

**WORLD 5**  
RUSSIA WITHDRAWS  
FROM CITY OF KHARKIV**MONEY 6**  
GOVT SETS UP COMMITTEE  
TO BOOST CRUISE TOURISM**SPORT 8**  
AMANDEEP FINISHES 13TH AND  
VANI 23RD IN SWITZERLANDPublished From  
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL  
BHUBANESWAR RANCHI  
RAIPUR CHANDIGARH  
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD  
VIJAYWADA

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# Now, Tripura surprise: New CM before polls

**State BJP prez  
Manik replaces  
Biplab Deb as  
Chief Minister**

DEEPAK K UPRETI ■ NEW DELHI

About a year ahead of the Assembly polls in Tripura, the BJP on Saturday elected its State president Dr Manik Saha, a dentist, as the new Chief Minister in place of Biplab Kumar Deb, who, in a surprise move, was asked to put in his papers by the party's central leadership.

Increasing factional fighting in the State BJP and dissent against Deb were among the major reasons for his ouster. Deb had met Union Home Minister Amit Shah and BJP president JP Nadda here on Thursday. Elections to the 60-member Tripura Assembly will be held early next year.

Saha was elected as the BJP legislature party leader in the presence of central observers Bhupender Yadav and Vinod Tawde. But it wasn't a smooth affair. As Deb proposed the 69-year-old Saha's name in the meeting, Minister Ram Prasad Paul protested, which led to a scuffle among the MLAs.



BJP leader Manik Saha meets Tripura Governor Satyadev Narayan Arya to stake claim to form the government, at Raj Bhavan in Agartala. Former Tripura Chief Minister Biplab Kumar Deb is also seen

Sources said Paul, who wanted Deputy Chief Minister Jishnu Dev Varma, a member of the erstwhile Tripura royal family, as Deb's successor also broke a few chairs before the situation was calmed.

Saha later met the Governor at Raj Bhavan and submitted the claim to form the Government with a letter of support from the party legisla-

tors. Saha promised to continue working for the State as well as the BJP.

"Our chemistry (of Saha and Deb) is strong. Earlier also, I worked for the party and will continue to do it," Saha said. The decision was taken hours after Deb, who was the CM for four years, tendered his resignation to Governor SN Arya, saying that the party

wants him to "work to strengthen the organisation" and that there is a "need to bring the party to power again".

"I did my best," said the outgoing Chief Minister and stressed that he would work for the party and that "Biplab Deb can fit in anywhere".

Deb could again be made State BJP chief.

*Continued on Page 2*

# 19 still missing, death toll in Mundka inferno set to rise

**Charred remains  
recovered on Sat,  
Kejriwal orders  
magisterial probe**

SHEKHAR SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Nineteen people are still said to be missing, a day after a massive blaze snuffed out 27 lives at a commercial building in West Delhi's Mundka area. Of the 27 bodies, the authorities have managed to identify only eight people. A top fire official said that the death toll may rise as charred remains were recovered from the second floor of the building on Saturday morning. It is suspected the death count may climb beyond 27.

The administration is also clueless about the whereabouts of those missing since the incident. According to police, of the 21 women and six men missing, eight of them have been identified.

During the search by the fire department on Saturday morning, some charred remains were also found.

"We have found charred remains and it is difficult to ascertain whether they are of one person or more. Initial investigation suggests an explosion in an air-conditioner may have triggered the fire," said Atul Garg, the Chief Fire



Security personnel and civil defence officials at the site as NDRF personnel carry out rescue and relief work after a massive fire at an office building near the Mundka Metro Station in West Delhi on Saturday

Officer, Delhi Fire Service.

The fire was so intense that out of 27 people killed in inferno only eight have been identified by police. The deceased have been identified as Tania Bhushan, Mohini Pal, Yashoda Devi, Ranju Devi, Vishal, Drishti, Kailash Jyani and Amit Jyani. The identity of the rest 19 bodies is yet to be discovered.

The father and son duo — Kailash Jyani and Amit Jyani — had come here at the company for a motivational lecture on the second floor.

Police said that they have initiated the DNA process for those dead bodies which cannot be presently identified.

According to a list released by the district magistrate of West Delhi, the injured have been identified as Satish (38), Pradeep (36), Ashu (22), Harjeet (23), Nitin (24), Avinash (29), Sandhya (22), Dhanvanti (21), Bimla (43), Ayesha (24) and Mamta (52).

Following the incident, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal ordered a magisterial

enquiry into the matter.

"It is a very unfortunate incident and a magisterial enquiry has been ordered. We will not spare anyone, whoever is responsible for the incident. Two brothers have been arrested so far, said Kejriwal.

The Chief Minister also announced to provide an ex-gratia relief of ₹10 lakh each to the kin of the deceased while the injured will be given ₹50,000 per person by the Delhi Government.

*Continued on Page 2*

## CAPSULE

**SHEIKH MOHAMMED BIN ZAYED IS UAE PRESIDENT**

**Dubai:** Rulers in the United Arab Emirates announced on Saturday that they unanimously appointed Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan as the president of this hereditarily ruled nation on the Arabian Peninsula.

**MARATHI ACTRESS HELD FOR FACEBOOK POST**

**Mumbai:** The Navi Mumbai Police on Saturday arrested Marathi actress Ketaki Chitale for sharing a "derogative" Facebook post against Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar.

**PFI, SDPI ARE TERRORIST OUTFITS, SAYS KERALA HC KOCHI:**

A judge of the Kerala High Court said in his verdict that the SDPI and the PFI are terrorist organisations and it is a widely known fact. Justice K Haripal termed these bodies as terrorist outfits while dismissing a petition filed by Arshika, widow of RSS activist Sanjith who was murdered by SDPI/PFI extremists, to shift the probe from the State Police.

# India bans wheat export to rein in inflation soaring to 7.79% in April

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India, the world's second largest producer of wheat after China, has banned wheat exports with immediate effect saying it is part of its steps to control the price surge at home, manage the overall food security of the country and support the needs of the neighbouring and other vulnerable countries. The decision is contrary to India's big export plans, especially against the backdrop of an affected global supply chain due to the Russia-Ukraine conflict. Further, the Government is under pressure to rein in inflation that surged to 7.79 per cent in April.

Incidentally, the decision also comes just a day after the Government even announced to send trade delegations to nine countries "for exploring possibilities of boosting wheat exports from India".

"The export policy of wheat is prohibited with immediate effect," the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a notification on Friday. However, the export shipments for which irrevocable letters of credit (LoC) have been issued on or before the date of this notification will be allowed, the DGFT stated.



Trucks loaded with sacks of wheat stand at a wholesale grain market in Amritsar on Saturday

It also clarified that wheat exports will be allowed on the basis of permission granted by the Government of India to other countries to meet their food security needs and based on the request of their Governments.

*Continued on Page 2*

## G7 slams India's no export call; promises will be fulfilled: India

**New Delhi:** Agriculture Ministers from the Group of Seven industrialised nations on Saturday condemned India's decision to ban unapproved wheat exports after the country was hit by a punishing heatwave.

Hours after G7's reaction against export ban, Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri tweeted, "Wheat stocks are comfortable. Decision to restrict wheat exports taken with focus on India's food security, ensuring affordable foodgrain and to combat market speculation. India, a reliable supplier will fulfil all commitments including needs of neighbours and vulnerable countries."

PNS ■ UDAIPUR/NEW DELHI

The issue of a regular full-time Congress president continued to mark its presence on Saturday at the ongoing Nav Sankalp Chintan Shivir of the party with its different factions "unofficially" and separately pitching the names of Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi for the top job before the media on the sidelines of the deliberations.

Officially, though, the party in its internal meetings chose to sidestep the issue. In a meeting of AICC general secretaries, PCC presidents and legislature party leaders over the party's mass contact programmes, sources said a discussion cropped up about the immediate concern of leadership crisis.

A section of leaders appeared to be pitching for a different candidate and another wanted to bring back Rahul Gandhi to lead the party,



Congress interim president Sonia Gandhi with party leader Rahul Gandhi and others during a meeting on day 2 of the party's 'Nav Sankalp Shivir', in Udaipur

sources said, adding there is likely to be a collective demand on the concluding day of the Shivir to bring the former Congress president back at the helm of affairs, officially.

Rahul called for planning Jan Jagran Abhiyan action plan.

*Continued on Page 2*

## Punjab Cong ex-prez Sunil Jhakar quits party

**Chandigarh:** Punjab Congress chief Sunil Jhakar on Saturday announced his decision to quit the party which had last month removed him from all positions.

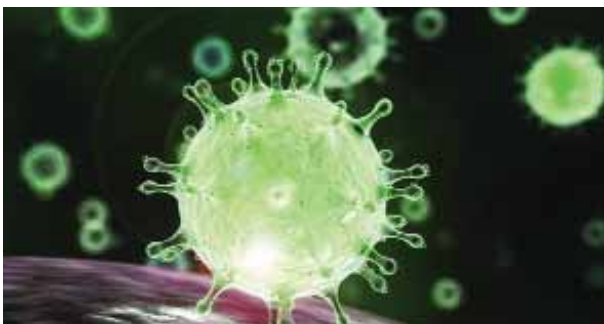
# China not to host 2023 AFC Asian Cup amid Covid surge

PTI ■ KUALA LUMPUR

China will not host the AFC Asian Cup final round next year in view of the surging COVID-19 cases in the country, the continent's football governing body said on Saturday.

Asian Football Confederation (AFC) said it has been officially informed by the Chinese association that it would not be able to host the continental showpiece next year. "Following extensive discussions with the Chinese Football Association, the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has been officially informed by the CFA that it would not be able to host the AFC Asian Cup 2023," the AFC said in a statement.

China were named as hosts of the 2023 AFC Asian Cup in June 2019, at the AFC Extraordinary Congress in Paris. The 24-team competition was to be hosted across 10 Chinese cities from June 16 to July 16 next year.



"The AFC acknowledges the exceptional circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to the relinquishment by China PR of its hosting rights," the AFC said.

The Indian team is vying for a place in the 2023 AFC Asian Cup and will feature in the final qualifying round to be held in Kolkata next month.

The AFC said it worked closely with the CFA and the Local Organising Committee (LOC) during the preparations and several milestones were achieved, including the launch of the tournament logo

and the unveiling of the newly completed Shanghai Pudong Football Stadium last year.

"The AFC appreciates that China PR, the CFA and the AFC Asian Cup China 2023 LOC have made this very difficult but necessary decision in the collective interests...Which has also provided the AFC the required time to assess the situation regarding the hosting of the AFC Asian Cup 2023."

The AFC said it will continue to work closely with its commercial partners and stakeholders to chart out the future course of action.

## CBI books 3 persons for IPL betting

**New Delhi:** The CBI has booked a network of individuals engaged in Indian Premier League (IPL) betting since 2013 in collusion with a Pakistani operator.

The agency has named one accused from Delhi — Dileep Kumar of B-9/200, Sector 5, Rohini — besides two individuals from Hyderabad — Gurram Satish and Gurram Vasu. "A reliable information has been received about a network of individuals involved in cricket betting influencing outcome of IPL matches based on inputs received from Pakistan," reads the FIR.

It further said, "In the garb of betting related to IPL matches, they are cheating the general public by inducing them for betting. For this purpose, they have opened bank accounts using fake identities and KYC documents in connivance with bank officials."

PNS

*Detailed Report on Page 4*

# 3 cops shot dead by black buck poachers in MP, 2 criminals killed

**CM announces ₹1 crore  
to kin of deceased cops**

PNS ■ BHOPAL

Three police officials were shot dead by black buck poachers in Suga Barkheda village of Aron region in Guna district in Madhya Pradesh late on Friday night. One accused Nausad was killed in the same encounter, while another criminal Shahjad Khan was gunned down in another encounter with cops on Saturday afternoon.

The incident occurred under the precincts of Aron police station, when the policemen had gone to nab the poachers after receiving a tip-off.

The deceased have been identified as Sub-inspector Rajkumar Jatav, 27 and constables, Neeraj Bhargava, 38, and Santram Meena, 27.

Soon after the information reached Bhopal, Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan conducted a high-level meeting around 10 am and gave directives to take stern action against the culprits. By the afternoon, the police and administration had identified all the accused that were from nearby villages and bulldozed the houses of two of them.

Inspector general of Gwalior Anil Sharma has been removed from the post, as he had not



reached the scene of crime even after 12 hours. He has been replaced by D Srinivas Varma. Ironically, Varma was posted as Gwalior IG few months ago, but due to strong opposition by a Union Minister, he was not allowed to join and under pressure, Amil Sharma was posted there.

*Continued on Page 2*

## China, Pakistan to visit India to take part in SCO anti-terror meet

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Pakistan and China will take part in an anti-terrorism meeting here next week under the aegis of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO). Despite tension between the two countries, an Indian delegation had also participated in a similar meeting in Pakistan last year.

The upcoming meeting scheduled from May 16 to 19 will see a Pakistan delegation coming to India for the first time after Prime Minister Sheebaz Sharif took over last month. Pakistan also appointed a Minister (Trade) at its High Commission here recently after a gap of more than three years thereby signaling some positive movement in ties between the two countries. Leaders and officials of India and China have also participated in the SCO meets even as stand-offs persist at LAC for last two years.

*Detailed Report on Page 4*



# PFI, SDPI terrorist outfits, says Kerala HC judge

**KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■**  
KOCHI

A judge of the Kerala High Court said in his verdict that the SDPI and the PFI were terrorist organisations and it is a widely known fact. Justice K Haripal termed these organisations as terrorist outfits while dismissing a petition filed by Arshika, widow of RSS activist Sanjith who was murdered by the extremists belonging to the SDPI/PFI on November 15, 2021 in Palakkad district. Arshika had sought the transfer of the probe of the murder of her slain husband from the State Police to the Central Bureau of Investigation. “No doubt, the SDPI and the PFI are extremist

organisations indulging in serious acts of violence. All the same, these are not banned organisations,” said the judge in his order after hearing the version of the Kerala Police which is investigating the murder. The judge further stated that the police have taken care to file a final report within 90 days. “All culprits had been identified and many of them have been arrested and if the probe is handed over to the CBI at this stage, it would result in further delay in the proceeding which is not in public interest,” said Justice Haripal. The judge also pointed out that transferring the case to CBI may also pave way for raising the demand by the



accused to be released on bail. Given the mindset of the rival groups, if the accused are released on bail that would entail further clashes and may lead to law and order situation, he said in the order. However, the Bench noticed that some of the accused were still at large. In this context, it was ordered that

although the roles allegedly played by them are less important, they have to be apprehended and brought before the court. The State Police Chief was directed to personally review the progress in apprehending the remaining accused and file fortnightly reports to the court till the last accused is arrested. Sanjith, a functionary of the RSS was waylaid by a group of SDPI/PFI activists while he was riding a bike with his wife on November 15 and was murdered in a gruesome manner in front of his wife Arshika. The accused were annoyed with Sanjith for passing on information to the police about the drug trafficking happening in the region.

# Uddhav ridicules Fadnavis’s claim about his presence during Babri Masjid demolition

**TN RAGHUNATHA ■**  
MUMBAI

Debunking his predecessor and senior BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis’ claim that the latter was present at the Babri masjid demolition, Maharashtra Chief Minister Uddhav Thackeray said on Saturday that Fadnavis might have gone to Ayodhya for his school or college picnic and ridiculed the former Chief Minister by saying that even if the latter had tried to climb the masjid, the structure would have collapsed under his weight. Addressing a huge rally of Sena workers at Bandra-Kurla Complex (BKC) in north-central Mumbai on Saturday night, Uddhav also came down heavily on the Narendra Modi-led BJP government at the Centre for diverting the attention of the people from the crucial issues like inflation and attacks on Kashmiri pandits:

“Why don’t you speak on the crucial issues facing the country like inflation and attacks on the Kashmiri pandits? This is not our Hindutva. You are just trying to distract the public and the country.” Taking a pot shot at BJP leader Kirit Somaiya and Rana couple who have been security by the central government, Thackeray said: “People like Somaiya and Rana couple are being provided Z plus and Y plus security. Why are they providing security to Kashmiri pundits?” Alluding to Fadnavis’ claim that he took part in Babri Masjid demolition, Uddhav said: “Fadnavis claims that the Shiv Sainiks did not take part in the demolition. He has says he had gone there at that time. I would like to know as to what was his age then? He (Fadnavis) might have gone to Ayodhya for school or college picnic.. You suspect us and say that the Shiv Sainiks were not part of the



Babri demolition. I would like to know what you have done for the country or even Hindutva?,” the Sena president asked Fadnavis. Alluding to Fadnavis’ hefty body structure, Uddhav poked fun at the former chief minister; “You say you were present at Babri Masjid. If that is the case, even if you had tried to climb the Babri Masjid, the structure would have collapsed under your weight. Kar Sevaks present there would not have to waste their energy to bring down the structure.” Ridiculing Fadnavis’ claim that the Sena had no role in the Babri Masjid demolition, Uddhav said: “Veteran BJP leader L K Advani went on record in a television interview that the youngsters who brought down the Babri Masjid were speaking Marathi. After the demolition, late Sena chief Balasaheb Thackeray had taken responsibility for the demolition by saying: If Sainiks have brought down the masjid, I am proud of them.”

# Marathi actress arrested for sharing ‘derogatory’ FB post against Pawar

**T N RAGHUNATHA ■**  
MUMBAI

The Navi Mumbai on Saturday arrested Marathi actress Ketaki Chitale for sharing a “derogatory” Facebook post against Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) chief Sharad Pawar, even as MNS chief Raj Thackeray condemned the “objectionable” post against Pawar, by saying that though he had “political differences” with the NCP chief but he strongly disapproved of the actress’ “hideous” comments against the latter.



