technologies apart from getting help from our strategic allies such as Russia, France and Japan. Also, cooperative mechanisms at the level of QUAD and AUKUS should be initiated for joint cyber defences. In the last few years, the government’s visionary strategic foresight has led to the establishment of various agencies such as the office of the National Cybersecurity Coordinator and a National Critical Information Infrastructure Protection Agency (NCIIPC). They are parallel to the Defence Cyber Agency (DCA) and the Military Defence Space Agency (DSA) of the Indian Armed Forces. However, a synchronisation or a fusion of the civilian and the military establishments and the incorporation of a strategic doctrine encompassing power projection for a fruitful deterrence is a must.

POINT COUNTERPOINT




“JUDGE ME NOT BY MY ANCESTORS, BUT BY MY ACTIONS. IT IS [MY] PROMISE TO BE A PRESIDENT FOR ALL FILIPINOS.”
— PRESIDENT-ELECT OF THE PHILIPPINE
FERDINAND MARCOS, JR



“...ANOTHER MARCOS SITTING AS PRESIDENT. WHAT TERRIBLE IRONY - THE KIND THAT TELLS US TO ONCE AND FOR ALL CHANGE THE ROTTEN SYSTEM THAT WE HAVE.”
— FILIPINO PRO-DEMOCRACY ACTIVIST
RENATO REYES, JR

Non-violence: essence of culture of peace

One who has removed violence from one’s feelings, thoughts, words and deeds will naturally be peaceful and will emanate subtle waves of peace



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ

The story of the Mahabharata represents the struggle that takes place on the battlefield of every thinking man or woman’s mind when desires, expectations and vices try to get the better of the innate virtues of the soul. Under these circumstances, the Holy Gita tells us how we can win these inner battles and emerge as better human beings, free from all bondages.

In Mahabharata, non-violence has been described as the highest duty of an individual. However, in real life, most people think that it is not feasible to be totally nonviolent. Is it so? However, looking at the situation of the world that we live in today, one factor that can be considered as the biggest cause of our downfall from an exalted stage of a divine being, is violence in all its forms. Hence, when we decide to be non-violent in every situation, it influences our speech and behaviour. A person who wishes to be nonviolent will not do anything that may get him into a situation involving violence, whether it is emotional, verbal or, in an extreme case, physical violence. Such a person is likely to be affable, humble, patient, tolerant, considerate and loving.

When such a person’s speech and behaviour are marked by the above qualities, they will not offend or hurt anyone or create any feelings in others that may lead them to be aggressive towards this person. The result of all this will be harmonious relations with others in which there is no scope for violence.

However, a person who believes that one may need to use force sometimes, even if only in self-defence, and therefore carries a weapon, may feel emboldened to act aggressively at times. Such behaviour is obviously not going to win him/her any friends, and will only feed his/her insecurity and aggression. One may argue that even if we are nice to everyone, someone may try to harm us due to a vested interest or evil intentions. Being good, they say, is no guarantee of having good done to the self. Then what? It is here that subtle forces come into play. We must understand that a person who has removed violence from his feelings, thoughts, words and deeds will naturally be peaceful and hence sub-

tle waves of peace emanate from such persons and influence the atmosphere and people around him.

The proof of this phenomenon can be found in places of worship. Even in a busy area of a city, the inside of a temple, mosque, gurudwara or church is an oasis of calm. These places soothe the mind and provide respite from the hustle and bustle outside. The atmosphere in these places is such because the people who go there create positive, holy or peaceful thoughts while they are there. At the least they avoid having negative or mundane thoughts. Hence, in actual sense, it is human thoughts that create the atmosphere or vibration of a place. That is why there is tension in the air in places where people tend to be tense, angry, irritated or frustrated.

It should be understood that when we interact with others, it is the subtle energy we radiate that has the biggest influence on their behaviour towards us. Ever wondered why our sweet words and smiles fail to convince someone for whom we harbour not very good feelings from within? That’s because they are catching the negative vibrations going out from us, not our words.

A calm person always carries an aura of peace around him. This influences even those who may have negative feelings for him. And this influence extends to all creatures and even the elements of nature. This is described in the life stories of holy men and women, as to how would-be assassins had a change of heart on coming near them; how wild animals calmed down in their presence; and how the elements of nature came to their aid. Thus, a person who has quietened his or her mind and intellect can calm down even those with violent intentions. Here one needs to mention the inviolable law of action and reaction, or the law of karma. Sometimes, violence suffered by one may be a result of one’s karmic accounts, whether of the present birth or earlier ones. But even in such a case a violent reaction on one’s part will only add to one’s karmic bondage. If we understand this fact and face a violent situation calmly, our karmic burden will soon be finished and the violent situation will subside.

Lanka's former strongman Mahinda under protection at naval base

Army marches on streets of Colombo

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's former prime minister Mahinda Rajapaksa is being protected at the Trincomalee naval base after he was evacuated from his official residence, Defence Secretary Gen (ret'd.) Kamal Gunaratne said on Wednesday, as security forces in armoured vehicles patrolled across the country with orders to shoot at sight amid continuing protests at the government's handling of the worst economic crisis.

The 76-year-old Sri Lanka People's Party (SLPP) leader, known for his brutal military campaign against the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) during his presidency from 2005 to 2015, resigned on Monday after violence erupted following an attack on the anti-government protesters by his supporters.

The attack triggered widespread violence against pro-Rajapaksa politicians, leaving nine people, including two police officers, dead. Mahinda, who served as the country's prime minister thrice, saw his residence set on fire on Monday. He, along with his

wife and family, fled his official residence - Temple Trees - and took shelter at the naval base in Trincomalee after a series of deadly attacks on his supporters.

"He (Mahinda Rajapaksa) was evacuated to the Trincomalee naval dockyard," Guneratne told reporters during an online briefing. Trincomalee is a port city on the northeast coast of Sri Lanka.

Gunaratne said after it was determined that it was not suitable for Mahinda to remain at Temple Trees, the necessary decision was made to relocate him. As word spread about Mahinda's presence at the Trincomalee Naval Base, people started a protest near the key military facility. "He will not live there forever."

After the situation returns to normal, he will be relocated to a residence or location of his choice," Gunaratne said. The defence secretary said it is important to protect every single life in the country, and after it was determined that it was not suitable for Mahinda to remain at Temple Trees, the necessary decision was made. "He is a former President and is entitled to adequate security," he added. Mahinda is also facing calls for his arrest from Opposition politicians



for inciting violence against peaceful anti-government protesters who were seeking his resignation as well as that of his elder brother and President Gotabaya Rajapaksa for mis-managing the country's economy.

Meanwhile, army troops on military vehicles marched on the streets of Colombo to ensure public security, a day after the defence ministry ordered the Army, the Air Force and the Navy personnel to open fire on anyone looting public property or causing harm to others. Army Special Forces' Combat Riders have also been deployed on mobile

patrol in Colombo and suburbs, the News First news portal reported. Defence Secretary Gunaratne also said that "there will never be a military rule in Sri Lanka, I say this with responsibility." His comments came amid concerns over increasing role of military in ongoing political and economic crisis.

President Gotabaya on Wednesday urged the public to reject subversive attempts and said it is time for all Sri Lankans to join hands as one, to overcome economic, social and political challenges. "This is the time for all Sri Lankans to join hands as one, to overcome

economic, social & political challenges. I urge all #Srilankans to reject subversive attempts to push you towards racial & religious disharmony. Promoting moderation, tolerance & coexistence is vital," the President said on Twitter. He had earlier urged the people to stop "violence and acts of revenge" against fellow citizens and vowed to address political and economic crisis facing nation. President Gotabaya will hold talks with ruling party dissidents and main Opposition SJB on Wednesday to end political impasse and appoint a successor to ousted PM Mahinda.

Mahinda's chief security officer questioned over violent incident

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan police on Wednesday summoned the chief security officer of former prime minister Mahinda Rajapaksa and recorded his statement over the violent clashes between anti- and pro-government protesters in the country that killed at least eight people and injured over 200 others.

Violence erupted in Sri Lanka on Monday after supporters of former prime minister Mahinda Rajapaksa attacked peaceful anti-government protesters demanding his ouster over the country's worst economic crisis that led to acute shortages of staple food, fuel and power. Over 200 people have also been injured in the violence in Colombo and other cities. The Criminal Investigations Department (CID) recorded a statement from the chief security officer of former Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa over the Galle Face incident on Wednesday, the Colombo Gazette news portal reported.

UN human rights chief, Human Rights Watch condemn violence in Sri Lanka

PTI ■ NEW YORK/GENEVA

UN human rights chief Michelle Bachelet has condemned the escalation of violence in Sri Lanka and called for a thorough and transparent probe into the attacks on peaceful anti-government protesters and members of the ruling party.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Bachelet called on the authorities in Sri Lanka to prevent further violence and urged restraint and meaningful dialogue to address the grievances of the population amid the severe economic crisis in the country.

"I am deeply troubled by the escalation of violence in Sri Lanka after supporters of the Prime Minister attacked peaceful protesters in Colombo yesterday 9 May and the subsequent mob violence against members of the ruling party," she said on Tuesday. Clashes broke out in Sri Lanka on Monday after government supporters

attacked peaceful anti-government protest sites in Colombo and elsewhere, killing at least 8 people and leaving over 200 others injured in the violence.

"I condemn all violence and call on the authorities to independently, thoroughly and transparently investigate all attacks that have occurred. It is crucial to ensure that those found responsible, including those inciting or organising violence, are held to account," Bachelet said in a statement in Geneva.

She also called on the authorities to prevent further violence and to protect the right to peaceful assembly. "Authorities, including military personnel deployed in support of security forces, should exercise restraint in policing the situation and ensure that measures adopted in the context of the state of emergency comply with international human rights norms and are not used to stifle dissent or hinder peaceful protest," she said.

Pak Def Min indicates that general elections can be held before Nov

Islamabad: Pakistan's Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has indicated that general elections could be held before November, as ruling PML-N leaders are in London to hold key consultations with former premier Nawaz Sharif on political and economic issues.

Asif said this in an interview with the BBC Urdu which was published on Wednesday. He was asked about the appointment of the army chief after incumbent Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa will retire by the end of November this year.

"It is possible that elections are held before the appointment of the new army chief... It is possible that the caretaker

government is replaced by a new government before November," he said. According to Pakistan's Constitution, a caretaker government is set up for a maximum 90-day period to hold elections after the Parliament is dissolved. The current national Assembly will complete its term in August next year.

When asked if the the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz-led coalition government would extend the service of incumbent Army chief Bajwa, who was already given a second three-year term in 2019, Asif said that Bajwa has already announced that he does not want his tenure to be extended. **PTI**

Bosnia's political crisis called worst since 1992-1995 war

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

The top international official in Bosnia called the escalating political crisis in country the most serious since 1992-1995 war that saw 100,000 people die and warned in a report circulated Tuesday that its potential "to become a security crisis is very real."

Christian Schmidt, the high representative overseeing implementation of 1995 peace agreement that ended devastating war, said leaders of country's Bosnian Serb-dominated entity have systematically challenged its provisions and intensified their activities aimed at usurping powers granted to federal government. The US-

brokered Dayton peace agreement established two separate entities in Bosnia — one run by Bosnia's Serbs and another dominated by country's Bosniaks, who are mostly Muslims, and Croats.

The two entities are bound together by joint central institutions, and all important decisions must be backed by both. Schmidt said in the report to UN Security Council that actions by Bosnian Serb entity, known as Republika Srpska, "not only erode fundamentals of the agreement, but directly threaten to undo more than 25 years of progress in building up Bosnia and Herzegovina as a state firmly on the path towards European Union integration".

India-China relations will 'remain strained', says US intelligence community

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The ties between India and China will "remain strained" in wake of "lethal clash" in 2020, the US intelligence community has told lawmakers as it also expressed concerns over any potential crisis between India and Pakistan.

