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Leaders pack punches as Guj poll pitch intensifies

Modi attacks Cong for being unaware of tribals' existence; Rahul hits at BJP for neglecting tribals

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Gujarat on Monday saw fierce campaigning for the State Assembly elections scheduled for next month as India's top political personalities, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, canvassed in the State along with Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Home Minister Amit Shah and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

Modi addressed three back-to-back Vijay rallies while Shah attended four public meetings. Rahul held a rally in Surat and public meetings, while Kejriwal took part in road shows and addressed public meetings.

In the tribal dominated regions, Prime Minister Modi took a swipe at the Congress claiming that "for very long time" it was "unaware of the existence of tribals" and instead of talking of development it was trying to show him his "aukat" as Rahul alleged that BJP was taking away the rights of tribals and soon they would have "lost their jungles" which



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being garlanded during a public meeting ahead of the Gujarat Assembly elections, in Surendranagar on Monday. (Top right) Congress leader Rahul Gandhi addresses a public rally in Surat; (Right) Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal during a roadshow at Dhrangadhra in Surendranagar

would go "in the hands of two-three industrialists".

Trying to win Gujarat for the seventh successive time in a row in 2022, the BJP has stepped up its campaign with Prime Minister Modi addressing public meetings in south, central and Saurashtra regions since Saturday. Rahul too took a brief break from his "Bharat Jodo Yatra" and addressed his first election rally in the State. Rahul did not campaign in Himachal, which voted on November 12.

The election to first phase for 89 seats would take place on December 1 and 93 seats of the total 182 seats would go to poll on December 5. The Gujarat

results would be announced on December 8 along with Himachal.

Canvassing for the BJP in tribal-dominated districts, the Prime Minister also said leaders of the Congress mocked him for wearing traditional tribal attire at public functions.

Continuing his massive offensive against the Congress at a public rally at Jambusar in Bharuch in south Gujarat, Modi said, "For a very long time, Congress leaders remained unaware of the existence of tribals in India. Weren't they living here since the days of Lord Ram and Lord Krishna? Weren't they part of



the 1857 mutiny? Tribals did so many things for this country. But, Congress leaders never knew that Adivasis exist."

"Otherwise, why was there no separate Ministry for tribals until Atal Bihari Vajpayee became Prime Minister? It was

Ataljee's Government at the Centre which carved out a separate Ministry and allocated a budget for their welfare. Even today, Congress leaders make fun of me for wearing tribal attire," Modi said.

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162 dead in Indonesia temblor

AP ■ CIANJUR

A strong, shallow earthquake toppled buildings and walls on Indonesia's densely populated main island on Monday, killing at least 162 people and injuring hundreds of others as residents fled into the streets, some covered in blood and debris.

Officials were gathering information on the toll of those killed and hurt in remote area. Detailed report on P9



Survivors receive medical treatment outside of a local hospital following an earthquake in Cianjur, West Java, Indonesia on Monday

LG OK's review plea against SC acquittal in Chhawla case

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Faced with public outrage, the Delhi Government has decided to file a review petition in the Supreme Court in the Chhawla gangrape and murder case. Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinal Kumar Saxena on Monday approved the filing of a review petition in the Supreme Court against its decision of acquitting three accused in the 2012 Chhawla gangrape and murder case, who were earlier convicted and awarded death sentence by the trial court and the Delhi High Court.

Saxena has also approved the appointment of Tushar Mehta, Solicitor General, and Aishwariya Bhati, additional Solicitor General, to represent the case before the apex court.

"The Lieutenant Governor has approved the filing of a review petition in the Supreme Court against its decision of acquitting the three accused. The Lieutenant Governor has also approved the appointment of Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and Additional Solicitor General to represent the case on behalf of the Delhi Government before the Supreme Court," sources in the Government said.

The approval comes after the parents of the victim approached Saxena and requested a review petition against the acquittal of the three accused — Ravi, Rahul, and Vinod. The parents also sought police protection. The acquittal of the accused had led to massive outrage with women's rights activists criticising the decision saying it will embolden the accused.

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Shinde MLA seeks Governor's recall over Shivaji 'past icon'

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Strains began to develop between the ruling alliance partners in Maharashtra over the remarks by Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari and a BJP spokesperson about Chhatrapati Shivaji on Monday, as an MLA belonging to the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena faction Sanjay Gaikwad demanded the Governor's recall and asked the BJP to take serious cognisance of Sudhanshu Trivedi's purported statement.

Upping the ante over Koshyari's recent statement that Shivaji was an icon of the "past era" and Sudhanshu Trivedi's purported statement that Maratha warrior had written a letter to Aurangzeb along the lines of the letters written by Veer Savarkar to the British, Gaikwad said that such statements about Shivaji would result in rift between the Shinde-led Sena and the BJP.



Shiv Sena workers protest against Maharashtra Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari over his remarks on Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, in Pune, on Monday

Talking to the media in Vidarbha region, Gaikwad said, "Here we have a Governor who does not know the history of Maharashtra. Nor does he know anything about our State. He has shown disrespect to Shivaji by saying that the Maratha warrior has become a thing of the past era. He should realise that Shivaji's ideology

can never become old".

"My request to all the BJP leaders to shift this Governor from Maharashtra and appoint a new Governor who is a Maharashtrian. Because, there is no use in having a person like Koshyari as the Governor of Maharashtra," Gaikwad said.

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Delhi girl found in bag on Yamuna E-way was killed by father, dumped by parents

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

The girl whose body was found stuffed inside a trolley bag abandoned on a service road of Yamuna Expressway in Mathura district last Friday belonged to Delhi and was killed by her father.

The police arrested the parents of the girl, who not only eliminated the victim but also dumped the body to evade detection. However, the footage from the CCTVs installed all over the expressway gave their game away.

The parents later confessed to the killing.

According to reports, the Mathura police, after sending the body for autopsy, scanned over one hundred CCTVs footage which helped them identify the accused who dumped the body. It showed a man and a woman dumping the suitcase.

Nitesh Yadav, a resident of Delhi's Badarpur, had contacted the police and reported



Police with accused Nitesh Yadav and Braj Bala, who allegedly killed their daughter Ayushi Yadav and stuffed her body in a trolley bag to be found in Yamuna Expressway, in Mathura district on Monday

that his 21-year-old daughter Ayushi Yadav was missing.

The cops called Nitesh to the post-mortem house to identify the body which they found stuffed in a suitcase. Nitesh's wife, Brajbala and their son identified the body as that of missing Ayushi Yadav.

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CAPSULE

RASNA FOUNDER AREEZ KHAMBATTA PASSES AWAY

New Delhi: Areez Pirojshah Khambatta, the founding chairman of the popular drink Rasna, passed away in Ahmedabad due to a cardiac arrest, the company said.

PUNJAB TERRORIST WITH ₹5L BOUNTY NABBED: NIA

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested a most-wanted terrorist, carrying a reward of ₹5 lakhs, from the Delhi airport here three years after he was declared an absconder.

HANI'S KILLER TO BE PAROLED: S AFRICA COURT

Johannesburg: South Africa's Constitutional Court has ordered the release of Janusz Walus jailed for killing anti-apartheid leader Chris Hani in 1993.

Suspended Andaman Labour Commissioner held in gangrape case

PTI ■ PORT BLAIR

Suspended Andaman and Nicobar Labour Commissioner RL Rishi was on Monday arrested in connection with the gangrape of a 21-year-old woman, police said.

Rishi arrived here aboard a flight from Chennai around 1 pm, and was taken into custody by the Andaman and Nicobar Police, they said.

So far, three accused have been arrested in the case, including former Andaman and Nicobar Chief Secretary Jitendra Narain and Sandeep Singh, alias Rinku, a Port Blair-based businessman. A special investigation team (SIT) was constituted to

probe allegations that the woman was lured to the chief secretary's home with the promise of a government job, and then raped there on April 14 and May 1.

The SIT has already questioned Narain thrice. The Andaman and Nicobar Police had on November 2 announced a reward of ₹1 lakh each for providing information on Singh and Rishi.

Singh, who had been arrested, was apprehended from Haryana on November 13. The FIR in the case was registered on October 1 when Narain was posted as the chairman and managing director of the Delhi Financial Corporation.

CBI files soccer match-fixing PE; Singapore-based fixer under lens

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered a Preliminary Enquiry (PE) to look into the alleged match-fixing in football matches in the country. During the enquiry which began about a fortnight back, the agency has sought and collected documents from the Delhi-based All India Football Federation relating to several Indian football clubs, officials said.

The role of an alleged match-fixer in Singapore is under the scanner, they said without divulging the suspect's name and details of allegations saying the same could hamper the probe which is at a nascent stage.

Continued on Page 2

Barred from stadiums at home, Iran women travel to World Cup

AP ■ DOHA

To 27-year-old Mariam, the World Cup match ticket was a precious gift. A sports fanatic, she traveled to the World Cup in Qatar from Tehran to catch Iran's opening game Monday against England, her first live soccer match.

Women are banned from attending men's matches in Iran. "I've never attended a football match in my life so I had to take this chance," said Mariam, a student of international relations who like other Iranian women at the match declined to give her last name for fear of government reprisals.

Iran is competing in the World Cup as a major women's protest movement is roiling the



England's Jude Bellingham, left, celebrates with England's Harry Maguire after scoring his side's opening goal during the World Cup group B soccer match between England and Iran at the Khalifa International Stadium in Doha, Qatar, on Monday

country. Security forces have violently cracked down on demonstrations, killing at least

419 people, according to Human Rights Activists in Iran, a group that has been monitoring the

protests. The unrest was spurred by the Sept 16 death of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini in the custody of the country's morality police. It first focused on the state-mandated hijab, or headscarf, for women, but has since morphed into one of the most serious threats to the Islamic Republic since the chaotic years following its founding.

"A big achievement for protesters would be to have the choice to wear the hijab," said Mariam. Her brown hair draped over her shoulders and ran long down her back. "But after that, women will go for their right to be in stadiums."

In an effort to restrict large gatherings, Iran has closed all soccer matches to the public since the protests erupted.

Continued on Page 2

IN-BRIEF

BJP MP MEETS LG WITH PARENTS OF GANGRAPE VICTIM
New Delhi: BJP MP Anil Baluni on Thursday met Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena along with the parents of the 2012 Chhawa gangrape victim and requested him to file a review petition in the case. "I met Lt Governor of Delhi along with parents of the 2012 Chhawa gang rape case victim and requested him to file review petition in the case as the Delhi government is party in the case so that stringent punishment could be given to the accused," Baluni, the BJP's national media in-charge said in a statement.

BJP WARD COUNCILLOR, BJP OFFICE BEARERS JOIN AAP
New Delhi: BJP Ward Councillor K K Agarwal and several BJP office bearers took membership of the AAP. Delhi Dy CM Shri Manish Sisodia and AAP MLA Shri Durgesh Pathak welcomed them to the party by offering caps and patkas.

UNICEF INDIA CELEBRATE CHILD RIGHTS WEEK
New Delhi: UNICEF India and partners celebrated an activity-packed Child Rights Week starting with the National Children's Day on November 14 and culminating on World Children's Day on Sunday. #GoBlue lights #ForEveryChild lit up iconic monuments and landmarks sending child rights messages in unison." UNICEF said in a statement.

CENTRE SCRAPS NEED TO FILL AIR SUVIDHA FORMS
New Delhi: The Centre on Monday scrapped the requirement to fill out Air Suvidha form for people flying into India from foreign countries amid declining coronavirus cases. The revised guidelines for international arrivals will be effective from November 22, according to a notification issued by the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFw).

DOCS REMOVE HAMARTOMA FROM PATIENT'S THROAT
Kattankulathur: Great effort by a team of doctors from SRM Medical College Hospital and Research Centre, Kattankulathurnear Chennai has enabled Mahadevan (name changed) to get back to normal life. Doctors from the hospital performed surgery for 10 hours recently on Mahadevan who is employed as a driver with Metropolitan Transport Corporation (MTC) and removed Hamartoma, a rare tumour from the throat which helped him get back to normal life.

Congress to challenge...

From Page 1
On May 21, 1991, Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated at Tamil Nadu's Sriperumbudur by a woman suicide bomber of Sri Lanka's Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) during the Lok Sabha poll campaign. The killing was largely seen as a brutal fallout of his decision to send over 1,000 Indian forces to the island nation in 1987 to disarm the Tamil rebels.

Sextortion racket: ED recovers high-end car

PNS ■ NEW DELHI
The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has recovered and seized a high end Ford Endeavour (2L TITANIUM automatic SUV) of lady black-mailer Archana Nag in an overnight search operation in connection with ongoing PMLA investigation into the high profile sextortion racket run in and around Bhubaneswar. "The vehicle was found to be abandoned without a Number Plate. The seized vehicle is valued at around Rs. 40 Lakhs (approximately)," the ED said in a statement.



In this matter, earlier the ED conducted searches on November 10 at seven premises (including residential premises and office) and several incriminating documents, digital evidence such as mobile phones and one SUV were seized. One of the accused, Khageshwar has been arrested and is still under ED custody.

Covid death: Docs of private hosp booked for negligence

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Five doctors of a private hospital in Noida have been booked for negligence in treatment of a COVID-19 patient which allegedly led to his death during the second wave of the pandemic in 2021. According to the officials, the family of the patient, who was in his early 20s, claimed that he was not administered remdesivir injection in time at the hospital despite them purchasing it on the basis of doctor's prescription, according to the FIR. The first information report (FIR) has been lodged against the doctors of Yatharth Hospital at the Phase 2 police station under Indian Penal Code section 304A (causing

death by negligence) over a complaint by Gautam Buddh Nagar's deputy chief medical officer Dr Tikam Singh. Dr Singh also headed an official probe committee which had investigated the complaint of the Ghaziabad-based family and the allegations to be true. However, Yatharth Hospital's managing director Kapil Tyagi claimed that the allegations were misplaced. "The patient was brought to our hospital in a critical condition. I believe had there been a delay of even half an hour, the patient would not have survived. But here his condition started improving and after about 35 days, the family took him to another hospital in Delhi," Tyagi told PTI. He said the team of doctors at the hospital did a good job



at their end, considering the challenging situation during the second wave of the pandemic last year. "Also, on the family's allegation of not administering remdesivir injection in time, there are multiple research reports which later showed remdesivir had no impact in treating coronavirus. We understand that the family has lost a young child and it is very unfortunate," Tyagi said. Paramhans Tiwari, the in-charge of the Phase 2 police station, said the police are investigating the matter and further action would be taken on the basis of findings of their probe.

Social media celeb dies in car crash

STAFF REPORTER ■ NOIDA

A 25-year-old social media celebrity died and his two friends were injured after their speeding car crashed into a tree in Greater Noida on Monday, police said. Rohit Bhati also known as Rowdy Bhati died in the accident while his friends are undergoing treatment at hospitals - one in Greater Noida and the other in Delhi, a police official said. "They are said to be returning from a party when the incident took place around 3 am near the Chuhadpur underpass. Apparently the speeding car failed to negotiate a turn and hit a tree," Anil Kumar, in-charge of the local Beta 2 police station, said. Bhati hailed from Bulandshahr but was living in Chi sector of Greater Noida. Belonging to the Gujar com-



munity, Bhati was popular on social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram where he posted videos and had followers in thousands. According to the police, Bhati, who was behind the steering of the speeding Maruti Swift, died on the spot, while his friends Manoj and Atish - both around 25, were left injured. "One of the injured is being treated at the Government Institute of Medical Sciences (GIMS) in Greater Noida, while the other has been referred to Delhi in view of the serious condition," Kumar said.

Delhi girl found in bag on Yamuna express...

From Page 1
To clear their doubts, the cops checked their mobile phones' location and found it at the same spot. Subsequently on Monday morning, the police took Nitesh and Brajbala in custody for interrogation and after an hour of grilling, they broke down and confessed to killing their daughter to save their "honour". As per the information, a few days back Ayushi went somewhere without telling her father, Nitesh Yadav. After she returned home, her father lost his temper and shot her dead. He then wrapped her body in plastic, stuffed it in a trolley bag and got it disposed of on the Yamuna Expressway in Mathura. Nitesh originally hails from Gorakhpur.

Shinde MLA seeks...

From Page 1
Gaikwad was referring to a statement made by Koshiyari while speaking at a convocation organised by the Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University to confer honorary doctorate literature on BJP's Union Minister Nitin Gadkari and NCP chief Sharad Pawar at Aurangabad on Saturday. Gaikwad also hit out at BJP's spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi for his reported remarks about Shivaji. "Speaking about the controversy over Savarkar, Trivedi said that the Hindu ide-

ology had apologised to the British five times, while Chhatrapati Shivaji had written a similar letter to Aurangzeb. Trivedi should know that the Maratha warrior had never apologised to Aurangzeb". "It is because of Shivaji, we have a state called Maharashtra. Shivaji championed the cause of Swarajya. Be the BJP-appointed Governor of its spokesperson Sudhanshu, they should first learn about Shivaji before talking about the Maratha warrior," Gaikwad said.

Fight between BJP & AAP spills over to legal domain

PIONEERS NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI
The fight between the BJP, the AAP, the Delhi Government, and the Union Government on the various aspects of the power sector, including subsidy and pending dues has spilled over to the legal domain. In a big development, Delhi Government-owned IPGCL/PPCL has enlisted the services of India's highest-ranked legal officer (Attorney General of India) for its cases pending in the Supreme Court of India in power matters. He will be representing the Delhi Gencos in the ongoing payment dispute with two-Delhi discoms. A letter written (and addressed to the AG of India)

by IPGCL/PPCL dated November 14, 2022 states, "The above-mentioned matter along with seven connected matters is pending before Hon'ble Supreme Court of India and is directed to be listed for hearing on 24.11.2022. In these matters, the IPGCL/PPCL (Undertakings of NCT of Delhi) has sent a letter dated November 27.10.2022 to your good office for giving consent to contest the cases on behalf of the company and also requested for fee schedule." The letter also states, ".....The competent authority is pleased to appoint your engagement to contest the above matters on behalf of the Company and also approved the below-mentioned fee schedule provided via mail dated Nov 2, 2022."

Barred from stadiums...

From Page 1
The reason for authorities' fear became apparent as fans filtered into the Khalifa International Stadium in Doha on Monday. Many Iran fans wore T-shirts or waving signs printed with the mantra of the uprising - "Woman, Life, Freedom." Others wore T-shirts bearing the names of female protesters killed by Iranian security forces in recent weeks. In the 22nd minute of the match - a reference to her age when she died - some fans chanted Mahsa Amni's name, but the chant quickly faded out and was replaced by "Iran." The World Cup in Qatar, just a short flight across the Persian Gulf from Iran, has emerged as a rallying point for Iranian political mobilization. Protesters have even called on FIFA, soccer's governing body, to prohibit Iran from competing in the tournament over restrictions on women in soccer stadiums and the government's crackdown.

CBI files soccer match...

From Page 1
The agency has received some documents while some are still awaited. The agency has also sought cooperation of several Indian football clubs in joining the investigation, they said. The CBI cannot conduct searches, arrests or question through summons under the PE as it does not come under the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPc) and is essentially an in-house enquiry of the probe agency, they said. During the PE, the CBI relies on cooperation of stakeholders and registers an FIR when it has material suggesting prima facie culpability of the suspects in an offence, they added.

the Supreme Court had said the law does not permit courts to punish an accused on the basis of moral conviction or on suspicion alone. The court made the observation while noting that a kind of agony and frustration may be caused to society in general and to the family of the victim in particular if the accused involved in the heinous crime go unpunished or are acquitted. The case in the gruesome rape and murder of a 19-year-old woman was filed on February 9, 2012. The Delhi Police after their investigation filed the chargesheet and the sessions court framed charges against all three accused on May 26, 2012. After the trial, the court of sessions convicted all three accused and awarded the death sentence to them

LG OK's review plea against SC acquittal...

From Page 1
Reacting on the Delhi Lieutenant Governor's decision, Uttarakhnad Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said that he is thankful to Delhi L-G for the decision towards the path of getting justice for the nation's daughter. "We are standing with the victim's family and will help in whichever way possible," Dhami said. The father of the 2012 Chhawa gangrape-and-murder victim also welcomed the Delhi Lieutenant Governor's decision and expressed hope they would be hanged to death. The Supreme Court's acquittal prompted the parents of the 19-year-old victim to seek police protection out of fear, officials said. While acquitting the three men,

on February 13, 2014. The accused later approached the Delhi High Court and the court on August 26, 2014, dismissed their appeals, and affirmed their death sentence. The accused then approached the Supreme Court against the judgment of the High Court. According to the prosecution, the woman worked in Gurugram's Cyber City. She was returning from her workplace and was near her home when the three men abducted her in a car. When she didn't return home, her parents lodged a missing persons report, the prosecution said, adding the woman's mutilated and decomposing body was found in a village in Rewari, Haryana.

The police found multiple injuries on the woman's body. Further investigation and autopsy revealed she was attacked with car tools, glass bottles, metal objects, and other weapons. She was also raped, they said. Police arrested the three men involved in the crime and said one of the accused allegedly took revenge after the woman turned down his proposal. Extending support to the parent's cause, an NGO People Against Rape In India (PARI), held a candle march in Delhi on November 20 and demanded justice in the case. Activist Yogita Bhayana, who was also one of the applicants before the Supreme Court in the case in favour of the victim's parents, led the march with students and volunteers.

Leaders pack punches as Guj poll pitch...