During a near day-long drama that unfolded after Ketki Chitale shared an allegedly defamatory Facebook post against the NCP chief, some NCP’s irate women activists hurled ink at the little-known Marathi activist while she was being taken to a police jeep at Kalmboli in Navi Mumbai. Though it did not mention the NCP chief’s full name, the objectionable Facebook referred to him through his surname as Pawar and mentioned his age as 80 years (Incidentally Pawar is now 81-year-old). The FB post, which described Pawar as “a mosquito”, carried comments like “hell is waiting” and “you hate Brahmins”. The tweet mentioned the name of Advocate Nitin Bhawe. Acting on a complaint lodged by one Swapnil Netke, the Kalwa police registered a case against Ketki under sections 500 (defamation), 501 (printing or engraving matter known to be defamatory), 505 (2) (making, publishing or circulating any statement, rumour or report promoting

enmity, hatred or ill will between classes), 153 A (spreading disharmony among people) of the IPC. The post shared by Ketki is the second objectionable post against Pawar that has figured in the social media for the past few days. Earlier on May 11, one Nikhil Bhamre put out a camouflaged “death threat” against the NCP chief. The tweet read thus: Time has come for the ‘Gandhi’ of Baramati... And for Baramati to prepare a Nathuram Godse.... Baramati Uncle apologise”. The tweet was “liked” and “re-tweeted” by scores of twitter users. Within hours after they registered an offence against Ketki, the police arrested the Marathi actress. On his part, the NCP chief downplayed the comments by the Marathi actress against him, by saying: “I do not know her. Nor do I know that the matter is”. Maharashtra chief minister Uddhav Thackeray slammed the Marathi actress for sharing out a “perverse” facebook against Pawar. “One woman has made a strange comment against Pawar. Does not she

# Kashmiri migrant employees seek transfer to terror free places

**MOHIT KANDHARI ■** JAMMU

The Kashmiri migrant employees working under the Prime Minister’s package on Saturday demanded relocation to the safest, unhazardous, terror-free places outside the Kashmir division and repeal of ‘unconstitutional bond’ that they were forced to sign at the time of joining their services for their survival. The migrant employees also warned the UT administration to immediately remove onground restrictions on their free movement inside the transit camps. The local administration had locked down the main gates and stationed security vehicles to prevent movement of Kashmiri migrant employees after they took out a protest march on Friday. In a written communication to the office of Divisional Commissioner Kashmir the migrant employees also informed, “We the employees of Vessu transit



camp, have decided to march to Sheikhpora and Veerwan colony in solidarity with our brothers and sisters tomorrow morning demanding that the authorities remove such restrictions on them”. Meanwhile, the migrant employees organised sit-in dharnas/ homage ceremonies in the memory of Rahul Bhat at various locations inside transit camps across Kashmir division. Emissaries were also deployed by the UT administration and some

political workers also approached the Kashmir migrant employees in their camps to pacify them. Instead of responding to their calls the agitated employees urged them to amplify their voice before the UT administration and the Union government to find permanent resolution of the issue. In Jammu, one of the frontal organisation of Kashmiri pandits, Panun Kashmir also urged the Government of India to immediately take out all the

Hindu Employees to Jammu without delay before any other more gruesome terrorist act happens against them. Addressing a press conference in Jammu, the Panun Kashmir leaders termed the gruesome killing of Rahul Bhat in his office at Chadoora, Budgam in Kashmir as ‘Genocidal Killing’. “We want to state it very clearly that so called employment package for Hindus of Kashmir was never an initiative for their return and rehabilitation in Kashmir but always a vicious process of Hostaging Hindus to an Islamist order only to ensure its secular cosmetic dressing” the statement issued by the Panun Kashmir said. In another related development several political parties have also decided to make a beeline outside the office of Raj Bhawan to raise the issue of safety and rehabilitation of Kashmiri pandit migrant employees. J&K BJP Chief Ravinder

Raina said a party delegation would be meeting Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to raise the grievances of Kashmiri pandit employees. On the other hand the People’s Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) has also sought an appointment with Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to raise the issue of safety and security of Kashmiri Pandits in the valley. Briefing reporters outside the residence of the PAGD president Farooq Abdullah after a meeting of the group, spokesperson M Y Tarigami, said the killing of Kashmiri Pandit government employee Rahul Bhat in Budgam has shaken the Kashmiri society. Tarigami said the killing has troubled the whole society and the people of Kashmir are with their pandit brethren in this time of grief. He said the amalgam has decided to meet Sinha and take up the issue with him.

# Now, Tripura surprise: New CM...

**From Page 1** “Party is above all. I am a loyal worker of the BJP. I hope I have done justice to the responsibilities that were given to me -- whether it was BJP State president or Tripura Chief Minister. I have worked for the overall development of Tripura and to ensure peace for the people in the State,” Deb told news persons at Agartala, the State Capital. The BJP made a history in 2018 when it came to power ending 25-year-old rule of a well-entrenched Left front dispensation. Deb became the

first BJP CM of Tripura. The replacement of Deb with Saha is akin to changes in the top made by the central leadership (read Modi-Shah) in Uttarakhand, Gujarat and Karnataka, months before the elections in a bid to beat the anti-incumbency. While the BJP retained Uttarakhand, the result of its move in the other two States remains to be seen. Though the sudden change in Uttarakhand played political dividends with the party returning to power in the hill State, Tripura is set to be a

different ball game with the Left, the Congress and an aggressive Trinamool Congress (TMC) seeking to capitalize on the “groupism” in the Tripura BJP. Health Minister Sudip Roy Burman, a challenger to Deb, recently quit the BJP and crossed over to the Congress. Saha, a dental surgeon turned politician who quit the Congress and joined the BJP in 2016, was made the party’s State president in 2020. Earlier this year, Saha was elected to Rajya Sabha in the lone seat from Tripura.

# India bans wheat export...

**From Page 1** New Delhi’s decision would be a setback to global buyers who had been banking on India for supplies after exports from the Black Sea region dropped since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine in late February. Russia and Ukraine together account for almost a quarter of the global wheat supply. Last month, Prime Minister Narendra Modi too had said, “If the WTO gives permission, India is ready to supply food stock to the world from tomorrow.” “Currently, there is adequate

food stock in the country. There is a sudden spike in the prices of wheat in the country. Unregulated trade is the reason behind the prices going up. Our primary goal is to check the inflation,” said Sudhanshu Pandey, Secretary, Department of Food & Public Distribution. The move to ban wheat exports also comes after huge crop loss due to a heatwave in March. The Agriculture Ministry had in mid-February estimated India’s 2021-22 wheat crop at a record 111.3 million tonnes but it has since scaled down the estimate to around 95 mt.

# RS poll crucial test of SP-led alliance future

**PNS ■** LUCKNOW

The upcoming Rajya Sabha election is going to be a crucial test of the future of the Samajwadi Party-led alliance having 125 members in the UP Assembly. The SP has the lion’s share of 111 MLAs while the rest are of its two allies Rashtriya Lok Dal (8) and Suheldev Bhartiya Samaj Party (6). The election to the 11 seats of Rajya Sabha from UP is due next month. On its strength, the ruling BJP can win eight seats.

If the SP alliance remains intact and united, it can win the rest of the three seats with 23 spare votes. Though the SP has strong temptation to field a fourth candidate as it has 23 spare votes, it is most likely to exercise this option to avoid a contest. If only 11 candidates file nomination papers, there will be no election and all 11 candidates will be declared elected unopposed. If the SP contests the extra (fourth) seat, the move will not only necessitate voting, but will

also bring in the risk of cross-voting which could hurt its prospects due to the purported unhappiness of Pragatisheel Samajwadi Party-Lohia (PSP-L) chief Shivalp Yadav and SP leader Azam Khan. The Rajya Sabha members are elected by MLAs in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of a single transferable vote. For one seat, 34 votes will be required. The BJP and allies have 273 votes while the SP and allies have 125. After the claim on eight seats, the BJP will be left with only one spare vote while the SP will have 23 spare votes.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Be it to know to all that My client Dr Anju Sharma do Manvir Singh, Dr Sharma is a celebrity sound healer has been awarded on many forums for her expertise in sound and other modalities of healing. It is brought to the kind notice to people at large. That my client Dr Anju Sharma has absolutely no connection whatsoever with Mr Lalit Dutta who was house no 96 second floor pocket 25, Rohini Sector 7 North West Delhi 110085 Rohini, Delhi for past 8 months. Hence any person dealing with Mr Lalit Dutta or his family or friends shall do at her/his own risk. No complaints or issues or misconceptions shall be entertained against Mr Lalit Dutta or his family or friends by my Client in future at any cost. Mr Lalit Dutta is also warned from not approaching my client or her professional team or family for any monetary help or spreading false and derogatory rumours against her. Any person dealing with such acts or omission shall be prosecuted harshly by civil and criminal action.

**HEENA SHARMA ADVOCATES**  
**SHARMA & SHARMA**  
A-7C, Paschim Puri, New Delhi-63

**I Sangita Devi W/o Govind Singh House No 336/ACD/2, Budh Vihar Village, Munirka, New Delhi-110067, Same name is written while issuance of my LIC Policy No is 129007304. Now My Correct Name is Sangeeta Yadav in All Future times. PD(9095)A**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

To be known to all that I, Satya Prakash Singh S/D/W/O Magan Singh, LG Flat No. 22D, 3rd Floor, Mansarovar Park, Delhi is the purchaser has applied for conversion of the aforesaid flat from lease hold to free hold in DDA. The original Demand Cum Allotment Letter, Possession Letter, Site Possession Slip & NOC for electricity and water connection LG Flat No. 22D/3rd Floor, Mansarovar Park, Delhi VIDE (09/15/2) 86/MG some Bank Challans of DDA payment have been lost. An NCR to this effect has lodged in P.S. Crime Branch, vide SO No. 430/2014, Delhi Police, LR No.1101299/2019 dated 31/05/2019. Any person(s) 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. 9311430222 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 (L&B) Housing, D-Block, 3rd Floor, Vikas Sadan, New Delhi

# 19 still missing...

**From Page 1** The Chief Minister along with his deputy, Manish Sisodia, visited the site of the blaze to take stock of the situation. The fire chief said that the building did not have a fire safety certificate or fire-fighting equipment and there was only a single entry and exit point, which is the reason behind so many casualties. “The building also did not have a proper blueprint. Most of the bodies were found on the second floor,” said Garg. Since Saturday morning, there was an atmosphere of grief at Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital in Mangolpuri after hundreds of relatives waiting outside the hospital were yet to get any details of their kin. The injured and dead bodies were taken to the Sanjay Gandhi Memorial hospital after the incident on Friday evening. North Delhi Municipal Corporation (NDMC) and other agencies officials were quick to put the onus on the owners of the building and

claimed that commercial was going on “illegally” in the building. Meanwhile, the NDMC Commissioner on Saturday wrote a letter to the Additional Commissioner of Narela Zone, asking him to file a detailed report on the following incident in the next 48 hours. “The Additional Commissioner, Narela Zone, is hereby directed to submit a detailed report of the above incident within 48 hours indicating on the following aspects, type of the area—either residential, lal dora, agriculture, where the said building is located, tentative year of the construction of the building, tentative height of the building, and whether building plan was sanctioned or not,” the letter stated. Police have arrested both brothers, Harish and Varun Goel, the owners of a CCTV camera and router manufacturing and assembling company while a nab manhunt has been initiated to nab Manish Lakra, the owner of the building who is at large.

# Rahul, Priyanka names pitched for...

**From Page 1** Sensing that the situation was not conducive as some of the leaders present in the meeting remained silent, Sonia diverted the matter saying let Rahul focus on public awareness by travelling across the country. Sonia was presiding over a meeting to discuss the second phase of the mass contact programme to take on the policies of the Government as well as rising inflation and unemployment in the country. The Congress has launched the mass

agitation/contact programme - ‘Jan Jagran Abhiyan’ - from November 14 to November 29, 2021 to highlight various issues, including inflation, recession, unemployment rate and farm distress. Senior leader Digvijaya Singh, who heads the party’s Sustained Agitation Committee, gave a detailed presentation. The Congress is also likely to constitute its Parliamentary Board replacing the Congress Election Committee that decides candidates for the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections.

This has been an important demand of many of the dissenters within the party. Those like Sachin Pilot have pinned hopes about the party giving more representation to the youth leaders in the Rajasthan Assembly polls and the 2024 general elections. But the old guards like Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot are unlikely to yield space to the younger lot. Differences over ticket distribution were one of the main sticky points between Pilot and Gehlot.

# 3 cops shot dead by black buck poachers...

**From Page 1** A poacher identified as Naushad Mewati of Bedoriya village in Guna district was also killed and his four accomplices, all residents of Raghogarh of the same district, were arrested. Guna superintendent of police, Rajeev Mishra, said the police got information about blackbuck poaching in the Aron forest near Sagabarkhed village of Guna. “When police personnel reached the spot at around 2.45am, they nabbed three poachers. But suddenly four poachers, who were on motorbikes, started

firing,” he said. The SP said the police personnel fired in retaliation and sudden firing caused injuries to them leading to the death of three personnel and injury to police vehicle driver. Police recovered carcasses and five heads of blackbucks. A carcass of the peacock was also found on the spot. Normally, blackbucks, Indian antelopes, are killed for their horns and skin. The Chief Minister has announced an ex gratia of Rs 1 crore each to the bereaved families of the three deceased police personnel.



# Secretariat to ban single-use plastic

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government has decided to ban the single-use plastic (SUP) items in the Delhi Secretariat from June 1, a month before the nationwide ban on SUP comes into force.

Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai on Saturday said it will be ensured that only alternatives to SUP items such as paper plates, cups, straws are used in the Delhi Secretariat premises, he said.

Staff will be asked to avoid SUP water bottles and use kul-hads, stainless steel glasses or paper cups to drink water, the minister said.

In August last year, the Union environment ministry had issued a notification prohibiting manufacture, import, stocking, distribution, sale and use of identified SUP commodities, including polystyrene and expanded polystyrene from July 1, 2022.

The identified SUP items include earbuds, plastic sticks for balloons, flags, candy sticks, ice cream sticks, polystyrene



(thermocool), plates, cups, glasses, forks, spoons, knives, straws, trays, wrapping or packaging films around sweets boxes, invitation cards, cigarette packets, plastic or PVC banners less than 100 micron, and stirrers.

All manufacturers, retailers, general public, and shopkeepers in Delhi have already been asked not to keep any stock of single-use plastics by June 30, 2022.

The Delhi Pollution Control Committee has also

asked all manufacturers of raw materials to stop supplying plastic items to those engaged in the use of banned SUP products. It is also carrying out a survey to identify littering hotspots and quantify plastic waste generation in the city.

The Delhi government had last year constituted a state-level task force for the elimination of SUP and effective implementation of Plastic Waste Management Amended Rules, 2021.

## SDMC providing online services

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The South Delhi Municipal Corporation (SDMC) has successfully developed and implemented more than 20 IT services under the 'Civic Service Suite', to make its services available for people on the basis of 'anytime-anywhere' and collect tax in a hassle-free manner, said a senior official.

According to a senior official, through the online system, more than seven lakh birth certificates and over two lakh death certificates, more than 29000 factory licenses, over 36500 general trade licenses, 36000 health trade licenses, and 5400 veterinary trade licenses have been issued so far.

"Govt eProcurement, NextGen eHospital, GPS enabled mobile attendance application launched during Covid-19, is being used by more than 90000 employees. More than 3600 Health Trade Licenses (HTL), more than 36500 General Trade (GTL) issued, over 5400 Veterinary Trade License (VTL) have been



issued, 2113 Community hall bookings, Cremation or Burial ground slips generation, Town plan approval System, eSBM (tracking of auto tippers of MCD), over 50500 permits renewed for TehBazari, Hackney and Hawking, etc," he said.

"The property tax of more than 13 lakh registered properties were deposited, and benefits of the amnesty scheme and e-mutation were provided to the citizens. More than 90,000 Corporation employees have been using the Mobile Attendance app. Over 50500 permits of Tehbazari and Hackney and Hawking were also renewed through online mode," he added.

# City stares at water crisis, sends SOS to Haryana

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With the water level of Wazirabad pond dropping to 670.70 feet, lowest this year, and Haryana not responding to SOS calls, the authorities in Delhi are barely meeting the drinking water demand in several areas, officials said on Saturday.

The level in the Wazirabad pond has dropped to 670.70 feet, the lowest this year. It was 671.80 feet on Thursday. The pond level had dropped to 667 feet on July 11 last year, prompting the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) to move the Supreme Court seeking directions to Haryana to release additional water in the Yamuna.

The DJB has thrice written to the Haryana Irrigation Department in this connection in a fortnight — on May 12, May 3 and April 30.

"Even flow via CLC (Carrier-Lined Channel) and DSB (Delhi Sub-Branch) is fluctuating... The lifting of 120 cusec of water from the Wazirabad pond is affected due to low pond level. This will affect water production adversely. Due to peak summer, the water requirement is more,"

the SOS sent on Thursday read.

"It is requested to supply 150 cusec of raw water additionally through DD-8/river route, so as to ensure that 120 cusec of raw water reaches the Wazirabad pond in this time of crisis, till the arrival of monsoon," it read.

According to officials, there has been no response from the neighbouring State whatsoever, leaving Delhi to fend for itself.

The production capacity at Wazirabad, Chandrawal and Okhla water treatment plants has reduced to 85 per cent. It could further decrease to 75 per cent on Sunday, a DJB official said on condition of anonymity.

"We have resorted to water rationing and have been able to meet the demand so far. However, the situation could turn worse if Haryana does not respond and release additional water in the river," the official said. Adhering to its Summer Action Plan, the DJB has deployed extra tankers to cater to areas facing water shortage and is trying to augment water supply through tube wells.

The Delhi Government last month said it will supply

around 1,000 million gallons of drinking water every day during the summer season as against 935 MGD earlier to meet the rising demand.

It had said 1,198 water tankers will be deployed across the capital during the peak season (April-July) to prevent water scarcity.

Haryana supplies a total of 610 million gallons of water a day to Delhi through two canals — CLC and DSB — and the Yamuna.

The CLC and the DSB are supplied water from Hathni Kund via Munak canal and the Bhakra Beas Management Board. Besides, Delhi receives 253 MGD from Uttar Pradesh through the Upper Ganga Canal, and 90 MGD is drawn from ranney wells and tube wells installed across the city.

The Chandrawal and Wazirabad water treatment plants have a capacity of 90 MGD and 135 MGD, respectively. The two plants lift raw water from the Wazirabad pond, treat it and supply to northeast Delhi, west Delhi, north Delhi, central Delhi, south Delhi, including Delhi Cantonment, and New Delhi Municipal Council areas.