In its annual threat assessment presented before the Senate Armed Services Committee during a Congressional hearing on Tuesday, the US intelligence community said the expanded military posture by both India and China along disputed border elevates risk of armed confrontation between two nuclear powers that might involve direct

threats to US persons and interests and calls for America's intervention. "Relations between New Delhi and Beijing will remain strained in wake of lethal clash in 2020, the most serious in decades," it said. Previous standoffs have demonstrated that persistent low-level friction on Line of Actual Control (LAC) has potential to escalate swiftly, the report said.

India has been consistently maintaining that peace and tranquillity along LAC were key for overall development of bilateral ties. The eastern Ladakh border standoff between Indian and Chinese militaries erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in Pangong lake area. Both

sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry.

India and China have held 15 rounds of military talks so far to resolve eastern Ladakh row. As a result of the talks, the two sides completed disengagement process last year on north and south banks of Pangong lake and in Gogra area.

Each side currently has around 50,000 to 60,000 troops along LAC in sensitive sector. The assessment also noted that crises between India and Pakistan are of particular concern because of risk - however low - of an escalatory cycle between two nuclear-armed states.

UK signs security declarations with Sweden, Finland

PTI ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson is touring across Europe on Wednesday to sign declarations with Sweden and Finland to reinforce their security with a pledge to assist in event of an attack, against backdrop of Russia-Ukraine conflict.

Downing Street said declarations will see a step-change in defence and security cooperation between UK and each country, intensifying intelligence sharing, accelerating joint military training, exercising and deployments, and bolstering security across all three countries and northern Europe.

They will also see UK bolster its collaboration on traditional threats facing all three nations, while working with Sweden and Finland to tackle new geopolitical challenges, such as hybrid and cyber threats.

"We are steadfast and unequivocal in our support to both Sweden and Finland and signing of these security declarations is a symbol of the everlasting assurance between our nations," said Johnson.

"When Europe celebrated VE [Victory in Europe] Day in 1945 - a victory that was of course in no small part ensured by heroism of Russian people - we hoped that peace on our continent endure. Well (Russian President) Putin's bloodthirsty campaign against a sovereign nation has put an end to that hope," he said, with reference to end of Second World War.

"And we face a new reality. But one that we face together. Throughout this conflict, our Nordic partners have been leading international support, not just for Ukraine but also for European security," he added. The declarations signed with Sweden and Finland are aimed at facilitating UK to cooperate with key Nordic partners and their armed forces,

PUBLIC NOTICE
My client, Harish Sethi, who is a registered owner of First Floor of property bearing no. 1423, situated at above of Jhoke Kuranja, Geeta Colony, Delhi-31, INDIA, vide Registered Relinquishment Deed dated 13/02/2017, Relinquishment Deed executed by (1) Sh. Ramesh Kumar, (2) Sh. Rajender Kumar Sethi both S/o Sh. Krishan Lal Sethi, (3) Smt. Neelam Kumari W/o Sh. Prem Kumar, (4) Smt. Sumita W/o Sh. Gobind Parkash Goria and (5) Smt. Ram Pyari W/o Late Sh. Krishan Lal Sethi in favour of Sh. Harish Sethi S/o Late Sh. Krishan Lal Sethi via document number 745 on 22/02/2017. The said property is under sale which is going to be mortgaged with ICICI Home Finance Limited by the purchaser. Any person/bank/financial institution having any claim/right, lien any objection whatsoever in regard to above property, should notified to the undersigned Adv. Vishal Mehra, E-713, Karkardooma Court, Bldg-110092, along with documentary evidence under address through registered A/D within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice failing which any claim, lien or objection shall be deemed to have been waived.

Vishal Mehra (Advocate)
E-713, Karkardooma Court, Delhi-110092
Mobile No. 9811215181

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General public that by Mr. Sanjay Arora S/o Late Mr. Shyam Lal, is owner of A Free Hold Entire Built up Property bearing No. G-6/13, erected on the plot of Land measuring 126 Sq. Yds. Situated in Matviya Nagar, New Delhi-110017, vide Registered Sale Deed dated 31/08/2019. All persons are hereby informed that of MR. RAJ KUMAR BHATI, is purchasing the above-mentioned property from Mr. Sanjay Arora S/o Late Mr. Shyam Lal by way of registered Sale Deed. General public hereby informed that anybody has any charge/interest/lien in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Mrs. Prasoon Lata, Advocate,
SG Associates (Law Firm)
Unit No 7, Basement, Plot No C 78, Sector 2, Noida, UP 201301.
E-MAIL: associatespl@gmail.com
Ph: 7011172764, 8130200837

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, CONSTRUCTION WING, UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM
E-32, JUDGE FARM, HALDWANI, DISTT.- NAINITAL (263139)

Letter No.: 794/INVIDA-ANUBANDH/PIthoragarh/33 Date: 11.05.2022

E-Tender Notice

- Name of the work:-** CONSTRUCTION OF LIBRARY, LAB, CLASS ROOM & ALLIED WORK AT G.I.C QUITER, BLOCK-MUNAKOT, DISTT.-PITHORAGARH
- Estimated Cost:-** Rs. 104.16 Lakh
- Period of Completion:-** 12 Month
- Date and Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal:-** 11.05.2022 (17.00 hrs)
- Online Bid submission: End date:-** 01.06.2022 (17.00 hrs)
- Date & Time of Technical bid Opening :-** 03.06.2022 (11.00 hrs)
- Name and Address of the Officer inviting bid:-** General Manager (Kumaon), Nirman Wing, Uttarakhand Pey Jal Nigam, Haldwani.
- Pre-bid meeting details (if required) Date & Place:-** 17.05.2022 (13.00 hrs) Project Manager Construction Unit Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam, Pithoragarh.
- For further details, details of subsequent Amendment / correction documentation etc may be obtained from the e-Procurement portal www.uktenders.gov.in

GENERAL MANAGER

Marcos Jr declares victory, faces calls to ensure democracy

AP ■ MANILA

Ferdinand Marcos Jr, the namesake son of an ousted Philippine dictator, declared victory Wednesday in this week's presidential election and faced early calls to ensure respect for human rights, the rule of law and democracy.

Marcos Jr garnered more than 31 million votes in an unofficial vote count from Monday's polls in what's projected to be one of the strongest mandates for a Philippine president in decades.

His vice-presidential running mate, Sara Duterte, appeared to have also won by a landslide. Marcos Jr's electoral triumph is a victory for democracy and he promised to seek common ground across the political divide, his spokesman, Vic Rodriguez, said.

"To the world: Judge me not by my ancestors, but by my actions," Rodriguez quoted Marcos Jr. As saying. The separately elected president and vice president will take office on June 30 after the results are confirmed by Congress. With a sin-



gle, six-year term, they are poised to lead a Southeast Asian nation in dire need of economic recovery following two years of COVID-19 outbreaks and lockdowns.

They'll also inherit huge expectations for a way out of crushing poverty, gaping inequalities, ending Muslim and communist insurgencies and political divisions, which were only inflamed by the turbulent presidencies of their fathers.

Marcos Jr.'s key rivals have conceded defeat, including former boxing star Manny Pacquiao, Marcos' closest challenger, Vice President Leni Robredo, a human rights lawyer who ran on a promise of badly needed reforms, has only acknowledged his massive lead.

Senior Al Jazeera journalist killed during Israeli raid in West Bank

PTI ■ JERUSALEM

A veteran journalist working for Al Jazeera was killed on Wednesday during an Israeli operation in the West Bank city of Jenin, prompting the Palestinian Authority (PA) and the Qatar-based network to blame the Israeli Army for her death.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said that 51-year-old Shireen Abu Aqla, a Jerusalem-based journalist for Al Jazeera, was hit in the head by live fire.

A second reporter, Ali Samodi from Al-Quds newspaper sustained a gunshot wound to the back and is in stable condition, the ministry said. The Israeli military denied that its forces targeted the journalists and called for a "joint pathological analysis and investigation" to establish the truth. Israeli forces were operating in the Jenin refugee camp and several other areas of the West Bank to apprehend "terror suspects," the military said.

Pillen beats Trump's candidate in Nebraska Governor primary

AP ■ OMAHA

Jim Pillen, a hog farm owner and veterinarian, won Nebraska's crowded Republican primary for governor on Tuesday over a candidate endorsed by Donald Trump, dealing the former president his first loss of the midterm election season.

Pillen defeated eight challengers, including Charles Herbst, a Trump-backed businessman accused late in the campaign of groping young women, and Brett Lindstrom, a state senator and Omaha financial adviser who was generally viewed as a more moderate choice.

The results were a setback for Trump after a decisive win in last week's Ohio Republican Senate primary for his candidate, JD Vance. The former president has released hundreds of endorsements in races across the country, all in an effort to reshape the GOP and

lift his loyalists into office. Herbst's loss raises the stakes on other high-profile races this month in Pennsylvania and Georgia, where Trump has also intervened in campaigns.

Pillen will be a strong favourite in November's general election against his Democratic opponent, state Sen. Carol Blood, in the Republican-majority state.

Nebraska hasn't elected a Democrat as governor since 1994. Pillen was endorsed by many top GOP leaders in the state, including Gov. Pete Ricketts, former Gov. Kay Orr, and renowned former University of Nebraska football coach and congressman Tom Osborne. Ricketts, the incumbent, was prevented by term limit laws from running again.

In Nebraska, the allegations against Herbst, a longtime supporter of Trump's, didn't stop the former president from holding a rally with him earlier this month.

KOVALAM INVESTMENT AND TRADING CO. LIMITED				
Regd. Office : Premises Oswal Woollen Mills Limited, G.T. Road, Shergpur, Ludhiana-141003 PB CIN : L65910PB1981PLC023058, Ph. : +91-161-5069605 Website : www.cwmnihar.com kovalam, Email : kovalam@cwmnihar.com				
EXTRACT OF THE AUDITED FINANCIAL RESULTS FOR THE QUARTER AND FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 31.03.2022				
Sl. No.	PARTICULARS	Quarter Ended		Year Ended
		31.03.2022 Audited	31.03.2021 Audited	31.03.2022 Audited
1.	Total Income from Operations	6.30	85.52	210.89
2.	Net Profit/(Loss) from Ordinary Activities for the Period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	4.03	80.24	198.90
3.	Net Profit/(Loss) from Ordinary Activities for the Period before Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	4.03	80.24	198.90
4.	Net Profit/(Loss) from Ordinary Activities for the Period after Tax (after Exceptional and/or Extraordinary Items)	(0.85)	79.86	180.95
5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	2,448.67	(105.13)	7,376.43
6.	Equity Share Capital (Face Value of Rs.10/-)	222.39	222.39	222.39
7.	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserves as shown in the Balance sheet of previous year)			10,930.98
8.	Earning Per Share (EPS) Face value of Rs.10/- each. (for Continuing and discontinuing operations)			3,554.56
	Basic & Diluted :-	(0.04)	3.59	8.14
				15.69
Notes: 1. The above is the extract of the detailed format of audited Financial Results for the quarter and financial year ended March 31, 2022 filed with the Stock Exchange under regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosures Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of Audited Financial Results for the quarter and financial year ended March 31, 2022 are available on the Stock Exchange website i.e. www.bseindia.com and Company's website: http://www.cwmnihar.com kovalam investor.php 2. The Audited financial results of the Company for the Quarter and Financial Year ended 31st March, 2022 have been reviewed by the Audit Committee and subsequently approved by the Board of Directors in their meetings held on May 11, 2022. 3. The financial results are prepared in accordance with Indian Accounting Standards (IndAS) as prescribed under Section 133 of the Companies Act, 2013 and other recognised accounting practices and policies to the extent possible.				
For Kovalam Investment and Trading Co. Ltd. Place : Ludhiana Date : 11.05.2022				
Sd/- (Jai Karan Singh) Manager				

Nobel laureate and physicist Wilczek wins Templeton Prize

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Frank Wilczek, the Nobel Prize-winning theoretical physicist and author renowned for his boundary-pushing investigations into the fundamental laws of nature, was honored Wednesday with this year's prestigious Templeton Prize, awarded to individuals whose life's work embodies a fusion of science and spirituality.

In a statement, the John Templeton Foundation praised the 70-year-old Wilczek for transforming "our understanding of the forces that govern our universe," while also applying "the insights of his field to the great questions of meaning and purpose pondered by generations of religious thinkers."

