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RAIPUR, TUESDAY MAY 24, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3

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OSAKA OUT AT FRENCH OPEN 12 SPORT

# India committed to free, open, inclusive Indo-Pacific: Modi

At Quad, PM calls for robust ties for eco prosperity, peace in region

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/TOKYO

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday said India is committed to a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific region and called for robust economic ties between the countries to ensure continued growth, peace and prosperity. Giving this assurance at the launch of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) in Tokyo, he also said this mechanism is a declaration of a collective desire to make the Indo-Pacific region an engine of global economic growth. He said the foundation of resilient supply chains must be 3Ts — Trust, Transparency and Timeliness. These observations came against the backdrop of China adopting an aggressive stance in the region and repeatedly criticising the Quad combine. India, the US, Japan and Australia are part of the Quad. Ahead of the Quad Summit, Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi on Sunday

said the Indo-Pacific strategy of the US is "bound to fail" as it is vigorously promoted by the US to "contain" Beijing. The "Indo-Pacific strategy" is causing more and more concern in the international community, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, Wang Yi said at his joint press conference with Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou. Meanwhile, speaking at the IPEF launch ceremony in the presence of US President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida besides leaders of several other countries who virtually took part in the event, Modi said India has historically been at the centre of trade flows in the Indo-Pacific region, having the world's oldest commercial port in Lothal, Gujarat. He stressed the need for finding common and creative solutions to tackle economic challenges of the Indo-Pacific region. He expressed India's commitment towards working with all countries of the region for an IPEF. "India is committed to a free, open, and inclusive Indo-Pacific region and believes that deepening economic engagement among partners is crucial for continued growth, peace and prosperity," said Modi.

# PM woos Japanese inc, lists ease of doing biz

Modi proposes 'Japan Week' to celebrate business ties

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/TOKYO

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday underlined several steps taken for ease of doing business in India and invited Japanese industry to explore more investment opportunities here. Underlining India's robust economy, he said despite the slowdown in global Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), India attracted record FDI of USD 84 billion in the previous financial year. Terming this a vote of confidence in India's economic potential, Modi invited greater participation by Japanese companies in India and proposed celebrating Japan's contribution to



Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday fondly interacted with a boy who was waiting outside his hotel here and praised him for his fluency in Hindi and signed him an autograph in his tricolour drawing, in Tokyo on Monday PTI

*Mujhe makhan par lakeer karne mein maza nahi aata hai, main patthar par lakeer karta hoon*  
— PM NARENDRA MODI

India's development journey in the form of a 'Japan Week'. He made this strong pitch while chairing a roundtable with Japanese business leaders in Tokyo.

# Nitish bowls another googly on caste census

Convenes all-party meet; move seen as his increasing proximity to RJD

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



In yet another sign of growing proximity between the Janata Dal(U) and the RJD in Bihar, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has convened an all-party to develop consensus on holding a caste census in Bihar. Leader of Opposition and RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav recently met Nitish Kumar to press for holding the caste census. The BJP has been all along opposed to such an exercise apprehending that could revive the Mandal politics all over again, but the party is expected to attend the meeting. The BJP leadership does not want the caste census to become a trigger for political instability in Bihar at a time when the relationship between the JD(U) and the saffron party is at an all-time low. Incidentally, the Union Government had gone on record in Parliament saying there was no move to hold a countrywide caste census. The move has come amid speculation that Nitish was moving away from the BJP and has finalised some secret 'deal' with the RJD. The crisis in Bihar NDA has yet another dimension. There is a strong

buzz that the JD(U) may deny Raja Sabha nomination to Union Steel Minister RCP Singh, who is seen as close to the BJP leadership. The denial of ticket to RCP could be seen as yet another rebuff to the BJP by Nitish, who has already opposed the BJP on demand for a Uniform Civil Code and removal of a loudspeaker from masjids. Nitish has also reservations about bringing back the CAA and the NRC and said that he would want that a suggestion made by his party in 2010 should be the criteria for the implementation of the Citizenship Amendment Act. The political temperature in Bihar has also risen amid reports that Nitish has asked his party MLAs to stay put in Patna for the next 72 hours, while he himself is going to Rajgir on Tuesday. While JD(U) leader Shrawan Kumar denied that any such directive has been issued to the MLAs, reports said majority of the MLAs and senior JD(U) leaders are camping in Patna. Incidentally, last time in 2018 when Nitish dumped the RJD to join hands with the BJP, he had gone to Rajgir, obviously to consider his political step away from the hustle and bustle of politics. The way Nitish Kumar and his party have refused to comment on corruption cases and CBI raids against Lalu Prasad and his family members has become another talking point in Bihar politics. It was the same Nitish Kumar who dumped the RJD in 2018 on the issue of corruption. Asked to comment on the date of the all-party meeting, Nitish said, "Many parties have agreed to the date. But we must have the consent of all parties for holding the meeting on any particular date." The JD(U) leader, whose ally BJP has of late grown aggressive over the issue, expressed confidence that all parties in the state will back the proposed move before clearance is given by the cabinet.

## CAPSULE

### YOGA DAY IN PHYSICAL MODE AFTER 2 YEARS

New Delhi: After a two-year gap due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the main event of the eighth International Day of Yoga (IDY) celebrations on June 21 will be held in the physical mode at Mysuru in Karnataka.

### SCIENTIST WITH IT MIN JUMPS TO DEATH

New Delhi: A 55-year-old scientist working with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology died after allegedly jumping-off from the seventh floor of the Shastri Bhawan in central Delhi on Monday, police said.

### BIDEN BACKS JAPAN BID TO JOIN UNSC: KISHIDA

Tokyo: Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has said that US President Joe Biden supports Japan's bid to join a "reformed" UN Security Council. If approved, Japan would join Britain, China, France, Russia, and the US as permanent members of the international body's security council.

## Varanasi court order on maintainability of Gyanvapi suit today

PNS ■ VARANASI

Varanasi District Judge Ajay Kumar Vishvesha on Monday reserved his judgment on maintainability of the Shringar Gauri-Gyanvapi Mosque lawsuit. He will deliver the order on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, a former seer of Kashi Vishwanath Temple filed a petition seeking permission to perform puja of the "Shivling" claimed by the Hindu side to have been found in the wuzu khana of the Gyanvapi mosque. A city lawyer also submitted an application in the court demanding action against the Samajwadi Party national president, the AIMIM chief and six others. District Judge Vishvesha started hearing the Shringar Gauri-Gyanvapi lawsuit on Monday afternoon.

## Man who turned Khadi around is now Delhi LG

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Vinai Kumar Saxena, the Chairman of Khadi and Village Industries Commission, was on Monday appointed the Lieutenant Governor (L-G) of Delhi replacing Anil Bajjal. He is the first man from the corporate and social sector to be selected for such a gubernatorial post. He is the person who made Khadi a global brand. President Ram Nath Kovind on Monday issued a notification to this effect. "The President of India has accepted the resignation of Shri Anil Bajjal as Lt Governor of National Capital Territory of Delhi. "The President of India has been pleased to appoint Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena to be the Lt Governor of National Capital Territory of Delhi with effect from the date he assumes charge of his office," read a communiqué issued by Rashtrapati Bhawan.



Vinai Kumar Saxena

Bajjal, who was appointed as the Delhi Lieutenant Governor in 2016, resigned last week citing personal reasons. Bajjal's resignation has led to speculation about who will replace him. Praful Patel, the administrator of Lakshwadeep and Daman & Diu, was the top choice for the post but the appointment of Saxena surprised everyone in the political circle.

# Temp plunges, flights delayed as rain, gale lash Delhi-NCR

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Eight people were injured as trees and houses fell in different parts of the city after gusty winds accompanied by rain lashed the national capital on Monday morning, bringing the minimum temperature down to 17.2 degrees Celsius from 29 degrees Celsius - nine degrees below normal. Heavy rain and thunderstorms in Delhi and its adjoining areas led to massive traffic jams and affected flight operations at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport (IGAI). According to information, around 130 flights were delayed — 90 at the departure terminal and 44 at arrivals — while 20 were diverted to other airports between 6 am and 10 am as wind speeds touching as high as 75 km per hour disrupted operations. Taking note of water-logging and traffic jams, Gurugram police issued an advisory to work from home for Monday.



The India Meteorological Department (IMD) said that in an 80-minute period, the temperature in Delhi fell by 11 degrees from 29 degrees Celsius at 5.40 am to 18 degrees Celsius by 7 am. Private weather forecaster Skymet said that the minimum temperature recorded in the city was not only the lowest of the season but also the lowest in a decade during May. The lowest all-time minimum in May stands at 15.2 degrees Celsius, which was observed on May 2, 1982, it added. According to Skymet Weather, mercury in Delhi went down by "10 degrees in one hour" on Monday morning. The temperature dropped from 29 degrees at 5:30 am to 19 degrees at 6:30 am. "Delhi recorded 17.2 degrees minimum temperature on May 23, its lowest during the decade for May. Record for the lowest is 15.2 degrees on May 2 in 1982.

## US will defend militarily if China invades Taiwan: Biden

AP ■ TOKYO

US President Joe Biden said on Monday that the United States would intervene militarily if China were to invade Taiwan, saying the burden to protect Taiwan is "even stronger" after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It was one of the most forceful presidential statements in support of self-governing in decades. Biden, at a news conference in Tokyo, said "yes" when asked if he was willing to get involved militarily to defend Taiwan if China invaded. "That's the commitment we made," he added. The US traditionally has avoided making such an explicit security guarantee to Taiwan, with which it no longer has a mutual defence treaty, instead maintaining a policy of "strategic ambiguity" about how far it would be willing to go if China invaded. Detailed report on P8

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# In Balangir Hit-and-run mishap a pre-planned murder

Main accused held PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ BALANGIR

Police on Monday arrested the main accused in the hit-and-run incident at RTO Chowk in Balangir town in which a person died and two others were injured. In the mishap, while a motorbike was badly damaged, it also injured a bullock and

hit a truck coming from the opposite direction and damaged a Toyota Innova car parked on the roadside. One Sanu Nayak along with Srikant Bag was coming towards the town by a motorcycle when a mini truck driven by one Chitta Mohanty hit their vehicle from the rear, resulting in death of Bag on the spot and injuring two others.

However on Sunday, CCTV footages went viral revealing that the incident was not a mere accident but done intentionally. Earlier, injured Sanu's father Rabindra had complained to police that Chitta had threatened to kill them over a land dispute. The Balangir police nabbed Chitta from Theruvali while he was being shifted to Visakhapatnam for treatment. After the CCTV evidence surfaced and other factors in the incident came to light, police have registered a case under Section 302 and 120(B) of IPC. Further investigation was on to nab the other culprits in the incident, which is nothing but a pre-planned murder, said Balangir SP Nitin Kulaskar.

# Demo in Balangir demands HC Bench

Condemns HC Bar's move PNS ■ BALANGIR

Members the Balangir Action Committee (BAC) led by Gopalji Panigrahi on Monday staged a dharna before the Collectorate demanding setting up a permanent Bench of the Orissa High Court at Balangir. They condemned a resolution by the High Court Bar Association urging the Chief Justice of HC not to give his assent to same which is against setting up of a High Court Bench elsewhere. "Earlier, a HC Bench was functioning here in the pre independence days. We demand setting up a permanent Bench at Balangir, failing which the agitation will be intensified," warned BAC presi-

dent Panigrahi. Moreover, members of the Balangir Bar Association led by its president Amrish Tripathy also staged protest before the Collectorate, condemning the resolution of the HC Bar Association and demanded a HC Bench at Balangir. BJP members led by party district president Shivaji Mohanty also joined the dharna and supported the demand. Balangir MLA and senior Congress leader Narasingha Mishra in a tweet said, "Condemn the HC Bar resolution against establishment of permanent Bench of high court in western Odisha. The CMO should initiate a consultation process with the Chief Justice as per the latest letter by the Union Minister of Law immediately."