# Traders' body to soon discuss issues about getting NOC from fire dept

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A day after the unfortunate fire incident in the Mundka area, due to which 30 lives are lost, a trader's body on Saturday stated that several issues regarding obtaining No Objection Certificates (NOC) from the fire department will be discussed with factory owners and key business leaders.

The Chamber of Trade and Industry (CTI) chairman Brijesh Goyal said the factory owners have been complaining of many difficulties and frills in getting the no-objection certificates (NOCs).

"Sometimes factory owners apply for NOC which gets delayed or is not renewed on time," Goyal said.

Goyal said, "A meeting with traders and factory owners will be held soon to discuss the real problems in getting the fire NOC and prepare a draft on it to get help from the Delhi Government."

"Due to various rules and



constraints, factory owners also hesitate to take NOC and this is not right, said Goyal who heads the ruling Aam Aadmi Party's trade wing.

Many markets in Delhi are located on narrow streets. It is challenging to reach here in an emergency and for this concrete arrangements will have to be made, he added.

A fire ripped through the four-storey building in Mundka on Friday killing at least 27 people and leaving 12 injured.

According to the police, 29 people are still reported to be missing while the fire department officials said that they found charred remains on Saturday and there was a likelihood of the death toll going up.

## MAJOR FIRE INCIDENTS

**March 2020:** Seven people were killed in a fire that ravaged several shanties in Gokulpuri. December 2019- 44 lives were claimed after a fire broke out in an illegal factory at Anaj Mandi. December 2019- Nine lives were lost after massive fire ripped through a three-storey residential-cum-commercial building in outer Delhi's Kirari area

**November 2019:** A massive fire gutted a footwear factory at Narela, killing a security guard and a labourer. The body of the security guard was found after the fire was brought under control, but the charred body of the second victim was recovered four days after the blaze.

**February 2019:** A massive fire swept through a four-floor hotel in Karol Bagh in the early hours, killing at least 17 guests, including two persons who jumped off the building in a

desperate bid to save themselves.

**November 2018:** Four persons were killed and one was injured after a fire broke out at a factory in central Delhi's Karol Bagh.

**April 2018:** A fire broke out at a building in Kohat Enclave, killing a couple and two children. A few days later, a major fire gutted 300 shanties in Shahdara and killed a girl.

**January 2018:** A firecracker storage unit in Bawana next year that left 17 persons, including 10 women, dead

**July 2017:** Four members of a family, including two children, died due to asphyxiation and two others were injured while trying to escape the early morning blaze at a four-storey building in the Dilshad Garden area.

**November 2011- 14:** Lives were lost when a fire swept through a community hall in Nand Nagri where a congregation of the transgender community was taking place.

## Kejriwal announces ₹10L compensation, orders probe

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday announced a compensation of Rs 10 lakh each to the kin of the deceased and Rs 50,000 for those injured in the Mundka building fire incident that claimed 27 lives.

The Chief Minister along with his deputy, Manish Sisodia visited the site of the blaze to take stock of the situation.

"The Delhi Government has ordered a Magisterial Enquiry into the matter and will ensure the strictest possible punishment for culprits," said Kejriwal.

Kejriwal also consoled the grieving families and reinforced that the Delhi Government stands in solidarity with them and will do whatever possible to help them

in this hour of pain.

"I am deeply pained and anguished to see the tragedy that has transpired at this complex in Mundka. We are all trying to rescue as many lives as possible. The fire was so devastating that it has become difficult to identify some bodies. We have set up a DM Helpdesk at the site to aid those filing missing reports," said Kejriwal.

"We will identify the bodies through DNA testing as well. Even though no amount can make up for the loss of one's life, as a measure of support the Delhi Government will provide an ex-gratia of Rs 10 lakhs to the families of all the deceased and Rs 50 thousands for the injured," said Kejriwal.

Delhi Health Minister Satyendar Jain had visited the site on Friday night.

## LG expresses grief over fire incident

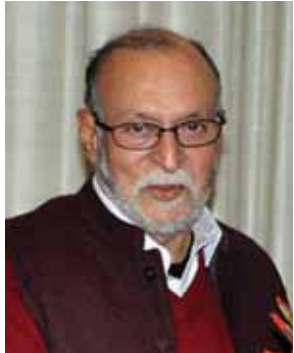
STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Anil Bajjal on Saturday expressed his grief over the recent fire incident in Delhi's Mundka area which claimed 27 lives. He also extended his condolences to the bereaved families.

"Deeply pained by the tragic fire incident in Mundka, Delhi. Despite best rescue efforts many precious lives were lost. My deepest Condolences to the bereaved families and prayers for speedy recovery of those injured," Bajjal tweeted.

"Even as we go into the details of causes behind the tragedy, immediate steps should be taken by all concerned to ensure that such incidents do not recur," he said.

At least 27 people were killed and 12 injured after a



massive fire ripped through a four-storey building in Mundka on Friday.

The fire started from the first floor of the building that housed the office of a CCTV camera and router manufacturing and assembling company, police said.

It is suspected that an explosion in an AC may have triggered the fire, according to fire officials.

# Family, relatives await info on missing loved ones

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The family and relatives of the 29 people missing since the inferno, at a commercial four-storied building in Mundka, are searching for their loved one at Sanjay Gandhi hospital. Sitting outside the hospital and most of them with tears in their eyes were just waiting for any information by the hospital staff or authorities on their loved ones.

Charred bodies were also recovered by the rescuers and many of the grieving relatives, who since Friday night had gathered at the Sanjay Gandhi Memorial Hospital at Mangolpuri, awaited identification of charred bodies of their kin. Some people were crying inconsolably as the hospital staff called them to identify charred remains. Many were seen uttering a silent prayer as the fear of



the worst loomed large.

The fire had started from the first floor of the commercial building that houses the office of a CCTV camera and router manufacturing and assembling company. It is suspected that an explosion in an AC may have triggered it.

Monica (21), who is among the people missing, had started working for the company

last month. Her brother, Ajit, said, "She received her first salary on Thursday. We got to know about the fire around 5 pm on Friday, but we had no idea that it occurred at her office building. We started looking for her after she did not return home by 7 pm."

Another woman, frantically looking for her elder daughter who also works at the

CCTV camera packaging unit, said she has been searching in other hospitals as well.

"My daughter Pooja has been working at the CCTV camera packaging unit for the last three months. We live in Mubarakpur and got to know about the incident at 9 pm. She has a cut mark below her left eye. We are looking for her at various hospitals. She is the sole breadwinner of our family of four. Her two younger sisters are school students," she said.

According to Deputy Commissioner of Police (Outer) Sameer Sharma, the company owners — Harish Goel and Vijay Goel who were detained have been arrested in connection with the incident.

An FIR has been registered against them under sections 304 (punishment for culpable homicide not amounting to murder), 308 (attempt to com-

mit culpable homicide), 120 (concealing design to commit offence punishable with imprisonment) and 34 (Common intention) of the Indian Penal Code, he said.

All floors of the building were being used by the same company, the DCP said.

The building's owner, Manish Lakra, has also been booked, the police said. Identities of all but one of the 12 injured have been ascertained, an official said.

According to a list released by the district magistrate of West Delhi, the injured are Staish (38), Pradeep (36), Ashu (22), Harjeet (23), Nitin (24), Avinash (29), Sandhya (22), Dhanvanti (21), Bimla (43), Ayesha (24) and Mamta (52).

The building in which the fire broke out is located near pillar number 544 of the Mundka metro station.

# Mundka fire: File detailed report in next 48 hrs, Add Commissioner of Narela Zone told

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a tragic fire incident in Mundka, in which 30 lives were lost, the fire broke out due to a short circuit, the North Delhi Municipal Corporation (North DMC) Commissioner on Saturday wrote a letter to the Additional Commissioner of Narela Zone, asking him to file a detailed report on the following incident in the next 48 hours.

According to the North DMC Commissioner's letter, an unfortunate incident of fire broke out in the Mundka area on 13/05/2022 wherein many human lives were lost and many other persons got injured. It is learnt that the fire reportedly broke out due to short circuit.

"The Additional Commissioner I/c Narela Zone is hereby directed to submit a detailed report of the above incident within 48 hours indicating on the following aspects, type of the area i.e. either residential, lar dora, agriculture; where the said building is located, tentative year of the construction of the building, tentative height of the building, in-case the building is old or new building i.e. any on-going construction, whether building plan sanctioned or not. If not, the reasons or details thereof," it stated.

"The purpose for which the building was being used, either the said purpose is permissible or not, in fact there is any No Objection Certificate (NOC) from fire department obtained by the occupier or not, whether factory license, trade Licence or any other permission was obtained by the occupier of the building, or not, if yes, the details thereof, if conversion charges, property tax or other municipal dues paid, if any, and the details



thereof, whether any show-cause notice or other penal action taken against the building in the past for any type of violation, whether there is any kind of lapse on the part of any municipal official of North DMC and the recommended action for the same, if any," it said in a statement.

The letter further stated that this matter should be treated as a top priority. Meanwhile, the North DMC commissioner also wrote letters to all six zones' deputy commissioners and additional commissioner of the factory licensing department to prevent these kinds of incidents in the future.

The letter stated, "in order to prevent recurrence of such tragic and unfortunate incidents, all the Zonal Dy. Commissioners of North DMC are hereby directed that a detailed survey of the areas falling under their respective zonal jurisdiction be carried out by constituting inter-departmental teams of officers/officials to find out whether any industrial/prohibited activity is going on in non-conforming areas."

"It is hereby directed that in case of detection of any prohibited/industrial activities in non-conforming areas, Notices

as per relevant provisions of the DMC Act, 1957 be issued immediately to all such units, and the relevant punitive action be taken forthwith against such premises including against the owner/occupiers of the premises as per the provisions of the law in a time-bound manner," it stated. "This exercise must be completed within 10 days, and an Action Taken Report be submitted to the Additional Commissioner, I/c Factory Licensing Department," the letter said.

"It is hereby directed that the factory licensing department shall give seven days time to factory owners in conforming/provisional conforming areas to either get the new online factory license or online renewal, as the case may be, along with NOC from the Fire Department to be uploaded on the online portal of North DMC," the letter said.

"In case of failure to obtain the online new factory license or online renewal (along with NOC from the Fire Department) by industrial units operating in conforming/provisional conforming areas, necessary action as per relevant provisions of the DMC Act be taken in a time-bound manner," the letter said.

# Heatwaves make a comeback

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The heatwave makes a comeback in the national capital, as Delhi on Saturday witnessed the maximum temperature of 44.2 degrees Celsius which is five notches warmer than the normal temperature for this time of the year. The city also witnessed severe heat-wave conditions at three stations including Delhi University, Narela, and Pusa.

The minimum temperature recorded at the Safdarjung Observatory was 26.5 degrees Celsius, which was one notch above the normal temperature for this season. The relative humidity on Friday morning at 8:30 was recorded at 62 per cent and 17 per cent in the evening at 5:30.

The weather stations at Ridge, Ayaznagar, Mungeshpur, Najafgarh, Pitampura, Palam,



and Lodhi Road recorded maximum temperatures of 45.4 degrees Celsius, 45.4 degrees Celsius, 47.2 degrees Celsius, 47 degrees Celsius, 46.4 degrees Celsius, 44.6 degrees Celsius and 44.4 degrees Celsius respectively, according to India Meteorological Department (IMD). No respite for the people of the capital city as the IMD predicted heatwave conditions to continue over

Northwest and Central India during the next two days and abatement thereafter. "Gradual rise in maximum temperatures by 3-4 degree Celsius very likely over southern parts of Maharashtra during next two days and no significant change thereafter," said IMD.

"No significant change in maximum temperatures very likely over rest parts of the country," IMD added..

The peak power demand in the national capital on Saturday cloaked at 6720 MW.

According to the sources in discoms, the Delhi power demand cloaked 6720 MW at 12:06 the midnight. The city's peak power demand broke the record on Friday. It not only clocked the season's highest of 6829 MW at 11:25 pm, but also the highest ever in the month of May. "Cooling load is the main reason behind the capital city's power load. In fact, according to estimates, almost around 50 per cent of Delhi's power demand in summers is because of the cooling load due to ACs, coolers, and fans. The rain had a direct bearing on the cooling load," sources said.

"Delhi's peak power demand in May had never crossed the 6000 MW in 2021 and 2020. In 2019, it had

crossed the 6000 MW mark only on three occasions - May 29 (6020 MW), May 30 (6240 MW), and May 31 (6461 MW)," they said.

"City peak power demand had breached the 7000 MW for the first time - peaking at 7016 MW in 2018. This expected peak power demand of around 8200 MW is an increase of around 285 per cent over the peak power demand of 2879 MW in 2002," sources added.

Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited has also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Central Board of Irrigation and Power (CBIP), for conducting capacity building training for the development and impartment of capacity building and skill development of personnel in the power distribution sector.



# Cong mulls 50% quota to SC, ST, OBC, minorities in party

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/UDAIPUR

The Congress on Saturday announced it plans to raise the representation of Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and minorities to 50 per cent at all levels of the organization. The party also held discussions on only two terms of Rajya Sabha per Congress leader. The discussion comes at the backdrop of party deciding over one family one ticket with exceptions to facilitate members from Congress first family to contest the elections. A decision on representation of SC/ST/OBC was taken by the panel on social justice



and empowerment formed by party chief Sonia Gandhi to lead discussions on this issue at the Congress' three-day 'Nav Sankalp Chintan Shivir'. Senior party leader K Raju said it is likely to be recommended for approval of the Congress Working Committee. Raju said the panel is also likely to propose establishing a social justice advisory council to the Congress president. This advisory council will look at issues and give recommendations to the president, he said.

# CBI books network for betting in IPL in collusion with Pak operator

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has booked a network of individuals engaged in Indian Premier League (IPL) betting since 2013 in collusion with a Pakistani operator. The agency has named one accused from Delhi Dileep Kumar of B-9/200, Sector 5, Rohini, Delhi besides two individuals from Hyderabad--- Gurram Satish and Gurram Vasu. "A reliable information has been received about a network of individuals involved in cricket betting are influencing outcome of Indian Premier League matches based on inputs received from Pakistan," reads the FIR. It further said, "In the garb of betting related to IPL matches, they are cheating the

general public by inducing them for betting. For this purpose, they have opened bank accounts using fake identities and Know Your Customer (IDs/KYC) documents in connivance with unknown bank officials." These bank accounts, according to the FIR, have been opened by submitting forged details such as multiple date of births and without due diligence due by the bank officials. As part of money received from the general public in India on account of such betting activities is also being shared with their associates based in foreign countries using hawala transactions. As per the information gathered by the CBI, a network of individuals has been involved in cricket betting



since 2013. Information received reveals "unscrupulous financial activities" by Dileep Kumar (accused number 1) in association with Gurram Satish and Gurram Vasu are in contact with one suspect Waqas Malik through a Pakistani phone number 923227890000. The persons involved were running cricket betting during the then ongoing IPL held in 2019. The involved persons are running the racket of cricket betting, committing fraud by inducing betting by the general public and thereby deceiving them of their hard earned money. They are also involved in impersonating their identities for operating various bank accounts on the basis of forged documents, according to the FIR. The bank accounts also displayed abnormal behaviour in relation to the customer profile. The three named accused have been booked under Indian Penal Code (IPC) section relating to criminal conspiracy, cheating and forgery besides provisions of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

# Wheat export ban measure anti-farmer: Cong

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Saturday hit out at the Government over the ban on the export of wheat, saying it was an "anti-farmer" measure as it deprives farmers of reaping the benefit of higher export prices. Asked about the government's move at a press conference during Congress' ongoing 'Chintan Shivir' in Udaipur, former Finance Minister P Chidambaram said, "I presume that it is because the Central Government has failed to procure enough wheat. It is not that wheat production has come down, it is more or less the same. In fact, it may be marginally more." Chidambaram said that on Friday, a Chhattisgarh minister had told him that the government there had procured 97 lakh tonnes of paddy.

If procurement had taken place, there would not have been any need to ban the export of wheat, he said. "But let me add, banning the export of wheat is an anti-farmer measure. It deprives the farmer of reaping the benefits of higher export prices. It is an anti-farmer measure and I am not surprised, this government has never been very friendly to the farmer," Chidambaram said. Asserting that the state of India's economy is a cause of "extreme concern", Chidambaram further mentioned by taking into account global and domestic developments, it may be necessary to contemplate a reset of economic policies. "State of Indian economy cause of extreme concern, job situation has never been worse," Chidambaram said. "The government appears

clueless on the ways to deal with these developments. USD 22 billion has flowed out of the country in the last 7 months. The foreign exchange reserves have depleted by USD 36 billion. The exchange rate stands at Rs 77.48 to a dollar, the highest ever. He also mentioned that job situation has never been worse. "The Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) is at a historic low of 40.38 per cent and the unemployment rate stands at 7.83 per cent. Henceforth we reiterate our charge that social services expenditure as a proportion of total expenditure has fallen to an average of 5 per cent (in 8 years) from an average of 9 per cent in the 10 years between 2004 and 2014. Later, the Congress' committee on farmers and agriculture, chaired by former Haryana chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda, sub-



mitted a report in the Chintan Shivir comprising of nine salient features including indebtedness of farmers, questions of legal guarantee of MSP, Climate changes effect on agriculture, direct transfer benefits, doubling of farmers income, PM Fasal Bima Yojana, Institutional Credit Investment, Green Revolution and Livestock and Horticulture. Party leaders Shaktisinh Gohil, T.S. Singhdeo, Nana Patole, Pratap Singh Bajwa and Dr. Akhilesh Prasad Singh addressed the media on the issue.