Established in 1972 by the late philanthropist Sir John Templeton, the prize is one of the world's most lucrative individual awards, currently more than \$1.3 million.

Past winners include Jane Goodall, Mother Teresa, the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu. "It's a company I'm very glad to join," Wilczek told The Associated Press in an interview ahead of the announcement.

Zero Covid policy not sustainable, shift strategy, WHO tells China

PTI ■ BEIJING

China's much-touted dynamic zero COVID policy came under sharp criticism from the WHO which termed it unsustainable in view of the constantly changing behaviour of the coronavirus and called on Beijing to shift its strategy.

World Health Organisation (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said this on Tuesday while commenting on China's zero COVID policy under which many Chinese cities, including Shanghai and Beijing, were either under lockdown or semi-lockdown for prolonged periods.

"As we all know the virus is evolving, changing its behaviour and becoming more transmissible. With that changing



behaviour, changing your measures will be very important," Tedros said.

"When we talk about zero COVID strategy, we don't think it is sustainable considering the behaviour of the virus now what we anticipate in the future, especially when we have now the good knowledge and understanding of the virus," he told a media briefing in Geneva. With the availability of good tools, transiting into

another strategy will be very important, Tedros said in the recording of his press conference circulated by the WHO to the media.

"We have discussed about this issue with Chinese experts and we indicated that the approach will not be sustainable, considering the behaviour of the virus I think a shift will be very important," he said in strong comments critical of China's zero COVID policy pursued vigorously by Beijing under the directives of Chinese President Xi Jinping.

On Wednesday, China's National Health Commission reported 1,847 cases, mostly from Shanghai, the country's business hub with over 25 million population, which remained under lockdown for over a month.

Iran detains 2 Europeans as EU nuclear talk envoy visits

AP ■ TEHRAN

Iran's Intelligence Ministry says it has detained two Europeans as a European Union envoy visits the country over its stalled nuclear negotiations with world powers.

The ministry said in a statement Wednesday that the two planned to turn routine demands by various social and professional groups into "chaos, social disorder and instability." It did not identify nationality of those held. It comes as Enrique Mora visits on nuclear deal talks. They have broken down apparently over an American designation of Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard as a terror group.

Russia pummels port of Odesa in attempt to disrupt supplies

AP ■ ZAPORIZHZHIA

Russia pummeled the vital port of Odesa, Ukrainian officials said on Tuesday, in an apparent effort to disrupt supply lines and Western weapons shipments as Ukraine's foreign minister appeared to suggest the country could expand its war aims.

With the war now in its 11th week and Kyiv bogging down Russian forces and even staging a counteroffensive, Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba seemed to indicate that the country could go beyond merely pushing Russia back to areas it or its allies held on the day of the February 24 invasion.

The idea reflected Ukraine's ability to stymie a larger, better-armed Russian military, which has surprised many who had anticipated a much quicker end to the conflict.

One of the most dramatic examples of Ukraine's ability to prevent easy victories is in Mariupol, where Ukrainian fighters remained holed up at a steel plant, denying Russia's full control of the city.

The regiment defending the plant said Russian war-

planes attempted to storm the plant and continued bombarding it, striking 34 times in 24 hours.

In recent days, the United Nations and the Red Cross organised a rescue of what some officials said were the last civilians trapped at the plant.

But two officials said on Tuesday that about 100 were believed to still be in the complex's underground tunnels. Donetsk regional Gov. Pavlo Kyrylenko said those who remain are people "that the Russians have not selected" for evacuation.

Kyrylenko and Petro Andryushchenko, an adviser to Mariupol's mayor, did not say how they knew civilians were still in the complex - a warren of tunnels and bunkers spread over 11 square kilometers (4 square miles). Others said their statements were impossible to confirm.

Fighters with the Azov regiment released photos of their wounded comrades inside the plant, including some with amputated limbs.

They said the wounded were living in unsanitary conditions "with open wounds bandaged with non-sterile remnants of bandages, without the

necessary medication and even food."

In its statement on Telegram, the regiment appealed to the UN and Red Cross to evacuate the wounded servicemen to Ukrainian-controlled territories.

The photos could not be independently verified.

In another example of the grisly toll of the war, Ukrainian officials said they found the bodies of 44 civilians in the rubble of a building destroyed weeks ago in the northeastern city of Izium.

New UN figures, meanwhile, said that 14 million Ukrainians were forced from their homes by the end of April, including more than 5.9 million who have left the country.

In Washington, a top US intelligence official testified Tuesday that eight to 10 Russian generals have been killed in the war. Lt. Gen. Scott Berrier, who leads the Defense Intelligence Agency, told a Senate committee that because Russia lacks a noncommissioned officer corps, its generals have to go into combat zones and end up in dangerous positions.

Ukraine said Tuesday that



Russian forces fired seven missiles at Odesa a day earlier, hitting a shopping center and a warehouse in the country's largest port. One person was killed and five wounded, the military said.

Images showed a burning building and debris - including a tennis shoe - in a heap of destruction in the city on the

Black Sea. Mayor Gennady Trukhanov later visited the warehouse and said it "had nothing in common with military infrastructure or military objects."

Ukraine alleged at least some of the munitions used dated to the Soviet era, making them unreliable in targeting.

Ukrainian, British and U.S.

Officials say Russia is rapidly using up its stock of precision weapons, raising the risk of more imprecise rockets being used as the conflict grinds on.

Since President Vladimir Putin's forces failed to take Kyiv early in the war, his focus has shifted to the eastern industrial heartland of the Donbas - but one general has suggested

Moscow's aims also include cutting Ukraine's maritime access to both the Black and Azov seas.

That would also give it a swath of territory linking Russia to both the Crimean Peninsula, which it seized in 2014, and Transnistria, a pro-Moscow region of Moldova.

Even if Russia falls short of severing Ukraine from the coast - and it appears to lack the forces to do so - the continuing missile strikes on Odesa reflect the city's strategic importance. The Russian military has repeatedly targeted its airport and claimed it destroyed several batches of Western weapons.

Odesa is also a major gateway for grain shipments, and its blockade by Russia already threatens global food supplies.

Beyond that, the city is a cultural jewel, dear to Ukrainians and Russians alike, and targeting it carries symbolic significance.

With Russian forces struggling to gain ground in the Donbas, military analysts suggest that hitting Odesa might serve to stoke concern about southwestern Ukraine, thus forcing Kyiv to put more forces there.

That would pull them away from the eastern front as Ukraine's military stages counteroffensives near the northeastern city of Kharkiv, aiming to push the Russians back across the border there.

Kharkiv and the surrounding area has been under sustained Russian attack since the early in the war.

In recent weeks, grisly pictures testified to the horrors of those battles, with charred and mangled bodies strewn in one street.

Russian aircraft twice launched unguided missiles Tuesday at the Sumy area northeast of Kharkiv, according to the Ukrainian border guard service.

The region's governor said the missiles hit several residential buildings, but no one was killed.

The Chernihiv region, along the Ukrainian border with Belarus, was hit by mortars fired from Russian territory.

There was no word on casualties.

But Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Tuesday that the military was gradually pushing Russian troops away from Kharkiv.

House approves USD 40 billion in Ukraine aid, beefing up Biden request

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The House emphatically approved a fresh USD 40 billion Ukraine aid package on Tuesday as lawmakers beefed up President Joe Biden's initial request, signalling a magnified, bipartisan commitment to thwart Russian President Vladimir Putin's bloody three-month-old invasion.

The measure sailed to passage by a lopsided 368-57 margin, providing USD 7 billion more than Biden's request from April and dividing the increase evenly between defense and humanitarian programs.

The bill would give Ukraine military and economic assistance, help regional allies, replenish weapons the Pentagon has shipped overseas and provide USD 5 billion to address global food shortages caused by the war's crippling of Ukraine's normally robust production of many crops. The measure was backed by every voting Democrat and by nearly 3 out of 4 Republicans.

House debate reflected a perspective, shared broadly by both parties, that the US has even more at stake than standing by

Ukraine.

"The Ukrainian people, they need us, they are in desperate need of our support," said Rep. Rosa DeLauro, D-Conn., chair of the House Appropriations Committee. "Vladimir Putin and his cronies must be held responsible. This bill does that by protecting democracy, limiting Russian aggression and strengthening our own national security."

"As China, Iran and North Korea watch our response, we must show the world that America stands firm with its allies and will do what is necessary to protect our interests abroad," said Rep. Kay Granger of Texas, top Republican on that committee.

The new legislation would bring American support for the effort to nearly USD 54 billion, including the USD 13.6 billion in support Congress enacted in March. That's about USD 6 billion more than the US spent on all its foreign and military aid in 2019, according to a January report by the nonpartisan Congressional Research Service, which studies issues for lawmakers.

Ukrainians stop Russian gas at one hub, make gains in east



AP ■ ZAPORIZHZHIA

Ukraine stopped the flow of Russian natural gas on Wednesday through a hub that feeds European homes and stoves, while Kyiv's military claimed it made some gains in grinding battles near a key northeastern city.

In 11 weeks, the war has played out on battlefields in Ukrainian towns and cities but also in energy and financial markets, as Ukraine's allies in the West have sought to deprive Russia of money needed to fund the war with sanctions and energy embargoes.

The practical impact of Wednesday's gas cutoff for European households was not immediately clear: Ukraine's pipeline operator said it would switch supply to another hub, and an analyst said transit should not be affected.

But Russia's state-owned giant Gazprom indicated some falloff: It said it was sending gas supplies to Europe through Ukraine in the amount of 72 million cubic meters, apparently down 25% from the day before.

Preliminary flow data suggested higher rates moving through a second station in Ukrainian-controlled territory. Russian gas flows to Europe through other pipelines as well.

It was also not clear if

Russia would take any immediate hit, since it has long-term contracts and other ways of transporting gas.

But the move could hold symbolic significance as the first time Ukraine has disrupted the flow westward. It comes as the European Union has sought to reduce its dependence on Russian energy, phasing out its use of coal and considering doing the same for oil. Gas presents a more complicated problem, given both how much Europe uses and the technical difficulties in sourcing it elsewhere.

On the battlefield, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Ukraine's military had pushed Russian forces out of four villages near Kharkiv - the country's second largest city, and a key to Russia's offensive in the eastern Donbas.

After his forces failed to overrun the capital in the early days of the war, Russian President Vladimir Putin switched his focus to the region, which is Ukraine's industrial heartland and has also been the site of fighting between Moscow-backed separatists and Ukrainian troops for years.

Zelenskyy pays tribute to Leonid Kravchuk

AP ■ KYIV

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy ended his nightly video address by paying tribute to Leonid Kravchuk, the first president of an independent Ukraine, who died on Tuesday at age 88.

"He was not just a politician, and even not just a historical figure," Zelenskyy said late Tuesday. "He was a man who knew how to find wise words and to say them so that all Ukrainians would hear them."

This was particularly important in "difficult, crisis moments, when the future of the whole country may depend on the courage of one man," said Zelenskyy, whose own communication skills and decision to remain in Kyiv when it came under Russian attack have helped make him a strong wartime leader.

"Leonid Makarovich (Kravchuk) showed just such courage," Zelenskyy said.

"Perhaps it was because of his wisdom that he was especially cheerful.

He always valued life, every minute. But he always found much more than one minute to help sort things out and give advice. And I am personally grateful to him for that in particular."