# In Kendrapada Unani hosp shut for 20 yrs, yet staffs paid salary

RAJESH BEHERA ■ KENDRAPADA

A doctor and a staff member are getting salary regularly, but the hospital they are working in has been nonexistent for last two decades. It exists only in pen and paper! If locals are to be believed, then former Chief Minister Biju Patnaik had set up a Unani hospital at Fakirabad under Kendrapada township during 1990s with an aim to provide health service to the minority community. The Unani is a Perso-Arabic traditional medicine practiced in the Muslim culture. A doctor and a health worker were also engaged in the Unani hospital. The Unani hospital functioned for eight years. But as people preferred to get allopathic treatment, the Unani hospital was closed in the lo-

cality for lack of patients. Several business establishments were later set up at the place, where the Unani hospital was set up. While the State Government has taken all steps for the modernisation of a Unani hospital at Bhadrak but in Biju Karmabhumi (Kendrapada), the State Government has been spending revenue to provide salary to a doctor and a para medical staff from the State exchequer though the hospital has been closed. When contacted, Kendrapada District Headquarters Hospital ADMO Sachidananda Mishra stated that the Unani medicine comes under the Ayush Department. The Unani health centre does not come under their jurisdiction. However, he said that an inquiry would be conducted into the issue.

# For not backing candidate in PRI poll Samiti Member ostracised in Ganjam village

Slapped fine of Rs 4L PNS ■ CHHATRAPUR

In a bizarre instance, a Panchayat Samiti Member has complained that she was forced to pay a fine of Rs 4 lakh and faced a social boycott in her own village, Subalaya, under Ganjam block. Samiti Member Mami Das alleged that only because she supported a candidate for Block Chairman other than the one from the ruling BJD, she was ostracised and targeted in the village. Meanwhile, she had met and submitted a written complaint against her own villagers to the Ganjam SP Brijesh Mishra and informed that if the local administration would not take any action

she would go to the Navin Niwas and meet the Chief Minister. She also warned of taking the extreme step of committing suicide if the administration failed to give justice to her. She alleged that the villagers had been continuously harassing her. However, on the contrary, Karuna Das, a resident of Subalaya village denied the allegation of boycott from village and alleged that the Samiti Member had levelled the allegation because she was removed from village president's post. Mami Das was elected unopposed during the last panchayat polls. She was in news for being kidnapped during the election of Block Chairperson post, but later she had released a video that she was well.

# KV location row: Champua Bandh total

All sections of people extend support RAJENDRA K. SAHU ■ CHAMPUA

The Champua Bandh demanding establishment of a Kendriya Vidyalaya at a location originally approved by the CBSE was held peacefully on Monday here. Sources revealed that after a notification of the Union HRD Ministry in the year 2016-17, the location for the KV at Ramla under wards no. 11 and no. 12 of Champua

NAC had been approved by the CBSE, but owing to a dispute over allotment of the required land, it was decided by the district administration to shift the school from Ramla to Kalikaprasad village situated by Rimuli - Champua State highway, about 12 km from Champua. From the very beginning, the locals of Champua were opposing the change of location of the KV to Kalikaprasad, but it turned out to be stronger when a message spread that the representatives of KVS, Bhubaneswar and Principal, Keonjhar KV had visited two sites recently at the request of the district level committee for the KV headed by the ADM and had approved the site at Kalikaprasad. The locals alleged a conspiracy of some influential people for a change of the location of the school.

# B'garh: Couple dies as car hits bike



PNS ■ BARGARH

A couple was killed in a road mishap on Monday morning near Sarandapali village in Bargarh district. Following the incident, police detained the driver of the car. Ganesh Ram Sahu from Kesheipali village and his wife Santoshini were on their way towards Parthalla village by a motorcycle. In the meantime, a car coming from the oppo-

site direction hit the motorcycle. The impact of the collision was so severe that Ram and wife Sahu were thrown away in different directions. While Ram died on the spot, Sahu succumbed to her injuries on the way to hospital. The Barpali police have detained a businessman Rahul Goel, who was driving the car. A case has been registered and the bodies were sent for post-mortem.

# In Parlakhemundi 5 parked cars reduced to ashes in blaze



PNS ■ PARALAKHEMUNDI

As many as five cars were reduced to ashes and one was partially damaged in a fire mishap at the Town Hall premises in Parlakhemundi town on Sunday night. Fire Brigade personnel rushed to the spot, but by that time the damage was done as the blaze spread from one car to another. A case regarding the incident was lodged at the Parala Model police station following an investigation has begun,

This was first such incident in the to The car owners had parked the vehicles near the Town Hall at Market Square for security reasons. Earlier the Town Hall was fenced and had gates not to allow parking of any vehicles. But later the tourists who availed accommodation at the nearby hotels were allowed to park their vehicles in the Town Hall premises. Locals have demanded that the Parlakhemundi Municipality take preventive measures to ensure that such incident doesn't reoccur.

# IN BRIEF

**EX-MP SIVAJI PATNAIK PASSES AWAY**  
Bhubaneswar: Veteran CPI(M) leader and former three-time MP Sivaji Patnaik passed away at a private hospital here on Monday afternoon. He was 91. He had been admitted to the hospital on Sunday after his potassium level deteriorated, informed CPI(M) State secretary Ali Kishore Patnaik. Sivaji Patnaik was elected to the Lok Sabha thrice from the Bhubaneswar constituency. He was the MP between 1977 and 1980. Further, he represented Bhubaneswar from 1989 to 1996.



**MLA PRASHANT JAGDEV SENT TO JAIL AGAIN**  
Bhubaneswar: Chilika MLA Prashant Jagdev was sent to jail again after he surrendered before the Judicial Magistrate First Class (JMFC) Court at Banpur on Monday. As the interim bail period of the legislator expired, he had surrendered before the court, following which he was sent to the Banpur Sub-Jail. Jagdev was arrested for ploughing his vehicle into a crowd injuring many at Banpur in March this year.



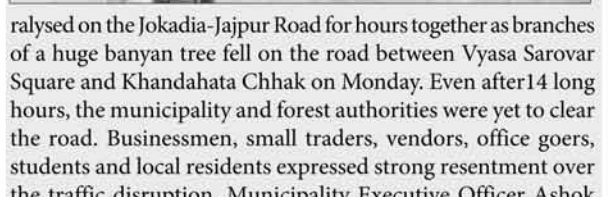
**B'PUR MAHANAGAR MAHOTSAV ENDS**  
Brahmapur: The week-long 10th Mahanagar Mahotsav here ended on Sunday. Joining as guests in the valedictory function, Brahmapur MP Chandra Sekhar Sahu, MLA Bikram Kumar Panda, BJD district president Dr Ramesh Chandra Chaupattanayak and Ex-BDA Chairman Subash Chandra Moharana highlighted the glorious past of Ganjam and its art, culture and literature. Organising committee president Narayana Mahankuda and secretary Gopal Patanaik coordinated the event. In the afternoon session Brahmapur Mayor Sangha Mitra Dalai had inaugurated a literary meet.



**CSPUR DAV STUDENTS' SUMMER CAMP CONCLUDES**  
Bhubaneswar: Students of the DAV Public School, Chandrasekharpur here performed various cultural programmes at the valedictory ceremony of their summer camp. Over 600 students participated in the weeklong activities in sports, art and painting, music, dance, acting and other forms of creative pursuits to rejuvenate themselves under the active guidance of experts and teachers.



**TREE BRANCHES FALL; TRAFFIC DISRUPTED IN JAJPUR RD**  
Jajpur Road: Vehicular movement and normal traffic were paralysed on the Jokadia-Jajpur Road for hours together as branches of a huge banyan tree fell on the road between Vyasa Sarovar Square and Khandahata Chhak on Monday. Even after 14 long hours, the municipality and forest authorities were yet to clear the road. Businessmen, small traders, vendors, office goers, students and local residents expressed strong resentment over the traffic disruption. Municipality Executive Officer Ashok Rout said he was informed about the matter late and arrangements were being made to clear the road.



**CAPACITY-BUILDING TRAINING FOR TEACHERS HELD IN BHAPUR**  
Bhapur: A five-day digital capacity-building training camp for headmasters was organised at the Balunkeswar Deb Peeth High School here. It was co-ordinated by Nityananda Das. Among others, District Assistant Education Officer Ashok Nayak, Mo School Supervisor Niranjan Das joined as guests. About 50 teachers and headmasters representing 17 newly-transformed schools of Bhapur and Khandapada blocks participated. The training covered topics of digital medium of education, smart board, e-library, technology used in science lab, role of teachers and headmasters. Piramal Foundation trainer Rinku Gour, Brajendra High School Headmaster Umakant Sethi and Solapat Headmaster Dr Girija Shankar Mohaptra conducted the training.



# 'Let Rajiv Gandhi be your role model'

Ex-PM's death anniv, Prativa Puraskar held PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Rajiv Gandhi Students Forum (RGSF) and the Rajiv Gandhi Study Circle jointly observed former PM Rajiv Gandhi's 31st Death Anniversary, a State level Rajiv Gandhi Prativa Puraskar event and a Special Lecturer on theme "Contribution of Rajiv Gandhi to Indian Democracy and Nation Building" here. The programme was organised under the leadership of RGSF State president Satyabrata Nayak. AICC national spokesperson Pawan Khera joined as chief speaker. He told that Rajiv was always working for eradication of poverty from the country. He had a pioneering role in the development of information



technology (IT) in India. Besides, he reduced the age from 21 years to 18 years for voting rights of the citizens. He will be remembered in history for his initiative for decentralisation of power, told Khera. The chief guest of the function Rajasthan Rajya Sabha MP Neeraj Dangi in his address told that Rajiv sacrificed his life

for unit, integrity and dignity of the country. Earlier, PCC president Niranjan Patnaik inaugurated the programme and told that Rajiv believed in peace, non-violence and truth and called upon the youth to follow the cardinal principles of life. AICC secretary and Odisha in-charge G Rudra Raju, Jatani MLA Suresh Routray,

Paryabekshayak Editor Dr Pabitra Mohan Samantaray and Amitav Chakrabati among others spoke. Satyabrata Nayak presided while general secretary Padmakar Guru delivered the welcome address. On the occasion, 85 talented students in various faculties were felicitated with Rajiv Gandhi Prativa Puraskar-2022.

# S Odisha forum vows to take up region's issues

Demands permanent solution to Kotia row PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Dakhin Odisha Unnayan Parishad on Sunday pledged to highlight the art, culture, literary history and rich heritage of the region, besides making efforts to popularise social life, indigenous food and products. In its annual general body meeting held here the Parishad office bearers stated that the organisation would work for betterment of the region and ventilate the genuine problems of the people of Malkangitri, Nabarangpur, Koraput, Rayagada, Gajapati, Kandhamal and Ganjam districts to the concerned authorities. Addressing a gathering,



Parishad president Bhruhu Buxipatra announced that the organisational network would be strengthened in all the 12 sub-divisions spread over seven districts and the forum would play a pivotal role in promoting talents from the area. He said the region which is rich in natural resources, known for maximum concentration of Adivasis and its contribution for strengthening State's economy, needs to get special attention.

The participants raised the demand for immediate and permanent solution of border dispute between Andhra Pradesh and Odisha caused by repeated attempt of AP Government to forcibly encroach upon lands in Kotia villages, sorting out the water disputes with AP concerning construction of dam at the upper basin of Bansadhara river, besides issues like construction of Gunpur-Therubali Railway line, functioning of Rayagada

Railway Division, recognition of first independence struggle of Paralakhemundi, formation of Biodiversity Conservation Board for Mahendragiri hills and tribals and establishment of Agriculture University for the region. While forum vice-president Prof Rama Chandra Mishra gave the welcome address, secretary Er Bipin Bihary Panda read out the annual report and treasurers Bijoya Chandra Adhikary presented the accounts at the meeting.

# Homegrown 'Dannex' fast gaining popularity: Baghel

STAFF REPORTER ■ DANTEWADA

Inaugurating the new unit of Dantewada NEXT (Dannex) in Katakalyan on Monday, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel said the innovative initiative of Dantewada is slowly gaining ground and rising on popularity chart.

Visiting Dantewada, the Chief Minister obliged the women staff of the unit with autographs. He also gifted a Dannex shirt to Bastar MP Deepak Baij.