# Pak, China to participate in SCO anti-terrorism meeting in India

MEETING UNDER SCO TO BE HELD FROM MAY 16

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Pakistan and China will take part in an anti-terrorism meeting here next week under the aegis of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO). Despite tension between the two countries, an Indian delegation had also participated in a similar meeting in Pakistan last year. The upcoming meeting scheduled from May 16 to 19 will see a Pakistan delegation coming to India for the first time after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif took over last month. Pakistan also appointed a Minister (Trade) at its High

Commission here recently after a gap of more than three years thereby signaling some positive movement in ties between the two countries. Leaders and officials of India and China have also participated in the SCO meets even as stand-offs persist at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Eastern Ladakh for the last two years. Besides, China and Pakistan, a Russian delegation will also arrive here for the meeting to be held as part of the Shanghai Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS). India is likely to hold a full-fledged drill later this year in Manesar at the National Security Guards (NSG) centre near Gurugram. The RATS is based in Tashkent. It is a permanent body of the grouping and aims to counter terrorism, extremism, and separatism in the region. A three-member Pakistani delegation is expected to arrive here over the weekend for the RATS meet, sources said here on Saturday. An Indian delegation had taken part in a similar meet in Pabbi in Pakistan last year. The SCO was formed in 2001 but India and Pakistan became members only in 2017. Given the travel restrictions in place, China may not be able to send its delegation and representatives from the Chinese Embassy here are likely to take part in the crucial meet, sources said. India is likely to host the SCO summit in 2023 where leaders of the eight-member grouping (China, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Pakistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan) are expected to come to New Delhi.

Meanwhile, besides the anti-terrorism exercise at the NSG in October, another joint border operation of the SCO member states called "Friendship Border-2022" will be held in Kazakhstan later this year. Both exercises were decided at a meeting of SCO-RATS in Tashkent on March 25 this year chaired by India. The SCO grouping is one of the largest groupings, covering around 40% of the global population and 30% of the global GDP. The grouping has Russia, China and four central Asian countries including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan is the chair of the group this year and will hold the summit in September. It hands over the chairmanship to India, who will hold the

# 'Teachers should give 5 min extra to create awareness on thalassemia and its prevention'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Pointing out that every year at least 10,000 kids are born with thalassemia, a genetic blood disorder, in the country, Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Arjun Munda has urged teachers to at least give five minutes extra to create awareness among students about the incurable disease and its prevention. He also felt that anganwadi workers too should be roped in a nationwide awareness campaign along with various government stakeholders to tackle thalassemia. "There is a need to have a nationwide awareness cam-

paign through the stakeholders of various ministries and state governments such as teachers-students, Anganwadi and ASHA workers, which is essential for mounting an attack on the problem of thalassemia. A teacher should give five minutes extra to create awareness among students and similarly Anganwadi workers should inform the villagers about the disease and its prevention," Munda said at a webinar recently. Munda also suggested that there should be common literature in simple and local language to guide the local level workers and help them in creating awareness. "Apart

from awareness and counselling, cheap medicines availability and community blood donation in rural areas should be promoted," the minister said. Experts felt that the Government should make the antenatal test (HbA2) mandatory for every pregnant woman in the first trimester of pregnancy. Dr Rahul Bhargava, a leading hematologist from Fortis Hospital, Gurugram, Haryana said that managing the disease is a big challenge when it comes to thalassemia and other blood disorder conditions. Making the HPLC test mandatory that includes the

HbA2 test also, for all the antenatal women in the first trimester for haemoglobin will help bring down the birth rate of the children with the genetic blood disorder. Thalassemia and Sickle Cell Society (TSCS) too in a press statement said that the need of the hour is to create further awareness among the masses on the importance of the HbA2 test for everyone. The Central Government too will be requested to pass a Bill for making it mandatory for every couple in India to go for HbA2 test before pregnancy or first trimester of pregnancy to help eradicate this genetic blood disorder. TSCS secretary Suman

Jain said in a statement that bone marrow transplant is the ultimate cure for thalassemia and the disease eradication is possible only with the government's support. About 4% of the population are thalassemia carriers and around 10,000 children are born thalassemia major in India. Five percent of the human population is carrier of some form of disorder of Hemoglobin (Hb) (Hemoglobinopathy) affecting its oxygen carrying capacity in blood, as per the WHO. Treatment of Thalassemia major is lifelong and includes regular blood transfusions, chelation medicines to tack-



le the issue of increasing iron content in the body, managing any complications such as infections, endocrine – resulting hormonal imbalances, say the doctors.

# NIA arrests two persons in TRF conspiracy case



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Saturday conducted searches at four locations in Kashmir valley in Baramulla, Kupwara, Pulwama and Shopian districts and arrested two accused persons in the TRF Conspiracy Case. The case relates to activities of 'The Resistance Front' (TRF), an offshoot of proscribed terrorist organisation Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and its self-styled commander Sajjad Gul, who has been actively radicalising, motivating and recruiting youth of J&K for indulging in violent activities

in Jammu and Kashmir and other parts of India. He along with his other associate commanders of LeT based in Pakistan, have been recruiting individuals (Over Ground Workers) to conduct reconnaissance of pre-determined targets, coordinating and transporting arms/ammunition/explosives to support the terrorists of LeT and TRF in order to launch attacks on the security forces and execute targeted killings. The case was registered suo-moto on November 18, 2021. During the searches, digital devices (mobile phones, Laptop, SIM cards and mem-

ory cards) and incriminating material used for fabrication of IEDs and Jihadi literature/posters were seized. "Based on these searches, two over ground workers of TRF, who are in contact with their Pakistan based handlers were arrested for providing logistic support for terrorist activities, spreading terrorist propaganda, radicalising and recruiting new members to TRF," the NIA said in a statement. The arrested accused are Muzamil Mushtaq Bhat of Khwaja Bagh, Fatehpura, Baramulla and Fayaz Ahmad Khan of Warpora, Zachaldara, Kupwara.

# Team of scientists from JNCASR develops molecule to cure Alzheimer's disease

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A team of scientists from the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), under the Department of Science and Technology (DST), has developed a molecule that could be a potential drug candidate to halt or cure the leading cause of dementia worldwide. This research work has been patented and published in the journal 'Advanced Therapeutics'. The research is aimed to design and synthesize molecules that can reduce the toxicity of amyloid peptide—that accumulate in the central nervous system. Prof. T Govindaraju who led the team said, "The molecule, named TGR63, can rescue neuronal cells from amyloid toxicity. We saw that the molecule helped in reducing the clumping and slowly reversing the cognitive decline, which disrupts the mechanism through which neurons become dysfunctional due to Alzheimer's." As per studies, Alzheimer's will soon be one of the top diseases in the country, and currently available treatments provide only temporary relief, and

there are no approved drugs that directly act on the mechanisms of the disease. This molecule addresses the unmet need to develop drug candidates to halt or cure the disease. Reviewing the potential of this research to be a drug candidate, Hamsa Biopharma India Private Limited, a Company based in Delhi, indicated its interest in further developing the drug based on a license agreement. Accordingly, the team led by Ram Mukunda of Hamsa Biopharma India Private Limited entered an agreement with JNCASR. The Hamsa Biopharma India Private Limited is a subsidiary of a US-based company, which has expertise in clinical trials, research, and taking this potential molecule through regulatory processes related to drug development. Alzheimer's disease is a progressive neurologic disorder that causes the brain to shrink (atrophy) and brain cells to die. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause of dementia — a continuous decline in thinking, behavioral and social skills that affects a person's ability to function independently.



People click photos of a flock of flamingos standing in a pond during the Flamingo Festival on the occasion of World Migratory Bird Day, at Talawe wetlands in Navi Mumbai on Saturday



# Russia withdraws from city of Kharkiv

AP ■ KYIV

Russian troops are withdrawing from Ukraine's second-largest city after weeks of heavy bombardment, the Ukrainian military said Saturday, as Kyiv and Moscow's forces engaged in a grinding battle for the country's eastern industrial heartland.

Ukraine's general staff said the Russians were pulling back from the northeastern city of Kharkiv and focusing on guarding supply routes, while launching mortar, artillery and airstrikes in the eastern Donetsk province in order to "deplete Ukrainian forces and destroy fortifications."

Defense Minister Oleksii Reznikov said Ukraine was "entering a new - long-term - phase of the war."

As the country's top prosecutor put a Russian soldier on trial for war crimes, the first of dozens that could face charges, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said Ukrainians were doing their "maximum" to drive out the invaders and that the outcome of the war would depend on support from Europe and other allies.

"No one today can predict how long this war will last," Zelenskyy said in his nightly



video address late Friday.

Russia's offensive in the Donbas, a mining and industrial region which Moscow-backed separatists have partially controlled since 2014, appeared to be turning into a back-and-forth slog with no major breakthroughs on either side.

After failing to capture Kyiv, Ukraine's capital, the Russian military decided to concentrate on the Donbas, but its troops have struggled to gain and hold ground.

Before the war, Ukraine had its most highly trained soldiers in the region to stave off the Russia-backed rebels.

Russia has captured some villages and towns during its invasion. The Ukrainian military chief for the Donbas' Luhansk province said Friday

that Russian troops had nearly full control of Rubizhne, a city with a prewar population of around 55,000.

Zelenskyy said Ukraine's forces had also made progress, retaking six Ukrainian towns or villages in the past day.

Western officials said Ukraine had driven Russian forces back around Kharkiv.

The largely Russian-speaking city was a Russian key military objective in the early phase of the war, when Moscow was still hoping to capture and hold major Ukrainian cities.

The Institute for the Study of War, a Washington-based think tank, said Ukraine "appears to have won the Battle of Kharkiv."

It said, "Ukrainian forces prevented Russian troops from

encircling, let alone seizing Kharkiv, and then expelled them from around the city."

Regional governor Oleh Sinegovov said in a post on the Telegram messaging app that there had been no shelling attacks on Kharkiv in the past day. He said Ukraine had launched a counteroffensive near Izyum, a city 125 kilometers (78 miles) south of Kharkiv that has been under effective Russian control since at least the beginning of April.

Fighting was fierce on the Siverskyi Donets River near the city of Severodonetsk, where Ukraine has launched counterattacks but failed to halt Russia's advance, said Oleh Zhdanov, an independent Ukrainian military analyst.

"The fate of a large portion of the Ukrainian army is being decided — there are about 40,000 Ukrainian soldiers," he said.

However, Russian forces suffered heavy losses in a Ukrainian attack that destroyed a pontoon bridge they were using to try to cross the same river — the largest in eastern Ukraine — in the town of Bilohorivka, Ukrainian and British officials said, in another sign of Moscow's struggle to salvage a war gone awry.

## US, Russian defence chiefs speak for 1st time since invasion

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Russian Minister of Defense Sergei Shoigu spoke with U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin on Friday after months of refusing direct contact with his American counterpart. But officials said the call didn't appear to signal any change in Moscow's war in Ukraine.

A senior Defense Department official said Friday that while Austin believes the hour-long conversation was important in the effort to keep lines of communication open, it didn't resolve any "acute issues" or lead to any change in what the Russian are doing or saying as the war enters week 12.

The call — initiated by Austin — marked the highest level American contact with a Russian official since the war began in late February. Over the past several months, Pentagon officials have repeatedly said that Russian leaders declined to take calls from Austin and Army Gen.

# New Lankan PM inducts 4 Ministers into Cabinet

Peiris retained as foreign minister

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Ranil Wickremesinghe inducted four ministers into his Cabinet on Saturday, including G. L. Peiris as the Foreign Minister, as the country's new Prime Minister sought to complete the government formation to focus on efforts to rebuild the economy.

Dinesh Gunawardena has been sworn in as the Minister of Public Administration, Peiris as the Foreign Minister, Prasanna Ranatunga as the Minister of Urban Development and housing and Kanchana Wijesekara as the Minister of Power and Energy, the Daily Mirror, an online news portal reported.

Peiris was also the Foreign Minister in the former Mahinda Rajapaksa-led Cabinet.

The government sources said Wickremesinghe's Cabinet is expected to be limited to under 20, the report said.

Sri Lanka's ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP)



party has decided to offer crucial support to Wickremesinghe, who has just one seat in Parliament, to help him prove a majority in the House.

Most of the opposition parties in Sri Lanka announced that they would not be joining the interim Government led by Wickremesinghe.

The 73-year-old United National Party (UNP) leader was appointed as Sri Lanka's 26th prime minister on Thursday as the country was without a government since Monday when President Gotabaya Rajapaksa's elder brother and prime minister Mahinda Rajapaksa resigned after violence erupted following an attack on the anti-government protesters by his supporters.

New Lankan PM Wickremesinghe invites Opposition leader to join hands to resolve country's worst economic crisis

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's new Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe has urged the main Opposition Samagi Jana Balawegaya (SJB) leader to leave aside party politics and join hands with him to form a non-partisan government to resolve the burning issues and stabilise the country's economy, according to media reports on Saturday.

73-year-old United National Party (UNP) leader, who was appointed as Sri Lanka's 26th prime minister on Thursday, wrote a letter to SJB leader Sajith Premadasa, the Daily Mirror, an online news portal reported. In the letter, Wickremesinghe invited the SJB to support the joint effort made by them to immediately resolve the burning issues faced by the people and also to stabilise the country economically, politically and socially by obtaining foreign assistance.

# Palestinian man dies of head wound sustained from Israeli police

AP ■ JERUSALEM

A 21-year-old Palestinian Aman died on Saturday from a head wound sustained last month after Israeli police fired rubber bullets at stone-throwing Palestinian demonstrators during violence at Jerusalem's most sensitive holy site. Israel's Hadassah hospital announced the death early Saturday, saying only that Waleed Shareef had died weeks after being hospitalised with severe head injuries. His family confirmed the death.

Shareef was injured on April 22 in the Al Aqsa Mosque compound — the site of repeated confrontations between Israeli forces and Palestinian demonstrators in recent weeks.

Amateur video from the time shows a large group of Palestinians running away from the direction of heavy Israeli fire. Immediately after one shot, Shareef is seen falling



on his face and lying motionless on the ground. Israeli police quickly evacuated him.

At the time, police fired sponge-tipped bullets to disperse a crowd of masked Palestinians that it said was throwing stones and fireworks toward police and near the Western Wall — Judaism's most holy prayer site.

Palestinian witnesses and Shareef's family say he was shot in the head with a rubber bullet, while Israeli authorities have suggested he died from

injuries sustained when he fell on the ground. Hadassah officials on Saturday declined to give a precise cause of the head injury.

The family's lawyer, Firas Jebreeni, said the family has rejected an Israeli request for an autopsy, but that police refused to let them see the body and removed it without permission to Israel's main forensics institute. He said he has appealed to an Israeli court to prevent the autopsy and return the body to the family.

# Peshawar mosque blast mastermind killed: Police

PTI ■ PESHAWAR

The mastermind of the Peshawar blast along with one of his companions was on Saturday killed in a targeted operation in the suburb of the district, which lies at the heart of Pakistan's restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, police said.

According to the police, the terrorist named Hassan Shah, a resident of district Khyber, was killed in Pishatakharra of Peshawar in a joint counter-insurgency operation conducted by Peshawar police and the Counter-Terrorism Department of Pakistan.

The slain terrorist was gunned down along with his companion, the police confirmed.

According to the police, both the terrorists belonged to a banned outfit of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), a militant organisation fighting



the government of Pakistan to enforce the law of Sharia across the South Asian nation.

The police said the security forces had geared up the search operation in the area to arrest the remaining culprits.

As many as 57 people were killed and over 200 injured in the suicide blast at the Ahle Tashih mosque of Kucha Risaldar in Peshawar city on March 4 this year.

The militant group Islamic

State, claiming the responsibility for the attack, had added that the lone suicide bomber was from neighbouring Afghanistan. The attack in Peshawar's congested old city was the worst in years in Pakistan as the country faces renewed militant attacks mostly carried out by the Pakistani Taliban since last August when the Afghan Taliban swept into power and America ended its 20-year involvement in Afghanistan.

# N Korea confirms 21 new deaths as it battles Covid-19

AP ■ SEOUL

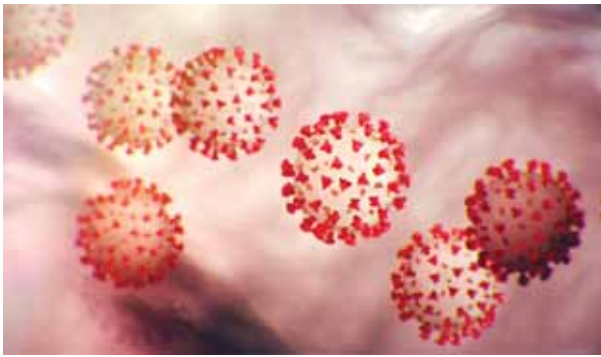
North Korea on Saturday reported 21 new deaths and 174,440 more people with fever symptoms as the country scrambles to slow the spread of COVID-19 across its unvaccinated population.

The new deaths and cases since Friday increased total numbers to 27 deaths and 524,440 illnesses amid a rapid spread of fever since late April.

North Korea said 243,630 people had recovered and 280,810 remained in quarantine. State media didn't specify how many of the fever cases and deaths were confirmed as COVID-19 infections.

The country imposed what it described as maximum preventive measures on Thursday after confirming its first COVID-19 cases since the start of the pandemic.

It had previously held for



more than two years to a widely doubted claim of a perfect record keeping out the virus that has spread to nearly every place in the world.

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un during a ruling party Politburo meeting on Saturday rejected the outbreak as a historically "great upheaval" and called for unity between the government and people to stabilise the outbreak as quickly as possible.

Officials during the meet-

ing mainly discussed ways to swiftly distribute medical supplies the country has released from its emergency reserves, Pyongyang's official Korean Central News Agency said.

In a report presented to the Politburo, the North's emergency epidemic office blamed most of the deaths on "mistakes like overmuch taking of drugs, bereft of scientific medical treatment."

Kim, who said he was

donating some of his private medicine supplies to help the anti-virus campaign, expressed optimism that the country could bring the outbreak under control, saying most transmissions are occurring within communities that are isolated from one another and not spreading from region to region.

He called for officials to take lessons from the successful pandemic responses of other nations and picked an example in China, the North's major ally.

China, however, has been facing pressure to change its so-called "zero-COVID" strategy that has brought major cities to a standstill as it struggles to slow the fast-moving omicron variant.

North Korea since Thursday has imposed steps aimed at restricting the movement of people and supplies between cities and counties, but state media's descriptions of the

measures indicate people aren't being confined to their homes.

Experts say a failure to control the spread of COVID-19 could have devastating consequences in North Korea, considering the country's poor health care system and that its 26 million people are largely unvaccinated.