उत्तराखण्ड सहकारी डेरी फैक्टरी लि०, मंगल पड़ाव, हल्द्वानी-नैनीताल
फोन / फ़ैक्स न०- 05946-255867, 255358 E-mail: ucdftd@gmail.com

अलंकालिक पुर्ननिविदा सू० सं० 3/आ. एजे. तथा पुन कार्ट/22-23 दि० 11 मई, 22

उत्तराखण्ड के विभिन्न दुग्ध संघों में रिक्त तकनीकी पदों पर आवश्यकतानुसार आउटसोर्स के माध्यम से योग्य कर्मिकों की भर्ती हेतु इस संस्था द्वारा पूर्व में निविदा सूचना सं० 27/आउटसोर्स एजेन्सी/दिनांक 29 अप्रैल, 2022 को निरस्त कर पुनः इच्छुक रजिस्टर्ड आउटसोर्स एजेन्सी जिन्हें डेरी क्षेत्र में उक्त कार्य करने का 02 वर्ष का अनुभव हो के चयन एवं आइसक्रीम ट्राइसाइकिल पुस कार्ट एवं ई-कार्ट क्रय हेतु टू-बिड सिस्टम के आधार पर सलबन्ध निविदा आमन्त्रित की जाती है। उक्त कार्य हेतु इच्छुक फर्म अपनी तकनीकी एवं वित्तीय निविदा दिनांक 23.05.2022 के अपरान्ह 5.00 बजे तक रजिस्टर्ड डाक/कोरियर से इस कार्यालय के पते पर उपलब्ध करारे। प्राप्त निविदाओं को दिनांक 24.05.2022 को कमेटी के सम्मक्ष खोला जाएगा। विज्ञापित के सन्दर्भ में विस्तृत विवरण तथा निविदा प्रपत्र संस्था की वेबसाइट www.ucdfaanchal.org पर उपलब्ध है।

दस्तावे: 499-01/यू.सी.डी.एफ./अलंकालिक पुर्ननिविदा/2022-23 दिनांक: 11 मई, 2022 **प्रबन्ध निदेशक**

NORTHERN RAILWAY
NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Name of work and its location 30-Elect-14-T-RI-21-22-E3
Electrical work in connection with provision Centralized Control and Command Center (C-4) at BRSQ Railway Station.

Approx cost of the works Rs. 109.39 lacs

Address of the office Sr. Divl Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.

Earnest Money Rs. 2,04,700.00

Date & time of submission of tender 02.06.2022, 12.00 Hrs.

Opening of tender 02.06.2022, 12.00 Hrs.

Website & notice board www.ireps.gov.in
& Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.

1109/2022

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निविदा निरस्तीकरण सूचना

ज्ञाप क्र. 3896 /40-388/सा.22 रायपुर, दिनांक 09/05/2022

इस कार्यालय द्वारा आमंत्रित निम्न निविदाओं को निरस्त किया जाता है :-

क्र.	एन.आई.टी. क्र./निविदा क्र.	दिनांक	निरस्त करने का कारण
1	275 / 95934	30.03.2022	1. निविदा में प्रतिस्पर्धा का अभाव है
2	279 / 95935	04.04.2022	2. निविदा में प्राप्त दर अधिक है।
3	281 / 95937	04.04.2022	

हस्ता /—
अधीक्षण अभियंता,
लोक निर्माण विभाग,
मंडल क्रमांक 1, रायपुर (छ.ग.)

Ro. No. - 91062/4
Ro. Date - 11/05/2022

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER PHE (WATER), ASSAM CUM
ADDITIONAL MISSION DIRECTOR, JAL JEEVAN MISSION, ASSAM HENGGRABARI, GUWAHATI - 781036
SHORT NOTICE INVITING REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL NO. 05 of 2022-23

On behalf of the Governor of Assam, the Chief Engineer, PHE (Water), Public Health Engineering Department cum Additional Mission Director, Jal Jeevan Mission, Assam invites bids on line through e-Procurement system against RFP No. 05 of 2022-23 in two envelop system from eligible agencies for the assignment **"EMPANELMENT OF MANUFACTURERS OR THEIR AUTHORISED DEALERS/DISTRIBUTORS FOR SUPPLY OF ISI MARKED BLEACHING POWDER GRADE-II TO BE PROCURED BY THE PANCHAYAT AUTHORITIES FOR MAINTENANCE OF DIFFERENT WATER SUPPLY SCHEMES IN DIFFERENT DISTRICTS UNDER JAL JEEVAN MISSION ASSAM UNDER THE PROVISION OF THE 15th FINANCE COMMISSION GRANT"** The detailed RFP Document,will be available in the web portal www.assamtenders.gov.in and can be viewed from 11.05.2022 up to 16.00 Hr. of 31.05.2022. Bids will be opened at 15:00 hrs. of 01.06.2022. Bid is to be submitted through online and in no case manual bid shall be entertained.

Sd/-
Chief Engineer(PHE), Water, Assam, Cum
Addl. Mission Director, JJM Assam
Hengrabari, Guwahati - 36.

Janasanyog/CF/51/1/22

AXIS BANK LTD.		PUBLIC NOTICE FOR E-AUCTION OF PLEDGED ASSETS BEING GOLD ORNAMENTS				
THE BORROWERS, IN SPECIFIC AND THE PUBLIC IN GENERAL ARE HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT PUBLIC AUCTION OF THE GOLD ORNAMENTS PLEDGE IN THE BELOW ACCOUNTS IS PROPOSED TO BE CONDUCTED BY THE AXIS BANK AT THE BELOW MENTIONED BRANCH. THE BELOW MENTIONED BORROWERS HAS AVAILED THE CREDIT FACILITY FROM THE AXIS BANK LIMITED AGAINST THE PLEDGE OF GOLD ORNAMENTS ("GOLD LOAN FACILITY") IN FAVOUR OF THE BANK TOWARDS THE SECURITY. THE DEMAND NOTICES WERE ISSUED TO THE BORROWERS/GUARANTORS CALLING UP THE BORROWERS/GUARANTORS TO PAY THEIR OUTSTANDING AMOUNT TOWARDS THE GOLD LOAN FACILITY. AS THE BORROWERS/GUARANTORS HAVE FAILED TO REPAY THE OUTSTANDING LOAN AMOUNT, THE BANK IS CONSTRAINED TO INVOKE THE PLEDGE AND PROPOSED TO CONDUCT AN E-AUCTION SALE OF PLEDGED GOLD ORNAMENTS MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED IN SCHEDULE OF PROPERTY HEREUNDER ON 23.05.2022 AT 12.30 PM TO 3.30 PM ON "AS IS WHERE IS", "AS IS WHAT IS", "WHATEVER THERE IS" AND "NO RECOURSE BASIS". DETAILS OF BORROWERS AND OUTSTANDING AMOUNT						
BRANCH NAME	CUSTOMER NAME	LOAN A/C NO.	AMOUNT OUTSTANDING	DATE OF RECALL	GROSS WEIGHT	
BRANCH NAME: FARIDABAD [HR]						
FARIDABAD [HR]	AMAR JEET	XXXXXXX000X5657	112112	22-JUN-21	28.50	
FARIDABAD [HR]	PREM WATI	XXXXXXX000X2088	32345	24-JAN-22	11.10	
BRANCH NAME: GHAZIABAD [UP]						
GHAZIABAD [UP]	MOHD SHAHID	XXXXXXX000X9929	186042	07-JAN-22	67.30	
BRANCH NAME: JYOTI NAGAR DEL DL						
JYOTI NAGAR DEL DL	AMIT KUMAR SHARMA	XXXXXXX000X8487	57528	24-MAR-22	5.00	
JYOTI NAGAR DEL DL	ROMA	XXXXXXX000X3938	387947	07-JAN-22	156.50	
BRANCH NAME: KALKAJI, NEW DELHI [DL]						
KALKAJI, NEW DELHI [DL]	MUKESH KUMAR	XXXXXXX000X5675	379265	24-MAR-22	35.80	
BRANCH NAME: LAJPAT NAGAR, NEW DELHI [DL]						
LAJPAT NAGAR, NEW DELHI [DL]	MANGAL RATAN KASHYAP	XXXXXXX000X1834	84515	30-MAR-22	14.00	
LAJPAT NAGAR, NEW DELHI [DL]	OM PRAKASH ROY	XXXXXXX000X6948	61374	15-FEB-21	20.20	
LAJPAT NAGAR, NEW DELHI [DL]	VIJAY CHOWDHARY	XXXXXXX000X9433	52143	07-JAN-22	20.10	
LAJPAT NAGAR, NEW DELHI [DL]	YOGENDER KUMAR	XXXXXXX000X1341	47748	23-NOV-21	26.20	
LAJPAT NAGAR, NEW DELHI [DL]	ANKUSH SHARMA	XXXXXXX000X7898	28579	30-MAR-22	7.50	
BRANCH NAME: MAYUR VIHAR, NEW DELHI [DL]						
MAYUR VIHAR, NEW DELHI [DL]	PRIVANKA YADAV	XXXXXXX000X5554	159680	30-MAR-22	19.40	
BRANCH NAME: MEERA BAGH, NEW DELHI [DL]						
MEERA BAGH, NEW DELHI [DL]	ARCHANA	XXXXXXX000X6925	150675	05-FEB-22	99.90	
BRANCH NAME: NEW FRIENDS COLONY,NEW DELHI [DL]						
NEW FRIENDS COLONY,NEW DELHI [DL]	MURLY KUMAR JHA	XXXXXXX000X8746	146222	05-FEB-22	52.70	
BRANCH NAME: NOIDA [UP]						
NOIDA [UP]	ABHAY RAJ MISHRA	XXXXXXX000X6156	158239	07-JAN-22	61.70	
NOIDA [UP]	RAM KUMAR CHOUDHARY	XXXXXXX000X6929	74299	24-JAN-22	25.00	
NOIDA [UP]	RAJNIKANT KUMAR	XXXXXXX000X0656	43263	24-MAR-22	15.20	
BRANCH NAME: PALAM VIHAR, GURGAON [HR]						
PALAM VIHAR, GURGAON [HR]	POONAM SINGH	XXXXXXX000X5377	89363	05-FEB-22	25.60	
BRANCH NAME: PALAM, DELHI [DL]						
PALAM, DELHI [DL]	GYAN SINGH RAWAT	XXXXXXX000X7350	53335	24-MAR-22	6.10	
BRANCH NAME: ROHINI, DELHI [DL]						
ROHINI, DELHI [DL]	RAGENDAR KUMAR AGARWAL	XXXXXXX000X0178	452152	23-NOV-21	193.30	
BRANCH NAME: SECTOR 14, GURGAON [HR]						
SECTOR 14, GURGAON [HR]	PINKI	XXXXXXX000X3994	319705	07-JAN-22	22.30	
SECTOR 14, GURGAON [HR]	VINOD KUMAR (16013565 M)	XXXXXXX000X6547	311498	05-FEB-22	103.80	
BRANCH NAME: SECTOR 16, FARIDABAD [HR]						
SECTOR 16, FARIDABAD [HR]	PRASENJIT DE	XXXXXXX000X6879	343015	29-JAN-22	9.80	
SECTOR 16, FARIDABAD [HR]	PARMOD GUPTA	XXXXXXX000X5808	65312	24-MAR-22	25.70	
SECTOR 16, FARIDABAD [HR]	NITIN JINDAL	XXXXXXX000X1618	206131	18-JAN-21	61.10	
SECTOR 16, FARIDABAD [HR]	ONKAR PRASAD SHARMA	XXXXXXX000X7473	164336	30-MAR-22	55.20	
SECTOR 16, FARIDABAD [HR]	NITIN JINDAL	XXXXXXX000X8953	72051	12-AUG-21	30.30	
SECTOR 16, FARIDABAD [HR]	ONKAR PRASAD SHARMA	XXXXXXX000X6848	50912	30-MAR-22	7.30	
BRANCH NAME:						
SHALIMAR BAGH, DELHI [DL]	MANNU KUMAR	XXXXXXX000X0264	63924	07-JAN-22	23.90	
BRANCH NAME: SHALIMAR BAGH, DELHI [DL]						
SWASTHYA VIHAR, NEW DELHI [DL]	HOSHIYAR SINGH	XXXXXXX000X8697	822507	07-JAN-22	101.30	
BRANCH NAME: TILAK NAGAR, DELHI [DL]						
TILAK NAGAR, DELHI [DL]	MANISH MALHOTRA	XXXXXXX000X7572	373109	24-MAR-22	24.10	
TILAK NAGAR, DELHI [DL]	VIJAY SINGH	XXXXXXX000X6418	616371	24-MAR-22	29.00	
TILAK NAGAR, DELHI [DL]	RUDRADEV PANDEY	XXXXXXX000X0412	68887	22-JUN-21	24.10	
TILAK NAGAR, DELHI [DL]	VIJAY BABU	XXXXXXX000X0374	50694	03-DEC-21	21.50	
BRANCH NAME: VAISHALI, GHAZIABAD [UP]						
VAISHALI, GHAZIABAD [UP]	SARIKA SINGH	XXXXXXX000X1463	489800	30-MAR-22	4.30	
VAISHALI, GHAZIABAD [UP]	SARIKA SINGH	XXXXXXX000X04707	394800	30-MAR-22	41.20	
VAISHALI, GHAZIABAD [UP]	DEEPAK TVAGI	XXXXXXX000X6531	338248	07-JAN-22	120.40	
VAISHALI, GHAZIABAD [UP]	PRAMENDRA SINGH	XXXXXXX000X0622	412255	22-JUN-21	108.20	
VAISHALI, GHAZIABAD [UP]	SARIKA SINGH	XXXXXXX000X7595	310913	07-MAY-21	102.40	
VAISHALI, GHAZIABAD [UP]	JITENDRA KUMAR	XXXXXXX000X6301	217496	05-FEB-22	75.60	
VAISHALI, GHAZIABAD [UP]	VISHAL SAGAR	XXXXXXX000X9862	64009	30-MAR-22	5.00	
VAISHALI, GHAZIABAD [UP]	ADITYA GANJOO	XXXXXXX000X7864	44723	22-JUN-21	14.00	
VAISHALI, GHAZIABAD [UP]	MANSI PANCHAL	XXXXXXX000X8455	40483	24-JAN-22	16.40	
BRANCH NAME: VIKASPURI, NEW DELHI [DL]						
VIKASPURI, NEW DELHI [DL]	VINIT YADAV	XXXXXXX000X5046	80992	18-FEB-22	4.70	
AXIS BANK LTD. HAS THE AUTHORITY TO REMOVE ACCOUNT/CHANGE THE AUCTION DATE WITHOUT ANY PRIOR NOTICE. AUCTION WILL BE HELD ONLINE HTTPS://GOLD.SAML.IN BETWEEN 12.30 PM TO 3.30 PM . FOR DETAILED TERMS AND CONDITIONS, PLEASE LOG INTO GIVEN WEBSITE HTTPS://GOLD.SAML.IN						
PLACE: DELHI DATE: 12-05-2022				SD/-, AUTHORIZED OFFICER AXIS BANK LTD.		