The newly-inaugurated textile unit will deploy 100 women to manufacture the garments, an official communication said.

He said that Dantewada has a huge potential to experiment with organic farming as the land is fertile and has abundance of forest resources.



resources. He said the innovations taking place in Dantewada are compatible with the natural environment of the region, which is

commendable.

In the presence of the Chief Minister, a MoU was inked between Dannex FPO and Export House Tirupur -- one of the largest wholesale units in the country -- for export of apparels made in Chhindnar, the fifth unit of Dannex.

Dannex is the homegrown clothing brand of Chhattisgarh's tribal dominated Dantewada district. Soon it will be exported to foreign countries.

Four units of Dannex have been commissioned at Haram, Barsoor, Karli and Katakalyan. A MoU has been signed for the fifth unit at Chhindnar.

The women employees of Dannex have made a 11-km-long 'chunari' which will be offered by the Chief Minister to Danteshwari Mai.

# C'garh moves SC against bail to suspended IPS GP Singh



In January, the Chhattisgarh Anti-Corruption Bureau arrested Singh, who is under suspension, and charged him with corruption, sedition, and promoting enmity.

Chhattisgarh Home Department on March 14, 2022.

"In reference to the said request, the Central Government had raised certain queries on March 29, 2022, which were replied to by the state of Chhattisgarh on April 12, 2022. Therefore, the mandated time period of three months, along with one month extension, could not have been over before July 2022," it added.

The high court had, on May 12, granted bail to Singh.

On May 4, the Supreme Court declined to grant interim bail to Singh in the corruption case and asked the high court to dispose of Singh's bail matter, pending adjudication before it, expeditiously, on its own merits and in accordance with law.

In January, the Chhattisgarh Anti-Corruption Bureau arrested Singh, who is under suspension, and charged him with corruption, sedition, and promoting enmity.

On January 3, this year, the top court had junked a plea by Singh, challenging the high court order, which denied him protection against arrest in the corruption case.

The Chhattisgarh government has moved the Supreme Court challenging the bail granted to the state's Additional Director General of Police Gurjinder Pal Singh in a case filed against him under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

The plea, filed through advocate Sumeer Sodhi, said: "The petitioner state submits that the present case is not one where the state apprehends that if the respondent is released, he might influence witnesses, in fact the present case is such where the respondent has, in the past, intimidated witnesses because of which the state had to provide police protection to such witnesses."

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, representing the state government, mentioned the matter for a vacation bench headed by Justice D.Y. Chandrachud and sought urgent listing. The bench allowed the state government to mention the case for urgent listing through the mentioning registrar, who would then list it.

The state government's plea said the Chhattisgarh High Court was not correct in observing that Singh is a suspended police officer having no power. It added that Singh's conduct inside the jail is also questionable. "He was using his seniority in the Police Department in luring guards deployed inside the jail to act contrary to the jail rules and the law applicable therein and hence the regular bail application of the respondent ought to have been rejected by the High Court," it said.

The state government said the high court has not considered the fact that the necessary sanction from the Centre as mandated under Section 19 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 has already been sought by the

# Baghel tastes Bastar's Chapda Chutney

STAFF REPORTER ■ DANTEWADA

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Monday had his lunch at the residence of a farmer, Ramlal Negi, in Bastar's Barsoor village. The attraction was Bastar's Chapda Chutney.

Chapda Chutney, a unique red ant sauce, is a trademark of Bastar's meal and is known for being essential part of their food habit.

To make the chutney, villagers first crush and dry all the ants and eggs, then grind them with a mortar and pestle. Then they add tomatoes, coriander, garlic,



ginger, chili, salt and a bit of sugar to create a smooth, orange paste. Sometimes, they cook the paste further with oil and chopped onions. Tribal vendors also sell

the chutney at weekly markets 'Madais' in small packets of sal leaves. The ants' high levels of formic acid, coupled with the added seasonings, make this chutney extremely hot.

The chutney not only satisfies the taste buds but also keeps many diseases at bay.

It is also found to be effective in preventing the tribals from cold, cough, flu and other seasonal diseases and has proved to be a preventive medicine for malaria.

Jondhra Pej (corn soup), Chindadi, a sweet dish prepared from Tikhur, and Saigoda were also in the lunch menu served to Baghel.

# Four more held for Rs 50L robbery

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Police in Chhattisgarh on Monday arrested four more persons including a minor for robbery of Rs 50 lakhs from a grain merchant on May 16 on Raipur's outskirts. One accused is still at large.

A group of masked turbaned robbers in three or four motorcycles looted and injured Raipur-based grain merchant Narendra Khetrapal of Rs 50 lakhs when he was returning home on Sunday night.

Raipur Senior Superintendent of Police Prashant Agrawal identified them as mastermind Devendra Dhritlahre and his accomplices Sanju

Shrihole (19), Vikas Chaturvedi (22) and a minor boy, all from Raipur city.

Chaturvedi is employed with the grain merchant as a cash recovery agent, Agrawal said. Efforts are on to arrest Ajay alias Aju, the officer said.

After Dhritlahre was nabbed, he confessed his involvement in the incident and named the others.

He told the police that Chaturvedi informed them that Khetrapal returns home daily with a huge amount of cash.

Police recovered Rs 5.56 lakhs in cash, a motorcycle and a scooter used in the robbery.

Two minors among 10 miscreants were arrested on Saturday who were involved in the robbery.



A glimpse from the month-long exhibition underway at the Deendayal Auditorium in Raipur. Through photographs and video clips, it showcases the achievements of the Bhupesh Baghel government in Chhattisgarh over the past three-and-a-half years. Pioneer Photo

# Bastar woman entrepreneur to visit UK courtesy Baghel

STAFF REPORTER ■ DANTEWADA

Parwati, a tribal woman entrepreneur from Katakalyan village in Bastar's Dantewada district, will soon tour the United Kingdom courtesy Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.

She is one of the leading women of a Self-Help Group of Dantewada who recently sent a consignment of mahua flower to the UK.

During the outreach programme of the Chief Minister, she apprised Baghel that now their business has expanded overseas



and that they have sent a consignment to the UK. Expressing his delight, Baghel responded: "Wah, kya baat hai!" Parwati earlier told Baghel that their SHG had collected 40,000 quintals of mahua this season. The decision to provide support price to the minor forest produce has provided relief to the tribals and has become a major source of income, she said.

# VAT cut on fuel will incur Rs 500 cr loss: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Monday said the cut in excise duty on fuel by the Centre will cause a loss of around Rs 500 crores to the state exchequer. He again urged the Union government to withdraw the cess imposed on the fuel.

Baghel was talking to reporters here before leaving for Dantewada district on his feedback campaign 'Bhent Mulaqt'.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Saturday announced a reduction in the central excise duty on petrol by Rs 8 per litre and on diesel by Rs 6 per litre.

Asked if Chhattisgarh



will reduce Value Added Tax (VAT) on petrol and diesel, Baghel said he could not understand Sitharaman's comment of Sunday that the reduction in excise duty will not impact the state's share in it. If the Central excise is cut, then 41 per cent of its share which goes to the state will be automatically reduced, he said. "The revenue collection

through VAT (which is levied on ad valorem basis) will also dip automatically. State officials have informed me that we will suffer a loss of around Rs 500 crore (annually)," the Chief Minister said.

Baghel said he has been asking the Union government to withdraw the cess it started imposing on petrol and diesel since last year and impose the same rate of tax on these products as was charged during the UPA government.

Sitharaman on Sunday said the cut in excise duty on petrol and diesel have been done in road and infrastructure cess levied on the two fuels, collection on which was never shared with the states.

**बैंक ऑफ बड़ोदा Bank of Baroda** Regional Office, Jeevan Prakash, L.I.C. Building, Pandri, Raipur (C.G.), PH: 0771 - 4222611, 4222612 E-mail: recovery.raipur@bankofbaroda.com

**POSSESSION NOTICE**

(As per Appendix IV read with rule 8(1) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002)

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorised Officer of the Bank of Baroda under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(2) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a Demand Notice to the following borrowers / guarantors calling upon the Borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the respective notices within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The under mentioned Borrower / Guarantor having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrowers/Guarantors and the Public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002.

S. N.	Branch Name/Ph.No.	Name of Borrower / Guarantor	Description of Property	Demand Notice Date, Amount & Symbolic / Physical Possession Date
01	Rawabhatha Birgaon Branch Raipur 9752410789	Mr. Goverdhan Mahanand S/o Mr. Rajaram Mahanand	Equitable Mortgage of Property situated at KH. No. - 264/4, Total Rakba - 3000 Sqft. a part of 600 sqft. ( Diverted Land ) at Mouza - Gogaon P.H.No.-107, RIC- Raipur 1, Tehsil & District- Raipur (C.G.). Boundaries : North - House of Manpreet Kaur, South - Plot of Kurre, East - Road, West - House of Kesar Patel.	15.03.2022 <b>Rs. 9,32,056.00</b> + interest + other charges 20.05.2022 Symbolic

The Borrowers / Guarantors / Mortgagors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the above mentioned property and any dealings with the property/ies will be subject to the charge of Bank of Baroda for above mentioned amount interest and other charges thereon. The Borrower's attention is invited to provision of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Date: 23.05.2022, Place: Raipur, Chhattisgarh  
Authorised Officer, Bank of Baroda



# After 2 years, Yoga Day to be held in physical mode; Modi to lead event

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**  
After a two-year gap due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the main event of the eighth International Day of Yoga (IDY) celebrations on June 21 will be held in the physical mode at Mysuru in Karnataka. The event will be led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.  
"Apart from the main event at Mysuru, another attraction will be Guardian Ring, a relay Yoga streaming event which will capture and weave together a digital feed of IDY programs organised by Indian Missions abroad on June 20. The proposed plan is to initiate the streaming from Japan, the land of the rising sun, at 6 am local time," Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal told media persons here.  
According to Ayush Secretary, Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, each Indian mission will organise yoga activities on June 21 as in the past.  
Based on the broad pattern of observing IDY in previous



years, these activities could include short functions, speeches, Common Yoga Protocol based yoga demonstrations and local celebrity videos among others, said the official.  
The Guardian Ring programme will string together video feeds from 20 to 30 selected missions across different time zones into a continuous social media event of about 18 to 20-hour duration.  
The Ayush Ministry has sought concurrence from MEA on which missions will be participating in the programme.

"Also, as this Yoga day is being celebrated in the backdrop of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' year, events will be held at 75 iconic locations like Shiv Sagar in Assam and Hampi in Karnataka across the country. The focus will be on 'branding India' on a global scale."  
He also informed that a series of events are being held across the country and globe in the run-up to IDY and the 25 days countdown is being observed in Hyderabad from May 27, wherein around 10,000 Yoga enthusiasts will participate in the Yoga demonstration. Sharing that "this time the Government is targeting at least 25 crore people who will be joining yoga events to be held across the world including India," Basavaraddi pointed out adding that "Yoga has become an international phenomenon, with practitioners from all over the world practicing it in different ways. It has been followed by people of all ages and strata to improve their health and well-being."