Tests of virus samples collected Sunday from an unspecified number of people with fevers in the country's capital Pyongyang confirmed they were infected with the omicron variant, state media said.

The country has so far officially confirmed one death as linked to an omicron infection.

Lacking vaccines, antiviral pills, intensive care units and other major health tools to fight the virus, North Korea's pandemic response will be mostly about isolating people with symptoms at designated shelters, experts say.

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GU05CN5048 DL2FDPK2000 HR22Q9688 DL8CE1310 DL3CAD8161 DL8CK3686 DL2CAF9346 RJ14CJ8922 DL2CP5422 DL3CAS0780 DL2CW3164 DL8CK4309 MP07CA1172 UK07AD9068 DL3FC9999 DL9CG9188 DL9CP094 DL8CF1508 DL3SY0066 DL3CAL0146 DL9CP7826 DL2FG50034 DL2FGH0700 DL4CA5262 DL2CAD2049 DD484 DL4CR8459 DL4CP3260 DL2CZ2382 HR30CN170 DL4CM4377 DL9CE566 DL8CN1170 DL4CAD6034 DL4CAA607 DL4CA6986 DL2CAL3700 HR05D7562 DL4CA63900 DL3CAY2683 DL4CAG4438 DL3CV3475 DL6CE2896 DL4CGT154 HR12D1769 DL2FDD0002 DL3CV2818 DL3CAK5340 DL3CB83206 MP09BC2663 DL3CBJ6816 DL4CAB5425 DL1CM439 DL4CM9381 DL9CJ5152 DL2CW0154 DL8CJ8726 DL3CR5320 ML06A2455 DL2CZ9092 DL4CS0009 DL8CL7531 DL8CNA1995

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Email: legaloffice2006@gmail.com

# 1 dead, 3 hurt after shots fired outside Arkansas graduation

AP ■ HOT SPRINGS (US)

A man opened fire outside an after a high school graduation ceremony, killing one person and wounding three others and exchanging gunfire with police, authorities said Friday.

The shooting happened Thursday night outside the Hot Springs Convention Center, which had hosted a graduation ceremony for Hot Springs World Class High School, said Officer Omar Cervantes. Hot Springs officers then wounded the suspect, Charles Johnson, 25, who fled

and was later arrested at a hospital on a murder warrant.

Authorities have not said what led to the fight, but Hot Springs School District Superintendent Stephanie Nehus said in a statement that no current students or graduates were involved.

Cervantes said in a statement that Hot Springs police officers and Garland County deputies were trying to defuse the situation when a single gunman began shooting into the crowd. He identified the man who died as Michael Jordan, 39. Others had non-life threatening wounds, he said.

# House subpoenas its own, grave new norm after January 6 attack

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The Jan 6 committee's remarkable decision to subpoena House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy and other congressional Republicans over the deadly insurrection at the Capitol has deepened acrimony and distrust among lawmakers and raises questions about what comes next.

The outcome is certain to reverberate beyond the immediate investigation of Donald Trump's unfounded efforts to overturn Joe Biden's presidential election victory. Fuming Republicans vow to use the same tools, weaponising congressional subpoena powers if they wrest control of the House in November's midterm elections to go after Democrats,



even at the highest levels in Congress.

"It's setting a very jarring and dangerous precedent," said Rep Peter Meijer of Michigan, who was among the handful of Republicans who voted to impeach Trump over the insurrection. On Friday, the subpoenas for McCarthy and the

five Republican lawmakers were served as the committee investigating the Jan 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol is wrapping up its initial phase. Public hearings are expected to begin in June, and the panel is still determining whether to call Republican senators to testify.

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As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

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1.	Hemant Swain/ Shima Rane Swain/ (12900001179 & QZFD800005012550)	House No-2E/151, Front Portion, N.I.T. Faridabad, (Haryana)/ May 10, 2022	September 27, 2021 Rs. 25,89,389/-	Delhi/ NCR

The above mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

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**Place: Delhi/ NCR**

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# Wheat export ban to help control prices, regulate trade: Comm Secy

‘Adequate food available in Govt stocks, private stocks’

**New Delhi:** Asserting that there is no wheat supply crisis in the country, Commerce Secretary BVR Subrahmanyam on Saturday said the government's decision to ban wheat exports will help in controlling rising domestic prices and meeting the food requirement of India's neighbours and vulnerable countries.

The government has banned wheat exports with immediate effect. However, the export shipments for which irrevocable letters of credit (LoC) have been issued on or before the date of this notification will be allowed.

Subrahmanyam said that the decision was taken at the right time. "There is no dramatic fall in production. I do not think there is a crisis which needs to be imagined. There is adequate food available in gov-



ernment stocks and private stocks," he said while addressing a joint press briefing along with counterparts in the departments of food and agriculture. Explaining the rationale behind the decision, the commerce secretary said the primary goal was to put a "check on inflation".

"So, what is the purpose of this order. What it is doing is in the name of prohibition - we are directing the wheat trade in a certain direction. We do not want the wheat to go in an

irregulated manner to places where it might get just hoarded or where it may not be used to the purpose which we are hoping it would be used for," Subrahmanyam said.

The focus has also been given to ensuring adequate food stock availability within the country.

"At the end of the day, food is a very sensitive item for every country because it affects everybody - poor, the middle and the rich," he said, adding the wheat flour prices have

gone up in some parts of the country by about 40 per cent.

The government is also committed to ensuring the food security of neighbours and vulnerable countries.

"So, we have kept the window open for (our) neighbours. We have also kept the window open for a large number of vulnerable countries if their governments do make such requests," he added.

The secretary highlighted that the country has exported 7 million tonnes of wheat during the last fiscal, out of which about 50 per cent were shipped to Bangladesh.

Talking about the current fiscal 2022-23, he said as per estimates, 4.3 million tonnes of wheat have been contracted for exports so far.

Out of this, 1.2 million tonnes have already been exported in April and May, and another 1.1 million tonnes are expected to be shipped, he said, adding "if you have a valid order - irrevocable letters of credit - that contract will be honoured. So, India's credibility as a reliable supplier is maintained".

PTI

# Govt sets up committee to boost cruise tourism

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal on Saturday said the government has set up a high-level committee to create an enabling eco-system for the development of cruise tourism in the country.

The committee comprises government officials and cruise industry players.

Sonowal on Saturday inaugurated the first two-day International Cruise Conference being held here.

Speaking to the media on the sidelines of the event, the minister said the government aims to make India the most attractive cruise tourism destination and the industry the world's largest one in the world.

The Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways also informed that the government has set up a Task Force under the Secretary in the Ministry of Tourism and the Shipping secretary as its vice-chairman.

The high-level committee will assist the Task Force with its ideas and suggestions to the committee, he said.

"I declare the constitution of a High-level committee

comprising both government officials and national and international industry players. It will assist the Taskforce and give it ideas and suggestions," Sonowal told reporters.

Emphasising that the purpose of the international conference is to make India a cruise tourism hub, the minister said the government will provide whatever modern infrastructure is required to attain the objective.

He also expressed hope that the state governments will also play their role in the promotion of the industry, which is seeing demand coming back after being hit during the pandemic.

"India is going to be the most attractive destination of cruise tourism, and there is no doubt about it because whatever potential we have in the coastal areas and inland waterways are now set to be explored. It is still untapped. So, we will explore it with our most modern infrastructure," Sonowal said.

India aims to increase cruise passenger traffic from 0.4 million at present to 4 million. The economic potential of

cruise tourism is expected to go up from USD 110 million to USD 5.5 billion in the years to come, according to an official release.

To boost the cruise tourism industry in the country, the government has taken several initiatives, including infrastructure up-gradation, rationalisation of port fees, removing ousting charges, granting priority berthing to cruise ships, and providing e-visa facilities, among others, the release added.

Upgradation and modernisation are being carried out at seven major ports in the country, including the flagship New International Cruise terminal coming up in Mumbai with a total cost of about Rs 495 crore.

Sonowal asserted that the Indian cruise market has the potential to grow 10 folds over the next decade, driven by rising demand and disposable incomes. "The government realises this potential and is determined to position India as a global cruise hub with state-of-art infrastructure for both ocean and river cruises," he said. PTI

# Sri Lanka to receive 65,000MT of urea from India for paddy cultivation

**Colombo:** India has assured Sri Lanka to immediately supply 65,000 metric tonnes of urea to avoid any disruption in paddy cultivation in this country, as it faces the worst economic crisis in its post-independence history.

High Commissioner of Sri Lanka in New Delhi Milinda Moragoda met with the Secretary of the Department of Fertilisers Rajesh Kumar Chaturvedi in New Delhi on Thursday to discuss the supply of urea required for the current Yala cultivation season in Sri Lanka, according to media reports here on Saturday.

Moragoda thanked Chaturvedi for India's decision to supply 65,000 MT of urea required for the current Yala cultivation season in Sri Lanka, the High Commission of Sri Lanka in New Delhi said in a message.

The Government of India has decided to supply this quantity of urea immediately to Sri Lanka at the request of the Government of Sri Lanka, despite a ban on export of urea from India, the Sri Lankan High Commission said in a statement.

High Commissioner Moragoda thanked Secretary Chaturvedi for his personal involvement in arranging necessary approvals and logistics to supply 65,000 metric tonnes of urea to Sri Lanka in consultation with the High Commissioner of India in Colombo Gopal Baglay.

In response, Chaturvedi said that his Department is always ready to support Sri



Lanka in keeping with India's 'neighbourhood first' policy, and that the Department is making arrangements to ship the required quantity of urea from the nearest port to Sri Lanka through a State Company coming under his purview.

The High Commissioner and the Secretary also discussed ways and means to ensure the continuous supply of chemical fertiliser from India to Sri Lanka under the existing credit line and beyond.

India has committed more than USD 3 billion to debt-ridden Sri Lanka in loans, credit lines and credit swaps since January this year.

Yala is the season of paddy cultivation in Sri Lanka that lasts between May and August.

Sri Lanka is aiming to boost its agriculture sector to avoid any disruption in the agriculture market following

the drop in the paddy cultivation in the Maha session.

The Sri Lankan government banned chemical fertilisers last year as part of a phased transition towards organic agriculture. The dearth of adequate supplies of organic fertilisers affected agricultural output, especially rice and tea, and the government recently ended the ban on several key crops.

Sri Lanka's annual fertiliser imports cost USD 400 million. Farmers across Sri Lanka have intensified their protests due to the lack of fertiliser and being compelled to abandon their farmlands.

The chemical fertiliser ban, combined with bad weather, led to falling crop yields and contributed to inflation hitting a 47-month high of 8.3 per cent in October with food inflation at 11.7 per cent, Daily Mirror, an online news portal said. PTI

## There are mountains to climb: Air India CEO-designate Campbell Wilson

**New Delhi:** Campbell Wilson has termed his appointment as Air India CEO and MD as a fantastic opportunity to lead a historic airline and mentioned that there are "mountains to climb" in his new stint.

Wilson is currently the Chief Executive Officer of the Singapore Airlines' wholly-owned subsidiary Scoot Air. Singapore Airlines (SIA) is a joint venture partner of Tata Group in full service carrier Vistara.

On Thursday, Tata Sons had announced the appointment of Wilson as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of Air India.

In a communicate sent to Scoot employees on Friday, he said, "This afternoon I informed the executive team and your union leaders of my resignation from Scoot and the SIA Group."

He said it was by no means an easy decision to leave and SIA was his first professional job and has been his home for the last 26 years.

Wilson noted that across three continents, six countries and more than 12 roles, SIA has accorded him many more opportunities and experiences than he could ever have dreamed of. PTI

# Flour millers' association RFMFI welcomes Government's decision to ban wheat exports

**New Delhi:** Flour millers' association RFMFI on Saturday welcomed the government's decision to ban wheat exports, saying this will prevent "unnecessary panic" in the market regarding domestic supply and also help in controlling any price rise.

Roller Flour Millers Federation of India (RFMFI) President Anjani Aggarwal said the association had written to the government to regulate exports. "It is a very good decision by the Government at this stage, as this will prevent unnecessary panic in the country about wheat supply and prices."

He said the wheat production in the 2021-22 crop year, ending June, is likely to decline at 95-98 million tonnes. "The country would have to import wheat after a few months if exports were not banned," Aggarwal said.

He said the prices of wheat and wheat flour will be stable now. Atta (loose) prices are ruling at Rs 26-28 per kg, while packaged Atta prices stood at Rs 28-30 per kg.

"The prices of atta could have risen to Rs 40 per kg or even more. Prices will stabilise now," he said, while justifying

the government's decision.

India has banned wheat exports with immediate effect, as part of measures to control rising domestic prices, according to an official notification.

However, the export shipments for which irrevocable letters of credit (LoC) have been issued on or before the date of this notification will be allowed, the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) said in a notification dated May 13. "The export policy of wheat is prohibited with immediate effect," the DGFT said.

The government has revised downwards the estimate for wheat production by 5.7 per cent to 105 million tonnes in the 2021-22 crop year ending June, from the earlier projection of 111.32 million tonnes, as the crop productivity has been affected due to the early onset of summer

India's wheat production stood at 109.59 million tonnes in the 2020-21 crop year (July-June).

The country exported 7 million tonnes of wheat during the last fiscal. India was looking to export 10 million tonnes of wheat this fiscal year on rising global demand amid war between Russia and Ukraine. PTI

# Restriction on agri exports 'indirect tax' on farmers: Bharat Krishak Samaj

**New Delhi:** Farmers' body Bharat Krishak Samaj (BKS) on Saturday said that restrictions on exports of agricultural produce are an "indirect tax" on farmers as they are unable to benefit from rising global commodity prices.

Reacting to the government's decision to ban wheat exports, Bharat Krishak Samaj Chairman Ajay Vir Jakhar tweeted "Restriction on agricultural exports are an indirect tax on farmers in countries where imposed."

Farmgate prices get subdued by policy and farmers are unable to benefit from rising commodity prices while having to pay higher input costs, he observed.

"This is a #HumanRights issue," Jakhar tweeted.

India has banned wheat exports with immediate effect as part of measures to control rising domestic prices, according to an official notification.

However, the export shipments for which irrevocable let-

## UK delays ban on 'buy one get one free' junk food deals

**London:** Rules banning multi-buy deals on foods and drinks high in fat, salt, or sugar (HFSS), including buy-one-get-one free (BOGOF), three for two and free refills for sugary soft drinks, will be delayed for a year, the UK government said on Saturday.

The plan had been unveiled in December 2020 to be enforced by April this year as part of a wider anti-obesity health drive.

The Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) said the delay to restrictions on multibuy deals will allow the government to review and monitor the impact of the restrictions on the cost of living in light of an unprecedented global economic situation.

"Pausing restrictions on deals like buy one get one free will allow us to understand its impact on consumers in light of an unprecedented global economic situation," said UK Public Health Minister Maggie Throup. "We're committed to doing everything we can to help people live healthier lives," she said.

The restrictions banning HFSS adverts on TV before 9 pm. PTI

कार्यालय अतिरिक्त तहसीलदार, वाणिज्यिक कर अधिकारी, वृत्त-तीन, दुर्ग / / नीलामी की उद्घोषणा / / फार्म सी-1 (नियम 5-क देखिये) छत्तीसगढ़ भू-राजस्व संहिता 1959 की धारा 447(ख-ख) तथा धारा 147(ख-ख-ख) के अधीन खाते को पट्टे पर देने की उद्घोषणा

चूंकि मेसर्स नेशनल ट्रेड कर्माईज, इन्फरस्ट्रक्चर एक्स, मिलाई तहसील व जिला दुर्ग दिन 22423300952 द्वारा कालम (5) में उल्लेखित भू-राजस्व संहिता की बकाया तथा आदेशिका फीस के कारण शोध 37.23,360/- रुमयों की बसुली के नीचे उल्लेखित खाता/खाते कुक किया गया है।

अतएव एवं द्वारा उद्घोषणा की जाती है, कि यदि शोध रकम, पट्टे पर देने के लिये, इसमें निश्चित दिन के पूर्व शासकीय कोषालय मे न चुकाई गई, तो उक्त खाते/खातों उस पर/उन पर अधिलेखित सम्पत्त मारो और उसके संबंध में किये गये सम्पत्त अनुदानों से एवं सविदाओं से मुक्त, दिनांक 04.06.2022 का 11:00 बजे सार्वजनिक नीलामी द्वारा ...30... वर्षों की कालावधि के लिये पट्टे पर दे दिये जायेंगे :

अनुसूची (संपत्ति का विवरण)					
स्थान	संपत्ति का ब्यौरा	क्षेत्रफल	बकाया राशि	संपत्ति का आरक्षित मूल्य	घरोहर राशि
1	2	3	4	5	6
मोतीलाल नेहरू नगर पूर्व आवासीय योजना	ब्लॉक क्रमांक 7 बी यू खण्ड क्रमांक 05	आकार 16X21=336 Sq.Mt.	37.23,360/-	88,67,040/-	8,87,000/-

खातों का पट्टे पर दिया जाना अनिवार्य निम्नलिखित निर्बंधनों तथा शर्तों के अध्याधीन होगा :-

- इसपत्ति की नीलामी 'जहां है जैसी है', के आधार पर छत्तीसगढ़ भू-राजस्व संहिता 4959 की धारा 146 एवं 147 के प्रावधानों के तहत की जायेगी।
- नीलामी उद्घोषणा जारी होने की दिनांक तक, संपत्ति पर किसी अन्य शासकीय विभाग, अर्धशासकीय विभाग, वित्तीय संस्था अथवा गैर वित्तीय संस्था अथवा किसी अन्य कोई अथवा किसी अन्य कोई अधिकार अथवा कोई दावा अग्रप्राप्त है।
- नीलामी में भाग लेने के इच्छुक बोलीदार को 'वाणिज्यिक कर अधिकारी वृत्त तीन दुर्ग के पक्ष में आरक्षित, मूल्य की लगभग 10 प्रतिशत राशि अर्थात् रूपये 8,86,704/- का पे आर्डर/डीडी, घरोहर राशि के रूप में नीलामी आरम्भ होने के पूर्व जमा करना आवश्यक होगा।
- प्रत्येक बोलीदार को नीलामी के पूर्व में भाग लेने हेतु उक्त घरोहर राशि के साथ, पहचान पत्र, (पासपोर्ट, ड्राइविंग लाइसेंस, वोटर आई. डी. कार्ड, आधार कार्ड में से एक) एवं पेन कार्ड की स्व प्रमाणित छायाप्रति के साथ, उनके द्वारा नीलामी की शर्त स्वीकार है, इस आशय का घोषणा पत्र सलग्न करना होगा।
- यूनसम तीन बोलीदार होने पर ही नीलामी की कार्यवाही आरम्भ की जायेगी।
- नियम व शर्तों के अधीन, पूर्णरूपेण सही एवं सार्वजनिक बोली लगाने वाले को सफल घोषित किया जायेगा अन्य बोलीदार की जमा की गई घरोहर राशि नीलामी के बाद बिना ब्याज के वापस कर दी जायेगी।
- सफल बोलीदार को विक्रय मूल्य का 25 प्रतिशत का भुगतान, पे आर्डर/डिमाण्ड ड्राफ्ट के माध्यम से, तत्काल (या निर्देशानुसार) वाणिज्यिक कर अधिकारी वृत्त तीन दुर्ग के पक्ष में करना होगा, घरोहर राशि इसमें समाविष्टित की जायेगी। निश्चित समय के भीतर राशि जमा न करने पर घरोहर राशि जफ्त कर ली जायेगी। संपत्ति की पुनः नीलामी की प्रक्रिया आरम्भ की जायेगी।
- नीलामी की पुष्टि होने पर व अधिकारम बोली लगाने वाले को सफल बोलीदार मानकर उक्त संपत्ति हस्तांतरित करने का निर्णय लिया जाता है तो, सफल बोलीदार को विक्रय मूल्य का शेष 75 प्रतिशत राशि निर्णय के 15 दिवस के भीतर जमा करना होगा। अन्यथा पूर्व में जमा 25 प्रतिशत राशि जफ्त कर ली जायेगी एवं उक्त संपत्ति की पुनः नीलामी की प्रक्रिया आरम्भ की जायेगी।
- किसी विवाद की स्थिति में नीलामीकर्ता का निर्णय अंतिम एवं सर्वमान्य होगा।

## NTPC's 20 MW solar capacity at Kawas begins commercial op

**New Delhi:** State-owned power giant NTPC on Saturday announced the beginning of commercial operation of the first part capacity of 20 MW out of 56 MW Kawas Solar PV Project in Gujarat.