Quoting PAN, Aadhaar must to deposit, withdraw ₹20 L

New Delhi: The Government has made it mandatory to quote either PAN or Aadhaar for depositing or withdrawing over ₹20 lakh in a financial year or opening of a current account.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT), in a notification, said furnishing the Permanent Account Number (PAN) or biometric Aadhaar will be mandatory for such high-value deposits or withdrawals from banks in a financial year, or opening of a current account or cash credit account with a bank or post office.

Commenting on the move, AKM Global Tax Partner Sandeep Sehgal said this shall bring in more transparency to financial transactions where banks, post offices and co-operative societies would be required to report the transactions of deposits and withdrawals aggregating to Rs 20 lakh or more in a financial year.

“Further, the mandatory condition of obtaining PAN for deposit and even for with-



drawals would help the government in tracing the movement of cash in the system. All in all, this would tighten the entire process of suspicious cash deposits and withdrawals with the already present TDS provision u/s 194N under the Income-tax Act, 1961,” Sehgal said.

Currently, PAN and Aadhaar are interchangeable for income tax purpose.

An assessee needs to mention his/her PAN in all communications with the I-T department and while entering into specified financial transactions.

However, there can be sit-

uations where a person entering into high-value transactions, such as purchase of foreign currency or huge withdrawal from banks, does not possess a PAN.

The Finance Act, 2019, has provided for interchangeability of PAN with Aadhaar.

It has been provided that every person who is required to furnish or quote his PAN under the Income Tax Act, and who has not been allotted a PAN but possesses the Aadhaar number, may furnish the biometric ID in lieu of the PAN.

Nangia & Co LLP Partner Shailesh Kumar said once such person quotes the PAN it will be easier for the tax authorities to track the transactions.

“The government has constantly been striving to increase its taxpayer base to be able to bring such people under the tax net who may be entering into large transactions but do not hold a PAN,” Kumar said.

It may eventually become difficult where a person tries to avoid filing return of income, he added. **PTI**

Markets give up; Sensex falls 276 points

Mumbai: Benchmark indices pared early gains and declined for the fourth day running on Wednesday, with the Sensex falling 276.46 points amid selling in index majors Infosys and Reliance Industries.

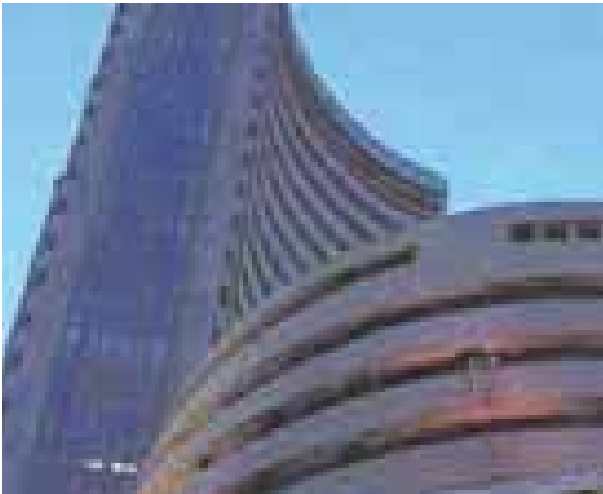
Foreign institutional investors remaining in selling mode and jump in crude prices also weighed on sentiment.

Despite a firm start, the 30-share BSE Sensex failed to carry forward the momentum and ended at 54,088.39, lower by 276.46 points or 0.51 per cent. During the day, it tumbled 845.55 points or 1.55 per cent to 53,519.30.

Similarly, the NSE Nifty dipped 72.95 points or 0.45 per cent to settle at 16,167.10.

“Indices displayed extreme volatility today ahead of CPI and IIP data this week. The market breadth was very weak with several stocks in the broader market taking a big knock...,” said S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP Securities.

Among the Sensex firms, Larsen & Toubro, Bajaj Finserv, NTPC, Bajaj Finance, Maruti, PowerGrid, Infosys and ITC were among the prominent laggards.



In contrast, Axis Bank, IndusInd Bank, HDFC, ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, HDFC Bank and Bharti Airtel were among the gainers.

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

Equity markets in Europe were quoting higher in the afternoon session. Stock exchanges in the US had ended mostly higher on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, international

oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 3.12 per cent to 105.7 per barrel. Foreign institutional investors offloaded shares worth a net Rs 3,960.59 crore on Tuesday, according to stock exchange data.

“Nifty continues to be in the negative for the fourth consecutive session while Asian markets are mixed and European markets are up ahead of inflation report from the US,” said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities. **PTI**

Investors poorer by over ₹13.32 lakh crore in four days as markets sell off

New Delhi: A four-day decline in stocks has wiped out over Rs 13.32 lakh crore from the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms.

Sliding for the fourth straight session, the BSE Sensex shed 276.46 points or 0.51 per cent to close at 54,088.39 on Wednesday.

In four days, the benchmark has lost 1,613.84 points or 2.89 per cent.

Tracking the weak trend in equities, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms tanked Rs 13,32,898.99 crore in four sessions to stand at Rs 2,46,31,990.38 crore.

“Lack of fresh positive cues is forcing investors to dump equities and switch to safer havens like gold, etc. Although the larger texture of the market is still on the bearish side, we could see a sharp pullback rally in the near future due to markets being in an oversold

territory,” said Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Equity Research (Retail), Kotak Securities Ltd.

Larsen & Toubro, Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Finance, PowerGrid, NTPC, Infosys and Maruti were among the prominent laggards in the Sensex pack on Wednesday.

In contrast, Axis Bank, IndusInd Bank, HDFC Bank and Bharti Airtel were among the gainers. Meanwhile, international oil benchmark Brent crude jumped 3.05 per cent to USD 105.7 per barrel. Foreign institutional investors offloaded shares worth a net Rs 3,960.59 crore. **PTI**

BSE reports two fold Q4 net profit to ₹71.52 cr in FY-2022

New Delhi: Leading stock exchange BSE on Wednesday reported an over two-fold jump in net profit to Rs 71.52 crore for the three months to March 2022.

In comparison, the exchange had posted a net profit of Rs 31.75 crore in the same quarter of the preceding fiscal, BSE said in a regulatory filing to the NSE.

The exchange's revenue from operations rose to Rs 204.59 crore in the period under review from Rs 152.18 crore in the quarter ended March 2021. The exchange has declared a final dividend of Rs 13.5 per equity share of Rs 2 each for FY 2021-22 on expanded equity capital post issue of bonus shares in March 2022.

“As seen over the last few years, BSE has operated with a strategy to build products and markets for institutions and investors, in a manner that enables us to grow in all economic conditions, so that BSE is truly an all-weather growth story, something that does not exist in a single market or asset class alone,” Ashishkumar Chauhan, MD and CEO of the exchange, said. **PTI**

Coal India arm NCL plans capex of ₹1,900 cr in FY-23

New Delhi: Coal India-arm Northern Coalfields Ltd (NCL) on Wednesday said it has planned a capital expenditure of Rs 1,900 crore in the current financial year.

To give a boost to infrastructure, most of the capex in the current financial year would be spent on the procurement of heavy earth moving machines (HEMMs), setting up coal handling plants and land acquisition, NCL CMD Bholu Singh said.

The company had scaled up its capex to Rs 1,750 crore in FY22, up 7 per cent from the set target of Rs 1,640 crore.

NCL is working on nine first mile connectivity (FMC) projects with an investment of Rs 3,174 crore. These projects will eliminate road transportation of coal with mechanised loading and enable the company to promote sustainable mining practices.

Two projects have already



been commissioned and four others will be commissioned this year. Once completed, these FMC projects will help transport additional 55 million tonnes (MT) of coal through eco-friendly mode.

The company produced 10.81 MT of coal in April, registering a 26 per cent increase in April 2021. NCL produced 122.43 MT of coal while its off-take was at 125.66 MT in the last fiscal.

NCL contributes 20 per cent to Coal India's total production. Coal India accounts for over 80 per cent of the domestic coal output. **PTI**

Tirupur Exporters Association urges SBI to help MSMEs tide out liquidity crisis

Coimbatore: The Tirupur Exporters Association (TEA) on Wednesday requested public sector State Bank India (SBI) to help MSMEs tide over the liquidity crisis, as the knitwear sector is passing through a difficult situation due to an unprecedented surge in cotton prices that have more than doubled.

The subsequent hike in yarn prices have also doubled compared to last year, which ultimately resulted in the Tirupur knitwear garment sector and stakeholder working units going into confusion and seeking support from the government as well as the banks to pull them out of the crisis, TEA President Raja M Shanmugham said in a letter to SBI Chairman Dinesh Kumar Khara.

Thanking the bank for continuously providing support to the Tirupur knitwear sector, comprising 95 per cent of MSMEs, Shanmugham said 18

months back, the unit could buy one kg of yarn for Rs 200 whereas now the same amount fetches only 400 grams of yarn.

This revealed how the knitwear exporting MSMEs are now undergoing financial stress in the operational front and the major concern is that liquidity has been drained off from its sanctioned limits, he said.

Despite all of this, it is possible for MSMEs to execute only 40 per cent of its own capacity, Shanmugham said.

We would like to drive home the point that price escalation cannot be easily equated with price realisation as it takes time and ultimately all MSMEs are facing stress, he pointed out.

The issue was highlighted to Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, who was in Coimbatore two days ago and the exporters' body made a detailed representation, he said. **PTI**

IGIA first airport to get two state-of-the art MRO hangars

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL) on Wednesday said that Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport has become the first airport in India, which got two state-of-the-art maintenance, repair, and overhaul (MRO) hangars for the General Aviation Terminal. Each hangar has approximately 2,000 square meter floor space and it can accommodate six to eight midsize GA aircraft. The new hangars will not only help save time and money for the operators but also reduce environmental pollution to a large extent.