From Page 1
The PM said Adivasis cannot expect Congress will improve their condition because leaders of Congress mock tribal outfits and insult tribals at regular intervals. "While past Congress candidates left tribals to fend for themselves in Gujarat, it was BJP, after coming to power, resolved their issues such as education, health, malnutrition and employment among others," he added. In another public rally at Surendranagar in central Gujarat, Modi took a dig at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', saying those who have been thrown out of power are taking out padyatra to get back to power. Modi also said instead of talking about development during elections, the Opposition Congress is saying it will show him his 'aukat' (status). "Now, the Congress does not talk about development during elections. Instead, Congress leaders are saying they will show Modi his 'aukat'. Just look at their arro-

gance. They, indeed, belong to a royal family, while I am merely a servant having no 'aukat'," he said. "In the past, the Congress had used words like 'neech aadmi', 'maut ka saudagar' and 'naali ka keeda' for me. I urge you to talk about development instead of playing this game of 'aukat'," the Prime Minister said, adding that he swallows such insults because his focus is to make India a developed nation. Hitting at the Congress, Modi said people who were dethroned long back were taking out yatra to get back the power. "Some people are doing a padyatra to get back to power. They are also taking along those who had stalled the Narmada project for 40 years through litigation and kept Gujarat thirsty for 40 years. I in this election, the people of Gujarat will punish those who are doing this padyatra. People will also punish those who were against the Narmada project", he said without taking any names. Modi was referring to Narmada Bachao Andolan

spearhead Medha Patkar joining the Rahul Gandhi-led Bharat Jodo Yatra in Maharashtra recently. On the other hand, Rahul said he felt the pain of farmers, youth and tribals after meeting them during his Bharat Jodo Yatra and accused the BJP of drawing up plans to displace adivasis by handing over forests to industrialists as he hit the campaign trail in Gujarat 10 days ahead of the first phase of Assembly polls. Addressing his first rally in Gujarat after the announcement of the Assembly poll schedule, Gandhi asserted tribals are the first owners of the country, but the BJP was working to take away their jungles and keep their children away from modern education. The Congress MP took a break from his Bharat Jodo Yatra, currently passing through Maharashtra, and travelled to Gujarat, where he addressed a gathering of tribals at Mahuva in Surat district in support of his party, which is seeking to end its nearly three-decade stint in the opposition in the BJP-ruled state in

the next month's Assembly polls. Gandhi said his 3,570-km yatra, which started from Tamil Nadu on September 7, was for the unity of the country and during the cross-country foot-march he felt the pain of farmers, youth and people from the tribal community after listening to their problems. Sharing his experience of the yatra so far, the Congress leader said he felt sad while talking to farmers, youth, and tribals. He said farmers shared their experience of not getting proper rate of their produce, crop insurance money or their loans not getting waived, while youth talked about remaining unemployed and failing to realize their dreams. "They (BJP) call you 'vanvasi' (forest dwellers). They do not say you are the first owners of India, but that you live in the jungles. Do you see the difference? It means they do not want you to live in cities, see your children becoming engineers, doctors, learn to fly planes, speak English," he said at the rally at tribal-dominated Mahuva.

Zakir Naik in Qatar to lecture on Islam during World Cup

ANI ■ DOHA
Indian fugitive preacher Zakir Naik, who faces charges of money laundering and hate speech in India, is set to give religious lectures at the 2022 FIFA World Cup in Qatar, according to social media posts. "Preacher Sheikh Zakir Naik is present in Qatar during the World Cup and will give many religious lectures throughout the tournament," Al Arabiya News quoted Faisal Alhajri, a presenter at the Qatari state-owned sports channel Alkass, as saying on Twitter on Saturday. The FIFA World Cup will begin in Qatar on Monday at the Al Bayt Stadium, located about 35 km away from Doha. Naik, who is a wanted fugitive by the Indian government, will reportedly give many religious lectures throughout the tournament, according to Alhajri. Earlier in March, home ministry had declared Zakir Naik founded Islamic Research Foundation (IRF) an unlawful association and banned it for five years.

PUBLIC NOTICE
ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Vellaturi Sudhakar/Vellaturi Subbalakshmi/ LBTE00005198416/H No. 1046 2nd Floor Sector- 45 Haryana Gurgaon- 122001	Guntur District, Tenali West Sub District, Angalakuduru Grama Panchayath area in Angalakuduru Village D. No.322/3, 322/4 in Two D. Numbers Land is Contiguous and as Per Plan Plot No.1 Site is Bounded By: East : Plot No.8 Site- 30'- 09". South: 18 Ft. Wide Panchayath Road- 30'- 06". West: 18 Ft. Wide Panchayath Road- 30'- 09". North: Plot No.2 Site of Unmudi Lakshmi- 31'- 09". Within These Boundaries an Extent of 106.34 Sq. Yds. or 88.91 Sq. Mts. and in That Ground Floor, R. C. C. Daba And With All Other Amenities Along With All Access Rights and Easementary Rights. Property With Door No.5-136. Panchayath Assesment No.824	22.09.2022 Rs. 21,43,103.00/-	04.07.2022

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

Date : November 22, 2022
Place : Gurgaon
Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

SPECIAL BRANCH
POLICE HEADQUARTER, M.P., BHOPAL
NO. SB/Store/2022-25 (326), Bhopal, Dated 18-11-2022

"ONLINE E-TENDER NOTICE"

E-tender are invited by Assistant Inspector General of Police, Special Branch (G) M.P., Bhopal on behalf of DGP MP Bhopal for the following item on website <https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app> :-

S. No.	Name of Item (s)	Qty.	Tender Fees (Rs.)	EMD (Rs.)	Tender No.
1	Disaster Recovery & Information Security with Backup Solution	1	20,000/-	30,00,000/-	1st Tender

1. Cost of tender document (Tender Fee) is non refundable and cannot be exempted in any condition & must submit online through website <https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app>.

2. Tender document can be download from the website of MP Police (www.mppolice.gov.in)

3. Bids shall be submitted online only at MP Tenders website: <https://mptenders.gov.in/nicgep/app>

4. Tender Schedule :

No.	Tender Activity	Tentative Date & Time
i	Submission of written queries - through e-mail: sec24-sb@mppolice.gov.in	29/11/2022 up to 1700 hrs.
ii	Pre Bid Meeting along with written queries	30/11/2022 at 1100 hrs.
iii	Bid Submission Start Date	12/12/2022 at 1000 hrs.
iv	Last date of online e-Tender submission	20/12/2022 up to 1700 hrs.
v	Bid will be opened on	21/12/2022 up to 1700 hrs.
vi	Demonstration from	27/12/2022 at 11.00 hrs.

A.I.G. of Police
Special Branch (G) M.P. Bhopal
Tel No. 0755-2443654

G-19455/22 कोरोना में सावधानी रहें, सप्सो दूधना घटें।

Police recover bone fragments from Mehrauli forest

Cops seek court's permission to conduct polygraph test on Aftab

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

On a day the Delhi Police recovered more human remains, mostly fragments of bones, in further searches in the Mehrauli forest area, it filed an application in a city court seeking permission for conducting a polygraph test on Aftab Poonawala, accused of killing his partner Shradha Walker.

The hearing is likely to take place on Tuesday before the Metropolitan Magistrate, who had earlier heard the application on Poonawala's narco analysis test and given his nod. Meanwhile, a dentist, who did not wish to be named, said, "The police came today. They had a picture of the jaw which they recovered during investigation. I asked them to get an X-ray from the Mumbai-based



Media personnel and locals near a pond where Aftab Poonawala, accused in the Mehrauli murder case, is suspected to have dumped his live-in partner Shradha Walker's head and some other remains, at Chhattarpur area in New Delhi on Monday. Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

doctor who treated the woman, for a root canal treatment. Without X-ray, it is very difficult to identify." In the meantime, a PIL has been filed in the High Court (HC) for transferring the probe to the CBI as the Delhi Police has a paucity of personnel and technical equipment.

The Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) Assistant Director Sanjeev Gupta said that the narco analysis test on Poonawala could not be conducted on Monday.

A polygraphic test is to be conducted on Poonawala before the narco test, for which his consent is needed, and the police have been informed about that, the FSL said.

Dr Punit Puri, also an Assistant Director at the FSL, said the polygraphic test will be conducted if the consent is

received. "It will be followed by medical tests and after these only the narco will be performed. Within 10 days, narco will be done," he said.

A PIL was filed in the Delhi HC on Monday seeking a direction to transfer the investigation into the case from Delhi Police to the CBI, alleging that the presence of the media and the public at places of recovery amounts to tampering with evidence.

The plea, which is likely to be listed for hearing on Wednesday, alleged that so far the Delhi Police has revealed each and every detail to the media and public regarding the investigation which is not permitted under law.

On its part, the Delhi Police team in Mumbai has recorded the statements of 11

people in connection with the case, even as details emerged about Poonawala having shifted belongings from his flat in Maharashtra's Palghar district to Delhi in 37 boxes in June and paid Rs 20,000 for it.

Poonawala has stated that he and Walker fought about who would pay for shifting the items from their house in Vasai. A police officer said they will find out whose account was used to pay Rs 20,000 for the transportation of furniture and other household items in June through the Goodluck Packers and Movers.

Police sources said that during investigation, it was also revealed that Poonawala used Walker's phone number when he bought the fridge, that he allegedly used to store her body parts, at the electronics shop near the couple's apart-

ment in Delhi's Chhattarpur. These details emerged days after an employee of the shop revealed that Poonawala bought a fridge on May 19 - a day after the killing - and left within minutes.

"A mover and packers bill from Mumbai's Vasai to Delhi was found and another was a refrigerator bill which Poonawala had bought from Tilak Electronic shop in Delhi," said the sources.

It was also revealed that Poonawala and Walker had on May 6 visited Tosh in Himachal Pradesh and bought 'weed' there and police have some digital evidence which corroborates this.

"He had visited Tosh a couple of times earlier also with his friends and had bought weed, as he is fond of it," said sources.

Admissions to pvt nursery schools to begin from Dec 1

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government on Monday released a circular stating that admissions to private nursery schools for the academic year 2023-24 in the national Capital will commence from December 1.

The last date for filling applications is December 23 and the first list of shortlisted candidates will be declared on January 20. The admission process for pre-school, pre-primary and class I will commence from December 1 for open seats in private unaided and recognised schools for the 2023-24 session.

According to the schedule released by the Delhi Government's Directorate of Education (DoE), all private schools will have to upload their admission criteria by November 28 and the application process will begin on December 1. The upper age



limit for admissions is four, five and six years for nursery, KG and class I respectively as of March 31, 2023. After the first list of selected candidates and the waiting list is issued on January 20, the second list, if any, will be issued on February 2, and any subsequent list on March 1. The admission process will close on March 17.

There are no significant changes in the admission guidelines from previous years. All schools are required to reserve 22 per cent of their seats in entry level classes for economically weaker sections (EWS) and disadvantaged group (DG) students and 3 per cent for children with special needs (CWSN). Admissions to

these are conducted through a centralised process of draw of lots by the DoE and a separate schedule for this will be released later.

Schools have been asked to notify their number of seats and the admission criteria by December 16. The criteria on the basis of which admission will be take place is for the schools to formulate but there are certain "discriminatory" criteria which they are not allowed to adopt.

These include taking into consideration parents' education qualifications, their food and drinking habits (vegetarianism and alcohol, non-veg consumers), their professional fields or any kind of expertise, oral tests or interviews, or a first-come-first-get system. Most schools usually allot points to applicants based on their distance from the school, on having siblings in the school and if a parent is an alumnus.

The notification said that a non-refundable amount of Rs 25 can be charged as admission registration fee. The purchase of the prospectus of the school by the parents will be optional, it said.

The DoE has also directed that the number of seats at the entry level will not be less than the highest number of seats in entry level classes during the last three academic years - 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23.

"Eligible parents of students in the draw of lots will be informed at least two days before the date of draw through website, notice board and e-mail by the school," the notification said. It said the draw of lots will be conducted under videography and its footage will be maintained and retained by the school. The slips will be shown to the parents before being put in the box, being used for the draw of lots, the notification said.

Pending NI Act cases: L-G nod to hiring of court staff

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

To clear the huge backlog of cases registered under the Negotiable Instruments Act (NI Act), Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena has approved the hiring of five judicial officers and 35 other clerical and support staff in five special courts.

The appointments of court staff including Readers, Stenographers, Ahlmads, Assistant Ahlmads and peons will be made on contract basis for a period of one year as a pilot project to examine the efficacy and additional requirements of staff/resources, if any, in future.

"The move aims at expediting the disposal of court cases under the NI Act and reduces the huge pendency of cases in these courts, mainly due to procedural and logistical delays owing to shortage of staff," they said. "The decision comes in wake of a Supreme



Court order dated May 19, 2022, in a Suo Moto Writ regarding "Expedition Trial of Cases under Section 138 of Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881." In pursuance of the Supreme Court order, the Law Department had sought the approval of the L-G for engaging the court staff," they stated. "The State Court Management Committee of the Delhi High Court has recommended that only 2500 oldest pending cases will be assigned by the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) to every special court (NI Act) at the time of commencement of the pilot pro-

ject," the official sources said.

In recent times, the LG has taken concrete steps to equip the judiciary with ample staff and expeditiously reduce the pendency of cases. In a first such move, the LG has authorized Delhi Subordinate Services Selection Board (DSSSB), to make recruitments/selections of Group 'B' & 'C' non-judicial subordinate staffs for the Delhi High Court.

"It has been observed that prolonged pendency of cases under NI Act that mostly deal with petty financial disputes including cases of cheque bounce, often made litigation in the cases irrelevant for the litigants due to inordinate delays while also causing harassment to the parties involved," they informed.

L-G noted non-systematic and irregular filling up of vacancies at such positions, often creates procedural and logistical impediments in the functioning of the Court.

Jain moves CBI court seeking food as per his religion



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Jailed Delhi Minister Jaitendar Jain has moved a petition in the CBI court seeking directions to the jail authorities to provide him basic food items as per his religious beliefs as well as provide him access to medical facilities in the jail.

In his petition, Jain claimed that he has lost 28 kgs in the last six months since his arrest which is clearly indicative of his debilitating health status.

He stated in the petition that he has not been able to visit Jain temple since his arrest on May 31, this year and hence being a strict religious observer, he has been on a fast and is not having - cooked food, pulses, grains and milk products. "Due to withdrawal of the fruits being provided to him, he has alarmingly lost 2 kgs of weight in the last week," he alleged in the petition.

Meanwhile a city court will hear on Tuesday his plea seeking contempt proceedings against the Enforcement Directorate for allegedly leaking CCTV footage of his prison cell to media.

The matter, which was scheduled to come up for a hearing on Monday, was adjourned for Tuesday since the judge was on leave.

Jain alleged in the petition that from the last 12 days, the jail administration has stopped providing Jain with basic food items as per his religious belief.

Since he is on religious fast for the last six months because he was relying on consumption of uncooked fruits/vegetables, mixed seeds, dry fruits and dates in the jail. He is being starved by the jail authorities and is not being given sustenance or nutrition to even sustain his well-being.

The petitioner further argued that a prisoner does not cease to remain a human being even after punishment. And that he is currently under trial and as such cannot be made to starve, relinquish his religious beliefs and be denied basic medical conditions.

Ahead of MCD polls, BJP release another 'sting' video on AAP

Party says BJP trying to malign AAP, cover up its own corruption, failure in civic body

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Monday released an alleged sting video shot purportedly by a former AAP volunteer from North West Delhi's Rohini area to allege that the party sold tickets for MCD polls. BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra alleged at a press conference that the AAP and its chief Arvind Kejriwal were deeply involved in corruption and maladministration during its 15 year rule.

Responding to the charges, Goel said AAP's tickets for MCD polls were much sought after. "There are many touts who got active. Touts got active but no tickets were given on the basis of money. The AAP is not BJP or Congress where tickets are distributed to those who pay money," he said.

He said, "It is evident that the BJP has conceded its defeat



State president of AAP's Purvanchal wing Sanjay Bhagat with some AAP's Purvanchal wing leaders join BJP in presence of BJP senior leader Vijay Goel and former Delhi BJP president Manoj Tiwari at BJP party office in New Delhi on Monday. Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

said. AAP leaders said that the saffron party was doing this only to malign the AAP which is inching closer to a historic win in MCD and to cover up its corruption and maladministration during its 15 year rule.

Responding to the charges, Goel said AAP's tickets for MCD polls were much sought after. "There are many touts who got active. Touts got active but no tickets were given on the basis of money. The AAP is not BJP or Congress where tickets are distributed to those who pay money," he said.

He said, "It is evident that the BJP has conceded its defeat

in MCD elections. Their frustration is visible from the fact that they are releasing fake stings every now and then which they shoot anywhere."

"One thing has become clear even in these doctored videos released by the BJP that no one can get tickets from AAP with money. The AAP has not given tickets to anyone by taking money. It is just not possible. Tickets are given only to those candidates who have worked among the people at the grassroots level," he added.

Earlier, at the press conference Patra alleged that the video was purportedly shot by

former AAP volunteer Bindu who was allegedly asked for Rs 80 lakh for a ticket from the Rohini D ward.

Patra claimed that the video shows Bindu purportedly discussing the payment of money with some purported AAP leaders including its North West Delhi Lok Sabha incharge RR Pathania and Rohini Assembly constituency incharge coordinator Punit Goel. The BJP spokesperson claimed, "These leaders including Pathania and Goel have links with a five-member committee of the AAP that was associated with ticket distribution. AAP Minister Gopal Rai, MLAs Durgesh Pathak, Saurebh Bhardwaj and Atishi as well as Adil Khan are its members." Patra also said the sting video revealed that 110 tickets of the AAP were reserved for distribution on the basis of a payment. Bindu alleged that AAP leaders "sold" tickets for MCD polls to rich people neglecting the party's ground-level volunteers. "The AAP sold tickets and I did this sting after much thinking. This is not the doing of some leaders.

'Kejriwal ki sarkar, Kejriwal ka Parshad' in MCD will bring development: Sisodia

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing full-fledged campaigning, the AAP leader and Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Monday launched another campaign 'Kejriwal Ki Sarkar, Kejriwal Ka Parshad' for the civic elections, seeking victory of party candidate in every ward.

The campaign argues that it will be easy for AAP to carry out development initiatives where the party has its councillor. 'Kejriwal Ki Sarkar, Kejriwal Ka Parshad' campaign translates to 'Kejriwal is in Government in Delhi and there should be Kejriwal's councillor in all 250 wards.

Launching the campaign, Sisodia sharpened his attack on the BJP, accusing it of having "no vision" for the MCD as he announced a new campaign to "alert voters" in choosing the



AAP in the civic body polls.

Sisodia claimed the "AAP is set to win" the MCD polls and if BJP wins even one ward in Delhi "they will impede development work in their areas". The BJP has done nothing in the past 15 years in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and has no vision for the next five years as well, he alleged.

"But, we have a vision to fix civic problems, make parks better and address landfill sites issues. The AAP is going to win this election. So, if you want

work to be done in your ward, pick an AAP councillor. If a BJP councillor is elected in your ward that person will try to obstruct work since the AAP will be in power in MCD," Sisodia claimed.

"So, a new campaign 'Kejriwal ki Sarkar, Kejriwal ka Parshad' (Kejriwal's government, Kejriwal's councillor) campaign has been launched to alert people to pick AAP over BJP in civic polls due on December 4," he said.

The BJP was in power in the Municipal Corporation of Delhi from 2007 to 2012 when it was unified. It again controlled the three corporations that existed from 2012 to 2022 before being reunified again in May this year.

"I appeal to the people of Delhi to ensure the AAP comes to power in MCD and that your ward councillor is picked from the AAP too.

Govt paying honorariums only to imams, muazzins, says Parvesh

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

As campaigning for the Delhi municipal polls intensifies, BJP MP Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma on Monday asked temple priests and gurdwara granthis to nudge Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to give them salaries, saying the Government was paying honorariums only to imams and muazzins. He also told them to shut temple and gurdwara doors on any AAP leader or candidate if the Government doesn't fulfil the demand in three days.

Verma himself wrote to the Chief Minister keeping forth the demand. "I appeal to all the priests and granthis of temples and gurdwaras to write to



Kejriwal to provide monthly salaries of ₹42,000. "If he fails to convey his decision within three days, boards should be installed outside temples and gurdwaras banning the entry of any AAP leader, any AAP candidate and the chief minister himself, until the salaries are paid," the West Delhi BJP MP said. He also claimed that the Kejriwal government paid ₹101 crore to Maulvis and muazzins

using taxpayers' money. "It is the money paid as taxes by the people and it can not be spent on just one religion," he said.

Reacting to Verma, AAP led Delhi Government said, "We are already paying as much salaries to priests and granthis as any other BJP Government in UP, MP etc".

However, based on his advice, management committees of a Shiv temple in Tatarpur village and a gurdwara in Tihar village shot letters to Kejriwal in this connection.

An official of Delhi Waqf Board said monthly honorarium of ₹18,000 is being paid to about 150 imams and ₹16,000 to 58 muazzins of mosques that are registered with it.

Shah moves HC over sealing of DDCD's office

NEW DELHI: Delhi Government think tank Dialogue and Development Commission of Delhi (DDCD)'s vice-chairman Jasmine Shah has approached the High Court challenging Lieutenant Governor's order restricting him from discharging his duties and sealing his office.

Shah's lawyer said they have challenged LG's order and have also sought an interim relief of staying that decision. The plea, filed through advocate Chirag Madan, is listed for hearing on Tuesday before Justice Yashwant Varma.

After Saxena's order, the facilities enjoyed by Shah, being vice-chairman of were also withdrawn. SR

Doctors perform successful Phalloplasty surgery

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A successful Phalloplasty surgery - penile reconstruction and implant to transform a female to a male (FTM) - has not only effected a physical transformation of 34-year-old Gayatri but also helped her fulfill her dream to marry Shalini, her "childhood sweetheart". Rechristened as Mahesh, he is now discharging the responsibilities of a husband.

However, the journey to transform from a female to male has not been easy for the patient, reveal the doctors at the Delhi-based Sir Ganga Ram Hospital. Gender dysphoria is a term that describes a sense of unease or psychological discomfort that a person may have because of a mismatch between their biological



sex and their gender identity.

"Gayatri, a resident of Uttar Pradesh, who was suffering from Gender Dysphoria had visited us two months ago to get completely transformed into a male. She had over the past six years transitioned from female to male, having been put on male hormone replacement therapy since 2016, undergoing bilateral breast removal in 2017,

as well as uterus, ovary and vaginal removal in 2019.

"After her psychological evaluation, we found that although the patient was a female but mentally she was a male, a condition which is called Gender Dysphoria," said Dr. Bheem Singh Nanda, Senior Consultant, Department of Plastic & Cosmetic Surgery, Sir Ganga Ram Hospital.