"Consequent upon successful commissioning, the first part capacity of 20 MW out of 56 MW Kawas Solar PV Project at Kawas, Gujarat, is

declared on Commercial Operation from 00:00 Hrs of May 14, 2022," a BSE filing said.

With this, the standalone installed and commercial capacity of NTPC has reached 54,616.68 MW.

Further, the NTPC group installed and commercial capacity has touched 68,981.68 and 68,321.68 MW, respectively. PTI

## Shipping Corporation Q4 net profit jumps 77.42% to ₹152.16 crore

**New Delhi:** Shipping Corporation of India (SCI) on Saturday reported a 77.42 per cent jump in its consolidated net profit to Rs 152.16 crore for the fourth quarter ended March 2022.

The state-owned company had clocked a consolidated profit of Rs 85.76 crore in the same quarter of 2020-21, it said in a regulatory filing.

Its total consolidated income rose to Rs 1,364.62



crore during the quarter under review against Rs 900.73 crore

in the year-ago period.

Total expenses also increased to Rs 1,223.76 crore during the quarter compared to Rs 838.57 crore a year ago.

For FY22, the company reported a consolidated profit of Rs 865.22 crore. It had recorded a profit of Rs 696.9 crore in 2020-21. In March last year, the government received multiple bids for the privatisation of the Shipping Corporation of India. PTI





sunday pioneer

# INDIAN PREMIER LEAGUE 2022

7

I spoke to him and he is not retiring. He was disappointed with his performance and that's why he might have put out that tweet. But he has deleted it and he is definitely not retiring

CSK CEO on Rayudu tweet

## KKR 'stay alive' on paper after 54-run win against SRH

PTI ■ PUNE

Andre Russell's all-round brilliance theoretically kept Kolkata Knight Riders in contention for a play-off berth as they recorded a comprehensive 54-run victory over Sunrisers Hyderabad in a must-win IPL game on Saturday.

It was Russell's unbeaten 49 off 28 balls that took KKR to 177 for six in 20 overs after being down and out at 94 for 5.

In reply, SRH were never in the hunt as they huffed and puffed their way to 123 for 8 against a collective bowling effort from Shreyas Iyer's men with the flamboyant Jamaican finishing with best figures of 3 for 22.

Umesh Yadav (1/19 in 4 overs), Tim Southee (2/23 in 4 overs), Varun Chakravarthy (1/25 in 4 overs) and Sunil Narine (1/34 in 4 overs) -- all stuck to their respective game plans with near-perfect executions over after over.

KKR now have 12 points from 13 games with a net run-rate of +0.160 and moved to sixth place. With Rajasthan Royals (14 from 12) and RCB (14 from 13 games) having chance to move up, even a victory is unlikely to be enough for Shah Rukh Khan owned franchise which played its 13th 'first XI' combination in as many games.

For Sunrisers, 10 points from 12 games with a dismal NRR of -0.270 means that even two big wins and 14 points might not be enough after five straight defeats. While he is a sentimental favourite among Indian cricket lovers, a lot of SRH's poor



batting show could be attributed to skipper Kane Williamson's nightmarish season that has yielded only 208 runs in 12 games at an average of less than 19 and a strike-rate of 92.85.

Williamson (9 off 17 balls) has been SRH's weakest link this season and his failure at the top of the order has been one of the biggest reasons for their slump. It was an ordeal for Williamson till Russell bowled one on the stumps to end his misery. Rahul Tripathi (9 off 1 balls) also looked scratchy even as Abhishek Sharma (43 off 28 balls) attacked Sunil Narine, hitting him for two sixes.

It was Tim Southee's brilliant reflex return catch that ended

Tripathi's innings. At the halfway stage, SRH weren't in a very comfortable position at 66 for two and even the statistic of teams chasing (highest successful chase of 170) at the Gahunje Stadium didn't paint an altogether rosy picture. Once Abhishek was dismissed by Varun Chakravarthy (1/25) and Narine took a fine return catch to dismiss SRH's big hope Nicholas Pooran (2), there wasn't much resistance from the rest of the batters. Earlier, Umran Malik was back in his groove after a few forgettable outings as he ran through KKR's top-order but Russell along with Sam Billings (34 off 29 balls) added 63 runs for the sixth wicket to give the total a semblance of respectabil-

ity after KKR were in trouble at 94 for 5.

KKR added 58 runs in the last five overs, mainly due to Russell as he hit three sixes off three full-tosses bowled by off-break bowler Washington Sundar (0/40 in 4 overs). Malik (3/33 in 4 overs), who had gone for 120-odd runs in his last 10 overs (across 3 games) and that too wicketless, was back in his element as he bowled fast and straight to get rid of Nitish Rana (26 off 16 balls), Ajinkya Rahane (28 off 23 balls) and skipper Shreyas Iyer (15 off 9 balls) in his first two overs to peg back KKR.

He did get good support from T Natarajan (1/43), who nailed the block-hole deliveries with perfection, getting rid of Rinku Singh (5). Venkatesh Iyer's "second season blues" continued as he chopped one from Marco Jansen (1/30 in 4 overs) onto the stumps.

As far as Rahane is concerned, he has well past his IPL sell-by date and even three sixes couldn't hide the fact that he played a lot of dot balls and once he started cramping, it became even more difficult to rotate the strike.

Finally he was out when he slashed hard at a wide rising delivery and Shashank Singh at sweeper cover fence maintained perfect body balance in a side on position to latch on to the catch. Russell and Billings then took the attack back to the opposition camp with some big blows after initial period of struggle. While the Jamaican had three fours and four sixes to his name, Billings hit three fours and one maximum

## GT eye top-2 finish with win over out-of-reckoning CSK

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Their play-offs berth already secured, high-flying Gujarat Titans would look for nothing less than a win to ensure a top-2 finish when they take on out-of-reckoning Chennai Super Kings in an Indian Premier League match here on Sunday.

Under the brilliant leadership of Hardik Pandya, GT rose above expectations to book their play-offs berth with two matches in hand.

GT are currently at the top of the table with 18 points from 12 games and a win on Sunday will more or less secure them a top-2 finish, which means they will get an extra chance of making it to the final.

Lying at the second-last spot, defending champions CSK are out of the competition and will play for pride in their remaining two games.

While GT ensured their play-offs berth after a comprehensive 62-run win over Lucknow Super Giants, CSK slumped to a five-wicket loss against Mumbai Indians.

Young opener Shubman Gill, skipper Hardik, David Miller, Wriddhiman Saha and Rahul Tewatia have been GT's batting mainstay throughout the season and they would be hoping to carry on in the same vein.

The credit for GT's phenomenal run in their opening season



largely goes to their ability to fight back from adverse situations.

But of late, GT's batting unit has misfired and Hardik would be looking for some consistent performances from his batters.

In their last match, only Gill (63 not out) made a substantial score and batted through the innings to take GT to a modest 144 for 4, which they defended with ease. The GT team management would also be hoping for Hardik, Miller and Tewatia to return among runs.

But GT's main strength is their potent bowling attack, comprising world-class bowlers like Mohammed Shami, Lockie Ferguson and Rashid Khan.

Shami, the team's highest taker with 16 scalps, has been lethal upfront, while Ferguson's ability to generate pace is a cause of concern for any batting line-up.

Rashid too has got his mojo back after a slow start, scalping four wickets in the last match and when on song, he can tear apart any batting line-up.

Yash Dayal too has been among wickets but his economy is a cause of concern, while R Sai Kishore has complemented Rashid perfectly in his first game.

GT's main recipe for success has been a considerably mellowed down Hardik, who seems to be relishing the responsibility of captaincy. CSK, meanwhile, have endured a nightmarish season with nothing working for them from the start.

MS Dhoni's decision to hand over captaincy to Ravindra Jadeja backfired as the all-rounder never looked in his comfort zone with the responsibility, forcing him to return the leadership mantle to the talismanic stumper.

## Rohit, Pant, Rahul, Bumrah to be rested for SA series; Dhawan, Pandya in line for captaincy

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Many seniors including captain Rohit Sharma and KL Rahul are all set to be rested for the upcoming five-match T20 series against South Africa, with an eye on the marquee tour of England in July.

Besides, the national selection committee is also set to excuse Jasprit Bumrah and Rishabh Pant from the engagements against the Proteas.

It is understood that veteran opener Shikhar Dhawan and all-rounder Hardik Pandya, who has impressed one and all with his captaincy for Gujarat Titans in IPL-15, are in reckoning for the leadership role for both South Africa and the short two-match T20I series against Ireland.

The T20 rubber against the Proteas will start in the national capital on June 9 with the remaining matches being held at Cuttack, Visakhapatnam, Rajkot and Bengaluru respectively.

The squad for the SA series is likely to be selected on May 22 -- the last day of the league phase of this edition of IPL -- in Mumbai.

The PTI has already reported that an out-of-form Virat Kohli will also be given a much-needed break but it is understood that for the selectors as well as the BCCI, the tour of England starting early July is paramount.

"All the senior India players will get at least three and half weeks of complete rest. Rohit, Virat, KL, Rishabh and Jasprit will all directly go to England for the 'fifth Test' following the white-ball



series. We need all our key players to remain fresh for the England series," a senior BCCI source privy to the development told PTI on the

condition of anonymity.

As a part of workload management, all the senior all-format players will not be part of the next

seven T20 Internationals.

Asked about captaincy, the source said: "The selectors have a couple of choices. Shikhar Dhawan, as he has already captained India in absence of Virat, Rohit and Rahul during last year's Sri Lanka series.

But Hardik Pandya's impressive captaincy for Gujarat Titans hasn't gone unnoticed. So it will be a close call," he added.

While Umran Malik has generated considerable excitement with his 150 kmph plus pace, there is a feeling that he is too raw and time with the India A team could help him develop better.

While he remains in the mix with death overs specialist Arshdeep Singh, the man who is emerging as a 'Dark Horse' is Lucknow Super Giants' left-arm

Mohsin Khan. "Our pace bowling department is set and selectors might not experiment too much," he said."

But yes, Mohsin has impressed almost everyone with his pace, bounce and swing in this edition. He does have a chance.

Having said that, not ruling out Umran or Arshdeep either, but Mohsin might just be slightly ahead," he added.

It is understood that most of the players who recently played in the T20 series against Sri Lanka and the West Indies are set to be retained irrespective of their current IPL form. Obviously Suryakumar Yadav or Ravindra Jadeja's injury needs to be factored in and Deepak Chahar will also not be available.

## India finish second in shooting at Deaflympics



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India wrapped up their shooting assignment at the 24th Deaflympics in Caxais do Sul, Brazil, by finishing in second place with three gold and two bronze medals.

Only Ukraine finished ahead of the 10-strong Indian contingent, with six gold and an overall tally of 12 medals. It was a commendable performance by the Indian shooters in ensuring the country's best-ever performance at Deaflympics.

India currently ranks eighth on the medals table with seven gold, one silver and four bronze medals.

This is the first time an Indian shooting team has participated at the Deaflympics on the initiative of the National Rifle Association of India (NRAI).

An elated NRAI secretary general K. Sultan Singh said, "It makes me even prouder to have such a dedicated and high-quality team of professionals at NRAI. Without their hard work and dedication this phenomenal performance would not have been possible in such a short time."

"Our coaches Anuja Jung and Priti Sharma even went to the extent of learning sign language to better impart coaching."

"My President Mr. Raninder Singh, forever the shooting promotion man, also made it very clear from day one that there should be left no stone unturned in the preparations of the squad."

He also thanked the Sports Authority of India and the Sports Ministry for supporting the shooters.

"The Hon. Minister, Anurag Thakur, MYAS, was himself at hand to flag-off the team, inspiring confidence and providing much deserving recognition to the deaf shooters."

Dhanush Srikanth was the star of the shooting squad, bagging two gold medals in the men's 10m air rifle and 10m air rifle mixed team competitions respectively. Priyesh Deshmukh was his partner in the mixed event.

Abhinav Deshwal won India's third gold medal in the men's 10m air pistol event while Shourya Saini in the men's air rifle and Vedika Sharma in the women's air pistol won individual bronze medals.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the NRAI and the All India Sports Council for the Deaf (AISCD), just three months ahead of the Games, whereby the national governing body of the sport would be involved actively from the trials to selection to coaching and training of the team for the Deaflympics.

## 20 injured in Milwaukee shootings after Bucks playoff game

AP ■ MILWAUKEE

Twenty people were injured in two shootings in downtown Milwaukee near an entertainment district where thousands of people had been watching the Bucks play the Celtics in the NBA's Eastern Conference semifinals, authorities said.

None of the injuries from either shooting Friday night were believed to be life-threatening.

The first shooting, involving three victims, occurred adjacent to the Deer District -- an entertainment district with numerous bars and restaurants where large crowds often assemble for major sporting events.

The Milwaukee Fire Department said authorities took two people to a hospital, a 30-year-old man and a 16-year-old girl, and a third person drove to a hospital.

Police said a 29-year-old man was in custody. Seventeen more people were injured in a second shooting about two hours later, which happened a few blocks away.

Ten people were taken into custody and nine guns were recovered, WTMJ-TV reported.

There was no immediate indication whether the two shootings were related or involved fans who were watching the game.

Witnesses told WTMJ-TV that they saw a fight outside a bar following the basketball game.

Bill Reinemann, a parking attendant at lot adjacent to Deer District, said he heard gunshots but didn't see anyone get shot or see the shooter during the earlier shooting.

"It sounded like six to eight gunshots," he said "It was close."

After the shots were fired, scores of fans began running toward the Deer District, he said.

Reinemann, who has worked the lot for 18 years, remained at his post even as fearful Bucks fans ran past him.

"I sat in my chair here the whole while," he said.

"The incident took place outside of the Deer District area. We direct all questions to the Milwaukee Police Department," Bucks spokesman Barry Baum said.

Boston defeated Milwaukee in the game to force a Game 7 in the series.(AP)

## Amandeep finishes 13th and Vani 23rd in Switzerland

PTI ■ FLUMSERBERG

Amandeep Drall held steady and carded 1-under 71 to finish inside Top-15 as she totalled 2-under 213 at the 2022 Flumserberg Ladies Open here.

Fellow Indian Vani Kapoor dropped a triple bogey late in the day on the Par-5 16th. Despite that she fought back for a birdie on 18th to card 73 and finished tied 23rd.

Amandeep dropped a shot on fifth, but picked birdies on Par-3s on seventh and 11th.

Vani, playing with Amandeep in the same group, birdied the opening hole and then parred the next 14. She had a disastrous triple bogey on 16th which spoilt her run. She birdied 18th for some consolation.

Dutch amateur Lauren Holmeyer won the tournament after a final day round of 2-under 70. The 19-year-old won by a single shot in just her third LETAS event.

After 14 straight pars to begin



her round, Holmeyer hung in at the top of the leader board, before back-to-back birdies on the 15th and 16th saw her through at the GAMS-Werdenberg Golf Club.

One shot behind the winner Holmeyer was Germany's Patricia Isabel Schmidt, who rattled in eight birdies and an eagle on the way to a score of 66 (-6) on the final day. Sweden's Anna Magnusson fin-

ished third on -6 after a final day score of 70 (-2), albeit having reached -8 with a birdie on the 13th, only for two bogeys on her last five holes to see her drop back into the pack.

The next LETAS event is the PGA Championship Trelleborg which takes place on May 19-21 at Tegelberga Golf Club in Sweden. PTI Cor

## Swiatek equals Serena Williams with 27-match winning streak

AP ■ ROME

Not since Serena Williams seven years ago has another woman had such a hot streak.

Top-ranked Iga Swiatek routed Aryna Sabalenka 6-2, 6-1 on Saturday to extend her winning streak to 27 matches and reach the Italian Open final.

Williams won the same number of consecutive matches over 2014 and 2015.