# Didi attacks Centre, demands autonomy of Central agencies

**SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA**  
Days after comparing the powers that be in Delhi with medieval tyrant Muhammad bin Tughlaq, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday drew new parallels for the Narendra Modi Government comparing it with the likes of Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini and Joseph Stalin.  
Saying that even Stalin, Hitler or Mussolini were better than the present dispensation in Delhi that ruled by CBI, ED et al., Banerjee demanded a complete autonomy for the central agencies.  
"This is a government worse than those of Hitler Mussolini or even Stalin," Banerjee said adding "they are bull-doing the federal structure of the country by using the central agencies against the opposition parties."  
Demanding autonomy for the central agencies she said, "I do not say that all the officials are bad but the fact is that many of them are influenced by those

in power ... I think the agencies should be made completely autonomous ... I am saying so because this is the need of the time ... these agencies are bound to be made autonomous in days to come only their salaries will be given by the government."  
Flaying the BJP for sending the central agencies to the houses of the opposition leaders Banerjee referred to a recent raid in the houses of former Bihar Chief Minister Laloo Yadav. "As soon as Laloo ji came out of jail they sent agencies to raid his houses ... this is because they want to weaken the opposition parties ahead of the elections," Banerjee said.  
Presently the Trinamool Congress functionaries including its senior ministers and MPs are facing more than a dozen cases of corruption, violence that are being investigated by the central agencies like CBI, ED and NIA — all upon court orders.  
Attacking the Centre for bull-doing the houses of the



poor people Banerjee said how in the past week the BJP-run Bihar government sent police even to Bengal to pull down houses of the local people. "The Bihar Police did not even have the courtesy to inform the Bengal Police ... they simply sent in their men with bulldozers inside Malda district and pulled down the houses of the poorest of the poor people in that locality ... they know how to break."  
Rebutting arguments that her own government should order a matching reduction of fuel prices following in the

footsteps of the Centre which cut petrol prices a couple of days ago Banerjee said, after the reduction of petrol prices her State too had suffered loss of Rs 641 crore in terms of cess and rebate.  
"They (Centre) are asking us to reduce prices but on the other hand they are holding back our dues ... they release funds to the BJP-ruled States but do not give funds to the States ruled by the opposition parties and now they are asking us to reduce petrol prices," Banerjee said alleging the Centre had in the past a few years earned more than Rs 18.23 lakh crore by increasing fuel prices.  
"Before Narendra Modi came to power petrol sold for Rs 71.51 in Kolkata ... after he came to power there was a reduction in price of crude but the Centre instead of cutting the price went on increasing it to Rs 106.03 in May 2022 ... and now they claim credit for reducing the price by a few rupees."

# Rain brings respite from heatwave in north, northwest

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**  
Rain and thunderstorms brought some respite from the scorching heatwave in north and northwestern parts of the country on Monday.  
According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), no part of the country, except West Rajasthan, is likely to witness a heatwave condition during the next five days. "No significant change in maximum temperatures very likely over rest parts of the country during the next 5 days," it said.  
An extra-tropical weather system approaching from north Pakistan led to formation of rain-bearing clouds that brought showers to parts of Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh early on Monday.  
"A Western Disturbance

as a cyclonic circulation lies over north Pakistan extending upto middle tropospheric levels. An induced Low Pressure Area lies over northwest Rajasthan and an eastwest trough runs from this induced Low Pressure Area to north Bangladesh in lower tropospheric levels," the IMD said.  
According to the weather office, thunderstorms occurred at several places in Uttarakhand, while most parts of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and isolated places in Rajasthan received rainfall.  
On Sunday, Fatehgarh in Uttar Pradesh had recorded the maximum temperature of 45.9 degrees Celsius.  
In Delhi, the morning temperature plunged 11 notches from 29 degrees Celsius to 18 degrees Celsius.



Students of Calcutta University raise slogans during a protest demanding online examinations, in front of the university's campus, in Kolkata

# Will Govt do wrongs like Aurangzeb who razed temples: Prof Irfan Habib

**PRADEEP SAXENA ■ ALIGARH**  
Emeritus Professor of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and eminent historian Prof. Irfan Habib said that the way Mughal emperor Aurangzeb had done wrong by destroying the temple, so will the Government do wrong in the same way. The temples of Kashi and Mathura were built by Raja Vir Singh Bundela during the reign of Jahangir, which were later demolished by Aurangzeb, as per the history records. He also raised questions on the structure being described as Shivling in Gyanvapi.  
Pro Irfan said that there is talk of getting Shivling in Gyanvapi, but there was no mention of this in the petition which was filed. There is a way to make Shivling. Now Shivling is being made an issue. He said that when temples were demolished, its stones were used in

mosques. Stones of Hindu symbols were used in many mosques. Stones associated with the site of Buddhism will be found in many temples. 'Allah' is written in Arabic on a stone of the minaret built by Rana Kumbha in Chittor, but it cannot be called a mosque.  
Prof Habib said that in the year 1992, the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya was demolished and it paved the way for the construction of Ram temple. He said that Aurangzeb had destroyed the temples. In those days there was no secret work. The incident of breaking the temple is recorded in history. On the Gyanvapi episode, he said that whenever mosques or temples were built in olden times, stones of Buddhist monasteries were found in them, so should the temples be demolished. These are stupid things. In such a situation many temples will be destroyed.

# Priyanka to campaign for Cong in Karnataka Assembly polls: DK

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI/BENGALURU**  
Karnataka Congress president DK Shivakumar on Monday said the party's national General Secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra has agreed to campaign and spend time in the State for the Assembly elections next year. The KPCC chief's sudden New Delhi visit came amid talks about differences between him and Congress Legislature party leader Siddaramaiah regarding probable candidates recommended to the high command for the upcoming MLC polls in the state.  
Shivakumar's meeting also resulted in the announcements of the final list of candidates for the Legislative Council. Party chief Sonia Gandhi approved the candidatures of M Nagarjun Yadav and K Abdul Jabbar as Congress candidates to contest the biennial elections to be the Legislative Council.  
The June 10 Rajya Sabha elections was also discussed with Priyanka Gandhi's name being favoured but the party will take some more time to decide upon it keeping in mind the resolution of Udaipur Chintan Shivir that proposed 'one family, one ticket, one MP'.  
Tuesday is the last date to file nominations for the June 3 polls to seven seats of the Karnataka Legislative Council to be elected by MLAs and all the three major political parties in the state — Congress, BJP and JD(S) — are yet to announce their candidates.  
"Everyone will have the desire that their leader should come to their state, but as of now it has not been discussed," Shivakumar said in response to a question about several state leaders insisting that Priyanka Gandhi contest the Rajya Sabha polls from Karnataka.



"We have said that she should spend time for the state during elections (assembly polls) and she has agreed to it. She has said that she will campaign in the state...No discussion has taken place regarding Rajya Sabha tickets," Shivakumar said briefing the media.  
This comes amid speculation that a section of the Karnataka Congress leaders, including Shivakumar, wants Priyanka Gandhi to contest the June 10 Rajya Sabha polls from the state, as they feel it may benefit the party during the Assembly polls, due next year. Shivakumar had recently said the party wants Priyanka Gandhi Vadra to "concentrate on the south, where elections are coming up".  
He said he and Siddaramaiah together had submitted a list of candidates to the high command for MLC polls. Seats are falling vacant, due to the retirement of MLCs — Laxman Sangappa Savadi and Lahar Singh Siroya of BJP; Ramappa Timmapur, Allum Veerabhadrapa, Veena Achaiah S of Congress; and H M Ramesha Gowda and Narayana Swamy K V of JD(S).  
According to official sources, in this election, each MLC candidate will require a minimum of 29 votes to win, and on the basis of minimum votes required and tallying it with the strength of each party in the Legislative Assembly, the BJP will be able to win four seats, Congress two and JD(S) one.

# SP MLAs create din in Assembly

**PNS ■ LUCKNOW**  
The first session of the 18th Vidhan Sabha of Uttar Pradesh began on a stormy note with the Samajwadi Party, the main Opposition party, creating a din during Governor Anandiben Patel's address to the joint sitting of the legislature.  
The SP members, during the hour-long address by Governor Anandiben Patel, raised slogans against the government and asked her to "go back".  
Continuing the high drama during the governor's address on Monday, the SP MLAs, who carried placards, trooped into the well of the House and raised slogans.  
As soon as the House met on Monday morning, the SP members thronged the well of the House with placards in their hands and raised slogans over issues like law and order, farmers, stray cattle, and incidents of rape in the state.  
Anandiben Patel was 'welcomed' by SP members with chants of "Governor go back." However, Governor Anandiben Patel continued her address amidst the pandemonium and read the speech for over an hour.  
During the protest, leader of opposition Akhilesh Yadav remained on his seat. His uncle Shivpal Singh Yadav also remained silent and raised no slogans. Abdullah Azam also remained seated and did not participate in the protest.  
The SP MLAs asked the governor to stop her address and return midway. Inflation, unemployment and the law and order situation in the state were major issues raised by the opposition.  
The governor, however, continued her address and listed out the achievements of the Yogi Adityanath-led government.  
"The current Bharatiya Janata Party-led government in

# Auditors play vital role in shaping e-governance, says CAG

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**  
Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) Girish Chandra Murmu on Monday said that auditors have an important role in strengthening e-government systems by providing inputs to the Government in how it is managing the three Ps, which are the touchstone of e-government systems - Privacy, Performance, and Participation. He was inaugurating a virtual seminar as the chair of International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI) Working Group on IT Audit (WGITA).  
Murmu said that the principal beneficiary of e-Governance is the people of the country and have to consistently follow the principle of Antyodaya which means no one is left behind.  
Some members of the opposition parties tried to create disturbance during the governor's address but she read out her entire address without stopping.  
Appreciating the better law and order situation in the state, Patel expressed happiness over the peaceful completion of various festivals in the recent past.  
While addressing the House, the governor mentioned the efforts being made by the government in all areas including housing, social security, pension schemes, industrial investment, infrastructure development, education, health and women's uplift.  
She also stated that work would be done while fixing the timeline for implementation of projects and focus would be on performance-based works.

# Era of good governance in 5 yrs: UP Guv

Pradesh a leading state in the country on multiple fronts."  
In her address, Patel outlined developmental initiatives of Yogi Adityanath's previous government and also the projections for the next five years. She said work was in full flow on the defence manufacturing corridor projects and there was a focus on self-employment schemes and establishment of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).  
The work on the Lucknow-Ghazipur expressway was on while the government had improved aviation facilities, completed 20 irrigation projects and made five international airports, she said.  
The governor said Asia's biggest airport was coming up at Jewar and important steps were being taken in the field of defence production.  
Congratulating Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for the historic mandate in the recent assembly elections, Patel said, "In the next five years, our government will compete with itself to further strengthen good governance."  
"Expressing faith in nationalism, good governance, security and development, the prudent people of Uttar Pradesh have given my government an opportunity to serve the state again," she said.  
"Such an opportunity has been given to any government after 37 years, which proves that the government has fully met the expectations of the people," she said.  
The governor said due to the efforts of the government, UP was at the top place in four dozen schemes, which was proof of good governance.



"While e-Governance systems improve the ease of life, they also raise concerns of data privacy, national information security and associated risks of providing information technology services; creating new challenges and opportunities for Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs). These advancements have provided opportunities to audit as well. SAI India has embarked on its enterprise-wide audit process automation and knowledge management system. An ambitious project is the One IAAD One System (OIOS) Project implemented in SAI India," said the CAG of India.  
He also said that India's apex audit body is increasingly embedding data analysis using advanced tools and techniques into its audit domain. It is supported by institutional arrangements within the organization. Its Centre for Data Management and Analytics (CDMA) of SAI India plays an advisory and facilitating role to our field audit offices in the use of Data Analytics and audit of IT systems and fostering a data-driven culture in our institution. The International Centre for Information Systems and Audit (iCISA), the premier training centre of CAG of India, promotes capacity building on technology related areas within our SAI as well as internationally.