According to Dr Nanda, "We decided to perform penile reconstruction (Phalloplasty) for complete male transformation by state-of-the-art microsurgical technique of tissue transfer. Our aim was to give good shape, length, urethra (to pass urine) and erotic sensation to the patient.

"Of all the techniques we chose the forearm as a donor for penile reconstruction. This was a challenging surgery as

the penis was fabricated on the forearm with preservation of vessels and all the important nerves. The next step was to implant the reconstructed penis from the forearm to the genital area of the patient."

Dr Nanda continued, "The second challenge was to join the urethra (urine tube) and then connect the vessels to establish the blood circulation again in the reconstructed penis. The last and the most important step was to join the nerves of the reconstructed penis with the erotic nerves (Pudendal nerve and nerve to clitoris) which is the most important pre-requisite for penile implant and sexual satisfaction later."

It was a successful surgery which took about eight hours with minimal blood loss, said the doctor.

SC asks Guj HC to monitor Morbi bridge collapse probe

Need to fix responsibility of civic body, Orevva officers, says Counsel

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Termining the Morbi bridge collapse as an "enormous disaster", the Supreme Court on Monday asked the Gujarat High Court to periodically monitor the probe and other aspects related to the incident which claimed over 140 lives. A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice Hima Kohli said that as a Division Bench headed by the Gujarat High Court Chief Justice has already taken a suo motu note of the incident and will not hear the petitions as of now. "It is an enormous tragedy and this will require a weekly monitoring to see award of contract, credential of party awarded the contract, attribu-



tion of responsibility for those guilty. The High Court has taken charge else we would have issued notice," the bench remarked.

"As many as 140 people have died out of which 47 are children. Several aspects of matter would require periodical references and so that HC is apprised of antecedent facts... We request High Court to take this up on periodical basis," the apex Court said.

The Court was hearing two petitions seeking probe into acts of criminal wrongdoing, the need to affix responsibility against officials of nagar palika and the need to ensure that the agency entrusted to

maintain the bridge are held accountable including making arrests. Senior Counsel Gopal Sankaranarayanan appearing for a petitioner, whose brother and sister-in-law passed away, leaving a 9-year-old behind, argued that an investigation independent of the State is required to bring out the truth.

"There are also looming elections and that is why it is important to catch the big fish behind the Ajanta Orevva," said the lawyer, adding that the compensation given to the victims' families was not adequate. The apex court also asked the petitioners to move the High Court.

Section 64 on who can receive summons discriminatory against women, says petitioner; SC gives notice to Centre

ANI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday issued notice to the Centre on a PIL challenging Section 64 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) which stated that it discriminates against women by treating the female members of the family incapable of accepting the summons on behalf of the person summoned.

A Bench of Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud and Justice Hima Kohli sought a response from the Ministry of Law and Justice and the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Section 64 CrPC states "Where the person summoned cannot, by the exercise of due diligence, be found, the summons may be served by leaving one of the duplicates of him with some adult male member



of his family residing with him, and the person with whom the summons is so left shall, if so required by the serving officer, sign a receipt, therefore, on the back of the other duplicate."

The plea said that Section 64 Cr.P.C. essentially fails to account for — When the person summoned resides only with the female family members or when the only person

available at the time of service of summons is a female.

"The possibility of such a situation (the only person available at the time of service of summons is a female) is particularly high in light of the stark gender gap in the workforce between the males and the females, i.e., only 22 per cent of the Indian women are at work, which entails that the remaining 78 per cent of women are at home," the plea stated filed by advocate Kush Kalra.

"Issue an appropriate Writ or Order, declaring the part of Section 64 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 which excludes female family members to receive summons on behalf of the summoned person as violative of Articles 14, 15, 19, and 21 of the Constitution," the plea stated.

It said the larger purpose behind the enactment of Section 46 of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) is to facilitate the criminal justice system in not causing any unreasonable delay in the criminal proceedings which might otherwise be caused if a personal service to the person summoned is mandated in all circumstances whatsoever.

"Furthermore, the section is premised on the fact that the notice of the service of summons might be conveyed later on to the person summoned.

Thus, given the purpose, thereby excluding the female family members by insertion of the word 'male in the section, doesn't have any reasonable nexus with the object of the section, therefore, the same is blatantly violative of Articles 14 and 15," the petition added.

CJI meets protesting lawyers from Guj, Telangana, asks them to resume work

New Delhi: Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud on Monday met protesting lawyers' associations from Gujarat and Telangana against transfer of Justices Nikhil Kariel and Abhishek Reddy and asked them to resume work.

The associations which met separately with CJI said that they were assured by CJI to examine their demand.

After meeting the CJI, Telangana advocates' association decided to call off their strike and Gujarat association leaders said that they will take a decision on Tuesday morning after convening a general body meeting in Ahmedabad. The CJI agreed to examine and take an appropriate decision, said association leaders. **PNS**

IN SHORTS

FIR AGAINST TV CHANNEL ALLOWED TO BE WITHDRAWN
New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday permitted the Maharashtra government to withdraw an appeal filed by the state during the previous Uddhav Thackeray dispensation against a Bombay High Court's 2020 order suspending the probe in two FIRs filed against Republic TV editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami for allegedly making inflammatory comments.

PM TO GIVE 71,000 APPOINTMENT LETTERS
New Delhi: As part of the government's 'Rozgar Mela' (employment fair), Prime Minister Narendra Modi will distribute about 71,000 appointment letters to new recruits on Tuesday via video conferencing and also address them. Physical copies of appointment letters will be handed over at 45 locations across the country.

SC ASKS CENTRE TO REPLY ON CONMAN SUKESH PLEA
New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday sought response from the Centre and the Delhi government on plea of conman Sukesh Chandrashekar seeking that he be shifted from the Mandoli jail here to any other prison in the country.

PRESIDENT HOUSE WILL BE OPEN 5 DAYS A WEEK
New Delhi: Rashtrapati Bhavan will be open for public viewing for five days a week from December 1, an official statement said on Monday.

FOREIGN SECY CONCLUDES 2-DAY MYANMAR VISIT
New Delhi: India's Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra on Monday concluded a two-day visit to Myanmar during which he discussed issues relating to border management and security. Kwatra's visit came amid escalating violence between ethnic armed organisations and the Myanmar army that could have some impact on border regions in India's northeastern states.

3 JUDGE BENCH SET UP TO HEAR ED TRANSFER PLEA
New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday said that a three-judge bench headed by CJI D Y Chandrachud would hear a plea of the Enforcement Directorate seeking transfer of a corruption case related to the 'Nagrik Apurta Nigam' or the PDS scam outside Chhattisgarh.

GUJ HC JUDGE TRANSFERRED TO PATNA HIGH COURT
New Delhi: The Supreme Court Collegium has recommended the transfer of Gujarat High Court judge Justice Vipul Manubhai Pancholi to Patna High Court. As per a statement uploaded on the apex court's website on Monday, the collegium made this recommendation in its meeting held on September 29.

WANTED TERRORIST KHANPURIA ARRESTED
New Delhi: The NIA on Monday said it has arrested a wanted terrorist Kulwinderjit Singh alias Khanpuria, who was carrying a reward of Rs five lakh on his head and absconding since 2019. He had been associated with terrorist outfits like Babbar Khalsa International and Khalistan Liberation Force and was nabbed from IGI Airport here on Friday when he arrived from Bangkok.

SC issues notice to Chintels India Private Ltd, seeks reply over PIL

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to hear the plea of residents of Gurugram's Chintels Paradiso society, a part of which collapsed in February killing two women, seeking compensation and action against the developer. A bench of Justices KM Joseph and Hrishikesh Roy issued notice to Chintels India Private Limited and sought its reply on the plea filed by the residents.

"If you look at your advertisement, it says it is a lush green and beautiful apartment. But it's beautiful only in the picture, not in reality. How come a structure which was built so recently came down collapsing like this? It is a very serious issue. We will issue notice," the bench said. Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for the resident petitioners of Chintels Paradiso society in Sector 109

of Gurugram, submitted that the audit of the structures reveals that the building is unsafe. He said the residents have been asked to vacate all the towers so the builder should pay the rent. The counsel appearing for the builder told the court that an inspection by IIT is going on and the expenses are being borne by it. The matter will now be considered by the bench on January 6, 2023.

Earlier in February, ceilings of several flats in one of the towers in the complex collapsed resulting in the death of two. After the partial collapse in Tower D, the Department of Town and Country Planning (DTCP) had ordered a structural audit of the affected towers. A Special Investigation Team headed by the additional deputy commissioner was also formed to probe incident.

If self-regulation is eyewash, why should we not disband you: HC asks NBDA

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Monday told five TV channels to ensure that their broadcast on the Delhi excise policy scam cases is "in tune with official press releases" by the CBI and the ED and comply with guidelines, after one of the accused Vijay Nair objected to alleged news leaks.

Notices were issued to Republic TV, India Today, Zee News and Times Now. The court also pulled up the News Broadcasting & Digital Standards Authority (NBDA) after it submitted that it has no power to restrain news channels. "If self-regulation is a mere eyewash, why should we not disband you," Justice Yashwant Varma said. The order, which made the News Broadcasters & Digital

Association (NBDA) a party to the proceedings, was passed on a petition by businessman Vijay Nair, an accused in the cases related to the alleged excise policy scam being probed by the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate (ED). NBDA is an industrial body formed by private TV channels.

Nair had moved the court earlier this month claiming that sensitive information in relation to the case was being leaked to the media by the investigating agencies, which was adversely impacting his right as an accused.

Justice Varma on Monday issued notice to the media organisations named by the petitioner while noting that the content in question was not based on any press releases stated to have been issued by investigating agencies.

The judge thus asked the

news broadcasting authority to duly examine the broadcast and place a report as to whether they would be compliant with the applicable guidelines.

"Pending further consideration, the court directs respondents 5 to 9 (media organisations) to ensure that all the broadcast that are carried in respect to (the case) are in tune with any official press releases that may be issued either by the CBI or ED and comply with the directives which govern," the court said.

"In the meanwhile, the court directs respondent no 4 (NBDA) to duly examine the broadcast in question and place a report in these proceedings as to whether they would be compliant with the guidelines in respect of broadcasting," it added. The court listed the case for further consideration in February.

US lauds PM Modi for being instrumental in forging consensus among G-20 nations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/WASHINGTON

With India playing a crucial role in forging a consensus among the participants in the G-20 summit last week in Bali, Indonesia regarding the ongoing Ukraine conflict and risk related to nuclear issues, the US has lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi for being instrumental for it and said the ties between the two countries will be even "bigger" next year.

Modi's recent appeal regarding the Ukraine conflict that "today's era must be of war" resonated in the joint declaration or communiqué issued after the G-20 summit.

Modi also held bilateral meetings with President Joe Biden, British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and some other heads of states on the sidelines of the G-20 summit.

Elaborating upon growing India-US relations, Principal Deputy National Security Advisor (NSA) Jonathan Finer said in the history of India-US ties, 2022 has been a huge year. He said the Biden administration sees this alliance as among the most consequential relationships for America anywhere in the world.

Modi was among the leaders President Joe Biden looked to take forward global agenda and share the burden with, the Deputy NSA said.

"Looking around the world when the United States and (its) President (Joe) Biden look for partners that can truly help carry the load, truly helped move forward a global agenda, India and Prime Minister Modi are very high on that list," Finer told a gathering of several hundred Indian-Americans in Washington late Sunday.

"We just saw this in real-time at the G-20 where the prime minister was instrumental in forging a consensus around a joint statement among a far-flung group of countries and in the comments and work that the prime minister has done and others in the Indian government have done to highlight the increasing risk related to nuclear issues," he said.

This relationship is being steered by Prime Minister Modi and President Biden



who have met more than 15 times, the latest one being in Bali last week, said India's Ambassador to the US Taranjit Singh Sandhu, addressing the gathering at a lunch reception hosted by him to celebrate the 'Festival Season'.

The unique event organised by the Embassy of India showcased the syncretic nature of Indian culture.

The event saw festivals of different faiths - from Diwali to Hanukkah, Eid to Bodhi day, and from Gurburab to Christmas celebrated with aplomb.

Attended by top officials of the Biden administration, including Senior Advisor to the President Neera Tanden and Surgeon General Dr Vivek Murthy, the event demonstrated amply India's unique stature as the embodiment of 'Unity in Diversity' - a land where various faiths have not only coexisted but flourished.

"This event really demonstrates so much about what President Biden is talking about when he talks about an inclusive country, a country that celebrates our diversity and our strength in diversity," Tanden said.

"I'm grateful for this partnership between the US and India. I think it has been important in the past, but it will be even more important going forward," Murthy said.

Reflecting on his views on the India-US relationship, Finer said: "The year 2022 was huge in US-India relations. We think we have an even bigger year ahead in 2023. We have the Quad summit on the agenda coming up.

We have India's G20 presidency, which I know we're all looking forward to, including Prime Minister Modi."

Nat'l Credit Framework to accelerate India's march towards becoming \$5 trillion economy: Pradhan

New Delhi: The Centre on Monday said the National Credit Framework (NCRF) will be instrumental in enhancing economic convertibility of education by bringing a vast majority of population under the fold of formal education and skilling. NCRF is an umbrella framework for skilling, re-skilling, up-skilling, accreditation and evaluation in educational and skilling institutions.

Speaking at a stakeholders' consultation on the framework at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said the NCRF will also help achieve the Gross Enrolment Ratio targets and accelerate India's march towards becoming a \$ 5 trillion economy.

"The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020, envisages universalisation of credit

framework for removing barriers between knowledge, skills and employability, establishing a credit accumulation and transfer system for all kinds of learning for ensuring seamless mobility between learning and skilling pathways," he said.

Pradhan noted that in order to reap India's demographic dividend, a level playing field has to be provided to the people.

"This can only be achieved by recognising, accounting and formalising all kinds of conventional, unconventional and experiential knowledge repositories. NCRF will provide us with an opportunity to recognise applied aspects of knowledge and skills. The framework will create new possibilities for lifelong learning and skilling. It will boost per capita productivity, empower all and lay a strong foundation for

India to lead this century," he added. Under NCRF, school students will be able to earn credits from academic and non-academic activities, which will be stored in the Academic Bank of Credit (ABC), just like in higher education. The NCRF has been jointly developed by the University Grants Commission, All India Council for Technical Education, National Council for Vocational Education and Training, National Institute of Open Schooling, CBSE, NCERT, Ministry of Education (MoE), Directorate General of Training, and Ministry of Skill Development.

The MoE had last year approved the formation of a high-level committee to develop a National Credit Accumulation and Transfer Framework for both vocational and general education. **PNS**



Former bureaucrat Arun Goel assumes charge as the Election Commissioner at Nirvachan Sadan in New Delhi on Monday. **PTI Photo**

Easing of CITES restrictions on sheesham relief for handicrafts



ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Two years after rejecting India's demand to lift global trade restriction on rosewood sheesham timber (Dalbergia sissoo) products, the Conference of Parties to Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of wild Fauna and flora (CITES) has eased the rules for the species at its ongoing meet at Panama. In what is being seen as a relief for Indian handicraft exporters, the global body at its

19th meeting said that relief for trade will be applicable for certain weight categories of such timber-based furniture and handicrafts.

India during the ongoing 19th meeting of the Convention pointed out that the species Dalbergia sissoo is found in abundance in the country and is not treated as an endangered species.

"Sheesham (Dalbergia sissoo) is included in Appendix II of the convention, thereby required to follow CITES regu-

lations for the trade of the species. As of now every consignment of weight above 10 kg requires a CITES permit.

"Due to this restriction exports of furniture and handicrafts made of Dalbergia sissoo from India have been continuously falling from an estimated Rs 1000 crore per annum to Rs 500- Rs 600 crore per annum after the restriction.

"The decrease in exports of Dalbergia sissoo products has affected the livelihoods of around 50,000 artisans who work with the species," India argued.

India also cited non-detrimental finding (NDF) study carried out by Botanical Survey of India stating that Dalbergia sissoo does not fall into any threatened category and is available in abundance both in wild and cultivated populations, a source in CITES Management Authority for India, the body responsible for

implementing rules of the convention said.

After sustained deliberations by Indian representatives, it was agreed upon that any number of Dalbergia sissoo timber-based items can be exported as a single consignment in a shipment without CITES permits if the weight of each individual item of this consignment is less than 10 kg.

It was in 2016 that the Dalbergia genus species was brought under the Appendix-II of the CITES after several African and Latin American countries had raised concerns over a "considerable rise in interest in the wood of Dalbergia in international markets, primarily in China".

According to them, this was fuelling an illegal trade, which was decimating Dalbergia populations. However, since all species of Dalbergia are not threatened, India had submitted that

CITES should regulate the trade of individual species based on their conservation status. Since then India along with Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh have been jointly demanding removal of trade restrictions on the Dalbergia sissoo, one of the Dalbergia genus species.

India had also argued that listing of Dalbergia genus may create unnecessary complications in the trade of common species like D sissoo, which are being managed and monitored through the management plans of forest areas and are protected under the forest laws of India, said the Ministry.

"Further, it was agreed that for the net weight of each item only timber will be considered and any other item used in the product like metal etc. will be ignored. This is a great relief for the Indian artisans and furniture industry," summed up the official.

UAE, India to review ties during Foreign Min visit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) will review the entire gamut of their bilateral ties during the two-day visit of UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan visit here beginning on Monday.

He will hold wide-ranging talks with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar to further strengthen ties with India. "The visit will be part of regular consultations between the two countries on bilateral as

well as global issues of mutual interest," a statement by the External Affairs Minister said. The visiting Minister is accompanied by a senior level delegation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the UAE on June 28 and met President Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. Jaishankar had visited the UAE in August-September to co-chair the 14th Joint Commission Meeting and the third Strategic Dialogue with UAE Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah.

Nikah under personal law not exempt from POCSO Act: HC

PTI ■ KOCHI

Muslim marriages under personal law are not excluded from the POCSO Act and sexual intercourse with a minor, even if it is under the guise of marriage, is an offence, the Kerala High Court has said.

The court denied bail to a 31-year-old man charged under the Act for allegedly abducting and impregnating a 15-year-old minor girl whom he claims he had married.

Justice Bechu Kurian Thomas, in his order dismissing the bail, said child marriage is a bane of the society and the POCSO Act is to prohibit physical relationships with a child, even under the cover of marriage.

"I am of the considered view that marriage between Muslims under personal law is not excluded from the sweep of the POCSO Act. If one of the parties to the marriage is a minor, irrespective of the validity or otherwise of the mar-

riage, offences under the POCSO Act will apply," Justice Thomas said in an order issued on November 18.

The high court was hearing a bail plea filed by a West Bengal native, Khaledur Rahman, who claimed that the girl was his wife whom he married on March 14, 2021 as per Mohammedan law. He claimed that he cannot be prosecuted under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act as Mohammedan law permits marriage of girls below 18 years.

The matter came to light after a Family Health Centre at Kaviyoor in Pathanamthitta district informed the police when the victim had gone there for an injection for her pregnancy. On noticing the victim's age as 16 from her Aadhaar Card, the Medical Officer informed the police on August 31, 2022.

"Sexual exploitation of every nature against a child is treated as an offence. Marriage



is not excluded from the sweep of the statute," the court said.

The court noted that the advances and progress achieved in societal thinking have resulted in the enactment of the POCSO Act.

"A child marriage compromises the growth of the child to her full potential. It is the bane of society. The legislative intent reflected through the POCSO Act is to prohibit physical relationships with a child, even under the cover of marriage. This is the intent of society, too, for a statute is, as is often said, the expression or

reflection of the will of the people," the court said.

It observed that when the provisions of a statute are repugnant to, or contrary to the customary law or personal law, in the absence of any specific exclusion of the said customary or personal law from the statutory provisions, the statute will prevail, and the personal law or the customary law shall stand abrogated.

The court noted that as per the prosecution, she was brought to Kerala from West Bengal, allegedly behind the back of her parents.

Mamata's Govt will fall like Maha one: Adhikari

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

After December will come the deluge. That is what Bengal Opposition Leader Suwendu Adhikari said on Monday holding out once again the December deadline for the ruling Trinamool Congress.

Mamata Banerjee Government will also fall like the Uddhav Thakery Government, Adhikari iterated. "They will go ... they will have to go ... it will have to go ... it is just a matter of time ... I had told you after Maharashtra it will be the turn of Jharkhand and then Bengal ... things will take place in that sequence," Adhikari said.

Not only Mamata Banerjee Government would not last beyond December but also the famous Bua and Bhaipo (aunt and the nephew) would go to jail as the central investigating agencies would once again dig up the multi-crore Sharada chit fund files, he said.

Stopping short of naming the Chief Minister or his nephew Abhishek Banerjee he said, "just wait and see what unfolds next



... Sharada chit fund case is again coming up ... don't think that files have been forgotten ... they will be revived soon and this time not only the Bhatija but also the Bua will be hauled up."

Once again not naming the Chief Minister he said, "no one has forgotten whose paintings were worth crores were purchased by industrialists like Sanjay Budhia, Harsh Neotia and Sudipto Sen (the jailed Sharada boss) ... those will be dug up again ... whose paintings were these ... were they made by Leonardo da Vinci ... explanations will have to be given."

Strongly reacting to his statement, TMC spokesperson

Kunal Ghosh said it was Adhikari who was sunk neck-deep in the Sharada chit fund case. "Sudipto Sen has already written in a letter how crores Suwendu Adhikari took him to East Midnapore and extracted crores out of him ... Sharada was promoted by Suwendu Adhikari ... I will prove it and I promise to take him to the dock under Section 311 ... he will have to go to jail," Ghosh who himself was in jail for several years in the same case said.

Ghosh had however, gone on record telling the media at that time that Mamata Banerjee was the "biggest beneficiary in the Sharada chit fund case."

Didi wants a Varanasi-like Ganga Aarti in Kolkata too



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

Apparently walking in the footsteps of her Uttar Pradesh counterpart Yogi Adityanath Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday directed Kolkata Mayor Firhad Hakim to make arrangements for Ganga Aarti in the City of Joy too.