According to the statement released by DIAL, the hangars are fully operational since April 2022, and these hangars serve the business jets and general aviation (GA) aircraft.

Earlier GA aircraft and business jets had to burn fuel while traveling an 8-10 km



stretch to undergo maintenance at hangars near Terminal-1 (T-1). These aircraft also had to cross one active runway while reaching the old hangars near T-1 often leading to wastage of time and fuel. The old hangars at T-1 have already been dismantled.

These hangars also have around 4,600 sq mt of the front maintenance holding area, which is available to accommodate aircraft needing minor maintenance. Additionally, these hangars are

equipped with necessary workshops such as battery-shop, aviation workshops, general workshops, etc., which are essential to support aircraft maintenance-related works under one roof.

One of the hangars is equipped with a lounge facility to facilitate the transit crew. Both the hangars have received statutory approvals for performing aircraft maintenance activity from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).

Kalyan Jewellers Q4 consolidated PAT down 2.47% at ₹72.04 cr

Mumbai: Jewellery retailer Kalyan Jewellers on Wednesday reported a 2.47 per cent decline in consolidated profit after tax (PAT) during the quarter ended March 31, at Rs 72.04 crore.

The company's PAT stood at Rs 73.87 crore during the corresponding quarter of 2020-21, Kalyan Jewellers said in a regulatory filing.

Consolidated revenue from operations of the company for the quarter under review declined by 6.54 per cent to Rs 2,857 crore, as against Rs 3,057 crore in the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

For the full 2021-22, the company posted a consolidated PAT of Rs 224.03 crore. It had a loss of Rs 6.07 crore in FY21. Consolidated revenue from operations of the company went up by 26.18 per cent. **PTI**

Rupee rises by 10 paise to close at 77.24 against US dollar

Mumbai: The rupee appreciated further by 10 paise to settle at 77.24 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday as the American currency retreated from its 20-year high levels.

At the interbank forex market, the domestic unit opened at 77.24 against the US dollar. It moved in a range of 77.17 to 77.31 during the day trade. The rupee finally closed at 77.24, registering a rise of 10 paise over its previous close. On Tuesday, the rupee had settled at 77.34 against the American currency.

“Rupee consolidated in a narrow range after falling to fresh all-time lows earlier this week. On the domestic front, market participants remained cautious ahead of the inflation number that will be released on Thursday.

BYD India ties up with 3 companies to set up charging infra for its EVs

New Delhi: Automobile manufacturer BYD India on Wednesday said it has partnered with three companies -- Chargezone, Volttic and Indipro -- for setting up charging infrastructure for its EVs in India.

This tie-up is to address the charging needs of the company's electric multi-purpose vehicle, e6 across multiple cities and major highways in the country, the company said in a statement.

“By enabling easy and convenient charging stations across major cities and highways, we will be supporting our customers in a smooth and happy electric driving experience,” BYD India Senior Vice President - Electric Passenger Vehicle Business, Sanjay Gopalakrishnan said.

Stating that the company will keep expanding the charging networks together with its partners, he said, “This is a key step towards strengthening our EV journey in the country. Chargezone, Volttic and Indipro are key players in electric vehicle charging infrastructure in India.”

Under the partnership, Chargezone, with its over 650 EV charging stations across more than 25 cities will provide its public charging network on National Highways to BYD India e6 customers.

While Volttic EV Charging with over 300 charging points across India will be a vital partner of BYD, IndiPro will also provide charging facilities across India to e6 customers through their charging network, the company said. **PTI**

Mahindra Electric Mobility moves 2 divisions to Bengaluru

Mumbai: Mahindra Electric Mobility on Wednesday said it has moved the offices of its two divisions, Last Mile Mobility (LMM) and EV Technology Centre (EVTEC), to new premises at technology hub in Bengaluru.

The Mahindra Group's electric vehicle arm also said that it will continue to have a fully functional office at Kandivali suburb in Mumbai while the Innovation Centre as well as the Bomassandra plant staff will continue to operate from their respective locations in Bengaluru.

The new office, with more than 500 people's seating capacity, is in line with Mahindra Electric Mobility Ltd (MEML)'s expansion strategy and creating an exciting workspace for its employees, the company said.



The new office will be able to house the entire workforce of EVTEC and certain functions of LMM, the company said, adding, from April 1, employees have started the work-from-office format, following necessary COVID-19 protocols, the company said. **PTI**

Tata Tech ink ties with Assam Govt to transform polytechnics, ITIs into centres of excellence

New Delhi: Global engineering and product development digital services firm Tata Technologies Ltd on Wednesday said it has entered into a collaboration with the Assam government to transform 34 state polytechnics and 43 Industrial Training Institutes (ITIs) into futuristic Centres of Excellence (CoEs) entailing an investment of about Rs 2,390 crore.

The company has signed a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) with the Assam government for a period of 10 years for the purpose, Tata Technologies said in a statement. Post upgradation, these COEs will not only cater to the

advanced skill requirements of students aligned to the key industries in Assam, but also act as a technology and industrial hub for MSMEs and support entrepreneurship.

Commenting on the collaboration, Tata Technologies Chairman Subramanian Ramadorai said technology is evolving rapidly and there is huge shortage of skilled manpower. To keep pace with these evolving technological trends, and lateral shift towards Industry 4.0-powered smart business operations, it is imperative to train the youth on latest technologies by upgrading the state polytechnics and ITIs in the country. **PTI**

Sebi notifies rules to strengthen regulatory framework for CIS

New Delhi: To strengthen the regulatory framework for collective investment schemes, markets regulator Sebi has enhanced the net worth criteria and track record requirements for entities managing such schemes.

Also, the regulator has mandated a minimum of 20 investors and a subscription amount of at least Rs 20 crore for each Collective Investment Scheme (CIS), according to a notification on Tuesday.

Currently, CIS rules do not mandate minimum number of investors, maximum holding of a single investor or minimum subscription amount.

In addition, the regulator has put a cap on cross-share-

holding in Collective Investment Management Company (CIMC) to 10 per cent to avoid conflict of interest. To give this effect, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has amended CIS regulations. The rules, first notified in 1999, have not been reviewed since then.

The move comes after the board of Sebi approved a proposal in this regard in its board meeting in March.

The new rule is aimed at strengthening the regulatory framework for collective investment schemes as well as empower the CIMCs to effectively discharge their responsibilities towards the investors. **PTI**

Tata Motors launches Nexon EV MAX with price starting at ₹17.74 lakh

New Delhi: Tata Motors on Wednesday expanded its electric vehicle range in the country with the launch of Nexon EV MAX, priced between Rs 17.74-19.24 lakh (ex-showroom).

Equipped with a 40.5 kWh lithium-ion battery pack, the Nexon EV Max offers 33 per cent higher battery capacity than the Nexon EV, delivering ARAI certified range of 437 km (under standard testing conditions), ensuring uninterrupted inter-city travel.

ARAI refers to Automotive Research Association of India.

The model produces 105 kW (143 PS) of power and delivers a torque of 250 Nm, resulting in 0 to 100 sprint times in under 9 seconds.

It comes in two trims -- the Nexon EV Max XZ+ and Nexon EV Max XZ+ Lux -- and features 30 new additional safety and comfort features like seat ventilation for front passengers, air purifier, wireless smartphone charging, auto-dimming IRVM and cruise control.

The Max XZ+ trim with 3.3 kW charger is



priced at Rs 17.74 lakh while the same trim with 7.2 kW fast charger is tagged at Rs 18.24 lakh. The XZ+ Lux trim with 3.3 kW charger is tagged at Rs 18.74 lakh while the same variant with 7.2 kW charger is priced at Rs 19.24 lakh.

The 7.2 kW AC fast charger can be installed either at home or at the workplace, which helps in reducing charging time to 6.5 hours. **PTI**

Immense potential to increase in paper production: Minister

Greater Noida: Paper production in the country needs to be augmented by 7-8 times for domestic industry to meet the surging demand and to make India Aatmanirbhar. Currently India accounts for only 4-5 per cent of global production of paper. Paper consumption in India needs to be promoted in view of the employment it generates,” said Dr Bhagwat Karad, Union Minister of State for Finance at the inauguration of Paperex 2022, one of the largest paper industry events in the world.



the pioneer

INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE 2022

11

We knew it was a tricky and challenging pitch, we bowled really well. Restricting a team under 150 on any pitch is commendable and the bowlers did their job

— KL RAHUL

MUST WIN GAME FOR CSK ONWARDS AND UPWARDS



PTI ■ MUMBAI

Their IPL play-off hopes hanging by a thread, Chennai Super Kings will face their fiercest rivals, a down and out Mumbai Indians, in their bid to stay afloat in the competition here on Thursday.

This has been a season to forget for both Mumbai and CSK. While Mumbai will be playing for pride, CSK still have an outside chance to progress if they win their remaining games and other results go their way.

CSK will be eliminated if they lose to Mumbai Indians at the Wankhede Stadium.

The M S Dhoni-led side would take confidence from their 91-run win over Delhi Capitals in their last outing and hope the batters build on their

Chennai vs Mumbai
Live from 7:30pm IST
STAR SPORTS 1 NETWORK

brilliant showing.

Opener Devon Conway is in sublime form and has hit three back-to-back half-centuries. He tore apart the Delhi Capitals attack with his whirlwind 87 and would need to provide an aggressive start with fellow opener Ruturaj Gaikwad, who too has found form but can be more consistent.

The season got worse for Ravindra Jadeja who was left out for the last game against Delhi due to an injury after handing back the captaincy to Dhoni. It remains to be seen if he is back in action against Mumbai.

If CSK have to post a big score, like they did against

DC, all batters will have to fire in unison.

Last time when the two sides met, a vintage Dhoni, 'the best finisher' sealed the game on the last ball of the game.

CSK bowlers were right on the money when they bundled DC for 117. Tweaker Moeen Ali picked three wickets, while young pacers Mukesh Choudhary and Simarjeet Singh also fared well.

The trio will need to once again deliver along with key spinner Maheesh Theekshana, whose four overs can also change the game's fate. Another important cog is Bravo, who has the knack of breaking partnerships.

For Mumbai, all the remaining games are 'dead rubbers' and they would need to give a 'complete performance' with an improved batting show.

Skipper Rohit Sharma (200 runs) will need to lead from the front and Ishan Kishan (321 runs) can build on his half-century in the last game. MI's middle order batters, which crumbled against KKR, will also need to get the act right.

With Suryakumar Yadav ruled out, the likes of Tilak Varma, Tim David, Ramandeep Singh and Kieron Pollard, who has been a failure, will need to take greater responsibility.

In bowling, Bumrah found his mojo back and clinched a maiden five-wicket haul in IPL history. But he needs support from other bowlers — Daniel Sams, Riley Meredith and Kumar Kartikeya Singh, who will need to contain the CSK batters.

While Mumbai would eye revenge, for Chennai the game is about 'survival'.

► pointstable

PO.	TEAM	M	W	L	NR	Pts	NRR
1.	GT	12	9	3	0	18	0.376
2.	LSG	12	8	4	0	16	0.385
3.	RR	12	7	5	0	14	0.228
4.	RCB	12	7	5	0	14	-0.115
5.	DC	12	6	6	0	12	0.210
6.	SRH	11	5	6	0	10	-0.031
7.	KKR	12	5	7	0	10	-0.057
8.	PBKS	11	5	6	0	10	-0.231
9.	CSK	11	4	7	0	8	0.028
10.	MI	11	2	9	0	4	-0.894

► boundarymeter

4s	1601
6s	830

PTI ■ NAVI SSMUMBAI

Riding on Mitchell Marsh's all-round heroics, Delhi Capitals got their act together in the nick of time to upstage Rajasthan Royals by eight wickets and keep their IPL playoffs hopes alive here on Wednesday.

After their bowlers restricted RR to 160 for six, Marsh's 62-ball 89 and David Warner's unbeaten 52 off 41 balls helped the Capitals complete the task with 11 balls to spare for their sixth win of the season that saw the team suffer setbacks both on and off the field, including multiple COVID-19 cases in its camp.