# DST awards STUTI programme as PMU to Amity University

**PNS ■ RANCHI/ROURKELA**  
The Department of Science & Technology (DST) has awarded the STUTI program as a Project Management Unit (PMU) to Amity University Uttar Pradesh (AUUP) to conduct 7 days of residential hands-on training on the state-of-the-art equipment, fully sponsored by DST.  
Following the award, Amity University organized the second DST-STUTI Program, which commenced on Monday, in collaboration with National Institute of Technology (NIT) Rourkela, on "Developing Skills and knowledge for Civil and Electrical Engineering Researchers

# Era of good governance in 5 yrs: UP Guv

through Access to Cutting-Edge Technology".  
Advising the research scholars, Prof. K. Umamaheshwar Rao, Director, NIT Rourkela, said we must move from untruth to truth, from darkness to light, from death to immortality, and from ignorance to knowledge. Highlighting the researches, patents and innovations done by Amity Universities, Prof. R. K. Jha, VC, Amity University, Jharkhand said Amity is a leading Research and innovation driven University which has filed more than 1600 patents. Dr. Nitin Batra, CEO, Amity Institute of Training & Development, was present on the occasion amidst other dignitaries.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

## Tightrope

The new Australian PM has his task cut out with regard to his role in QUAD *vis-à-vis* China



The Chinese feel that Australian Labour Party leader Anthony Albanese, who succeeds Scott Morrison as the Prime Minister, may adopt a less hostile attitude towards them. Where does that feeling leave the QUAD? The US-initiated security dialogue is about countering the projection of Chinese power in the Indo-Pacific. As an equal partner in the quadrilateral, how the Albanese-led Australia interprets the growing tension between China and the United States becomes crucial for both. The QUAD had a chequered first phase when under Liberal John Howard, Australia withdrew from the dialogue, and his successor, Labour's Kevin Rudd, did not rejoin. The strategic initiative got a second life in 2017, and the four members are today more serious than ever to protect the QUAD. That is why the QUAD would like to reassure themselves that the shrillness of the campaign in the run-up to the just-concluded Australian elections, particularly over the Liberal-Labour spat over who is closer to China and who is not, will not find its echo now that Albanese has taken over. The QUAD and the Australian people want to know if Albanese will review or continue with Morrison's policies. The China-Australia ties were at their worst during Morrison's tenure. In the recent election campaign, Labour was under intense public scrutiny over its China policy. The Morrison-led Liberals accused Albanese of being soft on China, claiming that "the Chinese Government has picked their horse and he's sitting right there". A video showing Albanese trying to speak in Mandarin at an Australian Chinese trade association dinner in 2018 was recirculated afresh.

Albanese did not take the bait and maintained that there will not be a major change on contentious matters like Taiwan and the South China Sea. He said Australia's relationship with China "will remain a challenging one", and that the friendship with the US will remain the "first pillar" of Australia's foreign policy. Closer to the election, the Labour party displayed a similarly hardened attitude towards China. Labour's Penny Wong — the new Foreign Minister — led her campaign saying they will not take "a backward step" on Australia's current tensions with China. The same Wong had said a year ago that the bilateral friction does not mean that "there's no room for improvement in our actions". Wong also criticised Morrison for preferring the AUKUS-linked nuclear-powered submarines pact over the French submarine deal. The Labour at that time wanted Australia to have a view separate from the US over military and security matters. To think that Albanese, new to international diplomacy at this level, would adopt an America-first policy and simultaneously try to rationalise relations with China appears far-fetched. For its part, China is leaving no stone unturned to send the message that a healthy relationship is in the interests of both countries. Beijing will lose no opportunity to drive a wedge in the QUAD. It is time for the real Albanese to stand up.

### PICTALK



Anchored boats during a dust storm at a ghat in Varanasi

PTI

## Embarrassing cover-up

The Taliban have ordered all female TV news anchors to cover their faces while on air

The Taliban-led Islamic Emirate Government in Afghanistan has pronouncedly returned to its crooked ways, especially with regard to the country's women. Actually, it's always been biased against the fair gender, even when it was in power the last time in Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001. After they seized power again in August last year, the Taliban initially appeared to have moderated their restrictions somewhat, announcing no dress code for women. But in recent weeks, they have made a sharp, hardline pivot that has confirmed the worst fears of the rights activists and further complicated the Taliban's dealings with an already distrustful international community. On March 23, 2022, the first day of the school year in Afghanistan, eager female students arriving for class found closed gates and armed Taliban guards posted there. Despite the *de facto* authorities' assurances only days earlier that schools would reopen for girls above sixth grade, they had barred girls from further education. The Minister of Higher Education — part of an all-male Government — has stated publicly that Islam is more important than qualifications, so education is of no value to boys or girls.



Then earlier this month, the Taliban's Ministry for the Prevention of Vice and the Propagation of Virtue ordered all women to wear head-to-toe clothing in public that leaves only their eyes visible. The decree said women should leave the home only when necessary and that male relatives would face punishment for women's dress code violations. And now, as per a report last weekend, Afghanistan's Taliban rulers have started to enforce a new order requiring all female TV news anchors in the country to cover their faces while on air. After the order was announced midweek, only a handful of news outlets initially complied. But on Sunday, most female anchors were seen with their faces covered after the Taliban's Vice and Virtue Ministry began enforcing the decree. However, the presenters are obviously not happy with the diktat. They feel it's the imposition of "just an outside culture" and there "aren't feeling good at all" while presenting programmes. But all hope's not lost. Not yet! In an act of solidarity with female colleagues, the channel's male personnel covered their faces with masks, including the main evening newsreader. Way to go, you are fighting for a cause.

# True trustees of the Constitution?

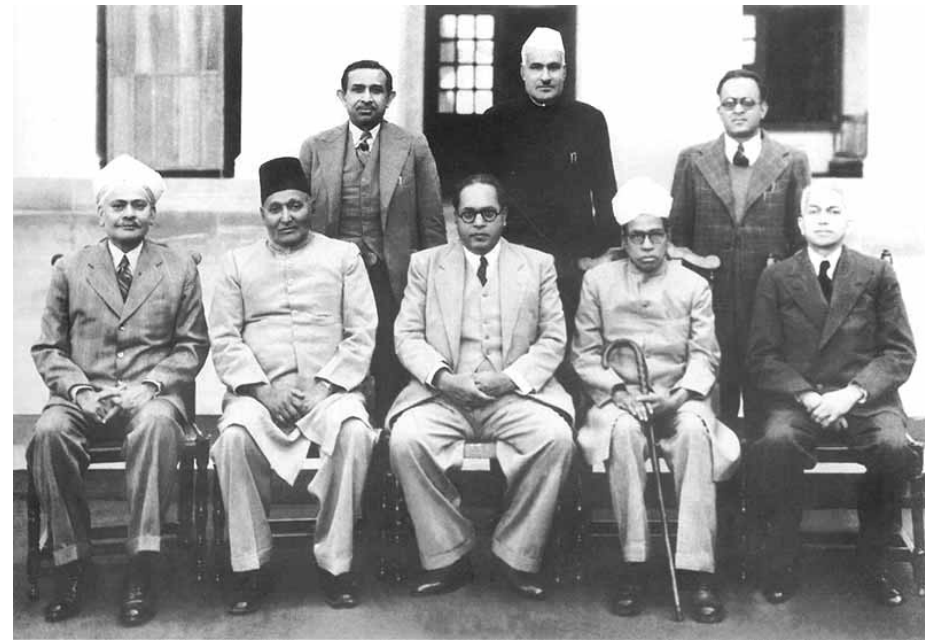


JS RAJPUT

Our forefathers, who drafted the Constitution, had pictured an entirely different scenario for the development of the nation than what it has now become

The unseating of the then Union Government by the people in May 2014 shocked those who were convinced of being the only conscience keepers to the nation, the protectors of the Constitution of India. Come September 2015, certain authors, poets and film personalities gave expression to their hurt conscience on what they thought were increasing intolerance and "unmaking of India". Recently, another letter written by 108 bureaucrats to the PM received only stunted media response; that too, from ideologically inclined fellow travellers. Selective efforts, people understand, are mere manifestation of the loss of hegemony over institutions and regular sources of support from the corridors of power. India deserves far more unbiased and credible civil society think tanks. Is it not intriguing that those worried about the 'victimisation of a particular community, intolerance and attack on secular fabric' just prefer to keep mum when orchestrated violence takes place in West Bengal before and after Assembly elections. Their conscience is not aroused when two ministers of the Maharashtra Government are put behind bars, but refuse to resign! The 108 custodians of the Constitution just did not remember TT Krishnamachari, Keshav Deva Malaviya or Lal Bahadur Shastri! Does it not indict the bureaucracy as a whole when the house of a senior IAS officer is raided and over ₹17 crore in cash is recovered? When orders of the Supreme Court of India on loudspeaker decibel levels are flouted for years and insistence on it being implemented is resisted? The unscrupulous come in the support of the deviant! Does the highest Indian judiciary deserve this treatment?

In Maharashtra and Rajasthan, the State Governments are openly encouraging the flouting of court orders on decibel levels; these two Governments are also the custodians of the spirit of Constitution. Why can't the 'hurt and worried' luminaries issue an appeal to



respect the judiciary?

As one peruses the Constituent Assembly debates, one is inspired by the spirit and intent that remains organically present during these deliberations, conducted with Rajendra Prasad as its president. The chairman of the Drafting Committee, BR Ambedkar, was admired for his comprehension of the socio-economic and cultural context of India. He had thorough comprehension of the global scenario and had acquired a great futuristic vision. He made a historic speech on November 26, 1949, when the draft was finally approved by the Constituent Assembly: "Whatever the Constitution may or may not provide, the welfare of the country will depend upon the way in which the country is administered. That will depend upon the men who administer it. It is a trite saying that a country can have only the Government it deserves."

Those with a hurt conscience must have read it all when they entered the corridors of power to implement the provisions of the Constitution, and preserve

and protect its spirit. Did they realise that it was imperative on the part of the implementers, including the elected representatives, bureaucrats and legal luminaries to remember Ambedkar's expectations: "I shall only hope that all those whose good fortune it may be to work this Constitution in future will remember that it was a unique victory which we achieved by the unique method taught to us by the Father of the Nation, and it is up to us to preserve and protect the independence that we have won and to make it really bear fruit for the man in the street. Let us launch on this new enterprise of running our Independent Republic with confidence, with truth and non-violence and, above all, with the heart within and God overhead."

On November 25, 1949, senior Congress leader Mahavir Tyagi was given four minutes to speak, which he considered "the most precious of my life, past, present and future". The Draft Constitution was a 'concrete picture' before them, in which each of the members had contributed; and Ambedkar was the chief artist. It would be very relevant

IN MAHARASHTRA AND RAJASTHAN, THE STATE GOVERNMENTS ARE OPENLY ENCOURAGING THE FLOUTING OF COURT ORDERS ON DECIBEL LEVELS; THESE TWO GOVERNMENTS ARE ALSO THE CUSTODIANS OF THE SPIRIT OF CONSTITUTION

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### IS SLASHING FUEL PRICES LOGICAL?

Sir — A reduction in central excise duty per litre of petrol by ₹8 and ₹6 for each litre of diesel will translate into retail prices on these fuels dropping by ₹9.5 per litre and ₹7 per litre. Again, the price subsidy for LPG of ₹200 per cylinder to beneficiaries of the Ujjwala scheme is a boon. So it is in the hands of the Finance Minister to control inflation. If this holds true, then inflation can be controlled periodically in the same way instead of making people struggle. Tax reduction must be at once passed to consumers who are now reeling under direct or indirect taxes.

At the same time, the taxes levied must be routed towards reduction of burden of purchasing power of every citizen of State-Central sectors. It is the duty of an elected Government to give concessions to the lower strata of people to ease their day-to-day expenses in terms of fulfilling their basic daily needs. So far they haven't taken positive steps to enhance the purchasing power of the lower and middle class citizens. It is time to control commodity prices; the sale of things should be streamlined and made available in the open market.

CK Subramaniam | Navi Mumbai

### INDIA'S CONDITION SAME AS LANKA'S?

Sir — Sri Lanka, our neighbouring country, is experiencing an unprecedented economic collapse that has pushed its Government into a deep crisis. Lanka is struggling to import basic necessities for its 22 million people because of its diminishing foreign reserves and crippling debt; anti-Government protests even turned violent which led to the burning of the houses of the President and other Ministers houses, and this violence ultimately led to the PM's resignation. The policies of Rajapaksa led the \$81 billion economy to bankruptcy. The two policy blunders were the cutting of taxes overnight and barring the import of chemical fertilisers and pesticides to push Lanka into organic farming.

## Appreciate the nuances first



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, while speaking about our country's foreign policy again on foreign land, had compared the conflict with China on Leh and Doklam with the Russian invasion of Ukraine. However, it is expected that he should have learnt a thing or two about the foreign policy from his forefathers, perhaps someone like Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru. Pt Nehru had such foresight that he predicted way back in the 1950s that Atal Bihari Vajpayee will one day become the PM of India, and his saying came true in 1998-

99 when Vajpayee became our PM. When Indira Gandhi took the bold decision on Bangladesh, the entire Opposition highly praised Indira Gandhi.