During an administrative meeting at State secretariat Nabanna the Chief Minister said, "Ganga Aarti is done in Uttar Pradesh and other parts of India ... I am instructing the Kolkata Municipal Corporation to organise Ganga Aarti in Kolkata too ... I want a proper place should be identified for the same in Kolkata Corporation area too ... the place should be neat and clean and peaceful ... there should be Shanti (peace) in the area," she said.

200 fleeing B'desh Army, Kuki war enter Mizoram

PTI ■ AIZAWL

Over 200 people from Bangladesh have fled to Mizoram's southernmost Lawngtlai district due to an armed conflict between the Bangladesh Army and Kuki-Chin National Army (KNA), an official said on Monday.

KNA is the armed wing of the Kuki-Chin National Front (KNF), a political front formed by the ethnic Kuki-Chin-Mizo community in Bangladesh, that demands a separate state and safeguard for the community in the neighbouring country.

The official said that 274 Bangladeshis, including 125 women and children, fled their



villages in Bangladesh and entered Siminasora in Lawngtlai district on Sunday evening due to a recent encounter between Bangladesh Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) and KNA. The Bangladeshis nationals, belonging to the Kuki-Chin-Mizo community, came from seven villages to

take shelter in the northeastern state, he said. The district administration and NGOs are providing relief to them on humanitarian grounds, he added. Meanwhile, Zo Reunification Organisation has condemned the attack on the Kuki-Chin-Mizo community by the Bangladesh army.

Mangaluru blast: Prime accused a terror suspect on run since September

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) is likely to take over the investigation of the autorickshaw blast case in Mangaluru in Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka. The Karnataka police suspects the incident to be an act of terror.

A moving autorickshaw caught fire at Padil-Pumpwell Main Road in Mangaluru after a minor blast reportedly occurred from a bag being carried by the passenger on

Saturday. Mohammed Shariq, the alleged bomber who was in the autorickshaw blast in Mangaluru and his CCTV footage have been secured by the police.

The prime accused in the blast case, Mohammed Shariq, 24, is a terror suspect on the run since September.

Hailing from Tirthahalli in Shivamogga district, Shariq working his father's readymade garments shop first came on the radar of the State police when he was arrested for pro-terror graffiti in Mangaluru city in November 2020.

Rampur, Mainpuri bypoll results to decide fate of SP politics

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

The results of the by-elections to Rampur assembly seat and Mainpuri Lok Sabha constituency will decide the fate of the politics of Samajwadi Party which banks on the social coalition of Muslims and Yadav -- the M-Y combination.

This combination represented by Akhilesh Yadav-Mohammad Azam Khan is already under strain as the SP has lost the by-election to Rampur and Azamgarh Lok Sabha seats in June last. The two seats were won by Azam Khan and Akhilesh Yadav respectively in the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. Against the backdrop of the series of electoral setbacks suf-

fered by the SP since 2014, the election results of Rampur assembly seat and Mainpuri Lok Sabha constituency are keenly awaited.

Though SP claims it is winning both Rampur assembly and Mainpuri Lok Sabha seats with comfortable margins, reports emanating from both the constituencies are not encouraging for the party. Akhilesh Yadav has left no stone unturned to win over his estranged uncle Shival Singh Yadav, who is MLA from Jaswantnagar, one of the assembly segments of Mainpuri Lok Sabha constituency. Rampur assembly seat has elected Azam Khan for ten terms while Mainpuri Lok Sabha seat,

known as pocket borough of the Yadav clan, has elected Yadav candidates in the last seven Lok Sabha elections since 1996.

The defeat of the SP in the bypoll to Azamgarh parliamentary constituency in June, was a major blow to the party. The by-election was held as SP president Akhilesh Yadav had vacated this seat following his election to UP assembly in March this year from Karhal assembly constituency in Mainpuri district.

The SP also lost from Rampur Lok Sabha seat, its bastion, in June last where bypoll was held as SP MP Azam Khan had resigned following his election to UP assembly from Rampur assembly seat.

IFFI 2022: Thakur felicitates '75 Creative Minds of Tomorrow'

PTI ■ PANAJI

Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting on Monday honoured 75 young creative talents participating in various fields of filmmaking at a ceremony here on the second day of the 53rd International Film Festival of India (IFFI).

The youngsters were selected as part of the '75 Creative Minds of Tomorrow', an initiative started by the IFFI last year to mark the 75 years of India's Independence.

Nearly 1,000 entries were received from across the country for the second edition.

"It was last year that we embarked on this journey, led by the vision of PM Narendra Modi to engage, encourage and explore the potential of our youth by providing them a platform at the IFFI.

"This is the second edition

of 75 Creative Minds of Tomorrow and we have already made a community of 150 strong individuals connected through their shared love for cinema, creativity and culture," Thakur said at the felicitation ceremony.

The 75 Creative Minds of Tomorrow' have been chosen based on their excellence in different areas of filmmaking, namely direction, acting, cinematography, editing, scriptwriting, playback singing, music composition, costume-and-makeup, art design and animation, visual effects (VFX), augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR).

The grand jury for the initiative includes Prasoon Joshi, Resul Pookutty, R Balki, Rickey Kej, Mala Dey Banthia, Gautami Tadmimalla, Ballu Saluja, Munjal Shroff, Narendra Rahurikar and Ravi K Chandran.

The young film professionals were discovered across 19 states, including Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Delhi, Goa, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Manipur, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and West Bengal.

The highest number of the selected participants are from Maharashtra, followed by Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.

The youngest candidates are 18-year-olds -- Nitish Verma from Haryana and Toufique Mandal from Maharashtra. Both have been selected for their talent in music composition.

The I&B minister said the government is making efforts to generate employment and boost the creative economy of India.

"Our government is making an effort to generate employment, boost the 'creative

economy', mentor outstanding artists and encourage youngsters just to achieve cinematic excellence.

"The IFFI is your platform to network, explore, collaborate and be inspired along the way. Who knows, some of you will go on to win National Film Awards, Grammys, Oscars and much more?" he said.

Thakur also launched the '53-Hour Challenge' during which the participants will be divided into groups of 15 and will have to produce a short film on their idea of India@100 in the time frame of 53 hours.

In his message, the minister urged young filmmakers to tell stories of aspirational new India.

"My young friends, your selection also strengthens the culture of meritocracy in the country, and this is our effort to encourage, mould and mentor young minds from far-



flung corners and provide them with unparalleled opportunities in the realm of media and entertainment," he added.

Day two of the IFFI also marked the beginning of Film Bazaar, the largest South Asian film market. Created and organised by the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), the market event was inaugurated by the I&B minister.

The five-day event has

There's difference in what Cong says and does: Yogi

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Taking a jibe at Congress, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that there was a difference in what the Congress said and what it

does. He said this was visible even during the Congress' Bharat Jodo Yatra when the party pretended to play the national song and instead played a film song on the stage.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR (EDUCATION) NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL
Room No. 5016, Palika Kendra, New Delhi-110001

NOTICE FOR WALK-IN-INTERVIEW FOR EMANELMENT OF RETIRED SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS FOR ENGAGEMENT AS CONSULTANT

Walk-in-interviews will be held on **29.11.2022 & 30.11.2022** from **11.00 a.m. to 1.00 p.m.** for formation of panel of retired "Special Education Teachers" to be engaged as Consultants on purely temporary basis in various schools under NDMC.

Eligibility Criteria	Venue
The candidate should have retired from the service of Central/Delhi/State Government, Local Bodies, Defence service or equivalent services as "Special Education Teacher" in the Pay Band of Rs. 9300-34800+Grade Pay Rs. 4200/- revised Pay Level-6 under 7th CPC or above and should be below 65 years of age.	Room No. 5016, 5th Floor, Palika Kendra, Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110001

Detail information may be seen at NDMC's website www.ndmc.gov.in (R.P.Sati) Director (Education)

PFI has well-structured, organised presence in Gulf to raise funds: ED

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Popular Front of India (PFI), banned recently by the government for alleged terrorist links and spreading communal hatred, has a "well-structured and organised" presence in the Gulf countries for raising and mobilising funds, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) said on Monday after a local court took cognisance of its latest charge sheet filed against three PFI office bearers.

The agency had filed the prosecution complaint or charge sheet last week before a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court here.

On Saturday, the ED filed the chargesheet to press money laundering charges and begin trial against Perwez Ahmad, Mohammad Ilias and Abdul Muqueet who were arrested by the agency on September 22 following nation-wide searches against the PFI by the National Investigation Agency (NIA), Enforcement Directorate (ED) and various

State police units. "PFI has a well-structured and organised presence in the Gulf countries for raising and mobilising funds as part of criminal conspiracy," the ED said in a statement.

It said Ahmad was the president of PFI Delhi unit and he "supervised the fund raising activities of PFI and managed its public relations."

"Md. Ilias, the general secretary of Delhi PFI, was active in mobilisation of funds for PFI and related organisations in the Delhi-NCR region. He also contested Delhi assembly elections of 2020 from Karawal Nagar as a Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) candidate."

"Both Perwez Ahmad and Md. Ilias were arrested by Delhi Police in the case related to North East Delhi riots of February, 2020," the ED said. Abdul Muqueet, it said, was the office secretary of Delhi PFI and was also "actively" involved in the fund raising activities of PFI and in the preparation of "bogus" cash donation slips, the



ED said.

"PFI generated proceeds of crime, both in India and abroad, by way of criminal conspiracy (an offence under section 120B of IPC), in active collusion with its associated individuals and entities as a part of a larger conspiracy to raise funds for its unlawful and anti-national activities, prejudicial to the unity, integrity and security of the state.

"Proceeds of crime mobilised and remitted in the form of cash have been deposited in PFI's bank accounts by falsely projecting them as cash donations from its sympathis-

ers/members," the agency said. As many as 106 suspects linked to PFI were arrested by the agencies in synchronized pan-India searches in September. At present, the three are under judicial custody in Tihar Jail.

A week after this action, the Centre banned the PFI for five years under the stringent anti-terror law, Unlawful Activities Prevention Act (UAPA), accusing the Islamic outfit of having "links" with global terror groups such as the ISIS and trying to spread communal hatred in the country.

'Competence will define success in life'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Chairman and Managing Director of Nestlé India Ltd, Suresh Narayanan, has shared his "C" mantras for success in career and life with the students of Indian Institute of Management, Sirmour, while addressing their sixth convocation a couple of days ago.

Narayanan's mantras include Clarity, Competence, Courage, Creativity, Constraints, Compassion, Contentment and Continuous learning.

He emphasised that an MBA degree is just a boarding pass. However, competence will define success in life and ultimately happiness is the greatest goal in life. In his welcome address at the Convocation on Saturday, the Chairman, Board of Governors, Ajay S Shirram shared his vision of making IIM Sirmour an institution of excellence by taking various new initiatives, emphasising on innovation and entrepreneurship among the students.

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi-110005

PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET

[See proviso to rule 8(6)]
Notice for sale of immovable asset

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the physical possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Limited will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis as per the brief particulars given hereunder:

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of E-Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Mrs. Charanjeet Dhanjal (Borrower), Sandeep Dhanjal (Co-borrower) Lan No. LBDEL00004207004, LBDEL00005032728 & LBDEL00005335581	Dda Flat No- 139- D, Third Floor Pocket - AG-1 Vikaspu, Delhi, Pin Code:-110018, Admeasuring An Area Of 753 Sq. Ft	Rs. 84,20,297.64 as on Nov 17, 2022	Rs. 73,10,000/- From 7,31,000/-	December 8, 2022, From 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM	December 29, 2022, From 12:00 Noon onwards

The online auction will take place on the website of e-auction agency M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited (URL Link-https://disposalhub.com) The Mortgagors/noticee are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till **December 28, 2022 before 05:00 P.M** failing which, this/these secured asset/s will be sold as per schedule.

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at **ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi-110005** on or before **December 28, 2022 before 05:00 P.M** and thereafter they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before **December 28, 2022 before 05:00 P.M** along with scan image of Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, in case prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at **ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi-110005** on or before **December 28, 2022 before 05:00 P.M**. Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/Scheduled Bank in favour of "ICICI Bank Limited" payable at Delhi.

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the e-auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact **ICICI Bank Limited On 8126013708/7304914763**

Please note that Marketing agencies **1.M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited 2. Augeo Asset Management Pvt Ltd** have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property.

The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons. For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/n4p4s

Date : November 22, 2022
Place : Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
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PAPER WITH PASSION

Too late

Rahul and other Congress leaders must get serious about fighting elections and act accordingly

Rahul Gandhi has finally entered the election battle, addressing a rally at Mahuva in Surat district, Gujarat. Even though it's too late, it may encourage Congress cadres, as its campaign did not have many top leaders, whereas the arch-rival Bharatiya Janata Party is leaving no stone unturned. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah are leading the battle. The Aam Aadmi Party is also trying hard, with its chief Arvind Kejriwal and other senior leaders canvassing for votes in the western state. Himachal Pradesh still remains neglected by the Congress top brass. Sonia Gandhi is not there because of health issues. Priyanka Vadra is campaigning but not as much as the state leaders want her to. A few weeks earlier, the BJP's prospects in the hill state, which is known to change the government every five years, were dim. Apart from anti-incumbency, there is the problem of rebels. A video went viral showing PM Modi beseeching a rebel BJP leader to stand down. BJP detractors were gleeful, saying that the party was so desperate that the PM had to intervene. What they failed to notice was the steadfastness of the BJP: party cadres do get a fillip when they see that the country's biggest leader is so serious about a state poll.

Compare and contrast this with the GOP top leadership's approach to the state Assembly elections. The top leader, Rahul Gandhi, remains occupied with his Bharat Jodo Yatra. Then he rakes up an unnecessary controversy, on VD Savarkar, annoying his ally in Maharashtra, the Uddhav Shiv Sena. Soon after, Medha Patkar's joining the yatra attracts criticism from the BJP. Without naming Rahul and Patkar, Modi attacked the Congress leader, questioning his (Rahul's) proximity with "those who were against Narmada dam." It seems that Rahul is trying to build a counter-narrative to that of the BJP's hyper-nationalist, Hindu-centric one. Hence the name Bharat Jodo, and hence Patkar's publicised presence at the yatra. The counter-narrative may be the thread that would help his party have some sort of understanding with NGOs and activists, most of whom are Left-leaning. It may be pointed out here that these activists had played a key role in discrediting the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government in 2004, which resulted in the return of the Congress to power after eight years in the wilderness. Therefore, Rahul's wanderings may have a theme; there may be a long-term plan. But a political party cannot afford to ignore short- and medium-term matters; it must fight elections seriously; good intentions and noble sentiments must never be lost sight of; but realpolitik too cannot be ignored. And it is here that Rahul's leadership has been lacking. What the country has witnessed in the last nine years is the unstoppable march of the Modi juggernaut and the concomitant diminishing of the Congress. Rahul and other Congress leaders like party president Mallikarjun Kharge must get serious about fighting elections and act accordingly.



Argentina's soccer fans with the poster of Lionel Messi on the eve of the World Cup match in Doha

No holds barred

'Aacharya Devo Bhava & Athidhi Devo Bhava' are tenets of our culture that SFI has forgotten

There is a Sanskrit shloka which means mother, father, teacher and guest are all equivalent to God. As the fight between the Kerala Governor and the CPI(M) government becomes bitter, this might be the right time to play Shloka to the CPI(M) cadres who seem to be going overboard in their fight against the Governor. What brought these lines to mind is some of the banners put up by SFI, the student wing of the CPI(M) across Kerala to condemn the action of the Governor whom the leaders of the parent party and their junior comrades allege of using high handed means to destroy the institutions of higher education in the State by trying to appoint Sangh Parivar elements as vice chancellors and faculty members. The SC by a verdict on October 21 declared as null and void the appointment of vice chancellor of the Kerala Technical University made by the Pinarayi Vijayan-led Government as the incumbent has no qualifications mandated by the UGC. On Monday, the Kerala High Court quashed the appointment of the vice-chancellor of KUFOS for the same reason. Tuesday saw the CPI (M) laying siege to Raj Bhavan demanding the dismissal of Arif Mohammed Khan. The real fight is between the BJP-ruled Centre and the Marxists in control of Kerala.

Last week saw all constituents in the Left Democratic Front staging a rally addressed by Sitaram Yechury, the CPI (M) general secretary. Thousands of party cadres took part in the demonstration which is being termed as the bugle for the 2024 Lok Sabha election. The anguish of the CPI (M) against the "high-handed behaviour" of the Raj Bhavan was visible all over the State. The larger-than-life-size flex boards installed by the student's wing of the CPI (M) were a shocker. The Government Sanskrit College at Thiruvananthapuram, established in 1889 by the then Maharaja of Travancore and labelled once as a centre of excellence, had the slogan "Raj Bhavan is not the property of Arif Mohammed Khan's father" and this was justified by none other than the minister for higher education. Nothing surprising as the SFI had held a symbolic funeral of the Principal of Government Victoria College in Palakkad the day she retired from service. The junior comrades burnt the chair of the principal of Maharaja's College Ernakulam when she was transferred out. Is this how tomorrow's citizens justify the dictum Acharya Devo Bhava? Are you listening, Mr Yechury?

Choosing the next Pakistan army chief

Make no mistake, Pakistan has always been under military rule though by proxy, with periods of democracy as occasional aberrations



BHOPINDER SINGH

Officially, the Pakistani Military has taken over national leadership of Pakistan thrice (1958-71, 1978-88, 1999-2008). Unofficially, it has been under the *Khakhi* coloured *Dock Marten* boots since 1958, barring the post-71 phase of Pakistan's 'worst hour' till the return of the 'establishment' (read, Pakistani Military) with General Zia-ul-Haq in 1978.

Each of three times that the surly and burly Generals took over the Pakistani leadership, they had double-crossed the same political power that was responsible for their ascendancy to Generalship. Biting the same hand that feeds, is a consistently repeated phenomenon. The trend started with the then Defence Secretary Iskandar Mirza lobbying for the junior-most Maj Gen Ayub Khan to become the first native Commander-in-Chief of Pakistani Army (despite Ayub's name not even figuring in the nomination list). Later as President, Iskandar Mirza, abrogated the constitution and declared *Martial Law* with General Ayub Khan as the *Chief Martial Law Administrator* (CMLA) - within 20 days of the move, General Ayub bumped Iskandar Mirza and banished him to England! Decades later, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto superseded seven senior Generals to appoint the junior-most Lt Gen in seniority, Zia-ul-Haq, as the Army Chief. Despite his junior-most status, Zia also had a dodgy track record, creepy nature and overly obsequious and beholden to Zulfikar Ali Bhutto - in less than a year of becoming the Army Chief, General Zia declared *Martial Law* and a couple of years thereafter, sent his initial benefactor to the gallows! A couple of decades later, General Zia's political protégé Nawaz Sharif, too sprung a similar surprise when he appointed an ostensible 'safe' Pakistani Army Chief in General Pervez Musharaf, superseding two seniors. History was to repeat for the third time with General Pervez Musharaf deposing the man who made him the COAS



and banished the hapless Nawaz to Saudi Arabia!

Interestingly each of the three civilian governments that were dethroned in the *coup d'états* represented the 3 varied persuasions of Pakistani politics - Musharaf had removed *PML-N* dispensation, Zia had removed the *PPP* dispensation and Ayub had removed an illiberal-authoritarian strain (closest in instinct to Imran Khan's *PTI*) in bumping-off Iskandar Mirza. Also, each of these Military usurpers were from the so-called 'minority/safe' ethnic denominations as Ayub was a *Hazara* from Haripur (and not a *Pathan* as popularly postured), while both Zia-ul-Haq and Pervez Musharaf were *Mohajirs* (immigrants from India). These ultra-ambitious Generals were not from the traditional *Punjabi* (Rajput/Jat) or *Pathan* ethnicity that makes the bulk of Pakistani soldering stock, yet their institutionalised bearing allowed them to roughshod the well-entrenched politicians.

However even when the civilian politicians ostensibly ruled the roost, the decisive imprint of the 'Army House' in overruling the politicians, who were in fact responsible for their appointment as Chief of Pakistan Army, is consistent. Nawaz Sharif has the dubious record of having rocky relations and getting outwitted by all six Chiefs that he had

HOWEVER, EVEN WHEN THE CIVILIAN POLITICIANS OSTENSIBLY RULED THE ROOST, THE DECISIVE IMPRINT OF THE 'ARMY HOUSE' IN OVERRULING THE POLITICIANS, WHO WERE IN FACT RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF OF PAKISTAN ARMY, IS CONSISTENT

'handpicked' - first Gen Waheed Kakar forced Nawaz to resign, next was Gen Jehangir Karamat who was forced into premature retirement, third was Gen Pervez Musharaf whose revenge needs no reiteration, fourth was Gen Pervez Kayani who unilaterally gave himself a second term, fifth was Gen Raheel Sharif who gave Nawaz sleepless nights with his popularity and talks of an extension (though didn't take) and the sixth, is the current Gen Qamar Bajwa who in 2018 was singularly responsible for dumping Nawaz and 'selecting' Imran Khan as Prime Minister!

Today, ironically it is the same Gen Qamar Bajwa who has done a complete 360 degree turn by flirting with Imran's *PTI* (till Imran got too big for his own boots) and then returned to the coalition of *PML-N* and *PPP*. The Pakistani 'establishment' or Military has always been its own entity with no permanent loyalty to any political leader, partisan flag or ideology - it has sided tactically with *PML-N*, *PPP* or even *PTI* as it deemed topically necessary, but never subscribed or rooted itself into any partisan preference, for long.