With the ball, Marsh had picked up the two important wickets of Yashasvi Jaiswal (19) and Ravichandran Ashwin (50). Then, he smashed seven sixes and five fours to emerge as the night's hero.

DC lost Srikanth Bharat in only the second ball of their innings to Trent Boult, who conceded just one run in the first over. That was followed by a maiden over by Prasidh Krishna and then the Kiwi speedster bowled



another economical over as DC struggled to force the pace early on, reaching five for one in three overs.

The introduction of Ashwin saw Marsh launching the off-spinner over long-off for a six. Marsh did the same to Prasidh, hitting him for a maximum over fine-leg to give the much-needed impetus to the DC innings.

There was more to come from the willow of Marsh as he smashed Kuldeep Sen for two sixes and a similar treatment was given to Ashwin as the ball, despite Jos Buttler's effort in the deep, sailed over long-on for a maximum, bringing up the Australian all-rounder's fifty.

By the time the 143-run stand was broken by Yuzvendra Chahal with the

wicket of Marsh, the match was almost in DC's bag.

Earlier, striking at better than most of the top batters, premier off-spinner Ashwin recorded his first half-century in T20 cricket. Ashwin made a 38-ball 50, while Devdutt Padikkal struck 48 in 30 deliveries after RR were asked to bat first.

The Capitals were off to fine start as left-arm pacer Chetan Sakariya (2/23), playing the must-win game in place of Khaleel Ahmed, dismissed RR's top batter Jos Buttler (7) cheaply in the third over.

Looking to play it over the infield, Buttler hit a fairly full-length delivery straight to Shardul Thakur.

With Buttler gone early, DC were

on top and looked to assert their dominance at the DY Patel Sports Complex. They gave very little away and kept RR to 43 for one in the six power play overs.

This was after DC skipper Rishabh Pant decided against a review despite a strong appeal by Sakariya for a caught behind in the first over. Replays confirmed that Pant was right in not opting for a review.

Coming off his blazing half-century in the previous game, Yashasvi Jaiswal produced a lovely on-drive off Anrich Nortje (2/39) and then smashed the South African pacer for a six over third man.

Jaiswal (19) impressed again, but not for long as Mitchell Marsh (2/25) cramped him up for room with a bouncer, paving the way for the left-handed Devdutt Padikkal to join Ashwin in the middle.

Looking confident after having hitting a few boundaries, including two maximums and a ramp shot over keeper Pant, Ashwin went along nicely and brought up his half-century in 38 balls.

However, the premier off-spinner got out soon after reaching the landmark with Marsh coming back into the attack to give DC the breakthrough.

Meanwhile, Padikkal smashed Axar Patel for two sixes — one over deep backyard point and another over long-on — as RR looked to force the pace.

Padikkal then scored two successive fours off Marsh, even as Nortje had RR skipper Sanju Samson (6) caught by Shardul Thakur at mid-wicket. As the DC players rejoiced, Kuldeep Yadav was seen walking off the ground holding his left shoulder, having hurt himself while going for a catch in the previous over.

Riyan Parag hit Nortje for a massive six before Sakariya cut short his brief stay in the middle, and Padikkal too followed suit, thanks to brilliant catch running by substitute fielder Kamlesh Nagarkoti.

Chennai's all-rounder Jadeja out off IPL due to bruised rib ‘Hopefully, AB will be back at RCB next year’

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Senior India and Chennai Super Kings all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja was on Wednesday ruled out of the remainder of the IPL due to a rib injury, days after quitting the leadership role.

"Ravindra Jadeja won't be playing CSK's next two games as he has suffered a rib cage injury. He has already gone home," CSK CEO Kasi Viswanathan told PTI.

Jadeja apparently didn't play the match against Delhi Capitals due to an upper body injury, sustained during an earlier match against the RCB.

Jadeja, who captained CSK in the first eight games, had a forgettable season as all he could manage was just 116 runs at an average of 20 in 10 games and only five wickets at an economy rate of



7.51. While the official reason being given for Jadeja's unavailability is injury, sources tracking developments in the CSK camp claimed that the all-rounder has been dropped.

"It seems there is more to it. Jadeja has also unfollowed CSK on Instagram," an IPL source told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Virat Kohli is hopeful that his friend and South African superstar AB de Villiers will be back at the Royal Challengers Bangalore in a new role next year.

De Villiers had been a big part of RCB family before he retired from all forms of cricket last year.

"I miss him a lot. I talk to him regularly. He was in the US recently with his family watching golf... He is keenly observing RCB and hopefully he will be here next year in some capacity," Kohli said during a light-hearted chat posted on RCB's Twitter handle.

Kohli is enduring one of the worst phases of his career, having scored 216 runs in 12 matches in the IPL with just one fifty.



He has also been dismissed for three golden ducks this season.

"It has never happened to me ever in my career I think, so I just smiled. I felt like I have seen everything that the game has to show," Kohli said.

His poor form has raised concerns with Ian Bishop pointing out Kohli's inability to score fluently in the IPL this season. The former West Indies pacer also said that it was a matter of concern that he is getting out to different types of bowlers.

However, Kohli said he doesn't pay heed to opinions and keeps critics at bay.

"They can't be in my shoes, they can't feel what I feel, they can't live those moment," the former India skipper said.

"You said how you cut the noise, you either mute the TV or don't pay attention to what people are saying and I do both of these things."

With Kohli stepping down from RCB captaincy, Faf du Plessis took over the reins and Kohli said he always enjoyed mutual respect for each other.

"Me and faf have always gotten along really well even before he was captain of South Africa. Faf is a guy who is sure of himself and he has full authority on the field," he said.

"He tells me sometimes, if I mention things, that he doesn't want to do that, which I respect a lot. That only makes you gain respect for the person you are playing under."

Can't afford to lose my line & length: Rashid



AGENCIES ■ PUNE

Gujarat Titans spinner Rashid Khan, whose four-wicket haul helped his side clinch victory against Lucknow Super Giants, said that he cannot afford to lose his line and length.

Gujarat Titans became the first team to qualify for Play-offs this season as they beat Lucknow Super Giants by 62 runs at MCA Stadium in Pune. GT bowled out LSG for 82 in just 13.5 overs in a low-scoring match in which they had scored 144/4 in 20 overs.

"Those couple of games which did not go well was all about my line and length. That was something I was missing in those games. The pace I bowl and action I have, I cannot afford to lose my line and length, it was about focusing on hitting the right area. The wicket was helping today with

'Had bit of back issues', reveals Gill

PTI ■ PUNE

After playing the crucial knock of 63 runs against Lucknow Super Giants, Gujarat Titans batter Shubman Gill revealed that he was having some problems with his back during the clash. "Always pleasing when you're there till the end and finish the game for your team. I didn't expect the ball to seam as much at the start.

bounce and turn, but overall it was about bowling in the right areas. They (the pacers) have given us a platform where we can come and put the pressure," said Rashid Khan in a post-match presentation.

Rashid further said that the team's entire focus will now be on playing good cricket and

enjoying themselves at the moment. "In a chase like 140-145 you need to have a good powerplay and the seamers gave us that. This is a very crucial part of the competition, it is all about the process whether we win or lose, we should keep the same process."

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Seniors told me not to worry about price-tag: Ishan

PTI ■ MUMBAI

High price-tag does create an unimaginable pressure and that's the reason why IPL auction's costliest buy Ishan Kishan was advised by current India captain Rohit Sharma and his predecessor Virat Kohli not to lose sleep over something which is not under his control.

Kishan agreed that price-tag pressure does play on one's mind for a first few days but his Team Indian seniors have specifically told him not to fret too much on the issue.

"Price tag pressure will remain for a few days but then one feels the pressure then it's always good to speak to the seniors and share your worries," Ishan said. "So many seniors said I should not think about the price tag, because this is not something I have asked for."

at August 2023 as a window to reschedule the Tests, but because these matches are not part of the ongoing World Test Championship cycle, they agreed on them being replaced by white-ball matches.

South Africa will also travel to Australia in late 2022 for their first festive Test series since 2008, with three matches due to be played in Brisbane, Melbourne and Sydney.

Want to have focus and concentration levels of Pujara, says Mohd Rizwan

PTI ■ LONDON

Pakistan wicketkeeper-batter Mohammad Rizwan wishes to have focus and concentration levels of his County teammate Cheteshwar Pujara as he looks to improve as a red-ball cricketer.

Pujara has made a strong case for a Test comeback with two hundreds and as many double hundreds in his campaign for Sussex in County Championship Division 2.

The Indo-Pak pairing had shared a 154-run stand against Durham earlier this month and they playing for the same team has also attracted a lot of positive attention on social media. Rizwan, who was named the ICC Player of the Year for 2021, rates Pakistan's Younis Khan and Fawad Alam very highly when it comes to batting with unwavering concentration but he has now added Pujara to the list.

"...As far as myself and Pujara are concerned, I didn't feel anything strange (on the lines of India-Pakistan rivalry).

"And hopefully, if you ask him, his answer will be the same as mine. Although I do share a laugh with him and tease him (laughs) and everyone in the team knows this," Rizwan told *Cricwick* when asked about the time spend with the India veteran.

Heaping praise on Pujara, Rizwan said: "He is a very nice



and loving guy. And his concentration and focus too... If you get a chance to learn something, you should do it.

"In terms of concentration levels and I told this to the coaches here too. In my whole career, the players with most focus, concentration are Younis bhai, Fawad Alam and his (Pujara's).

"Pujara is second on my list and Fawad Alam on three in terms of pure concentration and focus. I rate these three players very highly."

Regular white-ball cricket can affect your discipline in the

longer-format and Rizwan said advice from Pujara helped him on that front.

"...In terms of the focus and concentration levels, there is a time when that starts dropping low ... I will try to figure how these three players have so intense focus and concentration. I keep on talking with Younis bhai, I couldn't talk much with Fawad recently on this.

"And with Pujara, I had a chat with him after I got out early. He told me a few things and one of them was to play close to the body."

Postponed SA-Oz Tests replaced by ODIs, T20Is in 2023

AP ■ CAPE TOWN

The three-match Test series between South Africa and Australia, which was postponed in March 2021 due to COVID-19, has now been replaced by five ODIs and three T20Is.

South Africa will host Australia for eight white-ball matches, in August 2023, in order to prepare for the 2023

ODI World Cup. According to ESPNcricinfo, Cricket South Africa is not expected to lose any money as a result of the change. Though seven fewer days of cricket will be played now, the white-ball fixtures will make an equal amount of revenue for CSA as the three Tests would have, which is why it has agreed to the change.

Reportedly, Cricket Australia was initially looking



LIVERPOOL KEEP TITLE HOPES ALIVE

AP ■ BIRMINGHAM

Liverpool kept their Premier League title hopes alive as Sadio Mane's winner beat Aston Villa 2-1 on Tuesday to move level on points with Manchester City at the top of the table.

The Reds quickly made amends for a slow start as Joel Matip cancelled out Douglas Luiz's opener inside six minutes.

Mane's fine header 25 minutes from time then did enough to keep the pressure on City, who have a game in hand away to Wolves on Wednesday.

However, Liverpool's narrow margin of victory keeps Pep Guardiola's men top on goal difference.

Victory also came at a cost for Jurgen Klopp's men, who lost Fabinho to a muscle injury that is likely to rule him out of both Saturday's FA Cup final and the Champions League final against Real Madrid on May 28.

With one eye on Wembley, Klopp

rolled the dice with his team selection as Mohamed Salah and Thiago Alcantara were left on the bench, while there was no place in the squad for Andy Robertson.

The visitors looked like a much-changed side as Villa sprang out of the traps and caught them cold.

Alisson Becker had already denied Ollie Watkins by the time Steven Gerrard's men took the lead on three minutes.

Luiz's header was parried by Alisson, but only back into the path of his Brazilian international teammate to hammer the rebound high into the net.

Villa won this fixture 7-2 last season, but Liverpool this time bounced straight back from the early blow of conceding.

The hosts did not deal with a free-kick into the box and the ball eventually broke for Virgil van Dijk to square for his centre-back partner Matip to apply the finishing touch.