Aiming to defend her

Rome title and win her fifth straight tournament, Swiatek dominated the eighth-ranked Sabalenka with a mix of power, consistency and finesse.

While she struggled with her serve at times, Swiatek was able to consistently crush both forehand and backhand winners on the slow, red clay court at the Foro Italico.

The 20-year-old Polish player also hit a delicate backhand half-volley winner in the final game of the

first set.

Swiatek had the same number of winners and unforced errors, 15, while Sabalenka produced just eight winners and had a whopping 31 unforced errors.

The hard-hitting Sabalenka took a medical timeout late in the second set and had her back treated.

Swiatek, who was a surprise champion at the French Open in 2020 when she was ranked No. 54,

will be the favorite to add a second title at Roland Garros when the year's second Grand Slam starts next weekend.

First, though, Swiatek will face either Ons Jabeur -- who is on a 10-match winning streak -- or Daria Kasatkina of Russia in Sunday's final.

The men's semifinals later featured Novak Djokovic against Casper Ruud and Alexander Zverev against Stefanos Tsitsipas.



*The music composer, who has worked predominantly in Bollywood for popular films like Cash 2021 and Enemmy, speaks with SUPRIYA RAMESH about his latest songs, his experience, upcoming projects among other things*

**'I AM SUPER  
EXCITED FOR MY  
NEW RELEASES'**



It's an amazing video and I am super excited it's coming out on Hitz music. Probably my biggest club track

”

I am working on new songs. The idea is to work on new, interesting sound and have a couple of amazing writers working with me. I have an amazing team of musicians who support what I do and that's the reason why I am blessed and the whole idea is to change the sound skill. There are a few upcoming projects but I can't talk about it right now. Most of them are releasing in the end of the year and next year.

**What:** Theatre & Arts  
**Where:** Online  
**When:** May 15, 2022  
**Time:** 7 pm

Dafa Kar (A R Rahman)  
Saamna (Akasa)  
Mast Nazron Se (Rochak Kohli)  
Kya Kar Diya (Vishal Mishra)  
Macha Macha Re (Mika Singh)

Psychofreak (Camila Cabello)  
Seven Bridge Road (Jake Bugg)  
Wings Of Stone (Adam Levine)  
FREE (John Legend)  
Crazy (Doechii)

Also, fancy granite countertops? Choose the best for your kitchen from slabs that include over 150 colours and varieties. Don't forget to check out the quartz, which is enjoying great popularity among enthusiasts at the moment because of its beauty and durability. Architects prefer it for the beautiful finish as well. Don't forget to check out their Statuario Rosso and Botanic Green collections as well, inspired by the beauty of florals and nature.

## A close-up photograph of a bouquet of flowers. The arrangement includes several red and pink dahlias with prominent yellow centers, clusters of small yellow chrysanthemums, and a large, dark brown, heart-shaped anthurum leaf. The flowers are set against a dark, solid background.

A still life painting featuring a terracotta jug with a handle, filled with a bouquet of yellow flowers and greenery. The jug sits on a round, dark wooden table. The background is a textured, greyish-blue wall. The lighting is soft, creating gentle shadows.



The popularity of dried flowers and grasses has increased dramatically in recent years. They've gained demand among flower lovers as well as interior design enthusiasts. One reason is that they are durable and have a long lifespan. If properly cared for, dried flowers can survive for years, making them an excellent choice for individuals who prefer a low-maintenance solution. To care for them, keep them dry, away from

— Ashima Singla, Founder, CEO,  
Whispering Homes

Over the last three decades, Zee TV has been a pioneer in shaping the contours of reality television in India, introducing audiences to homegrown non-fiction formats like *Antakshari*, *Sa Re Ga Ma Pa*, *Dance India Dance*, and *India's Best Dramebaaz*. After receiving an overwhelming response to the previous three seasons that introduced audiences to some truly exceptional talent and giving a chance to all the ladies of becoming a *Super Mom*, the channel is all set to launch the 3rd edition of its non-fictional property — *DID Super Moms*. Bollywood choreographer Remo D'Souza will be seen in the seats of the judge as he will give them a chance to exhibit their talent and create a name of their own in the world of dance.



**DHAK DHAK DAY**

**MADHURI DIXIT BIRTHDAY SPECIAL**

**18th MAY, SUN**

**CAST:** Ila, Aarzoo, Seta, Anandika, Ran Leelan

**ZEE BOLLWOOD**

The movie marathon will kickstart with the mass entertainer *Dil* on at 7:30am. Next in line at 11:00 am, we have the romantic film *Aarzoo* that also features Akshay Kumar and Saif Ali Khan. Next up in the movie bonanza, there is *Beta* at 1:00pm.

Catch the sundown special *Khalnayak* at 4:45pm. Increasing the entertainment meter up a notch, we bring in the *dhundaad jodi* of Anil Kapoor and Jackie Shroff along with Madhuri Dixit that'll absolutely take this birthday celebration to another level. One is filled with sanity and love while the other brother is driven with vengeance, the classic film, *Ram Laxman* takes you on a journey filled with action and romance. Tune-in at 8 pm to witness the magic of Madhuri in *Ram Laxman*.



"The higher adoption of digital transactions by end customers during the pandemic provides a unique opportunity for lenders to leverage tech advancements in this space. Credgenics enables completely digitised loan collections process including communications along with a digital payment platform to deliver a seamless experience for end customers," says Rishabh Goel, CEO and Co-Founder, Credgenics.



Don't ever doubt  
yourselves or waste a  
second of your life.  
It's too short, and  
you're too special.  
— Ariana Grande



There is a wide recognition that the creation of the IAS was one of the cardinal follies of the wise. It is irrelevant to the people at large but it has made itself hugely useful to the political class, writes

MANOJE NATH

# HAS THE COUNTRY FAILED THE IAS?



Officers of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) who demonstrate the capability to make money from the system and make it fast, inevitably endear themselves to people in power. So, whatever the outcome of the ongoing investigation against Jharkhand Mines and Industry secretary Pooja Singhal, IAS, it will not interfere with the chances of her appointment as Chief Secretary of Jharkhand, when her time comes. In its brief history of twenty years as a separate state, Jharkhand has honoured three such IAS officers by appointing them as Chief Secretaries. Among officers so appointed was a gentleman who was facing trial in two cases related to financial irregularities in purchase of fertilizer. Another one had spent many months in jail on charges of forcing entrepreneurs to donate money to his NGOs and finally won a reprieve from the Supreme Court. A third officer who was convicted in an animal husbandry case, and perhaps died in jail, had two stints as chief secretary of Jharkhand. Jharkhand's case may be an exception, but in popular imagination IAS officers can make money not only with impunity but with honour.

There are two standard explanations for the steady diminution of the stature and prestige of the IAS. The first consists of playing down the well-founded criticisms of servility and capitulation, corruption and chicanery. Even though sometimes the merit of the criticism is granted, its significant contribution to the polity and society is dwelt upon at great length; distortions and aberrations that may have crept in are laid at the door of the many extenuating circumstances.

If the IAS has failed it is because the country has failed (or is failing at an accelerated rate). It is only the extreme formulation of such an approach. The other strategy is to deflect and devalue - the criticism by outwitting and silencing the critic with a more vehement self-critical diatribe, an anguished self-loathing of their own, as if the act of advertising could, in itself, absolve the service of all the sins that were being advertised.

The IAS, according to one view, requires a particular kind of society to function to its full potential, something like the idylls of Nehruvian era. The post-Independence leaders and influencers like Nehru, Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Ambedkar, Madan Mohan Malviya, T T Krishnamachari, Acharya Kripalani, Jyoti Basu, Atal Behari Vajpayee, Jaiprakash Narayan (to mention just a handful); industrialists like JRD Tata, Jamnalal Bajaj, Dinshaw Petit and GD Birla; editors like Desmond Doig, Arun Shourie, Sunanda K Dattaray, Kushwant Singh, Frank Moraes and Russi Karanjia have been mostly replaced by pygmies and carpet baggers. These people may win elections, make billion of dollars in one year or run up huge TRP ratings, but they are incapable of promoting public values or morals, or establishing ethical corporate standards, or writing an editorial (let alone investigating a story).

But that is hardly the case. The IAS has not only been quick to limber up to the changed political realities, it has scripted an even more indispensable role for itself in the era of "pygmies and carpet baggers."

Politics, to appropriate Balzac's remark, has become like, "Soldiering, ... chiefly a finan-



Jharkhand Mines and Industry Secretary Pooja Singhal was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in a money laundering case.

cial undertaking, you need gold in order to do battle, and you need to do battle in order to get gold." Some governments are (were) headed by leaders from newly emergent political classes for whom English was not the language of choice, who did not feel constrained by rules, regulations etc and were quite upfront about their intentions to abuse their office for personal gains.

The longevity of governments challenged the myths that the IAS had forged out of isolated life stories of a young collector telling off a CM,

THE IAS HAS NOT ONLY BEEN QUICK TO LIMBER UP TO THE CHANGED POLITICAL REALITIES, IT HAS SCRIPTED AN EVEN MORE INDISPENSABLE ROLE FOR ITSELF IN THE ERA OF "PYGMIES AND CARPETBAGGERS."

a chief secretary recording his dissent in days long gone by, myths that made them intelligible to themselves, provided them with their reassurance during times of self-doubt. Governments were there to stay; they were here today, they were going to be here tomorrow. How long could they wait out in the cold?

Though supposed to be unaligned, personally free and subject to the executive authority only within a defined area, they choose to be incorporated in the apparatus of political power. Commitment to rule based governance, are pragmatically abandoned by such officers. They are for the government, the government is for them.

An interesting example from marine biology will serve as an apt metaphor. In the Bay of Naples, a common sea slug medusa, and a snail, start off as independent organisms but on close encounter become conjoined in such a manner that both the jellyfish and the snail shed off a lot of themselves. A small portion of the snail gets permanently affixed to the ventral surface near the mouth of the jellyfish to become one single organism. They get along nicely in a symbiotic arrangement, exploiting each other's biological capabilities and yet retain their specific otherness.

A clutch of trusted officers-the drastically edited version of service, the cadre may have hundreds of officers, in an arrangement

reminiscent of the medusa and the snail, handle the core sectors of the governments as also the entire range of political purpose. The others are kept in a state of idle splendour. But like an Englishman the IAS is "never at a loss for an effective moral attitude ... you will never find ... them in the wrong." It is responsible for the marginalisation of its own service and yet persists with the complaint of political interference.

There is a wide recognition that the creation of the IAS was one of the cardinal follies of the wise. It is irrelevant to the people at large but it has made itself hugely useful to the political class. In an unusual consensus, cutting across their ideological divide, they have found them to be even more valuable after retirement than they are in service. As heads of all the accountability institutions, all those roadblocks to arbitrary exercise of executive power, they render them defunct. In many states you can find officers recruited in the 60s, 70s, 80s making themselves useful to their political masters in a myriad ways. To stand an old saying on its head, "the dead lion is even more valuable than the living donkey."

The alliance of these two major institutions has significantly altered the balance of power much to the detriment of democracy.

Manoje Nath is a retired Government servant.





Every year, on May 17, **World Hypertension Day** is observed in order to educate the public and create awareness on high blood pressure (BP) or hypertension which has no symptoms or warning signs. The HEALTH PIONEER reports

An alarming one in four Indian adults has high blood pressure. Known medically as hypertension, many people don't even know they have it, because high blood pressure has no symptoms or warning signs. "But only about 10 per cent of them have their blood pressure under control," according to a report by the India Hypertension Control Initiative. Releasing the report, Indian Council of Medical Research Director-General, Dr Balram Bhargava, emphasised on making hypertension a national priority.

Prashant Mathur, director of ICMR's Na Mathur, director of ICMR's National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research, Bengaluru, and corresponding author of the study chips in that "recognising the low awareness and high rates of drop-outs between the diagnosis of hypertension, its treatment and control calls for better planning of providing continuum of care for high blood pressure."

For both women and men, the prevalence increases sharply with age. The increase is for all categories of hypertension, including pre-hypertension, for both sexes. About one-fourth of women and men aged 40-49 have hypertension, says the study.

The recent National Family Health Survey 5 (NFHS-5) too presents an alarming picture of the chronic disease. It shows that when it comes to treatment, only 7 per

THE SILENT  
KILLER IS CAUSED  
BY STRESS AND  
SEDENTARY  
LIFESTYLE. IT CAN  
LEAD TO A RANGE OF  
DISORDERS SUCH AS  
STROKE AND  
DEMENTIA BESIDES  
HEART AND KIDNEY  
DISEASES. THE  
UNION HEALTH  
MINISTRY IS  
PUSHING TO LOWER  
THE PREVALENCE OF  
RAISED BLOOD  
PRESSURE BY 25 PER  
CENT BY 2025.



cent women and 6 per cent men who have been diagnosed with high blood pressure are on medication.

The survey also found that 33 per cent of women and 46 per cent men have never got their blood pressures measured. Based on the blood pressure measurement, the NFHS-5 found 21 per cent of women and 24 per cent of men are having hypertension marked by the blood pressure measurement of 140/90 or above.

When elevated blood pressure is accompanied by abnormal cholesterol and blood sugar levels, the damage to your arteries, kidneys, and heart accelerates exponentially. According to a study presented at the American Stroke Association's International Stroke Conference recently, hypertensive young people between the ages of 20 to 40 could experience brain problems in their midlife.

Last year, the World Health Organisation modified its blood

pressure control guideline, suggesting that a systolic pressure of 130 should be the threshold to start medication in people with a history of heart complications or other risk factors whereas for others such a threshold would be 140/90.

Fortunately, high blood pressure is easy to detect and treat. Blood Pressure can be kept under control in a healthy range simply by making lifestyle changes, such as losing weight, increasing activity, and eating more healthfully, say doctors.

## YOGA REMEDY

Ishwar V. Basavaraddi, Director of Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY) tells you, "We have a range of yoga asanas, pranayama and meditation that help to open up the chest cavity, improves lung capacity and increases cardiopulmonary function, which lead to maintain physical activity for longer." According to him, some of the Yoga



asanas that can help in beating high blood pressure are: Tadasana without heel raise/ Katicakrasana/ Ushtrasana/ Gomukhasana/ Uttanmandukasana/ Bhujangasana/ Ardha halasana/ Shavasana / Yoga Nidra/ Abdominal Breathing (30 times)/ Nadi shodhan pranayama/ Sitali pranayama/ Bhramari pranayama and Dhyana.

## BEYOND THE STETHOSCOPE

When not pursuing their profession, a breed of doctors prefer to wear different hats to keep themselves fit and centered. The HEALTH PIONEER tries to catch up with them every week.



## Doc's Iron Will For Iron Man

What started as a pastime activity in 2010—participating in the 5K category at the Airtel marathon—has now become a passionate hobby for this 48-year-old medico. Dr. Hariprasad G, Additional Professor at Department of Biophysics, AIIMS, Delhi, has since then even successfully completed the Olympic Triathlon (1.5 Km swim; 40 km cycling; 10 km run) a few times in under three-and-a-half hours.

His thirst for a bigger challenge unquenched, he is now preparing for the Half-Iron Man Triathlon (1.9 km swim, 90 km cycling and a 21 km run) championship to be held this year-end at the Talkatora-SPM Swimming complex. In between this journey, Dr Hariprasad has graduated from a 5 km run to a 10 km and then half marathon and finally a 42 km Full marathon, which he comfortably does in four-and-a-half hours.

He has participated in several marathons including Mumbai, Standard Chartered Singapore, New Delhi and Omaha to name a few. The most recent one was the Hyderabad Marathon, which Dr Hariprasad recalls, was quite a challenge considering the number of steep flyovers in the city all along the route.

Hundreds of colorful medals from all these events and the many glittering gold medals decorate the walls of the living room of this clinician-scientist who along with his team are currently investigating the A-Z of Omicron virus.

The father of two sons who balances out work-family-friends-endurance training shares, "I mix-up of a lot of physical activities like walking, jogging, sprinting, swimming, cycling, stair climbing, yoga, core exercises, skipping to get the best out of my heart, mind and body."

Every event is a learning curve and the challenge only gets bigger and more significant with each passing year, says the doctor who has done his MBBS from a Karnataka Medical College, Hubli and later did his post-graduation MD and subsequently a PhD from AIIMS, Delhi. His inspirations are sports legends such as Phelps, Dressel, Ledecky, Djokovic, Federer, Nadal, and Kipchoge!

Of course, behind all these achievements is his rigorous efforts, a strong-will and most importantly the support of his family, particularly his better half Roopa, a doctor herself who is into cervical cancer prevention at National Institute for Cancer Prevention and Research, Noida. She doubles up as his nutritionist and a personal chef, and ensures he gets the right blend of food in the weeks leading up to the endurance event, during the race and post-event. As a general rule he usually consumes wholesome unprocessed food cooked at home and avoids fast-packaged foods. Even delicacies be it Pani puri, dosas, tacos, pasta, pan cakes, waffles and desserts are given a yummy but healthy twist at Dr Roopa's kitchen, and it is this that helps him in 'the long run', he chuckles.

"We always have a choice and end up with the easier one. I decided to change that," the doctor quips, adding that "Don't give up on your dreams, because you have no idea what all you are capable of."

(Medicos may write to us at [healthp100@gmail.com](mailto:healthp100@gmail.com))

## NEWS BRIEFS

### CUT DOWN BAD MICROBES

Healthy adults who eat a diverse diet, with at least 8-10 grams of soluble fibre such as grains, beans, lentils, nuts and some fruits and vegetables daily, have fewer antibiotic-resistant microbes in their guts, according to a study by Agricultural Research Service scientists and their colleagues in mBio.

### 'AYURVEDA AAHARA' ON THE PLATTER

The Union Ministry of Ayush and Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), India's apex body for food regulation has formulated regulations of safety and quality standards for food products under 'Ayurveda Aahara' category. This comprehensive initiative will ensure manufacturing of quality Ayurveda food products and help in expanding the international market for Make-In-India products.

### NEW THERAPY FOR BREAST CANCER

The world's first subcutaneous therapy for breast cancer that is effective and reduces treatment time by 90 per cent has been launched in India, Roche Pharma said recently. The treatment by Roche called PHESGO is the first ever fixed dose formulation in oncology that combines two monoclonal antibodies: Perjeta (pertuzumab) and Herceptin (trastuzumab) with hyaluronidase. It is administered via an under the skin injection in combination with intravenous (IV) chemotherapy for the treatment of early and metastatic HER2-positive breast cancer.