With this backdrop, topicality suggests that the next Chief (as confirmed by Gen Qamar Bajwa in Washington DC, hence believable) will

certainly not be from Imran's preference e.g., Lt Gen Faiz Hameed (previous DG-ISI, believed to be close to Imran). It is also clear that the Sharif brothers, though in a coalition with *PPP* may not take to kindly to a perceived *PPP* loyalist like Lt Gen Mohammad Amir (once the Military Secretary to Asif Zardari). It will also stay away from appointing anyone with known religious conservatism as the 'establishment' fears a *redux* to Zia's 'shariaization'. Even suggestions of manipulating the system to accommodate any contender would be avoided, and that may cost Lt Gen Asim Munir to be left out. The law of elimination leaves the field to the likes of Lt Gen Sahir Shamshad Mirza, Lt Gen Azhar Abbas and Lt Gen Nauman Mehmood to fill the posts of the Chief of Army Staff and the nominally more senior, Chief Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee. All three are supposedly experienced professionals with no known partisan loyalty or overt religiosity - thus affording farcical optics of the 'final word' to the civilian politicians in Islamabad, whilst having the institutionalised clearance from the 'establishment' in Rawalpindi GHQ.

(The writer, a military veteran, is a former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DON'T BLAME MINORITIES

Sir - If a particular religious community gets constantly targeted and maligned for indulging in a "conspiracy" of ensuring a "population explosion" to "change the demography" of the country; why should certain states of the Union be spared from rebuke for its ever-increasing "contribution" in Indian population! Also, why shouldn't those states be accused of hatching a "conspiracy" to increase the number of its representatives in Parliament by taking unfair advantage of the 2026 delimitation exercise? If many states can either adopt or propose punishable measures to rein in "population explosion" through denial of panchayat poll tickets to the "offending individuals" or withholding increments in offices; why shouldn't the states, making a mockery of family planning policy, be similarly punished through reduction of its several Parliamentary seats!

If indeed delimitation exercise guarantees a "reward" to the population-increasing states through an increased number of seats or MPs; the message gets transmitted to the same states that they have committed a "national crime" of sorts by getting enlightened and responsible enough to practically ensure family planning! So all power clout monetary funds should flow towards the laggard states at the expense of the forward-looking ones! What justice to be rendered to the progressive states! With the loss of strength of MPs from the progressive states coupled with an increase of representatives from the laggard ones, India is destined to immerse in increased orthodox bigotry, and moral darkness very shortly. Lastly, it must be mentioned that the allegation of engineering a "population explosion" by a particular religious community is nothing but a cleverly generated myth.

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

NOT ALL IS WELL IN GUJARAT

Sir - In case Gujarat was paid required attention by Modi and BJP then why was there a need for camping of the senior leaders for such a long time and spending private or exchequer money which has many

Tabassum is no more



The death of Tabassum the legendary actor of the yesterday years and the respected chat-show host is a great loss to the world of cinema. She made her debut in films as a child-artist and was known as Baby Tabassum, she had starred in movies such as 'Mera Suhaag' 'Manjhdhar' and 'Bari Behen, after which she was a part of many films and TV shows, she always looked elegant in saree with a flower tucked in her hair. After making her mark as an actress, she became a popular talk-show host which became

a superhit. She worked as the television host of the first TV talk show of Indian television, Phool Khile Hain Gulshan Gulshan (1972-1993) many big names of the industry had graced the show. She will always ask the guests the questions where they will be comfortable. During that period it was as much of a craze as social media is today.

Tabassum with the changing world and with the advent of social media, launched her channel on YouTube in 2015, called "Tabassum Talks", being a veteran of the Hindi film industry, as host, she will discuss the lives of many cinematic figures and movies of the bygone era, in her shows, she always carried the show with grace, empathy and genuine admiration for her guests. Tabassum, India's original celebrity talk show host leaves behind a legacy of her popular show "Tabassum talks" on YouTube which will continue to be a window of the golden era of Hindi cinema,

Ramesh G Jethwani | Bengaluru

and beg for votes on the performance instead of flushing out unmeasured money, it harms the people even more.

RK Arya | Faridabad

SURYA SHINES BRIGHT

Sir - Surya's shining 49-Ball Ton vs New Zealand, enlightened Bay Oval, in Mount Maunganui, New Zealand. To put it aptly, Surya-Express invaded Bay Oval. Surya Juggernaut continued unabated. This is Surya Kumar Yadav's second T-20 century (the first was vs. England, earlier this year). He remained unbeaten on 111 off just 51 balls [11 fours, 7 sixes i.e. just (11+7 balls or) 18 balls fetched 86 runs]. Tim Southee's (NZ) hat-trick went in vain as India posted 191/6 in 20 overs and won the match comfortably by 65 runs. Even in the T-20 world cup -2022 tournament (held in Australia), Surya-Express hit three fast half-centuries.

Vasudeva R Sreelekha | Bengaluru

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

I want you to make sure the BJP wins each and every booth here. Will you do it for me?



Prime Minister - Narendra Modi



UK Prime Minister - Rishi Sunak

Neha Kakkar and I were rejected on Indian Idol on the same day. We travelled together in the train, from Mumbai to Delhi. We were rejected together.



Actor - Ayushmann Khurrana



video game innings by him. Indian cricketer - Virat Kohli

There are protests by people refusing to give up their land and access to their resources, refusing to believe false promises anymore.

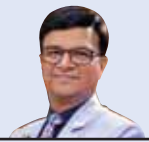


Author - Arundhati Roy

FIRST COLUMN

DRUGS FOR KIDS MUST BE CHILD-CENTRIC

It is wrong to continue to see children as miniature adults



SANJEEV JAIN

Effectiveness of a drug lies not just in the quality, formulation, and efficacy of the APIs but also in the commitment of the patients to take it as instructed. Across the globe, the problem of patient non-compliance with medication continues to slow down recovery rate, leading to treatment failure, and even death in some cases. The overall financial burden on the health system is another major consequence of non-compliance.

In the paediatric population, poor pharmacotherapy literacy of parents can cause unnecessary complications or not getting treated at all. It is always advisable to consult the doctor for children's medications.

Drug formulation is a highly complex process that poses a lot of challenges. However, the process is 10 times more complex and challenging when producing drugs for children. This is as a result of physical, physiological, and psychological considerations that must be met in order to support the growth and development of the affected child. It is wrong to continue to see children as miniature adults who can simply take one tablet if an adult is expected to take two.

The paediatric population is made up of several subgroups, including preterm and term newborns (0 to 27 days), infants and toddlers (28 days to 23 months), kids (2 to 11 years), and teenagers (12 to 18 years). Each of these subgroups has its own peculiarities, characteristics and preferences. Metabolism evolves and changes rapidly as a child moves from infancy through teenage.



While forgetfulness is the reason cited by 60 per cent of adults in a recent study for medical non-compliance, the situation is different among children who have a distinctly different preference for flavours, texture, and formulations. Hence, pharmaceutical companies must recognise the clear distinctions in the biological and biochemical properties of adults and children.

Size is a crucial factor in considering oral forms. Smaller tablets, caplets and capsules are more appealing to children. Naturally, it is easier for them to swallow, and this will also reduce the possibility of choke hazards. In a similar vein, scoring a drug to encourage splitting can be considered, but caution must be applied to avoid dosage inaccuracies. Another factor that requires critical attention is the form of the medication itself. Chewables, dispersible tablets, granules, powders, sprinkles, and pellets are forms that may appeal more to children than solid tablets.

Additionally, orodispersible tablets (ODTs), composed of superdisintegrants, are helpful. The superdisintegrants help them to dissolve the tablets within a minute in the mouth in the presence of saliva without any difficulty of swallowing. It offers several advantages with respect to its stability, administration without water, accurate dosing, easy manufacturing, small packaging size, and handling. Its ease of administration in the paediatric population makes it a very popular dosage form. In recent years, manufacturers have also begun introducing preservative-free eye drops that do not contain harsh preservatives like benzalkonium chloride (BKC). The goal with these preservative-free eye drops is to maintain an antimicrobial environment in a multidose container while minimising toxicity.

The overall goal of paediatric medicine is to ensure that the medications formulated and produced for children—across all segments—are tailored to suit their unique biological and biochemical features, as well as their preferences. It is about making sure that paediatric medicine truly becomes child-centric in a manner that doesn't compromise the efficacy and safety of the drug—in whatever form—and also makes it easy for them to comply with therapy.

(The author is Managing Director, Akums Drugs & Pharmaceuticals)

AAP offers fiscal mess in Gujarat, as in Punjab

If Aam Aadmi Party and Congress have their way, Gujarat will be soon on its way down the slippery slope of insolvency



GOVIND BHATTACHARJEE

Gujarat, an urbanised, entrepreneurship state with 90 per cent Hindu population has long been the saffron laboratory for the Bharatiya Janata Party's social re-engineering strategies. In polls due in December, the BJP, which has ruled the state for 27 years and had bagged all its 26 seats in 2019 Lok Sabha elections, is expected to make a comeback and beat the anti-incumbency, which the other two major challengers are banking on.

After the removal of the Vijay Rupani government last year, perceived to be corrupt and inefficient, the BJP has salvaged its image somewhat, though the Morbi disaster which has exposed the deep-seated cronyism and corruption in administration take its toll, but may not be enough to beat PM Narendra Modi's charisma and the high trust he enjoys among Gujarati voters. Even Muslims seem to be siding with the BJP, whether out of fear one doesn't know. The BJP flaunts its Gujarat model as a shining example of growth, progress and prosperity.

Gujrat has pioneered many exemplary initiatives, backed by efficient delivery. Its Kanya Kelavani for girls' education launched in 2003 has been replicated in many states in India and its ecosystem of innovation, start-ups, and incentives for new industries is an envy of other states. Gujaratis are known for their hard-work and business acumen.

Given the work ethic of Gujaratis, they are more inclined towards social justice being delivered through the market or workplace rather than through government doles.

The AAP is yet to release its manifesto but going by the promises it has made, it has no need for a formal manifesto. They are copying the Punjab model: 300 units of free electricity a month, Rs 3,000 for unemployed youth and Rs 1,000 for every adult woman every month, 80 per cent quota for local youth in private sector jobs, Rs 40 per day for the upkeep of each cow and reverting to old pension scheme.

In response to Modi's criticism of 'revdi' or freebies culture as opposed to development — "those with revdi culture will never build new expressways, new airports, or defence corridors", Kejriwal told women voters, "Rs 1000 is not revdi. This is your right. People's money should go to the people, not in the Swiss bank".

As election approaches, more freebies will surely be promised. In his lust for power, Kejriwal will stop at nothing, even if it means selling the whole state of Gujarat. In 2017 elections, the BJP got 99 of the total 182 seats, with 49 per cent vote share to Congress's 72 seats, with 41 per cent vote share. The AAP had contested 29 seats, but won none, and lost deposits



PUNJAB'S COMMITTED EXPENDITURE ON PENSION, SALARY AND INTEREST IN FY21 WAS 67 PER CENT OF ITS REVENUE EXPENDITURE (RE), WITH SUBSIDY BILL OF RS 9,758 CRORE ADDING AN ADDITIONAL 17 PER CENT, LEAVING VERY LITTLE FOR ANYTHING ELSE

(The author, former Director General at the Office of the Comptroller & Auditor General of India, is Professor at the Arun Jaitley National Institute of Financial Management)



in most, getting fewer votes than even NOTA.

Congress, which is showing obvious signs of an advanced state of decay and bankruptcy of ideas, could only promise to outdo the AAP in promising freebies. Rahul Gandhi said in a rally that his party will give all the "freebies" offered by the AAP and more. So, its manifesto released a few days back promised implementation of the old pension scheme, 10 lakh government jobs (like the RJD promised in Bihar), free medical treatment of up to Rs 10 lakh, LPG cylinder at Rs 500, 300 units of free electricity, unemployment allowance of Rs 3,000, pension of Rs 2,000 to Divyangs, widows, senior citizens and needy women, waiver of Rs 3 lakh loans, Rs 20,000 scholarship to the needy students, Rs 1,000 crore for upkeep of cow shelters, etc. Many of these promises are borrowed from its Rajasthan model where it wrested power from the BJP in 2018.

Gujarati voters ought to be thrilled, but the opinions polls suggest otherwise. Perhaps the AAP will gain the votes lost by Congress, which has perfected the game of giving doles, learning it from the Congress only. Walking a tightrope in the competitive populism of promising revdis, the BJP has so far maintained it was not in the race of "freebies" and advised voters to be wary of the AAP. "Promises by a visitor (Kejriwal) to Gujarat are like Chinese products. How long they will last is a

question mark," its state president CR Patil said.

The BJP is yet to release its manifesto, for which it is seeking public suggestions through its 'Agresar Gujarat' campaign. One hopes the Gujarati voters will give the correct feedback. The AAP's reckless magnanimity has already sent the state of Punjab on ventilator and it is well advanced on its way to coma from which it will be unlikely to return anytime soon. It can safely be predicted that the state of Punjab government will implode from the financial pressures that are fast building up, with deadly social consequences.

Punjab's committed expenditure on pension, salary and interest in FY21 was 67 per cent of its revenue expenditure (RE), with subsidy bill of Rs 9,758 crore adding an additional 17 per cent, leaving very little for anything else. In the current fiscal, its total power subsidy bill would be Rs 25,000 crore, of which the freebie of 300 units of power from July 2022 alone will cost Rs 16,000 crore. The government has borrowed Rs 8,000 crore in two months just to pay interest on old loans, and its debt ratio at 54 per cent of its GDP is the highest in India.

With a per capita debt of Rs 1 lakh, it is in the throes of a vicious debt trap when borrowing is made just to repay the past loans and interests. Still, in its first two months in power, it has spent Rs

37 crore on advertisements. It is the worst managed economy in India today.

In contrast, Gujarat is in a much better position, through in FY21, the growth rate of its gross state domestic product (GSDP) had plummeted to only 0.57 per cent from 9.75 per cent a year earlier, a fallout from the pandemic. Inadequacies in its public health-care delivery were severely exposed during the pandemic, something that the AAP hopes to gain from electorally. Since 2011-12, Gujarat has continuous surpluses in its revenue account, but in FY21, the revenue account had a huge deficit of Rs 22,548 crore. However, it still contained its fiscal deficit at 2.44 per cent, well within the limit of three per cent prescribed by the Gujarat Fiscal Responsibility Act (GFRA), 2005. It could also manage its debt ratio at 18 per cent of its GDP, well within the GFRA limit of 27 per cent.

During FY21, Gujarat generated 63 per cent of its total revenues from its own resources, compared to Punjab's 50 per cent. But Gujarat's own revenues have been stagnating in real terms even before the pandemic, while its borrowing has been growing at 22 per cent and outstanding liabilities at 10 per cent at a compound average annual rate. If AAP and Congress have their way, Gujarat will be soon on its way down the slippery slope of certain insolvency.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

WE WERE NOT UPTO THE MARK WITH THE BALL, WE COULDN'T TURN UP TODAY.
— INDIAN SKIPPER ROHIT SHARMA



I THINK INDIA WERE 30 RUNS SHORT. CHASING A TOTAL OF 160 OR 170 IS A LITTLE BIT EASY AT THAT VENUE.
— ENGLISH CRICKETER ALEX HALES

COP 27: Struggle over who pays for will continue

It should now take only two or three more years to set up the new 'loss and damage' agency and agree on the rules

As after every climate summit, the air is filled with shouts of rage and despair. What was agreed was unclear and inadequate, and what was left undecided or simply ignored was vast and terrifying. For example, they still haven't managed to agree that the world needs to stop burning fossil fuels.

What? Isn't that what this whole traveling circus is about? The climate is getting hotter because we're burning fossil fuels for energy, soon people will be dying in large numbers, in twenty or thirty years entire countries will become uninhabitable, so stop! Alternative energy sources are available! Act now, or global disaster will happen!

Yes, that's what it's about,



GWYNNE DYER

and every year tens of thousands of politicians, experts, campaigners, and lobbyists trek to a different location—Glasgow last year, Sharm-al-Sheikh this year, the United Arab Emirates next year—to debate and decide how to deal with this literally existential threat.

And in all those 27 years they haven't even managed to mention the name of the threat? No, they haven't. Last year, for the first time, they actually inserted the word 'coal' into the final report—we will eventually 'phase it down' (not 'out'), they said—but the words 'gas' and 'oil' are still taboo.

This is what you get when a global institution is ruled by consensus. Everybody has a veto, including the coal-, gas-

and oil-dependent countries—and the short-term interests of some (money and rapid fossil-fueled economic growth) clash with everybody's long-term interest in not experiencing a huge population die-back and civilisation collapse.

Oh, well. This is the price you pay for belonging to a species still emerging from a long tribal past that has developed a high-tech, high-energy civilisation before it was culturally equipped to manage it. Do the best you can, and hope that it will be enough.

So much for the philosophy. What actually happened at Sharm-al-Sheikh?

After the inevitable all-night negotiations (two all-nighters, in fact), they managed to agree on a new fund

that will recompense poor countries that suffer 'loss and damage' from extreme climate events. The money will come from the developed countries whose historic and current emissions are the reason for the damage.

Pakistan's catastrophic floods made it this year's poster boy. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif told the conference: "Despite seven times the average of extreme rain in the south, we struggled on as raging torrents ripped out 8,000 km. of [paved] roads, damaged over 3,000 km. of railway track, and washed away standing crops on four million acres.

"We became a victim of something with which we had nothing to do, and of course it was a man-made disaster...

How on Earth can one expect from us that we will undertake this gigantic task on our own?"

"Loss and damage" is not charity; it's climate justice," said Pakistan's climate envoy Nabeel Munir, and this time the message got through. That's about par for the course: if you bring up the same obvious injustice at the climate summits every year for a decade or so, eventually those who did the harm and should pay the price will admit that you have a case.

It should now take only two or three more years to set up the new 'loss and damage' agency and agree on the rules for who pays how much into it each year, and exactly what qualifies as climate-related damage eligible for

compensation.

The biggest remaining question by far is what about China? It is still classed as a developing country and therefore automatically a victim, but actually it is a middle-income country and the world's single biggest emitter of carbon dioxide. It's bigger than all the rest of the developed countries together, and almost three times bigger than the United States.

Should it be paying into the 'loss and damage' fund, rather than claiming money from it? And how about India? It's only third in total emissions now, after the United States, but it will also probably overtake America in the next ten years.

So the titanic struggle over who pays for the climate-

linked loss and damage inflicted on the poorest countries will continue, but at least the next climate summit can also focus on other things. Just as well, because stopping at the 'aspirational' target of no more than a 1.5°C rise in average global temperature is probably a lost cause by now.

The 'never-exceed' hard target is no more than +2.0°C, because after that we lose control. The heating we have already caused will trigger warming 'feedbacks' in the system that we cannot turn off, and away we go into the nightmare future.

So it's good to see them getting a little more reasonable each year at these summits. There's still a very long way to go, but at least we're moving in the right direction.

UKRAINE URGES CIVILIANS TO LEAVE LIBERATED AREAS FOR WINTER

AP ■ KYIV

Ukrainian authorities have started evacuating civilians from the recently-liberated areas of the Kherson region and the neighbouring province of Mykolaiv, fearing that damage to the infrastructure is too severe for people to endure the upcoming winter, officials said on Monday.

Residents of the two southern regions, regularly shelled in the past months by Russian forces, have been advised to move to safer areas in the central and western parts of the country, said Ukraine's Deputy Prime Minister Iryna Vereshchuk.

The government will provide "transportation, accommodation, medical care," she said.

The evacuations come more than a week after Ukraine retook the city of Kherson and areas around it. The liberation of the area marked a major battlefield gain, while the evacuations now highlight the difficulties the country is facing following heavy

Russian shelling of its power infrastructure as winter weather sets in.

Russian-installed authorities in the Kherson region on Monday also reiterated their call to people to evacuate an area on the eastern bank of the Dnieper River, which Moscow now controls. Officials cited a "high level of military threat" in the Kakhovskiy district as they asked residents to go to evacuation points.

Russia has set up defence lines along the eastern bank of the Dnieper River, fearing that Ukrainian forces would push deeper into the region.

Since Ukraine retook the Kherson city just over a week ago, Russia has stepped up pounding Ukraine's power grid and other infrastructure from the air, causing widespread blackouts and leaving millions of Ukrainians without heat, power or water as frigid cold and snow blankets the capital, Kyiv, and other cities.

In 15 Ukrainian regions, four-hour or longer power outages were expected on Monday,

according to Volodymyr Kudrytsky, the head of Ukraine's state grid operator, Ukrenergo. More than 40 per cent of the country's energy facilities were damaged by Russian missile strikes in recent weeks.

On Sunday, powerful explosions from shelling shook Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia region, the site of Europe's largest nuclear power plant. The IAEA, the global nuclear watchdog, called for "urgent measures to help prevent a nuclear accident" in the Russian-occupied facility.

Kyiv and Moscow blamed each other for the shelling that came after weeks of relative calm in the area.

The area has been the site of fighting ever since Russian forces occupied the plant soon after their invasion of Ukraine, sparking fears of a nuclear accident.

On Monday, Russia's nuclear plant operator, Rosatom, conceded that there is a risk of a nuclear accident at the Zaporizhzhia power plant. Rosatom head Alexei Likhachyov said the



company held talks with the IAEA overnight, and again blamed Kyiv for the situation.

"Apparently, Kyiv considers a small nuclear incident acceptable," said Likhachyov, "Every-

thing must be done so that no one even thinks about encroaching on the safety of the nuclear power plant."

There was no immediate Ukrainian reaction to the com-

ments of Likhachyov, who was repeating unfounded Russian claims that Ukraine was planning some kind of nuclear incident to blame Russia for it.

In fighting elsewhere, at

least four civilians were killed and eight more were wounded in Ukraine over the past 24 hours, deputy head of the country's presidential office Kyrylo Tymoshenko said on Monday.

A Russian missile strike in the northeast Kharkiv region on Sunday night killed one person and left two more wounded, according to Kharkiv Gov. Oleh Syniehubov. The strike hit a residential building in the Shevchenkove village, Syniehubov said, killing a 38-year-old woman.

One person was wounded overnight in the Dnipropetrovsk region, where Russian forces shelled the city of Nikopol and areas around it, Gov. Valentyn Reznichenko said.

In the eastern Donetsk region, which is partially controlled by Moscow, Russian forces shelled 14 towns and villages, the region's Ukrainian Governor Pavlo Kyrylenko said.