When PV Narasimha Rao was the PM, an Indian delegation to the UN was led by leader of the Opposition AB Vajpayee; such instances are rarely seen these days. The foreign policy of any country is a continuous process and, even with the change of Government, the policy and a nation's stand on most issues remain the same. Present example is before us in the context of the Russia-Ukraine war, where India followed its own foreign policy and maintained neutrality as well as old relations with Russia and also purchased oil from it by paying in roubles. Side by side, India is also attending the QUAD meetings and, on this front, even Pakistan had praised the foreign policy of India many times.

Yash Pal Raihan | Jalandhar

Diminishing foreign reserves, huge piles of debt, devaluation of currency, rising inflation, rupee value dropping its lowest level compared to dollar and total economic collapse has compelled the people of Sri Lanka to struggle for their basic needs. The shortage of almost everything from food, medicines to cooking gas has resulted in social unrest and political turmoil. Lankans often call out that there is a threat to their country from Islamic extremists. Same is the situation in our country. Our economy is damaged, rupee value has fallen, commodity prices are out of the reach of common man.

Zeeshan | Kazipet

### SIDHU'S CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Sir — With a fight for the fourth playoff spot, the fight between bat and ball was more tense than usual. The last two matches evinced keen interest from the bookie angle as the result would have had a bearing on the final outcome. The way Ashwin swept and pulled his old team-

mates from CSK was exhilarating, while the match between MI and DC was somewhat disappointing as the Delhi side could score within 160 and thereby lost a fair chance of going to the playoff stage. MI, who were doing bad so far, prevented DC with a facile win.

Royal Challengers Bangalore are having a minus run rate and that could have ousted them from the championship with NRR. However, the tournament reached the final stage with such interest to decide the last four positions. GT, RR and LSG booked their berth with facile wins and that too with a higher net run rate to show. RCB got a backdoor entry because of MI making a match of the final game. As a matter of fact, a number of bookies were arrested during IPL 15 and we would like to see fewer controversies during the final stages of the championship.

CKR Nathan | Ghaziabad

## SOUNDBITE

It's always people first for us. The decision (slashing fuel prices) will positively impact various sectors.



Prime Minister — Narendra Modi



Australia ex-Prime Minister — Scott Morrison

Getting (to act in) Aashram was more of a gift from the universe.



Actor — Esha Gupta



Indian Grandmaster — Praggnanandhaa Rameshbabu

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi is a part-time politician and a habitual offender.



BJP spokesperson — Gaurav Bhatia

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

TIME TO REJECT FOSSIL FUELS RIGHT AWAY

A candle produces more CO<sub>2</sub> than a single firecracker



PRITAM SINGH

More than 95% human activities over the past 4-5 decades are responsible for inching 'mother-earth' towards getting warmer year after year, eclipsing our life-system. Stephen Hawking had unequivocally predicted ('a veiled threat') that our planet will gradually rise its temperature and will become a 'hot-fireball' in next six centuries; and to protect it - "we need to act now before it's too late". The human's lust for deriving more power from fossil fuels for our vehicles and industry is having a serious cause of concerns of scientists and environmental experts; warrants to have adequate notice of active derivative - "The Wax" - we use very frequently in our daily life. We burn every-year more than three 'billion-candles' on cultural and religious occasions. They significantly increase the level of 'greenhouse gases', inviting new threats to human health. Most of the candles are made from 'Paraffin wax' - derivative of petroleum - which have common carcinogenic toxins released by burning of diesel in IC engines. For instance, each 50 gm household candle burns for about four hours. That produces about 39 gm of carbon dioxide. A single candle thus produces nearly 30 times more carbon dioxide than a single fire-cracker which produces a mere 0.4 gm. The 'collective flames of earth's gradual burning' are reaching to the coldest region Antarctica opening-up the gate-ways of destruction of humanity from multiple fronts ranging from North and South poles of Antarctica to the ecologically vulnerable and fragile-points known as 'third pole of earth' - the Himalayan range - melting the precious



'snowy regions'. These snowy regions are solid water (ice) which act to play a significant role of our "life-line on earth" - cooling down the earth's temperature compatible to our living conditions. Is the sun to blame for rising temperature on earth? No. The earth's climate is influenced by the sun and acts as giver of life. However, the scorching heat touching new records is not attributable to the sun's activities. The most abundant 'greenhouse gases' physically or chemically are responsible. "It will continue to get more-hotter and fiercer until humans stop burning of fossil fuels" climatologists from Oxford University contend.

An analytical data from the satellites have observed that the sun's energy output has changed less than 0.1% in the last 40 years whereas earth's warming has increased by at least 1.1° Celsius (1.9° Fahrenheit) in 142 years. The warming has increased, since 1975, at the rate of roughly by 0.15 to 0.20°C per decade. Planets like Venus have carbon dioxide content that is 1,54,000 times more than on earth (about 19000 times on Mars). It produces such Green House Gases impact that the surface temperature is over 475 degree Celsius, sufficient to melt lead. The alerts of Stephen Hawking warrant serious measures to bridle this spiral at any cost. Some studies at University of North Carolina predict that five lakh lives can be saved by the year 2030 if the GHG are controlled. For mitigating the impact of the lurking shadow of climatic dangers, all the countries should unanimously step-up their priorities and revisit the whole issue of 'using fossil fuels and its derivatives' to meet our 'bare-minimum needs' only. Accordingly, India being more vulnerable in respect of pollution-related issues, it is high time the regulatory authorities framed more stringent guidelines and launched massive public-awareness campaigns across the nation for the betterment of our future generations.

(The writer retired from the Indian Institute of Petroleum, Dehradun and is now an educator and analyst. The views expressed are personal.)

Indian power sector is pushed to the brink



UTTAM GUPTA

Among other things, free discoms from State control, allow them to set tariff for all consumers and permit private firms into the distribution business

Faced with an acute power crisis caused amongst others by sudden spurt in power demand in this season, the Modi Government has fired all cylinders to tackle the most crucial of all bottlenecks in the way, namely coal which accounts for nearly 52 percent of total power generation capacity in the country.

During April/May 2022, the Union Power Ministry - using powers vested in the Government under Section 11 of the Electricity Act, 2003 - issued directions to (i) all imported coal-based plants (ICB) to operate and generate power to their full capacity and (ii) all generation companies (gencos) based on domestic coal to import at least 10 percent of their fuel requirements (there is a move to further raise it to 30 percent).

Other measures include asking all gencos having captive coal mines to maximize production from their mines; Coal India Limited (CIL) - a central public sector undertaking (CPSU) which contributes about 85 percent of domestic coal production - to auction its mines 'not under use' to private companies; galvanizing railways' infrastructure to move coal from mines to plants site etc.

The Government has also announced financial and price support measures to help gencos actually see things happening on ground zero.

Thus, it has directed the Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and Rural Electrification Corporation (REC Ltd) "to arrange short term loans for a period of six months with adequate safeguards for ICB plants, which are under stress". It has also allowed 'pass-through' of the increase in cost of imported coal under the power purchase agreements (PPAs) of gencos with power distribution companies (discoms).

The Government's intent is to increase availability of coal - both from domestic and imported sources, by putting more money in the hands of gencos so that they can pay for higher cost imported fuel (in just about two months, its price is up by \$100 per ton, courtesy difficult geopolitical situation) and even more importantly, allow them charge more from discoms to recover the higher cost.

But things may not pan out as desired. The discoms (mostly owned and controlled by State Governments) may not agree to hike in tariff; besides such revisions are open to challenge in the court. It won't be easy to sell expensive stuff in the 'power exchange' either as under the extant regulations, the tariff chargeable is subject to a cap. As for garnering additional production, effort there won't yield results in the near term.

Even if the Government is able to surmount these problems by forcing the buyers (read: discoms) to pay for the higher cost and removing the tariff cap on sales in the exchange, this will push the already fragile discoms into deeper mess.

The discoms are in dire straits because



HAD THE PRODUCTION COME ANYWHERE NEAR THE TARGET, THE CURRENT CRISIS IN THE POWER SECTOR AND CONSEQUENTIAL AGGRAVATION OF DISCOMS WOES COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED. THE HUGE SHORTFALL DEMONSTRATES THE DIRE NEED FOR BETTER PLANNING AND TIMELY EXECUTION OF PROJECTS

(The writer is a former Chief Secretary, Government of Uttar Pradesh. The views expressed are personal.)



State Governments order them to supply a sizeable chunk of electricity to households and farmers at a fraction of the cost of purchase and distribution or even free (in some states, subsidy accounts for 30-40 percent of discoms' revenue). Although, States promise to reimburse discoms the excess of the cost over realization from sale, most of them either don't reimburse at all or do it partially and that too after delay. This results in huge under-recovery on units sold to HHs/farmers.

Discoms' underrecoveries are exacerbated by high aggregate technical and commercial (AT&C) loss - a jargon for power theft. To offset, they charge high tariffs on supplies to industries and businesses. Despite this cross-subsidization, overall, discoms incur huge loss.

Thanks to persistent losses, as of March 31, 2022, they had piled up a mammoth debt of over ₹600,000 crore. They also owe about ₹100,000 crore to independent power producers (IPPs) and other generators in the public sector such as NTPC.

The efforts to revitalize discoms have been going on for two decades with four major schemes launched in 2002, 2012, 2015 and 2021; yet none has delivered. The last two under the Modi Government deserve special mention.

Under Ujjwal Discom Assurance Yojana (UDAY) launched in November 2015, the Centre coordinated a financial restructuring package (FRP) of ₹400,000 crore for discoms in lieu of their committing to reduce AT&C losses from 20.7 percent during 2015-16 to 15 percent by 2018-19 and reducing the gap between average revenue realisation (ARR) from sale of electrici-

ty vis-a-vis the average cost of supply (ACS) or the ACS-ARR gap from ₹0.59 per unit during 2015-16 to 'zero' by 2018-19. During 2019-20, discoms' AT&C losses were 18.9 percent against the 15 percent target for 2018-19, while ACS-ARR gap was ₹0.42 per unit against the target of 'zero' for 2018-19.

In the Union Budget for 2021-22, the Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman launched a 'Reforms-Linked, Result-Based Scheme for Distribution' (RLRBSD) with an allocation of over ₹310,000 crore. Under this scheme also, in lieu of support to discoms, the government set targets for reducing AT&C losses to 12-15 percent and ACS-ARR gap to 'nil' by 2025. The release of money - under the Scheme - is linked to their meeting various reform targets.

As in the past, these are hollow proclamations. Under UDAY also, discoms were required to set their house in order. But, they didn't. The current AT&C losses at about 25 percent are even higher than 20.7 percent during 2015-16 (when the scheme was launched). Forget reduction. Hence, claims under RLRBSD don't inspire.

How will the crisis triggered by coal shortage and the manner in which the government is dealing with it impact discoms' finances?

The direction to all ICB plants to maximize generation and to domestic coal based plants to do 10 percent/30 percent blending with imported coal will result in sharp rise in the cost of power purchase by discoms. Since, our political brass won't let HHs/farmers pay even a paisa more and industries are already crippled by high tariff - ₹10 per unit plus in most states; hence can't be further

increased, this will end up further inflating their losses.

In 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had set a coal production target of 1500 million tons (MT) for 2019-20. During 2019-20, India produced around 730 MT. In 2020-21, production declined to 716 MT (courtesy, Covid). During 2021-22, at 777 MT it exceeded the 2019-20 level but was barely 50 percent of the target.

Had production come anywhere near the target, the current crisis in the power sector and consequential aggravation of discoms woes could have been avoided. The huge shortfall demonstrates the dire need for better planning and timely execution of projects. Modi also needs to plan for a smoother transition to renewable sources ensuring that conventional source (read: coal) which currently takes a major share of the load doesn't become an impediment.

However, the most important thing our political class needs to do is to actually carry out reforms in the power sector at ground zero. This will call for unshackling of discoms from State control, giving them freedom to set tariff for all consumers (HHs/farmers included), allowing private firms in distribution business and vesting infrastructure for transmission, wheeling and last-mile delivery of power in an independent entity which should provide access to it on 'common carrier' principle in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner.