Chances continued to come at both

ends in a frantic first half.

Mane headed inches wide for Liverpool before Danny Ings at the other end just failed to keep his header down from Lucas Digne's inviting cross.

MANE HEADER

Liverpool's heavy schedule began to show physically when Fabinho limped off with a hamstring injury midway through the first half.

The sale of Philippe Coutinho to Barcelona in 2018 helped Liverpool fund the signings of Alisson, Van Dijk and Fabinho.

As the Reds have gone from strength-to-strength in the four-and-a-half years since, Coutinho's career has faded and he was largely anonymous in his first appearance against his former club since returning to English football.

Only a complete miskick from Naby Keita with the goal gaping kept the scores level at the break.

However, Liverpool went through the gears in the second period to show the gulf in class between the sides.

Luis Diaz's arrival in January has played a huge part in keeping Klopp's men in contention for four trophies.

The Colombian created the winner as he teased Tyrone Mings before delivering a pinpoint cross for Mane to head in his 22nd goal of the season.

There were still nervy moments for Liverpool to see out in the final quarter as Villa sought to expose their high line.

Twice Ings failed to capitalise when played through on goal before being flagged offside when he did finally put the ball in the net.

But Liverpool held on and will hope Gerrard can finally come to their rescue in a title race.

Gerrard famously never won a league title during his decorated playing career at Anfield, but will take Villa to face City at the Etihad on the final day of the season.

Barca win overshadowed by Ronald Araujo's injury

AP ■ BARCELONA

Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang scored twice as Barcelona tightened their grip on second place in La Liga on Tuesday with a 3-1 win at home to Celta Vigo.

But Barca's victory was overshadowed by a serious head injury to defender Ronald Araujo, who had to be taken away in an ambulance in the 64th minute of the match.

Araujo was lifted into the ambulance on a stretcher, wearing a neck brace. Barcelona confirmed the 23-year-old "suffered a concussion and has been taken to the hospital to undergo further testing".

Araujo's injury came after he and Gavi banged heads challenging for the same ball. Araujo stumbled on for a few seconds before dropping to the floor as a concerned Iago Aspas and Eric Garcia called urgently for the medics.

The Uruguayan was put into the recovery position and after a few minutes, he was lifted into an ambulance that had driven onto the pitch. Barcelona fans chanted his name as Araujo was taken away.



Aubameyang's double either side of half-time came after Memphis Depay had opened the scoring at Camp Nou. Celta pulled one back through Aspas but any hopes of a comeback were dashed when Jeison Murillo was sent off just before the hour.

Barca move seven points ahead of Sevilla and eight in front of Atletico Madrid, with Sevilla and Atletico playing each other at the Wanda Metropolitano on Sunday. Real Madrid, who have already been crowned champions, sit nine points clear of Xavi Hernandez's side at the top of the table, with a game in hand.

Securing qualification for next season's Champions League last weekend means Xavi's primary objective has already been achieved but the club's dire financial situation means the team can still not afford to let up.

Every place towards the top of La Liga is worth around seven million euros while qualifying for the four-team Spanish Super Cup by finishing in the top two is worth another eight million euros to the Catalans.

ELECTRIC AUBAMEYANG

They should have the runners-up spot sewn up after another victory that owed much to Aubameyang, the 32-year-old scoring his 12th and 13th goals since joining Barcelona

from Arsenal in January.

Aubameyang's electric early form has slowed a little in recent weeks but it is hard to think of a Barca player who has made a bigger contribution to their resurgence in the second half of the season.

Depay's game-time has suffered as a result of Aubameyang's form but they both started against Celta and it was Depay who gave the hosts the lead in the 30th minute, sweeping in after superb run down the right by Ousmane Dembele.

Depay then turned provider for Aubameyang's first as he latched onto Jordi Alba's through ball and crossed for his Gabonese teammate to finish on the turn four minutes before half-time.

Three minutes after the restart, it was three as Dembele repeated his earlier trick, driving down the right, rolling left, this time for the sprinting Aubameyang to steer into the corner.

Aspas capitalised on a Barcelona error as Araujo was caught on his heels after Marc-Andre ter Stegen passed out to him in the penalty area. But eight minutes later, Murillo was sent off for preventing Depay from going through and Celta's momentum was gone.



AC Milan subject of 2 takeover bids

AP ■ MILAN

AC Milan, owned since 2018 by American investment fund Elliott Management, is the subject of "two bids", club president Paolo Scaroni said Tuesday.

"I understand that there are two offers and it takes time to complete the overview, understand them well and compare them," Scaroni told Italian news agency ANSA.

In April, Italian media reported interest from Bahrain-based investment fund Investcorp. More recently, the Italian press reported discussions with another potential bidder, American investment fund RedBird Capital Partners.

There has been no official response to from either reported bidder although Scaroni on Tuesday indicated that Investcorp's negotiations with the owners were more advanced.

"I am not aware of any problems or critical issues with Investcorp," said Scaroni, although he added "I am not the right person to ask about this, because I run the club that is the subject of the offer, so it is not something that involves Milan."

Paolo Maldini, the iconic director of Milan, which leads Serie A with two games to go, said in April that he expected the club would be sold.

Elliott Management acquired the club in 2018 when Chinese businessman Li Yonghong was unable to repay a loan he had taken out when he bought the club from Silvio Berlusconi's Fininvest in 2017. Elliott Management made it clear they planned to sell.

Reality check for India in Uber Cup Final, lose 0-5 by Korea

PTI ■ BANGKOK

Double Olympic medallist P V Sindhu was vanquished by world number four An Seyoung yet again as the Indian women's badminton team suffered a demoralising 0-5 defeat against Korea in their final group D match of the Uber Cup Final here on Wednesday.

After two successive wins against Canada

and USA, it was a reality check for the young Indian team as it could not take a single game from the Koreans during the five-match tie.

However, the defeat will not count much as India have already sealed a quarterfinal berth after ensuring itself a top-two finish in the group after two victories.

For Sindhu, it was a disappointing outing as she suc-



cumbed to her straight fifth loss to An Seyoung, losing 15-21, 14-21 this time in a lopsided contest as India conceded an early 0-1 lead.

The combo of Shruti Mishra and Simran Singhi was no match to world number two pair of Lee Sohee and Shin Seungchan, going down 13-21, 12-21 in 39 minutes.

Aakarshi Kashyap then was sent packing 10-21, 10-21 by

world number 19 Kim Ga Eun as India surrendered the tie 0-3. In the next two matches, Kim Hye Jeong and Kong Heeyong beat Tanisha Crasto and Treesa Jolly 21-14, 21-11, while Ashmita Chaliha lost 18-21, 17-21 to Sim Yujin as Korea completed the 5-0 drubbing of India. The Indian men's team will face Chinese Taipei in group C of Thomas Cup Final later in the day.

Jyothi breaks 100m hurdles NR

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



A month after her wind-assisted effort was not registered as a national record, hurdler Jyothi Yarraji has finally made the mark her own while winning a 100m event in Cyprus with a timing of 13.23 seconds.

The 22-year-old Andhra athlete on Tuesday won the Gold in Cyprus International Meet at Limassol under a head wind speed of 0.1m/s.

The old national record of 13.38 seconds was in the name of Anuradha Biswal since 2002.

JYOTHI HAD RUN BELOW BISWAL'S NATIONAL RECORD TIME AS SHE CLOCKED 13.03 SECONDS AT THE ALL INDIA INTER-UNIVERSITY ATHLETICS CHAMPIONSHIPS IN MOOBBIDRI

the wind speed was +2.1 m/s, more than the permissible +2.0 m/s, it was not counted.

In 2020 also, Jyothi had run below Biswal's national record time as she clocked 13.03 conds at the All India Inter-University Athletics Championships in Moodbidri, Karnataka.

But that was also not counted as NR as National Anti-Doping Agency did not test her at the meet and there was no technical delegate from the Athletics Federation of India present at the meet.

Another Odisha Athletics High Performance Center trainee Amlan Borgohain, who smashed the national record during the Kozhikode Federation Cup, finished third in men's 200m race with a time of 21.32 seconds.

The 24-year-old from Assam had clocked 20.52s in Kozhikode.

In other result, Lili Das won the women's 1500m race with a time of 4 minutes 17.79 seconds.



FIFA video game to be rebranded 'EA Sports FC'

AP ■ LONDON

The hugely successful FIFA video game series, which dates back to 1993's release of FIFA International Soccer, is set to end when the Women's World Cup concludes in August 2023.

FIFA, football's global governing body, and EA Sports, its biggest commercial partner, failed to reach an agreement to extend a partnership that's drawn 150 million players. Part of the separation was due to FIFA demanding at least double the annual \$150-million fee it gets from the video game developer and publisher, according to *The New York Times' Tariq Panja*.

The new name for the series is "EA Sports FC."

"If (FIFA) is not No 1, it's certainly in the top three game franchises of all time," Gareth Sutcliffe, a senior analyst specialising in the video games sector at Enders Analysis, told *Panja*. "And the reason for that is there are so many releases. Every year, they change the number on the box, put a new player on the front, and it's pretty much the same under the hood."

Top leagues across the globe

have since confirmed they'll be part of EA Sports FC. EA Sports retains the rights to use the sport's biggest clubs and stars because of separate licensing deals with organizations like UEFA and numerous competitions and clubs.

However, FIFA-controlled tournaments, such as the World Cup, will be off-limits. Sales of the video game series surpassed \$20 billion over the past two decades. FIFA is now expected to try to find a new digital partner to address the huge financial deficit its break from EA Sports will cause. It'd be limited in what's available in any game it makes because EA Sports FC boasts exclusive access to the Champions League, Premier League, and other huge soccer competitions.

"If you're breaking a relationship that goes back over 20 years, there will be consequences," Sutcliffe said. "EA will continue to motor on. They have got all the technological smarts, the creative implementation of an absolutely fantastic football game - and it really is fantastic. But what do FIFA have? Their name. And then what?"

UEFA revises CL revamp, new format from 2024

AP ■ VIENNA

The European Champions League will see an increase of four teams to 36 and the present group stage replaced by one single league from the 2024-25 season, UEFA said on Tuesday.

The revamp of European football's premier club competition will see each team play eight league games — four home and four away — as opposed to six in the group stage.

The top eight sides in the league will qualify automatically for the knockout stage, while the teams finishing in ninth to 24th place will compete in a two-legged play-off to secure their path to the last 16 of the competition.

"We are convinced that the format chosen strikes the right balance and that it will improve the competitive balance and



generate solid revenues that can be distributed to clubs, leagues and into grassroots football across our continent," said UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin.

Ceferin and UEFA will be hoping the reforms — passed unanimously by their executive board — will kill off once and for all any thought of the rebel Super League making a reappearance.

Twelve of Europe's biggest clubs signed up to the proposed new competition last April but it collapsed within days following a fierce backlash from their own players and fans, as well as governments and football's governing bodies.

Nine clubs distanced themselves from the project but Real Madrid, Barcelona and Juventus remain on board with the concept. UEFA had stepped back after consulting with various

parties — including supporters — from having 10 league matches and allocating two of the four new places to teams based on club coefficient.

The four places will go to the club ranked third in the championship of the association in fifth position in the UEFA national association ranking.

Another will be awarded to a domestic champion by extending from four to five the number of clubs qualifying via the so-called 'Champions Path'.

The final two places will go to the associations with the best collective performance by their clubs in the previous season (total number of points obtained divided by the number of participating clubs).

Those two associations if it had been judged on this season based on the collective performance of their clubs would be England and the Netherlands.

Similar format changes will also be applied to the UEFA Europa League (8 matches in the league stage) and UEFA Europa Conference League (6 matches in the league stage) and both will also include 36 teams in the league phase.

Ceferin revelled in the moment of succeeding in pushing through the reforms.

"I am really pleased that it was a unanimous decision of the UEFA Executive Committee, with the European Club Association, European Leagues and National Associations all agreeing with the proposal made," said Ceferin.

"Another proof that European football is more united than ever.

"Qualification will thus remain purely based on sporting performance and the dream to participate will remain for all clubs."