Heavy fighting was ongoing in the region near the city Bakhmut, where a school was damaged by shelling. In Makiivka, which is under Russian control,

an oil depot was hit with "an explosive object" and caught fire, local Moscow-installed authorities said.

Russian-installed authorities later said that more than 105,000 consumers in the province's capital, Donetsk, were left without electricity on Monday after Ukrainian shelling damaged power lines. One person was killed by the shelling, officials said, and 59 miners were trapped underground after power was cut off in four coal mines in the city.

In the neighbouring Luhansk region, most of which is under Russian control, the Ukrainian army is advancing towards the key cities of Kremienna and Svatove, where the Russians have set up a line of defence, according to Luhansk's Ukrainian Governor Serhiy Haidai.

"There are successes and the Ukrainian army is moving very slowly, but it will be much more difficult for Russians to defend themselves after Svatove and Kremienna (are retaken)," Haidai told Ukrainian television.



Cold and dark: Kyiv readies for 'worst winter of our lives'

AP ■ KYIV

When the power is out, as it so often is, the high-rise apartment overlooking Ukraine's war-torn capital feels like a deathtrap. No lights, no water, no way to cook food. And no elevator by which to escape from the 21st floor should a Russian missile strike. Even when electricity comes back, it's never on for long.

"Russian strikes are plunging Ukraine into the Stone Age," says Anastasia Pyrozhenko. In a recent 24-hour spell, her 26-story high-rise only had power for half an hour. She says the "military living conditions" have driven her and husband from their apartment.

"Our building is the highest in the area and is a great target for Russian missiles, so we left our apartment for our parents' place and are preparing for the worst winter of our lives," said the 25-year-old.

The situation in Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, and other major cities has deteriorated drastically following the largest missile attack on the country's power grid on Tuesday. Ukrainian state-owned grid operator Ukrenergo reported that 40 per cent of Ukrainians were experiencing difficulties, due to damage to at least 15 major energy hubs across the country.

Warning that electricity outages could last anywhere from several hours to several days, the network said that "resilience and courage are what we need this winter."

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko, too, stressed the need to be ready and resilient in the face of a potential blackout: "Worst case scenario. Actually, I don't like to talk about that, but I have to be prepared if we (do not) have electricity, blackout, no water, no heating, no services and no communication," Klitschko told

the AP on Friday.

Ukrenergo said in a statement that "thousands of kilometres of key high-voltage lines are not working" affecting the entire country.

It published a picture of a transformer station that was destroyed by a Russian missile, leaving around 400,000 people without power. According to the report, "there are dozens of such transformers in the power system now. This equipment cannot be replaced quickly."

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said after last week's strikes that more than 10 million Ukrainians were left without electricity; by Sunday, he said some areas had seen improvements.

"The restoration of networks and technical supply capabilities, the de-mining of power transmission lines, repairs — everything goes on round the clock," Zelenskyy said in his nightly address.

Blackouts were scheduled Sunday night in 15 regions and the city of Kyiv, he said. Ukrenergo said there would be scheduled outages in every region on Monday.

A sharp cold snap and the first snow have significantly complicated the situation in Kyiv. The cold forces people to turn on their heaters, which drastically increases the load on the grid and makes power outages longer. In light of the dropping temperatures, the Kyiv authorities announced they were setting up communal heating points.

In the city of 3 million people, 528 emergency points have been identified. Here, residents will be able to keep warm, drink tea, recharge their phones and get any necessary help. The heating points will be equipped with autonomous power sources, as well as special boiler rooms.

Japan nuclear watchdog considering extending reactor life

AP ■ TOKYO

Japanese nuclear regulators are considering revising a safety evaluation system to allow aging reactors to operate beyond the current 60-year limit, but the move is aimed at preventing safety lapses and is not motivated by government efforts to increase use of nuclear power, an official said on Monday.

The Nuclear Regulation Authority Commission, at the request of the Economy and Industry Ministry, has drafted a plan to scrap the 60-year limit and replace it with a system of potential extensions granted every 10 years after 30 years of operation.

That would be a major change from the current 40-year limit with a possible one-time extension of up to 20 years, a rule that was adopted under stricter safety standards set after the 2011 Fukushima nuclear power plant disaster.

The draft plan still has to be formally approved.

The move has prompted



mixed reactions from the public. Nuclear Regulation Authority Commissioner Shinsuke Yamanaka denied criticism that the watchdog may have yielded to government pressure to prolong the operational lifespan of reactors.

"Our judgment in our safety inspections is not affected, no matter what the government policy may be," Yamanaka said. "We have no intention of making any compromise in our strict safety checks."

Yamanaka stressed that his agency had not initiated the

change and was responding to the government's request in order to ensure safety.

Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said in August that Japan needs to consider all options in its energy mix, including nuclear, to bolster its "green transformation" to curb emissions of greenhouse gases and secure a stable energy supply.

Japan has pledged to reach carbon neutrality by 2050.

Anti-nuclear sentiment and safety concerns rose sharply in Japan after the Fukushima disaster, but the government has

been pushing for a return to nuclear power amid worries of energy shortages following Russia's invasion of Ukraine and a global push to reduce greenhouse gases. Japan has faced criticism for saying it will phase out fossil fuel use by 2050 without giving a clear timeline.

While maintaining a 20-22 per cent target for nuclear energy as part of its energy mix for 2030, Japan's government previously insisted it was not considering building new nuclear plants or replacing aged reactors, apparently to avoid triggering criticism from a still wary public.

Kishida, in a major shift toward a greater use of nuclear energy, asked a government panel to decide by the end of this year on a proposal for development and construction of "new innovative reactors," such as small modular nuclear reactors, while also asking nuclear officials and experts to consider extending the operational lifespan of aging reactors.



Aid sought for Moldova, hit hard by war in next-door Ukraine

AP ■ PARIS

Diplomats are drumming up money and other support on Monday for Europe's poorest country, Moldova, which is suffering massive blackouts, heavy refugee flows and potential security threats from the war in neighbouring Ukraine.

Monday's international aid conference in Paris is aimed at "concrete and immediate assistance" for the land-locked former Soviet republic, according to the French Foreign Ministry.

Two previous conferences for Moldova this year raised hundreds of millions of euros, but as the war drags on, its needs are growing.

"This international support is all the more important as

Moldova is currently facing an unprecedented energy crisis which, with the approach of winter, poses a risk of a humanitarian crisis for the Moldovan population," the ministry said.

Broad blackouts temporarily hit more than a half-dozen Moldovan cities last week as the Russian military pounded infrastructure targets across Ukraine.

Moldova's Soviet-era energy systems remain interconnected Ukraine, which is why the Russian missile barrage triggered the automatic shutdown of a supply line.

Earlier this month, the European Union pledged 250 million euros (nearly USD 260 million) to help Moldova after Russia halved its natural gas supply.

Germany offers Poland Patriot missiles to defend airspace

AP ■ WARSAW (POLAND)

Germany has offered Eurofighters and Patriot defence systems to Poland to help it defend its airspace, Defence Minister Christine Lambrecht told German newspapers in comments published on Monday.

"We have to position ourselves in the alliance even better in terms of air defence," and that that goes particularly for Poland, Slovakia and the Baltic countries, she told the Rheinische Post and General-Anzeiger newspapers.

Lambrecht said Germany is present with these air defence weapons in Slovakia already and wants to extend that through 2023 or even beyond.

Polish Defence Minister Mariusz Blaszczak said he received Germany's offer of additional Patriot missiles "with satisfaction" and will have them deployed close to the border

with Ukraine.

He tweeted that during a phone conversation on Monday with the German side, he will suggest the location for the Patriot missile reinforcement.

Poland already has a deployment of US Patriot missiles.

On Tuesday, two Poles were killed when a missile hit a grain depot in the village of Przewodow, just six kilometres from the border with Ukraine, which came under heavy Russian missile barrage that day.

Hungary's Foreign Minister travels to Russia for energy expo

AP ■ BUDAPEST

Hungary's top diplomat travelled to Russia on Monday to take part in an international forum on nuclear energy, underscoring his country's persistently close ties with Moscow amid the war in Ukraine.

Foreign Minister Peter Szijarto gave a speech at the opening plenary session of the two-day ATOMEXPO international forum in the Black Sea resort city of Sochi, according to the event's website.

The forum, titled "Nuclear Spring", is aimed at the global nuclear industry and serves as a "business platform for discussing the current state of the nuclear industry and setting future trends," the website says.

In a post on Facebook early Monday, Szijarto said his appearance at the expo would include talks with the head of Russia's state atomic energy company, Rosatom, over a planned Russia-backed expansion of Hungary's only nuclear power plant. He said the project was "in Hungary's national strategic and



national security interests."

"The global energy crisis means that it is of unprecedented importance for a country to be able to produce the energy it needs. The Paks nuclear power plant plays a key role in our energy security," Szijarto wrote.

The trip was the latest sign of Hungary's continuing diplomatic and trade ties with Russia which have confounded some European leaders as the war in Ukraine nears nine months.

Szijarto was last in Russia in October for natural gas negotiations with Russian state energy company Gazprom, a visit Czech Foreign Minister Jan Lipavsky called "scandalous" since some of those present

North Korea calls UN's Guterres 'puppet of US' after launch

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korea's foreign minister called UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres "a puppet of the United States" as he slammed the UN chief for joining US-led condemnation of the North's recent intercontinental ballistic missile test.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres earlier issued a statement strongly condemning North Korea's ICBM launch on Friday and reiterating his call on the North to "to immediately desist from taking any further provocative actions." Guterres' statement came after the United States and other countries issued similar criticism of the North's ICBM test that showed an potential to strike anywhere in the continental US.

"I often take the UN secretary-general for a member of the US White House or its State Department," North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui said in a statement carried by state media. "I express my strong regret over the fact that the UN secretary-general has taken a very deplorable attitude, oblivious of the purpose and principles of the UN Charter and its proper mission which is to maintain impartiality, objectivity and equity in all matters."

Choe accused Guterres of overlooking the US and its allies taking the North's ICBM test to the UN Security Council, saying that "This clearly proves that he is a puppet of the US."

Palestinians: Israeli forces kill man in West Bank

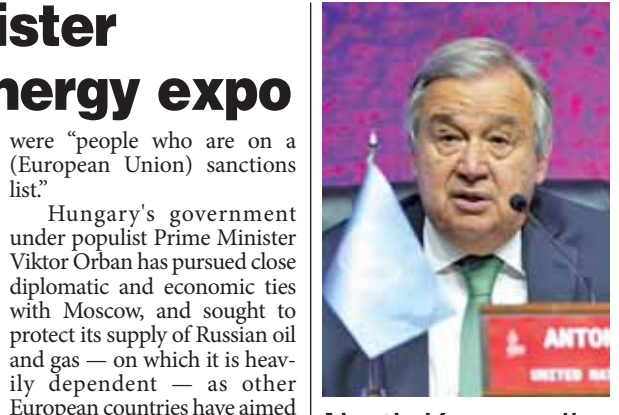
AP ■ JERUSALEM

The Palestinian Health Ministry said on Monday that Israeli forces shot and killed a young man near the occupied West Bank city of Jenin. The ministry said in a statement that the man died of a gunshot wound to the abdomen. Palestinian media identified the man as 18-year-old Mahmoud al-Saadi.

The Israeli army said it carried out arrest raids across the West Bank on Monday. It said its soldiers apprehended three suspects. During an arrest in Burqin, a town near Jenin, it said its troops came under fire, and shot back. It said its troops confirmed a hit.

The violence was the latest in a wave of Israeli-Palestinian fighting in the West Bank and east Jerusalem that has killed more than 130 Palestinians this year, making 2022 the deadliest since 2006.

Israel says its almost nightly arrest raids in the West Bank — which began



after Palestinian attacks killed 19 Israelis last spring — are needed to dismantle militant networks at a time when Palestinian security forces are unable or unwilling to do so.

The Palestinians say the raids undermine their security forces and are aimed at cementing Israel's open-ended 55-year occupation of lands they want for their hoped-for state.

Hundreds of Palestinians have been rounded up in such raids, with many placed in so-called administrative detention, which allows Israel to hold them without trial or charge.

Office of the Executive Engineer, Mechanical Hospital & Central Heating Division, Government Medical College & Hospital, Jammu

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

MHDJ/e-NIT 181 of 2022-23 Dated:-18.11.2022 Due:- 25.11.2022

On behalf of the President of India, e-tenders in two cover system on turnkey basis are invited from registered/reputed firms having sufficient relevant experience for the work mentioned below:

S. No.	Description of work	Estt	AAA	Earnest Money Deposit	Cost of tender document	Time of completion	Eligibility Criterion of Bidder
1	DSITC of 830 KVA OLTC Electric Sub Station.	50.00 Lacs	ACCORDED	Rs.1,00,00,000/- in the Shape of Challan through J&K Govt. Treasury indicating Tender Voucher No. & date and also indicating the name of work duly credited to 0059-PWD (Revenue) and uploading a copy of treasury challan / receipt on e-tendering portal. OR The bidder may deposit tender fee in the shape of e-Challan through Account no. 009701010002163 in the name of Executive Engineer MH&CH GMC&H Jammu. Name of Bank J&K Bank Town Hall Jammu Branch Code:0097 IFSC code: JAKA0TNHALL. MICR Code: 180051025	Rs.100,000/-	45 days	OEM /Registered & Reputed firms having sufficient experience as per Annexure 'C' similar nature of work

THE NIT CONSISTING OF Qualifying INFORMATION, ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA, BILL OF QUANTITIES (BOQ) SETS OF TERMS & CONDITIONS OF CONTRACT & OTHER DETAILS CAN BE VIEWED / DOWNLOADED FROM THE WEBSITE www.jktenders.gov.in.

Sd/- (E.Lakshmi Singh) Executive Engineer Mechanical Hospital & Central Heating Division GMC&H, Jammu

DIPU-1193422

NORTHERN RAILWAY e-OPEN TENDER NOTICE

Sr. Divisional Engineer-Northern Railway, New Delhi for and on behalf of President of India invites e-tender on the prescribed form for the under noted work.

Name of work with location, cost of work and Earnest Money	1. CTR(S) of loop lines at HUK, NUR, BBDE., etc in DUK section under ADEN/KUN & ADEN/PNP. Approx. Cost : Rs. 1,86,84,629.72/- Earnest Money : Rs. 2,43,400.00/-
Earnest Money should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway only. Note : FDR or Demand Draft will not be accepted as EMD for tender invited on IREPS as per Railway Boards letter No. 2015/CE-1/CT/5/1 dated 31.08.2016.	
Completion Period	10 Months
Date and time of submission of tender and opening of tender	Upto 15.00 hrs on 16.12.2022 opening of e-tender at 15.00 hrs. on 16.12.2022.
Website particulars, published-tender, notice location etc complete details of tender can be seen and web site where the tender form can be downloaded	Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in
Similar nature of work	CTR/TRR/TFR/TTR Including raising of track, screening, distressing of track, pre & post works for track maintenance machine like tapping machines/ballast screening/regulating machines & TRR by T-28.

NOTE: All attachments must be self attested by the tenderers and the affidavit should be submitted in the new format attached with tender conditions as per Annexure-XXIV is compulsorily.

No.- 128-W/280/Tender Notice/22-23/W4 (NIT-51) Dated: 21.11.2022 3104/2022

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Palestinians: Israeli forces kill man in West Bank

AP ■ JERUSALEM

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STRONG QUAKE TOPPLES HOUSES IN INDONESIA'S JAVA; 162 DEAD

AP ■ CIANJUR (INDONESIA)

A strong, shallow earthquake toppled buildings and walls on Indonesia's densely populated main island on Monday, killing at least 162 people and injuring hundreds of others as residents fled into the street, some covered in blood and debris.

Officials were gathering information on the toll of those injured and killed by the quake in the remote area.

West Java Governor Ridwan Kamil said the number of confirmed dead had risen to 162.

"The majority of those who died were children," he said.

Many were public school students who had finished their regular classes for the day and were taking extra lessons at Islamic schools, he said.

Cianjur is known for having a large number of Islamic boarding schools and mosques. "So many incidents occurred at several Islamic schools," Kamil said.

He said more than 13,000 people whose homes had been heavily damaged were being taken to evacuation centres.

Emergency workers treated the injured on stretchers and blankets outside hospitals, on terraces and in parking lots in the Cianjur region, about three



hours drive from the capital, Java. The injured, including children, were given oxygen masks and IV lines and were being resuscitated.

"I fainted. It was very strong," said Hasan, a construction worker who, like many Indonesians, uses one name. "I saw my friends running to escape from the building. But it was too late to get out and I was hit by the wall."

Residents, some crying and holding children, fled damaged homes after the magnitude 5.6 quake shook the region in West Java province in the late afternoon, at a depth of 10 kilometers. It also caused panic in the greater Jakarta area, where high-rises swayed and some people evacuated.

Rescue teams and civilians in Cianjur were looking for people buried in collapsed brick homes. In many homes, chunks of concrete and roof tiles fell inside bedrooms.

Shopkeeper Dewi Risma was working with customers when the quake hit, and she ran for the exit. "The vehicles on the road stopped because the quake was very strong," she said. "I felt it shook three times, but the first one was the strongest one for around 10 seconds. The roof of the shop next to the store I work in had collapsed, and people said two had been hit."

The National Disaster Mitigation Agency said that the death toll reached 62 and hundreds were injured. More than 5,000 people are being evacuated.

US pushes defence ties with Indonesia as China strengthens

AP ■ JAKARTA

US Defence Secretary Lloyd J. Austin met his Indonesian counterpart on Monday to push stronger defence ties amid growing Chinese naval activity in the Indo-Pacific region.

Austin, at a joint news conference after meeting with Indonesian Defence Minister Prabowo Subianto, said they discussed ways to deepen the two countries' partnership, including through expanding interoperability and increasing investments in defence education.

"The United States is proud to partner with you as we work together to advance our shared vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific," Austin said.

But Subianto stressed Indonesia's neutral stance.

"I like to emphasise that Indonesia always takes the position of trying to maintain the best relationships with all nations, especially all the major powers," Subianto said.

Austin arrived in Jakarta late Sunday from a visit to Canada's Halifax city where he spoke about US efforts to build a more resilient security architecture with allies and partners across the Indo-Pacific and Europe at the Halifax International Security Forum.



His visit to Indonesia comes less than a week after leaders of the Group of 20 economies met on Indonesia's resort island of Bali. In a declaration, most strongly condemned the war in Ukraine and warned that the conflict is making an already delicate world economy worse.

"We are meeting as the world is grappling with assaults on the rules-based international order, especially Russia's unprovoked invasion against Ukraine," Austin said. "And it's especially vital now that more like-minded countries come together to uphold our shared principles, including the rule of law."

He applauded Indonesia for its vote at the UN General Assembly earlier this year con-

demning Russia's aggression in Ukraine.

While Indonesia and China enjoy generally positive ties, Jakarta has expressed concern about Chinese encroachment on its exclusive economic zone in the South China Sea, which China claims virtually in its entirety.

Subianto said Indonesia sees China as a friendly nation, and the two countries have ways to manage possible misunderstandings and differences of opinion in disputes over territorial waters.

"We consider that we will be able to resolve them with dialogue," Subianto said. "However, we do emphasise that Indonesia will defend its sovereignty and we will defend our independence."



Kurdish militants fire at Turkish border town, 3 killed

AP ■ ANKARA (TURKEY)

Suspected Kurdish militants in Syria fired rockets across the border into Turkey on Monday, killing at least three people and wounding 10 others, officials said. The attack followed deadly airstrikes by Turkey on suspected militants targets in Syria and Iraq.

The rockets struck a high school and two houses in the town of Karkamis, in Gaziantep province, as well as a truck near a Turkish-Syria border gate, the state-run Anadolu Agency reported.

Interior Minister Suleyman Soyulu said the dead include a teacher and a child. One of the rockets landed on the grounds of a high school but there were no fatalities there.

A soldier and seven police officers were wounded overnight in separate shelling by suspected Kurdish militants that targeted a border area in nearby Kilis, Soyulu said.

Turkey would respond to the attacks "in the strongest way possible," the minister said.

The Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces opened fire toward Karkamis from its positions near the Syrian border

Kazakh president wins new term against weak Opposition

AP ■ ASTANA

Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev easily won a new seven-year term in a snap election in which the second biggest choice by voters was to reject all six candidates, the country's central elections commission said on Monday.

While Kurdish-led forces in Syria have not commented nor claimed responsibility for the attacks, the Syrian Democratic Forces in a statement on Monday vowed to respond to Turkish airstrikes "effectively and efficiently at the right time and place."

The rocket attacks came days after Turkey launched deadly airstrikes over northern regions of Syria and Iraq, targeting Kurdish groups that Ankara holds responsible for a November 13 bomb attack in Istanbul.

The bomb rocked a bustling avenue in the heart of Istanbul on November 13, killing six people and wounding over 80 others.

Turkish authorities blamed the attack on the PKK and its Syrian affiliate the YPG. The Kurdish militant groups have, however, denied involvement.

Chinese coast guard seizes rocket debris from Filipino navy

AP ■ MANILA

China's coast guard forcibly seized apparent Chinese rocket debris that was being towed by the Philippine navy, in the latest confrontation in the disputed South China Sea, a Philippine military commander said on Monday.

The Chinese vessel twice blocked the Philippine naval boat before seizing the debris it was towing on Sunday off Philippine-occupied Thitu island, Vice Admiral Alberto Carlos said. He said no one was injured in the incident.

China denied there was a forcible seizure and said the debris, which it confirmed was from a Chinese rocket launch, was handed over by Philippine forces after a "friendly consultation." It was the latest flareup in long-seething territorial disputes in the strategic waterway involving China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan.

Chinese coast guard ships have blocked Philippine supply boats delivering supplies to Filipino forces in the disputed waters in the past but seizing objects in the possession of



another nation's military constitutes a more brazen act.

Carlos said the Filipino sailors, using a long-range camera on Thitu island, spotted the debris drifting in strong waves near a sandbar about 800 yards (540 metres) off shore. They set out on a boat and retrieved the floating object and started to tow it back to the island.