If, any State Government wants to give subsidy to farmers and HHs, it should be given directly to the beneficiaries using the direct benefit transfer (DBT) mechanism.

(The writer is a policy analyst. The views expressed are personal.)

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THEY (THE INDIAN FOREIGN SERVICE) HAVE COMPLETELY CHANGED. THEY DON'T LISTEN TO ANYTHING; THEY ARE ARROGANT. — CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI



YES, THE INDIAN FOREIGN SERVICE HAS CHANGED. YES, THEY FOLLOW THE ORDERS OF THE GOVERNMENT. NO, IT'S NOT CALLED ARROGANCE. — EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER S JAISHANKAR

Russia will not disappear soon

It is awaiting leadership change

Russian President Vladimir Putin will almost certainly not be in power three years from now. The war he foolishly began in Ukraine has fatally undermined his political credibility among the Russian elite (and among a large though mostly silent part of the population). One way or another, he will be replaced.

He may even save everybody the trouble by dying before he can be removed. He definitely doesn't look well, his behaviour is increasingly erratic, and rumours that he is suffering from some terminal disease abound. Russia is not a fascist state, just a kleptocracy where the thieves and the thugs have taken power, but Putin's personal behaviour does begin to resemble Hitler in his bunker in the final days, and Hitler too



GWYNNE DYER

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

was very ill. Putin knows nothing about military matters, but he is reportedly micro-managing single 'battalion combat groups' (about 1,000 men) in the currently stalled Russian offensive in eastern Ukraine, trying to retrieve a military situation that has sunk into stalemate. Very Hitlerian. So what will become of Russia when he goes?

Alexander J. Motyl thinks it may just disappear. In an opinion piece in 'The Hill', the leading political website in Washington, Motyl, a political scientist at Rutgers University, suggests that "The Russian Federation could metamorphose into 10 or more states, only one of which would be known as Russia. That would change the face of Eurasia forever." It certainly would, but it



does imply the permanent demise of a state that has dominated northern Eurasia for the past four centuries (the first Russians reached the Pacific in 1647). It also ignores the remarkable homogeneity of that state's population: 81% are ethnically Russian, while none of

the many minority group even reaches 4%. There have been occasions, most recently during the civil war of 1917-22, when Russia was temporarily carved up into rival jurisdictions, but these interludes have never lasted long. The sense that there is a special Russian identity, even a unique 'Russian civilisation', always reasserts itself.

Decolonisation came late to the Russian empire and was harder to recognise, because Russia's imperial possessions were around its own land borders rather than across the oceans. Nevertheless, it was the same process, and just as irreversible (as Putin has been discovering).

Russia is as unlikely to split up permanently as France or Japan. Motyl's speculations on its break-up are wishful think-

ing, possibly motivated by the fact (unmentioned by 'The Hill') that both his parents were born in Ukraine.

It is understandable that Ukrainians might wish Russia to vanish, but that is not going to happen. So what will happen when Putin goes?

We cannot know yet what a genuinely post-Communist Russia would look like. Although it's 31 years since the collapse of the Soviet Union, almost all the people in senior political positions began their careers in the Communist Party. The ideology was dumped, but the administrative style and the factional struggles remain.

Moreover, one single man, Vladimir Putin, has dominated Russian politics for more than two-thirds of that time. It's hard to disentangle what is intrinsic-

ally Russian in the way Russia has been run during that time from what was just part of Putin's personality, but we are about to find out.

The default position is to say that the Russians are somehow fundamentally different from other Slavs. After all, the Poles and the Czechs got real democracy and genuine prosperity after 1991, whereas the Russians got Putin, border wars, and (for most people) genteel poverty.

But there were two big differences that had nothing to do with 'national character', whatever that is. One was that all the former 'satellite countries' of Eastern Europe immediately ditched their local Communist collaborators and got a whole new set of politicians, whereas Russia was essentially stuck

with the old Commies wearing new hats.

The other difference was that the western Slavs experienced the change as liberation, whereas their former rulers saw it as a loss of empire that stranded tens of millions of Russians in places that were suddenly foreign countries.

It would have been unreasonable to expect these two sets of people to react in the same way, and sure enough they didn't. But it's equally unreasonable to be convinced that Russians will go on behaving in the same ways when the ex-Communist ruling elite loses power (which may be imminent) and a new post-imperial generation takes over instead.

We have no idea what's coming out of the box then. It could even be something good.

Biden: US would intervene with military to defend Taiwan

AP ■ TOKYO

President Joe Biden said on Monday that the US would intervene militarily if China were to invade Taiwan, saying the burden to protect Taiwan is "even stronger" after Russia's invasion of Ukraine.



with which it no longer has a mutual defence treaty, instead maintaining a policy of "strategic ambiguity" about how far it would be willing to go if China invaded. The 1979 Taiwan

Relations Act, which has governed US relations with the island, does not require the US to step in militarily to defend Taiwan if China invades, but makes it American policy to ensure Taiwan has the resources to defend itself and to prevent any unilateral change of status in Taiwan by Beijing.

appropriate," adding that it "will dislocate the entire region and be another action similar to what happened in Ukraine." China has stepped up its military provocations against democratic Taiwan in recent years aimed at intimidating it into accepting Beijing's demands to unify with the communist mainland.

nations get the idea that such action is acceptable. Fearing escalation with nuclear-armed Russia, Biden quickly ruled out putting US forces into direct conflict with Russia, but he has shipped billions of dollars in US military assistance that has helped Ukraine put up a stiffer-than-expected resistance to Russia's onslaught.

In a CNN town hall in October, Biden was asked about using the US military to defend Taiwan and replied, "Yes, we have a commitment to

do that." Biden's comments came just before he formally launched a long-anticipated Indo-Pacific trade pact that excludes Taiwan.

Lankan police arrest 1,500 people in connection with May 9 violence



PTI ■ COLOMBO

Lanka's controversial 21st Amendment to Constitution fails to come up for Cabinet approval after SLPP's objection

In a major blow to Sri Lanka's new Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe, the proposal for 21st Amendment to Constitution to curb the unfettered powers of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa, scheduled to be referred to Cabinet on Monday was not presented before it.

injured over 200 others. Last week, Galle district MP Ramesh Pathirana informed the Parliament that Senior Police DIG in-charge of Western Province Deshabandu Tennakoon informed President Gotabaya Rajapaksa that Wickramaratne had instructed him not to block mob heading to Galle Face to disrupt anti-government protesters, online

Albanese sworn in as PM in Australia ahead of Tokyo summit

AP ■ CANBERRA

Australia's new prime minister was sworn in on Monday ahead of a Tokyo summit with President Joe Biden while vote counting continued to determine whether he will control a majority in a Parliament that is demanding tougher action on climate change.

Albanese, who describes himself as the first ever candidate for the office of prime minister with a "non-Anglo Celtic name" and Malaysian-born Penny Wong, Australia's first foreign minister to be born overseas, were sworn into office by Governor-General David Hurley before the pair flew to Tokyo for a security summit on Tuesday with Biden, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.



congratulate him on his election win and express the president's wish to make the countries' alliance stronger, the White House said.

Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles was also sworn in and will act as prime minister while Albanese is in Japan. Katy Gallagher and Jim Chalmers were sworn into economic ministries.

Bangkok governor's election handily won by Opposition figure

Bangkok: Residents of Thai capital Bangkok, in their first opportunity in nine years to vote for their city's governor, have elected an independent politician seen as representing opponents of country's military-backed government, results released early Monday showed.

Chadchart Sittipunt had been widely predicted by opinion polls to top field, but significantly outpaced expectations by taking 1,386,215 votes, or almost 52% of the 2,673,696 votes cast in Sunday's election, according to virtually complete but uncertified returns.

Beijing extends work-from-home order as Covid-19 cases rise

Beijing: Beijing extended orders for workers and students to stay home and ordered additional mass testing Monday as cases of COVID-19 again rose in the city.

UK's Boris Johnson awaits judgment of 'partygate' report

AP ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has been shadowed by career-threatening scandal for months - but so far he has escaped unscathed. This week he faces one more threat to his political future: a comprehensive report into lockdown-breaching parties in government offices that is expected to be published within days.

Senior civil servant Sue Gray is due to release her findings on "partygate," the scandal over more than a dozen gatherings in Johnson's No. 10 Downing St. Residence and nearby buildings that took place when coronavirus restrictions barred people in Britain from mixing with others.

7 dead, 120 others rescued in Philippine ferry fire

AP ■ MANILA

A ferry carrying more than 130 people caught fire Monday while approaching a northeastern Philippine province, killing at least seven people while most passengers and crew members were rescued, the coast guard said.

and crew were forced to jump into water, coast guard officials said. The survivors were rescued by vessels in the area, they said. The fire apparently started from engine room, the officials said. The wreckage has been towed to shore in Real.

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE Invitation of Tenders through E-Procurement system

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Xinjiang in focus as UN rights chief arrives for China visit

Beijing: Allegations of human rights abuses in China's northwestern Xinjiang region are the dominant issue on a visit by the United Nations' top rights official that starts Monday.

Michelle Bachelet's visit is the first to China by a U.N. High commissioner for human rights since 2005, but rights groups warn it threatens to whitewash the ruling Communist Party abuses in Xinjiang. China has locked up more than a million members of its Uyghur, Kazakh and other Muslim minorities in what critics describe as a campaign to obliterate their distinct cultural identities.

Iran vows revenge over killing of Guard member in Tehran

Dubai: Iran's hard-line president vowed revenge on Monday over killing of a senior Revolutionary Guard member gunned down in heart of Tehran day before, a still-mysterious attack on country's powerful paramilitary force.

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi hailed Col. Hassan Sayyad Khodaei as a martyr and blamed "the hand of global arrogance," a reference to United States and its allies, including Israel, for his slaying. There has been no claim of responsibility for killing, carried out on Sunday afternoon by two unidentified gunmen on a motorbike. They shot Khodaei five times in a car, an unarmored budget SAIPA Pride - among the cheapest, most-common Iranian vehicles.

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# OSAKA OUT AT FRENCH OPEN

**AP ■ PARIS**

Former world number one Naomi Osaka lost in the first round of the French Open on Monday, 12 months after controversially quitting the tournament, while women's title favourite Iga Swiatek stretched her winning streak to 29 matches.

Osaka, a four-time Grand Slam champion, was knocked out 7-5, 6-4 by American 27th seed Amanda Anisimova -- the same player who ended the Japanese star's title defence at the Australian Open this year.

An error-plagued Osaka served up eight double faults and committed 29 unforced errors on her return to Roland Garros, after withdrawing in 2021 when she refused to honour mandatory media commitments before revealing she had been suffering from depression.

"It's tough to see Naomi Osaka in the first round so I knew it wouldn't be easy," said Anisimova, who reached the semi-finals in Paris three years ago.

"I knew I had to play my best tennis and the conditions were not easy."

As rain fell on the outside courts, Swiatek required just 54 minutes to dispatch Ukrainian qualifier Lesia Tsurenko 6-2, 6-0 under the roof on Court Philippe Chatrier.

The 20-year-old Swiatek, who took over as world number one following Ashleigh Barty's shock retirement, has won her last five tournaments and is bidding for a second French Open in three attempts.

"Today was a pretty good match," said Swiatek. "I love playing here even though the last couple of days it's been raining and pretty dark."

The 2020 champion will play Ukraine's Dayana Yastremska or American Alison Riske for a spot in the last 32.



Swiatek is unbeaten since February and has the longest winning streak on the WTA tour since Serena Williams won 34 matches in a row in 2013.

"I'm pretty sure that it can end, but I just want to keep going. I'm sure someday my streak will stop."

"I'm just focusing on tennis and playing my game, not on stats or some numbers."

**DJOKOVIC, NADAL READY TO ROLL**

Defending champion Novak Djokovic and 13-time French Open winner Rafael Nadal start their Roland Garros campaigns

later on a star-studded Monday.

Djokovic plays Yoshihito Nishioka of Japan in the first of 10 night sessions -- introduced at Roland Garros last year when a pandemic curfew saw most late matches played in front of empty stands.

It is the world number one's first Grand Slam match since his high-profile deportation from Australia. He won his first title of the year at the Italian Open earlier this month.