### 'ONE STEP' PORTAL FOR HEALTH INFO AT INDIAN EMBASSIES

Soon facilitation centres at Indian embassies across the world will be set up for people wanting to travel to India for treatment, said Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya while addressing a roundtable conference with senior IFS officers on 'Building Brand India' in Delhi.

# Three-layered healthcare system to aid common man

Prevention is better than cure. Its significance can be witnessed in the tri-layered healthcare mechanism introduced by the Governments. The mechanism encompasses Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs), Community Healthcare Centres (CHCs) and District Healthcare Centres (DHCs) after which big hospitals comes into play, whenever needed, says Gaurav Pandey

The objective of this mechanism is to ensure that larger number of ailments shall be diagnosed at the initial stage in rural pockets or small towns and effective medications may begin to uproot it.

The importance of PHCs is considerable as the locals receive medical aid the moment symptoms appear. Also, such Centres are responsible for spreading awareness about and bringing various government healthcare measures to the locals through Aanganvadi workers and Asha workers.

If one does not get cured at the PHCs, s/he is referred to the CHCs which has adequately equipped Diagnostic Laboratory as well. The consultations and investigations may help him to get fully cured. But if there is no respite, s/he may be sent to District Hospital and to higher referral hospitals like All

India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS).

It is quessential for every resident to understand the nuances and structure of this mechanism. Talking of private sector, a person visits a General Physician also known as Family Physician, usually an MBBS degree holder. In case of common diseases, a person gets cured there itself. There are Polyclinics where Specialists dealing with various body parts and related ailments are available and a patient may get synergized expert opinion of these Consultants in case of two-three ailments.

Then there are Nursing Homes where the patients can be admitted. It falls under primary healthcare. The bigger Nursing Homes equipped with Operation Theatre (OT) and Intensive Care Unit (ICU), they are considered as second-level or Secondary care Centres.

The big hospitals with more



The writer is an expert in health care management

than hundred beds, fully-equipped with latest machines, contemporary Modular Operation Theatres, ICU,

facilities of CT Scan, MRI, in-house pathology and Consultants related to every speciality are available fall under the category of Tertiary Care Hospitals.

The hospitals where Robotics Surgery, Proton Therapy, Heart Transplants, Lung Transplants and other advanced solutions are possible are known to be Fourth-level Healthcare Hospitals which are at the zenith in terms of providing medical solutions.

It may be true that these mechanisms and levels come into play once someone falls ill but it is important for all of us to be aware of these structures so that the illness can be diagnosed at the initial level through investigations and doctor's interventions and prescriptions and can be contained before it may cause serious damages.

In abroad, the cost of keeping every citizen healthy lies with the

Insurance Companies and the Governments. There exist Diagnostic Related Groups where annual medical tests are carried out so that contagious ailments can be contained in time and the burden of paying for cure and recovery may get lessened from the shoulders of the Insurance Company or Government.

Many Insurance Companies offer annual health check-ups to those who hold their mediclaim policies. The private hospitals also play their active part and offer significant rebates on various investigation packages.

The government-run and private hospitals organize free camps continually and the people in remote locations are investigated through mobile vans and people must take benefit of it without second thoughts as many serious ailments get diagnosed in time. More such drives are needed which is possible by effective Public Private People Model.



# Sinn Fein a game changer in Northern Ireland

The Sinn Fein's historic win in the Assembly election is signaling a much-awaited change in the power corridors in Northern Ireland. It is the beginning of a new era. The old guards (Democratic Unionist Party) were forced to give way to a new political dispensation (Sinn Fein) in last week's election. Once again what has come to the forefront is that for long the Sinn Fein has been linked to the Irish Republican Army (IRA), a paramilitary group that used violent tactics to free Northern Ireland from British control. Once it used to be the Catholics vs the Protestants that led to a series of violence for decades in Northern Ireland. The IRA is a Catholic and nationalist organisation that conducted an armed insurgency against the state for a united independent Ireland whereas the DUP mainly evolved from Protestant Unionist Party that itself came out of the Ulster Protestant Action Movement.

This election has spear-headed a new debate, a new narrative and a new future in this part of the UK. The total number of seats in the Assembly is 90, but constituencies are only 18. The Sinn Fein won 27, DUP 25, Alliance Party 17, Ulster Unionist Party 9, Social Democratic and Labour Party 8, and the rest of the smaller parties and independents one each.

In the 2017 election, the DUP won 28 seats and Sinn Fein 27. The margin of victory between the two main rival parties was very narrow. In 2017, the Social Democratic and Labour Party won 12 seats, the Ulster Unionist Party 10, the Alliance Party 8, the Green Party 2, while the People Before Profit and Traditional Unionist Voice had one seat each.

What does this victory of Sinn Fein mean for Northern Ireland? It means a lot for the party as it has won a majority for the first time in the Assembly election. And for the DUP, it is a loss of face. The Sinn Fein has received the most first preference votes in

the election. The party said that the Brexit move unleashed by the Boris Johnson Government in Britain accelerated the debate on reunification with the EU member Ireland because most of the Northern Irish people voted to remain with the Union. The Good Friday Agreement of 1998 recognises the right of the people on the island of Ireland to reunify if border polls in Ireland and Northern Ireland support it. Whereas the existing British law says that the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland should order a vote if it appears likely that a majority of voters want a united Ireland but is unclear on how that should be decided. However, the Irish Government must also agree to the same.

Michelle O'Neill, the First Minister of the Northern Ireland Government, is the first nationalist politician to occupy that position since its creation. During the election, the DUP and the Sinn Fein were battling hard for the top post because it offers an entitlement to nominate the next First Minister. But it must be noted here that the office of the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister is an equal office with joint powers in Northern Ireland. But what has been termed as symbolically important is the allocation of the titles.

Why was it so important for the DUP to win the Assembly election in 2022? It was indeed crucial for the DUP to win the election as it has been the most dominant and largest political party since the formation of Northern Ireland in 1921 as a Protestant majority province. Earlier the Assembly was known as the Stormont Parliament in the name of the Stormont Estate in East Belfast where the building is located. Generally, the Stormont is the commonly used name to refer to the Northern Ireland Assembly.

What is Sinn Fein all about? Why is its win so significant for Northern Ireland? The Irish phrase "Sinn Fein"



From left, Sinn Fein's John Finucane, deputy leader Michelle O'Neill, party leader Mary Lou McDonald, and Conor Murphy speak to the media at Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast, on May 9

refers to "We Ourselves" or "Ourselves". The party was formed by Arthur Griffith in 1905 when the very ideology of Sinn Fein was brought into practice. Originally Griffith was the leader of the Cumannann Gaedheal i.e. "Party of the Irish". But the current form of Sinn Fein emerged only in the 1970s. The policy of Sinn Fein enunciated by Griffith highlighted passive resistance to the British, non-payment of taxes, the formation of an Irish ruling council and independent law courts.

Untill the rise of the Easter Rebellion or Easter Rising in the month of April (24-29) 1916 in Dublin by the Irish republicans, the Sinn Fein was not in the limelight around the world. This rising was all but to challenge the colonial rule of Britain over Ireland and to establish an independent Irish Republic.

It was an armed insurrection launched for the first time during the Irish revolutionary period. After this rebellion, the Sinn Fein became the rallying point for a new brand of

ultranationalist sentiment which is also known as "Republicanism". The fury of the nationalists could well be gauged from the historic proclamation of the Republic published in 1916. The proclamation known as the "The Provisional Government of the Irish Republic to the People of Ireland" clearly says: "Irishman and Irishwomen, in the name of God, and of the dead generations, from which she receives her old tradition of nationhood, Ireland, through us summons her children to her flag and strikes for her freedom... We declare the right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies to be sovereign and infeasible..." This clearly hints that the Irish people wanted to come out of the colonial yoke of British imperialism when the latter was fighting the First World War in Europe.

Sinn Fein's basic objective is to unite all the 26 counties of the Republic of Ireland and 6 counties of Northern Ireland under the umbrella of a

Democratic Socialist Irish Republic. For many years, this part of Ireland had the "Troubles" or better known as "Northern Ireland Conflict" that ravaged the land from 1968 to 1998. It was clearly a bloody flight between the Catholic and the Protestant community of Northern Ireland about their relationship with Britain.

Against this background, the historic win of the Sinn Fein is to be taken seriously by the people of Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and of course by Britain. Now the political situation in Northern Ireland has become fragile. It seems the unionist DUP will not join the new government until the post-Brexit custom arrangements.

The Sinn Fein, the single largest party, now has the right to occupy the post of the First Minister. But a functioning Executive cannot be established without the DUP taking the role of the Deputy Minister in the new government. As per the constitutional mandate of Northern Ireland, the DUP

has to take the required role of the Deputy in the power sharing agreement. If this power sharing does not take place, it could trigger a constitutional crisis in Northern Ireland.

After the withdrawal of Britain from the 28-member European Union (EU) in 2020, the relationship between the UK and Northern Ireland and between the EU and Northern Ireland has come into question. And to set it right, what has emerged is known as the famous Northern Ireland Protocol or post-Brexit Customs Arrangement Deal. Under the protocol, checks are needed on goods coming into Northern Ireland from the UK. Since it came into force from the beginning of the 2021 when Britain formally left the EU, the protocol became a bone of contention between the UK and the EU.

Many wonder why the Unionists are against the deal. The Unionist parties are opposed to the protocol as to them placing physical border across the Irish Sea absolutely undermines the longstanding

union they advocate between Northern Ireland and the UK. Paul Givan of the DUP in fact resigned over this matter as the First Minister of Northern Ireland in February. Just before the Assembly election, in a public debate Sir Jeffrey Donaldson, the leader of the DUP, made it clear that his party may not take part in the new government unless the outstanding issues around the protocol are solved amicably.

Today, leaders like Donaldson have voiced concerns about a decisive action on the protocol at the earliest. Indeed, this protocol is very necessary as the border is too sensitive an issue which can't be ignored.

One must flash back on the fragile history of Northern Ireland and how the past peace efforts came after decades of armed fighting by the IRA against the UK. And clearly, the agreements to bring back peace to this part of the UK also included the removal of visible signs of border. Now, if any physical border is erected between Northern Ireland and Britain, this could rightly threaten the historic peace deal known as the Good Friday Agreement or the 1998 Northern Ireland Peace Deal.

It is very clear that Sinn Fein's victory will not push for the union of Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland, but it has simply started the process. Britain's future measures towards this part of its territory may be more cautious in the days to come. Politically speaking, the Sinn Fein has to go a long way to muster a clear majority as the roots of the DUP are still very solid in many areas across the island.

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It is very clear that Sinn Fein's victory will not push for the union of Northern Ireland with the Republic of Ireland at once, but it has started the process. Britain's future measures towards this part of its territory may be more cautious in the days to come. Politically speaking, the Sinn Fein has to go a long way to muster a clear majority as the roots of the DUP are still very solid in many areas across the island



MAKHAN SAIKIA

## PERSPECTIVE

# Islam and nation-state: Are they compatible?

Many scholars claim that there is no inherent issue whether textual or practice, within Islam that makes it incompatible with the nation-state system or even democracy. The case of liberal democracy is a separate category as many argue that Islam is inherently opposed to such ideas



PREM ANAND MISHRA

Any discussion on the compatibility between Islam as a faith and the idea of the nation-state as a political, social and economic reality has been exhausted in the hegemonic Islam and western modernity debate. The text and practice distinction has been a historical reality in Muslim societies, and it remained equally significant with the rise of the nation-state system. The question of the separation between religion and politics has been a different historical reality in the pre-scientific world.

The religious experiences among all faiths and societies have a different trajectory. However, there has been a homogenised notion of such division in Islam. The core vision of Islam doesn't make any distinction between sacred and secular, and political and temporal. The argument is that politics can't be separated from Islam as its core value.

Propagators of such ideas were not just orientalist but have been equally among Muslim scholars. The division between *din* (religion) and the *dawla* (state) has been a usual practice in Muslim societies since its origin, notably after Islam emerged as an organised form of life and the emergence of Islamic empires. But the question remains "why is it a contested concept, and are they compatible?"

The nation-state system is a few centuries old idea born in modern Europe. The nation-state system came to Muslim societies only in the 20th century, under two separate circumstances: the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the rubric of European colonialism.

The gaze of orientalism has been a central episteme in creating a sustained knowledge power discourse over western understanding of Islam and thus the idea of the Muslim world and idea of Islam has been categorised as a singular category. There is a vast generalisation over the accordance given to Islam and nation-state compatibility.

With failing democracies and the rising number of failing states in the current world system, and the authoritarian structure in the majority of Muslim states, there is a discussion whether Islam and nation-state are compatible.

### Religion and politics: An Islamic context

The boundaries of religion have always crossed the boundaries of politics and vice-versa, both in practice and in the language of Muslim empires. James Piscatori argues that Islam and the nation-states debate has been broadly discussed under two schools of thought: Conformists and non-conformists.

The non-conformists' refutation is based on the thrust that comes directly from the Quran, shaping the whole human sphere of life; spiritual, physical, individual, social, economic and political through the divine law called Shariah.

The non-conformists' holy will is supreme, and God's sovereignty doesn't allow the human will to trespass God's divine decree.

After all, the human will is the core idea of the nation-state system, which defines the whole sphere of life.

Therefore, God's decree under the command of the

Quran and Shariah would decide the do's and don'ts for humans, which is insignificant in the nation-states system. In this regard, the case of Saudi Arabia is significant. The Saudi Arabian case is essential for two critical reasons: It's where Islam finds its origin, and for Muslims worldwide, it's the heart of Islam.

And secondly, the Saudi State's behaviour since the state's formation in 1932 under the command of the King has been an institutionalised form that foretells the contemporary image of Islam in Saudi Arabia. This is to understand the making of an institutionalised form of Islam or official Islam as many categories in Saudi Arabia under the aegis of the nation-state system.

This makes the case further critical to know how the state has dominated this space despite being considered the most conservative that follows a strict religious command in controlling the Saudi society, its religiosity and the everydayness of life.

In short, Saudi Arabia defies the core nature of the conformists' view, and therefore, the question of legitimacy needs serious analysis.

The idea that despite being the most conservative country in the world that follows the Wahhabi brand of Islam, Saudi has managed to create a dominant space for the idea of the nation-state.

Therefore, the core assumption of an Islamic state is that authority, regardless of the status of exercising power over the subjects, is legitimate according to the Islamic juridical theory if it follows divine sources like the Quran and

Sunnah.

In that scenario, can a Muslim majority state necessarily become an Islamic state, or it can only become genuinely Islamic only by applying the Quran and Sunnah and Shariah laws in the realm of the socio-political feature of the nation as a basic constitution of the country?

The two critical elements of the Islamic state are command (amr) and prohibition (nahy). However, the juridical sphere of the state follows the command and prohibition based on jurisprudential (*fiqh*) traditions based on the interpretations of the divine command of the Quran and sayings of the prophet.

Islamic philosophical/theological and legal enquiry creates a fundamental difference in the contested aspect of *fiqh* traditions that have been divided among four schools in Sunni Islam (Hanafi, Shafii, Maliki and Hanbali)

On the issue of Shariah, the vital principle for an Islamic State has four primary dimensions: First, enforcing ordinances of Shariah.

Second, for an administrative position, any stipulation of Shariah is unacceptable. Third, a properly constituted Islamic government is a Muslim's religious duty. People's consent is a part of forming an ISIS; fourth, the government comes into existence based on the people's free choice of the Quranic expression, "from among you."

"As Muhammad Asad helps in understanding these significant distinctions in the rulings of Shariah based on *Fard* (obligatory-omission of which is a sin) and *Mubah*

(allowed) omission of which doesn't make a man sinner.

*Mandub* (recommended) has merit in it, and the deletion doesn't lead to sin. *Makruh*: Undesirable but committed acts can't be a sin. *Mutlaq*: Neither meritorious nor sinful. This significance of the diversity of ruling Shariah directs the Muslims to accept the divine law (Shariah) and an open road (*Minhaj*) where *ijti-had* comes as a free enquiry despite the place for Shariah as divine law is the basis of the Islamic state system for fulfilling all spheres of life.

The practice, however, through *fiqh* rulings, is based on Qiyas. The room for the state to create its dominance comes from *fiqh* traditions in the absence of no strict divine commands.

The source of the state sovereignty in an Islamic State as a political framework for Muslim unity and cooperation and means for equity and justice is based on three guiding principles: Injunctions of the Quran and obey God, obey the Apostle and those in authority.

The injunctions, "He who follows me, obeys God; and he who disobeys me disobeys God. And he who heeds the Amir (head of the state) observes me, and he violates the Amir and disregards me."

Therefore, a Muslim, nature wise and superior ineligibility is a qualification under Shariah for the head of the state. In this sphere of a philosophical-technological and legal aspect, the Saudi state commands its legitimacy and creates a space for an official and institutionalised form of Islam.

ology and organisational characteristics.

It might be assumed therefore the future stability of Saudi Arabia may well depend on how the government balances demands for political participation and the traditional concentration of power within the Saudi elite. On the ideological factor, a tendency in orientalist tradition is that Islam is antithetical to modernisation.

If the 1950s and the 1960s were dominated by Arab nationalism, the 1970s and 1980s witnessed the rise of "Islamic fundamentalism," challenging secular ideologies and Muslim governments by appealing to religious dogma, symbols, and rhetoric.

Democracies are failing across the world under the reign of authoritarianism, but no other religious group receives so much attention on the question of compatibility as Islam.

Hence, the final point that many scholars offer is that there is no inherent issue whether textual or practice, within Islam that makes it incompatible with the nation-state system or even democracy.

The case of liberal democracy is a separate category as many argue that Islam is inherently opposed to such ideas. Still, even Turkey, Pakistan, Iran, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Algeria have classic compatibility cases between Islam nation-state and their multiple forms of expression, including constitutional democracy.

(The writer is PhD from Centre for West Asian Studies, JNU, New Delhi, and is a former journalist)