As they were travelling back to the island, "they noticed that a China coast guard vessel with bow number 5203 was approaching their location and subsequently blocked their pre-plotted course twice," Carlos said in

a statement.

The Chinese coast guard vessel then deployed an inflatable boat with personnel who "forcefully retrieved said floating object by cutting the towing line" attached to the Filipino sailors' rubber boat. The sailors decided to return to their island, Carlos said, without detailing what happened. Maj. Cherryl Tindog, spokesperson of the military's Western Command, said the floating metal object appeared similar to a number of other pieces of Chinese rocket debris recently found in Philippine waters.

Four Nepalese policemen on election duty killed in accident

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Four Nepal police personnel who were on election duty were killed and eight others injured on Monday when a jeep carrying them skidded off the road in Sudurpashchim province, police said.

The jeep fell some 300 metres down the hilly road at Nimgladi stream in Baitadi district when it was returning to duty after handing over ballot boxes to the district headquarters, according to the police.

Three policemen died on the spot while another one succumbed to injuries while undergoing treatment, the police said. Eight other policemen were injured, with two of them still in critical condition.

Chief District Officer Suresh Panthi said a helicopter of the Nepal Army airlifted the injured personnel to Kohalpur for treatment.

Panthi added that the accident might have occurred due to sleepy driver busy in ferrying ballot boxes throughout the night, the Himalayan Times reported.

Gunmen attack Mexico police station; several dead, wounded

AP ■ MEXICO CITY

Gunmen opened fire on a police station in the north-central state of Guanajuato Sunday, and several people were killed when police returned fire.

Police in the city of Celaya said that several attackers had been killed, but did not give an exact number. The attack occurred in a town on the outskirts of the city.

Celaya police chief Jesus Rivera said three police officers had been wounded, but their injuries did not appear to be life-threatening.

Guanajuato has the highest number of homicides of any of Mexico's 32 states. The state has been the scene of a years-long turf battle between the Jalisco cartel, and local gangs supported by its arch-rival, the Sinaloa cartel.

Pak's SC orders release of man who in 2003 tried to assassinate Musharraf

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Supreme Court on Monday ordered the release of a man, who tried to assassinate the then military ruler General (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf in 2003, after the convict spent 20 years in jail — six years more than the original sentencing of 14-years.

Rana Tanveer was sentenced to life imprisonment in 2005 by a military court in connection with the 2003 Rawalpindi pump attack case, Geo News reported.

Tanveer was arrested on December 31, 2003 in connection with the assassination attempt on Musharraf, who narrowly escaped two back-to-back bomb and gun attacks on his convoy in the garrison city of Rawalpindi.

A three-member bench headed by Justice Sardar Tariq Masood ordered Tanveer's release while hearing the case of the non-release of the convict despite the completion of his sentence, Geo TV reported.

During the hearing, Tanveer's lawyer Hashmat Habib said his client was still not being released even after the completion of his sentence. "The term of life imprisonment is 14 years and my client has been in prison for almost 20 years," said Habib.



Iran says new missile attack on Iraq meant to protect border

AP ■ ERBIL (IRAQ)

Iran said Monday that its latest strikes on Kurdish opposition bases in northern Iraq were necessary to protect the country's borders, while Kurdish officials condemned the missile and drone attacks as unprovoked aggression.

Iran's strike late Sunday killed a member of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan, said Mohammed Nazif Qaderi, a senior official in the Kurdish Iranian group exiled in Iraq.

The group said Iranian surface-to-surface missiles and drones hit its bases and adjacent refugee camps in Koya and Jeynikan. The group also asserted that the strikes had hit a hospital in Koya.

The Iranian strikes come in the wake of a visit to Baghdad last week by Iran's Quds Force commander Esmail Ghaani. During the visit, Ghaani threatened Iraq with a ground military operation in the country's north if the Iraqi army does not fortify the countries' shared border against Kurdish opposition groups, Iraqi and Kurdish officials said.

Some Kurdish groups have been engaged in a low-intensity conflict with Tehran since the 1979 Iranian Islamic Revolution, with many members seeking political exile in neighbouring Iraq where they have established bases.

Public Notice: This is to inform general public that Mrs. Gyanwati and Mr. Harikant Sharma have acquired the Residential Leasehold Built Up Plot Bearing No. 171, area measuring 153 Sq. mtrs. in Block-D, situated at Noida, Sector-49, Dist. Gurgaon, Noida, U.P. Under Transfer Deed of Leasehold Rights dated 08/07/2022, Doc. no. 4475 and Nov. Mrs. Gyanwati and Mr. Harikant Sharma are mortgaging the above said property with IndusInd Bank Ltd. & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 07 days of this publication to Mr. Munesh Dhwani/ Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Veritas North, Unit no. 907, 9th Floor, GD-IT Tower, (B-40), Noida/ Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9066707172/91282636 (M).

Public Notice: NOTICE, is hereby given that the Original Title deed no. 12046 dtd. 17.03.1992 in the name of Sh. Nareesh Kumar Sharma w.r.t. property situated at 1644, Sector 8, Faridabad 121004 and another Original Title deed no. 13757 dtd. 22.03.2013 in the name of Smt. Deepa Chauhan w.r.t. property situated at 2367, LIG, Housing Board Colony, Sector - 3, Faridabad have lost in transit in Canara Bank, Bhadana Bhawan, Neelam Bata Road, Faridabad Main II, NIT Faridabad, Haryana - 121001. Finder may please contact at mentioned address or call at 9416145492

Public Notice: The general public is informed that the cars with the following car numbers which have completed their life Petrol Cars 15 Years Diesel Car 10 Years. The MCD drive was confiscated by Pine View Technology Pvt Ltd and has not been claimed by anyone till now. All these vehicle owners are informed to come to the company's office and claim the scrap value of the vehicle. Otherwise, all these vehicles will be scrapped in the next three days.

Name of Work and its Location:-	30-Elect-52-T-2022-23-E3 Electrical work regarding improvements/ strengthening of power supply, lighting, cabling etc. in DUK section.
Approx Cost of the works in:-	Rs. 42.56 Lacs
Address of the Office:-	Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.
Bid Security:-	Rs. 85100.00
Date & time of submission of tender:-	19.12.2022, 12.00 Hrs.
Opening of tender:-	11.12.2022, 12.00 Hrs.
Website & Notice Board:-	www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.

Public Notice: Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of Fullerton India Home Finance Company Ltd. that Mrs. Santosh Kumari Arora is claiming owner of property bearing No. 40, area measuring 50 Sq. Yds. out of Khra No. 18/16, Situated in the area of Village Marasia, Delhi State Delhi, colony known as New T Block, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi, she acquired the said property on the basis of G.P.A. Agreement, and it dated 28.05.2007. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned claiming owner want to sell the said property to Mr. Rajendra Singh Rastogi who is taking a Loan from Fullerton India Home Finance Company Ltd. for purchase of the said property. If anybody has any objection/objection upon the ownership of Mrs. Santosh Kumari Arora in respect of the said property its sale, Mortgage, Litigation, and any kind of dispute, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Public Notice: This is to inform general public that Mrs. Manju is the owner of Property bearing no. A-72, area measuring 75 sq. yds. out of Khra no. 23/24, situated in the area of Village Postnagar, in the colony known as Ram Dutt Enclave, Block A, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi. She has mortgaged the said property to Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. in favour of Mrs. Manju. She has also mortgaged the said property to Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. in favour of Mrs. Manju. She has also mortgaged the said property to Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. in favour of Mrs. Manju. She has also mortgaged the said property to Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. in favour of Mrs. Manju.

Public Notice: This is to inform general public that Mrs. Manju is the owner of Property bearing no. A-72, area measuring 75 sq. yds. out of Khra no. 23/24, situated in the area of Village Postnagar, in the colony known as Ram Dutt Enclave, Block A, Uttam Nagar, New Delhi. She has mortgaged the said property to Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. in favour of Mrs. Manju. She has also mortgaged the said property to Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. in favour of Mrs. Manju. She has also mortgaged the said property to Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. in favour of Mrs. Manju.

Name of Work and its Location:-	30-Elect-52-T-2022-23-E3 Electrical work regarding improvements/ strengthening of power supply, lighting, cabling etc. in DUK section.
Approx Cost of the works in:-	Rs. 42.56 Lacs
Address of the Office:-	Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.
Bid Security:-	Rs. 85100.00
Date & time of submission of tender:-	19.12.2022, 12.00 Hrs.
Opening of tender:-	11.12.2022, 12.00 Hrs.
Website & Notice Board:-	www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Divl. Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE: The Dy. Chief Engineer/Construction/Northern Railway, Tilak Bridge, New Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender under Single-packet system for the following work:-

1. Name of work and Location	Miscellaneous repair in RCC Box No. 3 at Delhi Kishanganj and Provision of approach Road from LC No. 10 to Dobh station and other allied works in connection with new crossing station at Dobh on Rohtak-Bikaneri Section.
2. Completion of work	08 (Eight) months
3. Approx. Cost of work	Rs. 2.84 crore only
4. Earnest Money to be deposited	Rs. 2,92,000/- (Rupees Two lacs Ninety Two Thousand) only
5. Date & Time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender	Tender may be uploaded up to 11:30 hrs on 14.12.2022 on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in. The bidders can participate in the e-tender, the Bids of which will be opened at 11:30 hrs on 14.12.2022.
6. Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document	The detailed tender's document will be available on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 30.11.2022 to 14.12.2022 and bidders will be able to offer their technical and financial bid from 30.11.2022. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document.

Tender Notice No. - 477-ACS-C-DKZ-DOBH RD-TKJ Dated 18.11.2022 3095/2022
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Budget must focus on job creation: India Inc to FM

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Budget should focus on measures to accelerate job creation and broaden the tax base by rationalising GST and personal income tax slabs to boost consumption, industry bodies said in their pre-Budget meeting with finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Monday.

"The external scenario is likely to continue to be unfavourable for some time. Hence, we must broad-base our domestic economy by creating new sectors of growth and driving employment generation to boost domestic demand, inclusion, and growth," CII president Sanjiv Bajaj said.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) was part of the virtual pre-Budget meeting which was called for an aggressive focus on privatisation of public sector units and increasing allocation to capital expenditure with focus on an investment led growth strategy to pump India's economy amidst the global uncertainty.

To boost job creation, CII suggested that an employment linked incentive scheme be introduced and the government could consider an urban



Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman chairs her first pre-budget 2023 consultation with the first group of captains from industry and experts of infrastructure and climate change, in New Delhi on Monday

employment guarantee scheme and initiate a pilot in metro cities first in this Budget.

"Going forward, to provide tax certainty to businesses, the corporate tax rates should be maintained at the current levels.

"Further simplification, rationalisation, ease of paying taxes, and reducing tax litigation should be key priorities," the CII president said.

Industry body PHDCCI also submitted its suggestions for the Budget to the finance minister virtually on Monday.

It suggested a five-pronged strategy to revitalise the private investments through measures

Markets fall for 3rd day; Sensex, Nifty decline nearly 1%

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Market benchmarks fell for the third day running on Monday and ended nearly 1 per cent lower amid weak trend in global equities.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 518.64 points or 0.84 per cent to settle at 61,144.84. During the day, it tumbled 604.15 points or 0.97 per cent to 61,059.33.

The broader NSE Nifty fell 147.70 points or 0.81 per cent to end at 18,159.95.



From the Sensex pack, Reliance Industries, HDFC, Tata Consultancy Services, Tech Mahindra, Infosys, Bajaj Finance, Wipro and Tata Steel were the major laggards.

Bharti Airtel, Axis Bank, IndusInd Bank, Hindustan Unilever and Power Grid were among the winners.

Elsewhere in Asia, markets in Seoul, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower, while Tokyo settled higher.

Equity exchanges in Europe were trading in the negative territory in the afternoon trade. Wall Street had ended higher on Friday.

International oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.91 per cent lower at USD 86.82 per barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded shares worth Rs 751.20 crore on Friday, as per exchange data.

"The sharp decline in crude prices is a huge positive for the domestic economy. However, the market did not respond favourably due to stronger headwinds from the global market. The prospect of a prolonged tightening cycle by the US Federal Reserve and the Chinese Covid restrictions affected the world market," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

"Nifty continued its down move for the third consecutive day. Investors globally fretted about the economic fallout from fresh COVID-19 restrictions in China..." said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge dipped 0.15 per cent and smallcap index climbed marginally by 0.01 per cent.

Adani group's ₹493-cr open offer for NDTV to start from tomorrow

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Adani group's open offer to acquire an additional 26 per cent stake in the media firm New Delhi Television (NDTV) from the market would start from Tuesday.

The offer, for which a price band of Rs 294 per share has been fixed, will open on November 22 and closes on December 5, said a notice by JM Financial, the firm managing the offer on behalf of Adani Group firms.

Markets regulator Sebi on November 7 granted its approval to the proposed Rs 492.81 crore-open offer.

The conglomerate, run by India's richest man Gautam Adani, in August acquired a little-known company that lent over Rs 400 crore to NDTV's founders more than a decade



ago in exchange for warrants that allowed the company to acquire a stake of 29.18 per cent in the newsgroup at any time.

Post that, VCPL - the firm that the Adani group bought out - announced that it would launch an open offer on October 17 to buy an additional 26 per cent stake from minority shareholders of NDTV. However, the offer was delayed since Sebi had not given its approval to the open offer.

VCPL along with AMG

Media Networks and Adani Enterprises Ltd had proposed to acquire an additional 26 per cent or 1.67 crore equity shares at an offer price of Rs 294 per share.

If fully subscribed, the open offer will amount to Rs 492.81 crore at a price of Rs 294 per share.

"The decision to acquire NDTV was arrived at in furtherance of the Adani Group's objective to set up a credible next-generation media platform with an emphasis on digital and broadcast segments, and that NDTV is a suitable broadcast and digital platform to deliver on this vision," Adani Enterprises had said in a regulatory filing in October.

On Monday, shares of NDTV closed at Rs 382.20 on BSE, down 5 per cent, touching a lower circuit.

'India's food service market to reach \$79.65 bn by 2028'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's food service market is expected to reach USD 79.65 billion by 2028, growing at a CAGR of 11.19 per cent from USD 41.1 billion in 2022, according to a report.

Despite over 20 lakh jobs lost during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the industry is expected to reach employment figures of 1 crore by 2025, as per the Food Service and Restaurant Business Report 2022-23, by Francorp and restaurantindia.in.

The restaurants and food service market in the country is divided into two segments with the unorganised segment accounting for the major share, the report said, adding that the organised sector also grew at a strong rate between 2014 and 2020.

"India's food service market is anticipated to project robust growth in the forecast period with an impressive

CAGR of 11.19 per cent and reach USD 79.65 billion by 2028," it said.

It further said that the country's quick service restaurants (QSR) market is estimated to be USD 690.21 million in 2022 and is expected to reach USD 1069.3 million by 2027, growing at a CAGR of 9.15 per cent. Over FY20-25, the QSR chain market is estimated to be the highest-growing sub-segment -- at 23 per cent CAGR - in the entire food service market, not just the chain market.

This will be on the back of large food service chains such as McDonald's, Burger King, and Domino's, among others, deepening their reach in India's smaller cities and benefiting from a younger demographic.

The report pointed out that the annual spending of middle class households on fast food restaurants in India's Tier II and III cities has grown by 108 per cent in the last two years, from Rs 2,500 to Rs 5,400.

Gold declines ₹408; silver drops ₹594

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold price in the national capital declined Rs 408 to Rs 52,847 per 10 grams on Monday amid a fall in prices of precious metal in overseas markets, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the yellow metal had settled at Rs 53,255 per 10 grams.

Silver also dropped by Rs 594 to Rs 61,075 per kilogram. In the international market, gold was trading in red at USD 1,745.5 per ounce while silver was down at USD 20.83 per ounce.

"COMEX gold edged lower in Asia as a gauge of the dollar index gained. Market participants are waiting for fresh clues about the course of the Federal Reserve's monetary policy tightening path after the previous week's hawkish comment from Fed members," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst at HDFC Securities.

Rupee falls 7 paise to close at 81.81 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee depreciated 7 paise to close at 81.81 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, tracking the strength of the American currency in the overseas markets and a muted trend in domestic equities. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 81.84 and later witnessed an intraday high of 81.74 and a low of 81.91 during the session.

The domestic unit finally settled at 81.81 against the American currency, registering a fall of 7 paise over its last close.

On Friday, the rupee depreciated 10 paise to close at 81.74 against the US currency. The rupee depreciated on weak domestic markets and a strong dollar. FII outflows put downward pressure on the rupee, said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas. The US dollar gained amid hawkish tone by most Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) members and concerns over rising COVID-19 cases in China, which dimmed hopes of reopening in China. Economic data from the US remained mixed. The US existing home sales declined to 4.43 million in October from 4.71 million in September but topped estimates of 4.41 million. "We expect the rupee to trade with a negative bias on strength in the US Dollar amid risk aversion in global markets. However, weak crude oil prices may support the rupee at lower levels. Traders may remain cautious ahead of the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting minutes later this week," Choudhary said.

"We have revised down our forecast for real gross domestic product growth to 7 per cent for fiscal 2023 from 7.3 per cent, primarily because of the slowdown in global growth that has started to impact our exports and industrial activity. This will test the resilience of domestic demand," Crisil chief economist Dharmakirti Joshi said in a note.

Aditi Nayar, his counterpart at Ibra, in her report pencilled a 6.5 per cent growth in Q2 of the current fiscal, nearly half of the year-ago quarter when the economy had clipped at 12.7 per cent, but which is still a tad higher than the monetary policy committee's September forecast of 6.3 per cent and at 6.5 per cent in gross value added (GVA) less than half of 13.5 per cent a year ago.

She attributed the lower numbers to the mixed crop output trends revealed by the advance estimates of kharif production, adverse input cost movements for certain sectors with a higher fuel intensity, as well as the impact of the flagging external demand on non-

Crisil lowers FY23 growth by 30 bps to 7%; Ibra slashes Q2 GDP to half of last fiscal at 6.5%

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Rating agencies Crisil and Ibra on Monday revised down their India growth projections for the current fiscal and the second quarter mainly due to the ripple effect of slowdown in global growth and mixed crop output.

Crisil downgraded the India growth forecast by 30 bps to 7 per cent while Ibra pegged the economic expansion at 6.5 per cent for the second quarter of FY2022-23.



oil merchandise exports, which whittled down the gains from robust demand for contact-intensive services, healthy capital spending by government and pre-festive season stocking of goods.

She also said, however, GDP growth over the pre-Covid levels is expected to double to around 8 per cent in Q2 relative to 3.8 per cent seen in the previous quarter. The agency estimates the sectoral growth in Q2 to be driven by the services sector (9.4 per cent), with a subdued trend foreseen for the industry (2 per cent), and agriculture, forestry and fishing (2.5 per cent).

Joshi said he is paring growth forecast only by 30 bps as domestic demand still remains supportive, helped by a catch-up in contact-based services, government capex, relatively accommodative financial conditions, and overall normal monsoons for the fourth time in a row.

But Joshi warned that the ripple effect of the global slowdown will be felt more next fiscal, which will put domestic demand under pressure as interest rate hikes get transmitted more to consumers, and the catch-up in contact-based services fades.

Sitharaman to meet State FMs for pre-budget consultation on Friday

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will hold pre-budget consultations with her state counterparts on Friday.

The meeting is part of the customary meetings that the minister undertakes with stakeholders before the presentation of the Union Budget on February 1.

The pre-budget meeting with state finance ministers will be held in New Delhi on November 25, an official said.

Sitharaman on Monday began consultation to seek suggestions for the Budget 2023-24 with industry captains and experts from infrastructure and climate change.

On November 22, the minister will meet the agriculture and agro-processing industry, representatives from the financial sector and capital market.

She will also be meeting the representatives of the services sector and trade bodies, besides experts from the social sector, including health, education, water and sanitation, on November 24, in virtual mode.

The budget for the next year will have to address critical issues of high inflation, boosting demand, job creation and putting the economy on a sustained 8 per cent-plus growth path.

It will be the fifth budget of Sitharaman and the last full budget before the general elections slated for April-May 2024.

DoCA issues guidelines to curb fake reviews

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Department of Consumer Affairs (DoCA), under the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, on Monday issued guidelines to curb fake and deceptive reviews on e-commerce platforms.

As per the guidelines, e-commerce players like Amazon and Flipkart will have to voluntarily disclose all paid consumer reviews of products and services offered on their platforms, with the government bringing in new norms to curb fake reviews and help buyers make informed decisions.

Union Consumer Affairs Secretary Rohit Kumar Singh on Monday said the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) has

formulated a new standard 'IS 19000:2022' for Online Consumer Reviews - Principles and Requirement for their Collection, Moderation and Publication. Consumers should not be allowed to edit their reviews and use foul language.

However, the government has barred publication of reviews that "have been purchased and/or written by individuals employed for that purpose by the supplier or third party concerned".

The secretary said that companies like Zomato, Swiggy, Reliance Retail, Tata Sons, Amazon, Flipkart, Google, Meta, Mesho, Blinkit and Zepto were part of the consultation process and they have assured compliance with these

standards. Industry bodies like CII, FICCI, Assocham, Nasscom, ASCI, NRAI and CAIT were also consulted while formulating the standards.

Under the guidelines, platforms will be required to set up review administrators to moderate reviews using automated tools or manually to filter out biases and restrict fraudulent reviews. The reviews should also include the publishing date and star rating, the guidelines said.

The BIS standards, prepared after extensive stakeholder consultations and to be effective from November 25, will be voluntary but the government will consider making them mandatory in case the menace of fake reviews con-

tinues on the online platforms.

The standards will be applicable to any organisation which publishes consumer reviews online, including suppliers of products and services that collect reviews from their own customers, a third party contracted by the supplier or an independent third party.

Singh said the BIS will come out with a certification process within the next 15 days to check whether an organisation is complying with these standards. E-commerce players can apply for the certification of this standard with the BIS.

"We are probably the first country in the world to formulate standard for online reviews," Singh said.

Jio gets NCLT approval to acquire Reliance Infratel

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT) on Monday gave its approval to Jio for the acquisition of Reliance Infratel (RITL).