"I feel I am always in that contention to fight for any Grand Slam trophy," said Djokovic, who is seeded to meet Nadal in the quarter-finals and Spanish teenage sen-

sation Carlos Alcaraz in the last four.

Djokovic's last match at a major was his loss to Daniil Medvedev in last year's US Open final, a defeat which denied the Serb a calendar Grand Slam.

Nadal has yet to win a title on his beloved clay this season, but played down concerns over the chronic foot issue that resurfaced in Rome.

"There is nothing to recover," said Nadal, who faces Australia's Jordan Thompson. "What happened in Rome is something that happened very often in my practices." "I was suffering after that for a couple of days, but I feel better. That's why

I'm here." Nadal began the year with a 20-match winning run, capturing a second Australian Open title to claim a record 21st Grand Slam and move ahead of Djokovic and Roger Federer.

The 35-year-old's record at the French Open stands at a staggering 105 wins and just three losses since his 2005 title-winning debut. Djokovic has been responsible for two of those defeats. One came in the bruising semi-final 12 months ago, the most recent clash of the pair's epic 58-match rivalry.

Reigning women's champion Barbora Krejckova will play France's Diane Parry

## Naomi may skip Wimbledon over ranking points row

**AP ■ PARIS**

Former world number one Naomi Osaka on Monday said she may skip Wimbledon over the decision to strip the Grand Slam tournament of ranking points.

"I would say the decision is kind of affecting my mentality going into grass, like I'm not 100% sure if I'm going to go there," said Osaka after her 7-5, 6-4 loss to Amanda Anisimova in the French Open first round.

"I would love to go just to get some experience on the grass court, but at the same time, I don't want to say pointless, but I'm the type of player that gets motivated by seeing my ranking go up."

"I'm the type of player who gets motivated by the idea of rising in the rankings," said the four-time major winner.

"So the intention of this measure was good, but the execution is all over the place."

The ATP and WTA tours last week removed ranking points from Wimbledon after the All England Club banned Russian and Belarusian players in response to the invasion of Ukraine.

Wimbledon chiefs branded the move by the two tours, which threatens to reduce the sport's most prestigious tennis tournament to the status of an exhibition event, as "disproportionate".

On Monday, former US Open champion Sloane Stephens said she supported the move to strip points from Wimbledon.

"I think the decision that was taken was the correct one," said the American.

"I think that there is a lot of things that happened behind the scenes that the press are not aware of, and I think there has been a lot of mishandling of how everything was handled."

The Czech world number two has been sidelined by an arm injury since late February and is yet to play on clay this year.

## Liverpool confirm signing of Fabio Carvalho

**AP ■ LIVERPOOL**

Liverpool have finally completed the signing of Fulham forward Fabio Carvalho after failing in a bid to bring the 19-year-old to Anfield in January, the Premier League runners-up announced on Monday.

The Portuguese teenager, who is understood to have signed a five-year contract, will officially join the Anfield club on July 1.

Carvalho, out of contract at the end of June, was set for a move four months ago on deadline day when a £5-million deal was agreed with the Championship winners but the transfer window closed without a medical and formal paperwork being concluded.

Liverpool have reportedly agreed to pay extra in add-ons and attach a 20% sell-on clause.

Carvalho played a key role in Fulham's promotion back to the Premier League, scoring 10 goals and providing eight assists in 36 games as Marco Silva's side won the Championship title.

He made his debut for Portugal's U21s in March, having previously represented England at youth level.

Carvalho's arrival will add another fresh face to Liverpool's dynamic forward line, already boosted by the arrival of Luis Diaz in January.



## India concede late goal to draw-1-1 with Pak

**PTI ■ JAKARTA**

Defending champions India conceded a late goal to allow arch-rivals Pakistan walk away with a 1-1 draw in their opening Pool A match of the Asia Cup men's hockey tournament, here on Monday.

India took the lead in the ninth minute through Karthi Selvam before Abdul Rana broke their neighbours' heart by equalising in the 59th from a penalty corner. India will next play Japan on Tuesday. Pakistan had the first scoring chance in the third minute in the form of a penalty corner, but they failed to stop the ball properly as India survived.

Seconds later, it was India's turn to secure a penalty corner but Neelam Sanjiv Xess' effort was saved by the Pakistan goalie Akmal Hussain.

The Indians continued to put pressure on the Pakistan defence and secured two more penalty corners in the first quarter, the second of which was converted by Karthi, who scored his first international goal after his flick went inside the Pakistan citadel after getting a deflection off the stick of defender Muhammad Abdullah.

In between Pakistan also got another penalty corner but the effort went wide.

Soon after the start of the second quarter, Pakistan goalkeeper Hussain made a fine reflex save to deny Pawan Rajbhar from point blank range.

Pakistan made a bright start after the change of ends and threatened the Indian defence



## Ten Hag aims to smash Liverpool-City duopoly

**AP ■ MANCHESTER**

Manchester United's new manager Erik ten Hag believes it is possible to end the dominance of Manchester City and Liverpool despite taking over a struggling side that finished a lowly sixth in the Premier League.

United ended up 35 points behind champions City, who pipped Liverpool to the title by a point, as the Red Devils registered their lowest-ever Premier League points tally.

City boss Pep Guardiola has now claimed four titles in five years, while Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp can complete a treble of cup trophies this season should the Reds see off Real Madrid in Saturday's Champions League final.

Guardiola and Klopp -- the managers of United's two biggest rivals -- have consistently battled it out for the major trophies, leaving the Red Devils, without silverware since 2017, as bystanders.

However, the Dutchman challenged the suggestion it would take the departure of one or both of Guardiola and Klopp for United to be able to compete again.

"In this moment I admire them both," Ten Hag said as he was unveiled at Old Trafford on Monday. "They play in this moment really fantastic football, both Liverpool and Manchester City. "But you always see that an era can come to an end. I am looking forward to battle with them."

The former Ajax boss, 52, is United's fifth permanent manager since the club last won a league title in Alex Ferguson's farewell season in 2013.

## Emery's Villarreal beat listless Barca



**AP ■ BARCELONA**

Barcelona finished 13 points behind La Liga champions Real Madrid after ending their turbulent season with a whimper on Sunday by losing 2-0 at home to Villarreal.

Atletico Madrid secured third place by winning 2-1 away at Real Sociedad, retaining their one-point lead over Sevilla, who won 1-0 at home to Athletic Bilbao.

Atletico's defeat, combined with Villarreal's excellent victory at Camp Nou, means Villarreal beat Athletic into seventh and qualify for the Europa Conference League.

Villarreal's season was lit up by their sensational run to the semi-finals of the Champions League but Unai Emery's team

important objective of qualifying for the Champions League.

But going out to Frankfurt in the Europa League semi-finals and Athletic Bilbao in the Copa del Rey was disappointing while the drop-off during the run-in suggests there is still a lot of work to do.

Villarreal's two goals came either side of half-time as Alfonso Pedraza scored in the 41st minute after latching onto a Dani Parejo through-ball before Moi Gomez made it two in the 55th.

Atletico's victory over Real Sociedad came after Rodrigo de Paul and Angel Correa scored goals in the second half before Jon Guridi grabbed a consolation for the hosts late on.

Rafa Mir's smart finish inside the post in the 68th minute proved enough for Sevilla to overcome Athletic Bilbao at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan.

**AU SMALL FINANCE BANK LIMITED** (A Scheduled Commercial Bank)  
 Regd. Office: 19-A, Dhuleshwar Garden, Ajmer Road, Jaipur - 302001 (CIN:L36911RJ1996PLC011381)

**APPENDIX IV [SEE RULE 8(I)] POSSESSION NOTICE**

Whereas, The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the AU Small Finance Bank Limited (A Scheduled Commercial Bank) under the "Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest [Act, 2002 (54 of 2002)] and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued demand notice on the date as mentioned below calling upon the borrowers to repay the amount mentioned in the said notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice as per the details given in below table:-

Name of Borrower/Co-Borrower/ Mortgagee/Guarantor/Loan A/C No.	13(12) Notice Date & Amount	Description of Mortgaged Property	Date of Possession Taken
(Loan A/C No.) L9001060113473409 Tulsiram Verma (Borrower), Smt. Karun Verma (Co-Borrower), Uttara Kumar Patel (Guarantor)	15-Dec-21 ₹ 2,67,016/- Rs. Two Lac Sixty-Seven Thousand Sixteen only As On 14-Dec-21	All That Part And Parcel Of Residential/Commercial Property Land / Building / Structure And Fixtures Residential Flat 301/2 New 301/3, Jatadhara, Dhanda, Govt School, Dist. Durg, Chattisgarh Admeasuring 4360 Sq. Ft.	18-May-22
(Loan A/C No.) L9001060718190374 and L9001061121452054, Janta Kiraya Bhandar (Borrower), Dilip Kumar Sankhla (Co-Borrower) Soni Devi Sakhala (Co-Borrower), Abhishek Sankhala (Co-Borrower)	7-Mar-22 ₹ 68,83,167/- Rs. Sixty-Eight Lac Eighty-Three Thousand One Hundred Sixty-Seven only and ₹ 11,72,580/- Rs. Eleven Lac Seventy-Two Thousand Five Hundred Eighty only as on 5-Mar-22	All That Part And Parcel Of Residential/Commercial Property Land / Building / Structure And Fixtures Property Situated At Municipal Corporation Plot No 364 Middle Class Rajnandgaon Khairagarh Chhattisgarh. Admeasuring 1857 Sqyds	18-May-22

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, therefore notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein above mentioned table in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said [Act 2002] read with Rule 8 of the said rule on the date mentioned in the above table.

"The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets."

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 the AU Small Finance Bank Limited (A Scheduled Commercial Bank) for the amount and interest thereon mentioned in the above table.

Date : 23/05/2022  
 Place : Chattisgarh

sd/  
 Authorised Officer AU Small Finance Bank Limited

**Bandhan Bank** Regional Office: Netaji Marg, Nr. Mithakhali Six Roads, Ellisbridge, Ahmedabad-6. Phone: +91-79-26421671-75

**SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE**

NOTICE is hereby given under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, the Authorized Officer issued demand notice on the date mentioned against the account stated hereinafter calling upon them to repay the amount within 60 days from the date of receipt of said notice. The borrower(s), having failed to repay the amount notice is hereby given to the borrower(s) and the public in general, that the undersigned has taken symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of the powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of Section 13 of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules 2002 on the date mentioned against the loan account. The borrower(s) in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealing with the property will be subject to the charge of the Bank for the amounts, interest, costs and charges thereon. The borrowers'/borrowers' attention is invited to the provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured asset.

Name of borrower(s) & Loan Account No.	Description of property mortgaged (Secured Asset)	Date of Demand Notice	Date of Symbolic Possession Notice	Outstanding Amt. as on Date of Demand Notice
Mr. Ashraf Khan Mrs. Tanjum Khan Mr. Md. Imran Khan 851/3581	All that piece and parcel of the immovable property situated at Khasra No. 254/3, 255/2 (Part), P.H. No. 105-47, Mouja Mathpurena, Ward No. 52, Chandrashekhar Azad Ward, Raipur, Chattisgarh-492001, Rakba 600 Sq. Ft. and bounded by: North: House of Fatima Aayeja, East: House of Ashraf Bhai, West: Road, South: Road	21.12.2021	19.05.2022	Rs.16,21,543.92
Mr. Ghanshyam Sahu Mrs. Saraswathi Sahu 851/2923	All that piece and parcel of the immovable property situated at Khasra No.171/3, 175/3, 176/3 (Part), New Khasra No. 171/14, PH No. 105/41, RNM-1, Ward No. 52, Chandrashekhar Azad Ward, Mathpuraina, Tahsil & Dist. Raipur, Chattisgarh-492001, Rakba 546 Sq.Ft. and bounded by: North: Land of Mohit Sahu, East: Land of Balecha, West: Road, South: Land of Sumit Das	07.12.2021	19.05.2022	Rs.14,33,382.09

Place: Raipur  
 Date: 24/05/2022

Authorised Officer  
 Bandhan Bank Limited