The tribunal asked Jio to deposit Rs 3,720 crore in the State Bank of India (SBI) escrow account to complete the acquisition of RCOM's tower and fibre assets.

On November 6, Jio had proposed to deposit Rs 3,720 crore in an escrow account to complete the acquisition of Reliance Infratel which is undergoing an insolvency resolution process.

Billionaire Mukesh Dhirubhai Ambani-led Jio placed a bid of Rs 3,720 crore



in November 2019 to acquire tower and fibre asset of debt-ridden subsidiary of his younger brother Anil Ambani-managed firm Reliance Communications.

The Committee of Creditors has already approved the resolution plan by Jio on March 4, 2020 with a 100 per cent vote.

370 cos to take part in 'Poultry India Expo' from Nov 23

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Around 370 companies, including 50 foreign firms, will participate in 'Poultry India Expo', touted as South Asia's biggest poultry event, to be held here for three days from November 23.

Indian Poultry Equipment Manufacturers Association (IPEMA) president Chakradhar Rao Potluri on Monday said the companies would showcase their products, including feed, medicine, equipment and their best farming practices during the event which is being held after a gap of three years.

'Removal of export duty will lead to new era of growth for steel industry'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Removal of export duty on steel products will lead to a new era of growth for the domestic steel industry which has gained footprint internationally, Union minister Jyotiraditya Scindia said on Monday.

It has taken years for the domestic steel industry to gain footprint in the international markets, the steel minister said at the 3rd Indian Steel Association (ISA) conference here.

The government has cut the export duty on steel products and iron ore to nil with effect from November 19, 2022 -- six months after imposition of the levy on May 21.

"It has taken if not months then years for our industry to be able to firmly plant its footprint internationally... (On) steel product, the duty has been removed completely from Friday evening enabling a new era for the steel industry to grow," he said.

The decision was taken very judiciously after taking all stakeholders' concerns into account.

BUSINESS BRIEF

IIFL FIN'S 'GOLD LOAN MELA BUMPER DHAMAKA OFFER'
New Delhi: IIFL Finance, one of India's largest non-banking financial companies, has launched 'Gold Loan Mela Bumper Dhamaka' from November 15, 2022 to December 31, 2022. The offers include luxury car, bikes, smartphone and assured gifts for each customer who takes gold loan from IIFL Finance's 2400+ branches across India. Saurabh Kumar, Business Head, Gold Loans, IIFL Finance said, "IIFL Gold Loan remains one of the most preferred gold loan brands in India with very high customer loyalty. To show our gratitude we have launched 'Gold Loan Dhamaka' offers, where gifts worth crores are up for grabs."

EVEIUM TO SET UP OVER 100 SHOWROOMS IN INDIA
Mumbai: Electric two-wheeler maker Eveium said on Monday it plans to set up more than 100 showrooms in the country by December next year. The company currently has 11 dealerships across Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Telangana and Karnataka, among other locations.

India imports 23.4 lakh tons of fertiliser in Oct

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The country imported 23.4 lakh tonne of fertilisers, including urea and Di-ammonium Phosphate (DAP), in October this year, according to official data.

Out of the total fertiliser imports, DAP was maximum at 14.70 lakh tonne, followed by urea at 4.60 lakh tonne, Muriate of Potash (MoP) at 2.36 lakh tonne and complexes at 1.70 lakh tonne in the said month, the data showed.

Meanwhile, the domestic



production of fertilisers was 36.19 lakh tonne in October, lower than the target of 41.54 lakh tonne set for the month.

Against the assessed requirement of 71.47 lakh tonne fertilisers for October, the availability was less at 64.28 lakh tonne, and sales stood at 53.34 lakh tonne during the period, as per the data.

'Average housing prices up by 5% in 8 cities between Jan & Sept this year'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Average housing prices appreciated nearly 5 per cent across eight major cities in the first nine months of this year on account of rise in input costs and a strong revival in demand, according to property brokerage firm PropTiger.Com.

The weighted average prices of residential properties in primary markets across eight cities stood at Rs 6,600-6,800 per square feet at the end of September quarter, as against Rs 6,300-6,500 per square feet at the end of the December quarter, PropTiger.Com said in a statement.

REA India, part of Australia's REA Group and US-based News Corp, owns three real estate portals -- Housing.Com, PropTiger and Makaan.Com.

"THE WEIGHTED AVERAGE PRICES OF RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES IN PRIMARY MARKETS ACROSS EIGHT CITIES STOOD AT RS 6,600-6,800 PER SQUARE FEET AT THE END OF SEPTEMBER QUARTER, AS AGAINST RS 6,300-6,500 PER SQUARE FEET AT THE END OF THE DECEMBER QUARTER"

"We are witnessing a modest price increase in the primary housing market. This is mainly because of the sharp rise in prices of key raw materials like cement and steel," the company's Group CFO Vikas Wadhawan said. Apart from rising input costs, he said a strong revival in demand after the second wave of the Covid pandemic has put an upward pressure on prices.

THREE LIONS ROUT IRAN 6-2

AP ■ DOHA

England made a scintillating start to their World Cup campaign as Bukayo Saka and Jude Bellingham inspired a 6-2 rout of outclassed Iran in Monday's Group B opener in Doha.

Saka and Bellingham were England's driving forces with dynamic displays that underlined their emergence as two of the game's brightest young stars.

Bellingham, 19, shattered Iran's hopes of frustrating England when he rose to head his maiden senior international goal in the first half.

Gareth Southgate's side were in sparkling form at the Khalifa International Stadium and goals from Saka and Raheem Sterling put them in control before half time.

Saka, netted again after the interval and, although Mehdi Taremi struck twice for Iran, Marcus Rashford and Jack Grealish completed the demolition.

There will be far sterner tests to come for England as they bid to win their first major trophy since the 1966 World Cup.

But this was a welcome step in the right direction for Southgate, whose team arrived in Qatar on a six-match winless run that triggered scathing criticism of the Three Lions boss and his perceived negative tactics.

The only concern for Southgate was the sight of Harry Maguire being replaced in the second half after being checked for a potential head injury.

England play their second match against the United States



on Friday and conclude their Group B fixtures against Wales on November 29.

Just hours before kick-off, England revealed captain Harry Kane would not wear a rainbow-themed 'One Love' armband after the Football Association and several other European countries dropped their campaign in support of LGBTQ rights.

Because the armband was not a FIFA-approved piece of kit, it was reported any player wearing it would be booked — a risk

England were apparently unwilling to take.

The match also took place against the background of turmoil in Iran after months of female-led demonstrations sparked by the death in custody of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old woman of Kurdish origin who was arrested by the morality police in Tehran.

Iran's players refused to sing their national anthem in apparent support for anti-government protesters.

Having reached the World

Cup semi-finals in 2018 before losing to Italy in the Euro 2020 final, England are desperate to take the last step to silverware in Doha.

Southgate had urged his team "play on the front foot" and they responded in style, after initially finding their rhythm disrupted by a long delay when Iran goalkeeper Alireza Beiranvand smashed into team-mate Majid Hosseini. Despite being in no state to continue amid fears of a concussion, the bloodied Beiranvand played on before

finally being substituted.

England eventually penned Iran deep inside their own half and Bellingham delivered in the 35th minute.

Sterling found Luke Shaw on the left flank and his cross was perfectly weighted for Bellingham, who looped a fine header into the far corner.

Playing for Birmingham in the Championship just two years ago, the Borussia Dortmund star's goal made him England's second youngest scorer at a World Cup behind Michael

Owen.

Eight minutes later another of England's gifted prodigies doubled the lead.

Maguire headed down a corner and Arsenal forward Saka swivelled to lash a superb left-foot finish into the top corner. Sterling put the result beyond doubt with his first goal at a World Cup in first-half stoppage time.

Bellingham fed Kane, whose pin-point cross was volleyed home by Sterling with the outside of his boot.

Man Utd row 'won't shake' Portugal team: Ronaldo



AP ■ DOHA

Cristiano Ronaldo insisted on Monday that his explosive row with Manchester United would not impact Portugal's chances at the World Cup as they prepare for their opening match in Qatar with Ghana.

Last week superstar Ronaldo lashed out at Premier League club United and the team's coach Erik ten Hag in a TV interview after being relegated to a peripheral role this season.

"I have no doubt that this recent episode, that interview, and other episodes with other players that happen sometimes, can sometimes shake the player but won't shake the team," Ronaldo said at a press conference at the Portugal camp.

Ronaldo, who is set to start his fifth and likely final World Cup, was suspended for the Premier League club's 1-1 draw at Chelsea after refusing to come on as a substitute against Tottenham last month.

The 37-year-old claimed during the interview that he felt "provoked" into that reaction by Ten Hag and on Monday was unrepentant about giving the interview.

"I don't have to worry about what others think, I talk when I want to," he said.

"Everybody in the team knows who I am, what I believe in."

Ronaldo said frosty interaction with his team-mate for club and country Bruno Fernandes, along with images of him grabbing Manchester City's Joao Cancelo by the head, had been being overblown by the media.

"In these final stages of competitions there's always those type of moments," said Ronaldo.

"We were just playing around, I have a great relationship with him. I was asking him, because his plane was late, I asked him if he came by boat."

"The same thing happened with Cancelo, he was a bit sad during training and I grabbed him by the neck and told him 'Come on, you've got this', that's

what I said. And then it became another controversy at your end.

"The whole atmosphere is excellent, it's bulletproof and iron clad. The next player who comes here, you don't have to ask about that, don't talk about me, you don't have to talk about Cristiano Ronaldo... help them out, ask them about the World Cup."

Portugal open their Group H campaign against Ghana on Thursday before facing Uruguay and South Korea.

After missing a friendly with a stomach bug last week, Ronaldo says he is in perfect shape to play.

"I feel great, I have recovered my best shape, we've had good training sessions, the team and myself, I'm ready to start the World Cup in the best possible way," Ronaldo added.

MESSI DEBATE

Ronaldo, who made his Portugal debut in 2003, is poised to appear at his fifth World Cup. He is the all-time top goalscorer in men's international football with 117 strikes in 191 games.

The forward recently appeared in a Louis Vuitton advert alongside long-time rival, Argentina striker Lionel Messi, where the pair were pictured playing a game of chess.

"I would like to be the player to checkmate Messi, it happened in the chess game and in football it would be magic," Ronaldo said with a smile.

Paris Saint-Germain forward Messi has won seven Ballon d'Or awards and many consider him to be the best player of all-time.

"Even if I win the World Cup that debate will continue," said Ronaldo.

"Some people like me more, some people like me less, like in life, some like blondes, some like brunettes. The World Cup will always be a showcase."

"But if you tell me you won't win any more tournaments in your career, I would still be happy, given all I have achieved."

Lewandowski & Poland ready to face Mexico

AP ■ DOHA

As Poland's all-time leading scorer, Robert Lewandowski is still missing something from his collection: A goal at the World Cup.

That could change on Tuesday against Mexico, Poland's opening opponent in Group C.

A prolific scorer who moved to Barcelona after a successful stint with Bayern Munich, Lewandowski has 18 goals in all competitions this season. For Poland, he's scored 76 goals from 134 appearances.

At 34, the World Cup in Qatar may be Lewandowski's last chance for a coveted goal in football's biggest event.

Poland managed only two goals four years ago in Russia,



from Jan Bednarek and Grzegorz Krychowiak, and the team was eliminated from the group stage with losses to Senegal and Colombia.

Poland, ranked No. 26 in the world, didn't even make the 2010 or 2014 World Cups and the team hasn't advanced to the knockout round since 1986.

Poland's best finish was third place in West Germany in 1974 and in Spain in 1982.

Lewandowski scored in the 2-0 playoff victory over Sweden in March, giving Poland a spot at the World Cup. He finished with nine goals in the qualification campaign.

Poland is coming off a 1-0 victory over Chile last week in a final warmup match before the opener against Mexico at Stadium 974. While third-ranked Argentina is the favorite to win Group C, which also includes Saudi Arabia, Tuesday's match could be a good indication of the second team that moves on to the knockout stage.



Messi enters WC as Argentina plays Saudi Arabia

AP ■ DOHA

Lionel Messi begins his legacy-defining World Cup with a game against likely the weakest opponent the Argentina star will face in Qatar.

On a 36-match unbeaten run, Argentina opens the group stage on Tuesday against Saudi Arabia — the second lowest-ranked team at the tournament.

It seems like an ideal chance for Messi to push his international goals tally toward a century — he currently has 91 — in what's surely a forlorn attempt to catch the leading men's mark of 117, owned by great rival Cristiano Ronaldo.

How Argentina coach Lionel Scaloni treats Messi for this game in particular, being staged in the 80,000-seat Lusail Iconic Stadium, might be instructive given the captain's fitness has been managed heading into the World Cup.

Messi trained individually on Friday and Saturday because of what the Argentina football federation described as "muscle overload." That raises doubts over whether Messi will play the full 90 minutes against Saudi Arabia.

Not that he should be needed that long.

The Saudis might have come through Asian qualifying relatively comfortably, but they tend to struggle on football's highest stage, reaching the last 16 only once in their five appearances at the World Cup.

They started the 2018 tournament with a 5-0 loss to Russia, the host nation.

Then again, Argentina opened that World Cup with a disappointing 1-1 draw with tiny Iceland — in a match which saw Messi have a penalty saved — that immediately put pressure on the Albiceleste.

That's something the team

is eager to avoid again.

It's unlikely the Argentines will trip up this time. Copa America champions in 2021 for their first major title in 28 years, a national-record unbeaten run — one short of tying the world record set by Italy from 2018-21.

Scaloni, Argentina's somewhat accidental coach, has turned his team into an extremely well-balanced unit and back to being a major force in world football. Where, many believe, it belongs.

Messi is obviously the star at the center of everything and is looking to finally win the World Cup to boost his standing as arguably football's greatest ever player.

By playing against Saudi Arabia, Messi will become the first Argentine player to play in five World Cups — one more than Diego Maradona and Javier Mascherano.

France face midfield battle against Australia

AP ■ DOHA

Even without the injured Karim Benzema, defending World Cup champion France has plenty of attacking power.

Most teams would love to have either Kylian Mbappe, Antoine Griezmann or Olivier Giroud in their forward line, let alone all three. They have 119 international goals between them, plus an abundance of speed, craft, experience and skill.

But France does not have the same assurances in midfield, and that is where Australia could trouble Les Bleus on Tuesday in their opening Group D match.

France struggled to beat Australia 2-1 when the teams met in their World Cup opener four years ago, and that was with a full-strength midfield.

France coach Didier Deschamps is missing the injured N'Golo Kante and Paul Pogba — his dynamic engine room from 2018. Pogba has played 91 times for France and one of his 11 goals came in the 4-2 win over Croatia in the 2018 final.

While Pogba's form has been up and down since then, Kante's consistency rarely ever dropped and he's arguably an even bigger loss.

A tireless runner with an incredible ability to close down space, surface from anywhere to



win the ball and then release it cleanly, Kante is one of the best defensive midfielders in world football. But he's recovering from a hamstring operation

and won't add to his 53 international appearances.

So Deschamps faces Australia with a revamped midfield where the most experi-

enced player is Adrien Rabiot — Pogba's teammate at Italian club Juventus — with 29 appearances.

The 27-year-old Rabiot finally feels ready to emerge as France's new midfield leader.

That's some turnaround for Rabiot, who four years ago actually asked to be taken off the list of reserve players for the 2018 World Cup. He was dropped for more than two years by Deschamps, who called his decision "a huge mistake."

Now Rabiot will likely line up on the left of a midfield three at Al Janoub Stadium with 22-year-old Aurelien Tchouameni in the center, and either Eduardo Camavinga or 23-year-old Matteo Guendouzi on the right.

European teams say won't wear 'OneLove' WC armband

AP ■ DOHA

England, Germany and five other European teams at the World Cup on Monday abandoned plans to wear a rainbow-themed armband in support of LGBTQ rights, citing the threat of disciplinary action from FIFA.

"FIFA has been very clear that it will impose sporting sanctions if our captains wear the armbands on the field of play," the seven teams said in a joint statement.

Under FIFA rules, players wearing kit that is not authorised by football's world governing body could be shown a yellow card. If that player was then shown a second yellow card, they would be sent off.

The "OneLove" armband due to be worn by the likes of England captain Harry Kane

and Germany counterpart Manuel Neuer is designed as part of a campaign to promote inclusivity.

The armbands had widely been viewed as a symbolic protest against laws in the World Cup host nation Qatar, where homosexuality is illegal.

"As national federations, we can't put our players in a position where they could face sporting sanctions including bookings, so we have asked the captains not to attempt to wear the armbands in FIFA World Cup games," the federations of England, Wales, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland said.

Monday's decision came just hours before England were due to kick off their World Cup campaign Iran and the Netherlands opened their tournament



against Senegal. Wales are also playing later Monday against the United States.

On Saturday, Germany's veteran skipper Neuer insisted he planned to wear the "OneLove" armband regardless

of the threat of sanction.

"We have the complete backing of the (German Football Association), we have no fear," Neuer remarked. When the "OneLove" initiative was announced in September, Kane

said he was "honoured" to join fellow World Cup captains in donning the armband.

"As captains we may all be competing against each other on the pitch, but we stand together against all forms of discrimination," Kane said.

"This is even more relevant at a time when division is common in society. Wearing the armband together on behalf of our teams will send a clear message when the world is watching." Qatar's laws against homosexuality have been long-running controversy in the build-up to the World Cup.

Former Qatari international and World Cup ambassador Khalid Salman sparked outrage earlier this month after calling homosexuality "damage in the mind" in an interview with German television.

Denmark meet Arab nation Tunisia

AP ■ DOHA

When Denmark meets Tunisia in the World Cup on Tuesday it will pit one of the most outspoken critics of the tournament being hosted by Qatar against one of the four Arab nations competing.

The game at Education City Stadium will also mark Christian Eriksen's return to a major tournament after his cardiac arrest at last year's European Championship.

Denmark has lofty goals following a semifinal appearance at Euro 2020 followed by a near-perfect qualifying campaign, while Tunisia is seeking to advance from the group stage for the first time in its sixth World Cup appearance. Since arrival in Qatar, Denmark has been training in kits that are all black to



mourn migrant workers who died building infrastructure for the tournament.

Denmark was also planning on wearing the "One Love" anti-discrimination armband along with other European teams before the campaign was dropped when FIFA threatened to hand out yellow cards.

"Imagine going on the pitch with a clear yellow card to start with. That is not possible and we have to make sure that it's not up to the players to make that decision," Denmark coach Kasper Hjulmand said.

Tunisia coach Jalal Kadri also addressed the armband issue.

"We are in an Arab country with Islam tradition. We have to respect the culture of other people," Kadri said in Arabic through an interpreter.

WILL UMRAN, SAMSON GET A CHANCE IN FINAL T20?

PTI ■ NAPIER

A drastic change in approach for India but question remains if the likes of Umran Malik and Sanju Samson will be tested in third and final T20 against New Zealand here on Tuesday.

India were expected to try out a bunch of players after another World Cup debacle but if the team combination for the second T20 was any indication, they seemed reluctant to start with a clean slate.

Take out the individual brilliance of Suryakumar Yadav, the team would have struggled to post 160 on Sunday, a grim reminder of its travails in the World Cup Down Under.

India's powerplay approach has been a major concern. Rishabh Pant was tried at the top with Ishan Kishan in the second game but the move did not work. Considering Pant's class, one can expect him to fire in the series-decider.

Samson is another batter who can make instant impact but the team did not start with him.

Going by skipper Hardik Pandya's post match comments, the management is unlikely to make too many changes for the third T20. India lead the series 1-0 with the series opener washed out.

"I don't know (about changes for the next game). I'd like to give everyone in the squad a chance but it's just one more game, so it's a bit tough," said Hardik, who is seen as the next full captain in the shortest format.

Shubman Gill was in the running for opening too in the absence of senior players but the team went ahead with two left-handers. He is likely to get his



chances only in the ODI series to follow. Pandya is keen on having more batters who can bowl in the playing eleven and Deepak Hooda has given him one option.

However, the biggest disappointment was the non-inclusion of Umran Malik in the first game. It has been proved that there is a pressing need for an out and out pace bowler in T20 cricket and the New Zealand series is crucial to the development of the Jammu and Kashmir-based tearaway pacer.

In Jasprit Bumrah's absence, Malik, who played three T20s earlier this year, should be exposed to the pressure of playing a top team and given a long run.

Playing his first game in a while, Yuzvendra Chahal showed why he should be a regular in the team but fellow wrist

spinner Kuldeep Yadav might only get to play the ODIs.

Facing a must-win scenario, New Zealand will take the field without their skipper Kane Williamson who will miss the game due to a pre-arranged medical appointment.

In his absence, the team will rely even more on opener Finn Allen and Glenn Phillips down the order to put the opposition under pressure.

The home bowlers leaked way too many runs in the death overs and they will be looking to correct that. New Zealand will also have to find a way to stop Surya, who is in the form of his life.

"Suryakumar played an incredible innings out there. Everyone watched in amazement, some of the shots he played. We have had a few dis-

ussions already and we will have few more tomorrow before the game around how to combat him," said New Zealand head coach Gary Stead.

SQUADS

New Zealand: Finn Allen, Michael Bracewell, Devon Conway (wk), Lockie Ferguson, Daryl Mitchell, Adam Milne, Jimmy Neesham, Glenn Phillips, Mitchell Santner, Tim Southee (c), Ish Sodhi, Blair Tuckner, Mark Chapman.

India: Hardik Pandya (c), Rishabh Pant, Ishan Kishan, Shubman Gill, Deepak Hooda, Suryakumar Yadav, Shreyas Iyer, Sanju Samson, Washington Sundar, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Harshal Patel, Mohammed Siraj, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Arshdeep Singh, Umran Malik.



Pak name mystery spinner for Eng Tests

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan has named uncapped mystery spinner Abrar Ahmed and fast bowler Mohammad Ali in its 18-member squad for next month's three-Test home series against England.

The 24-year-old Ahmed is in top form in the ongoing domestic first-class tournament, where he has picked up 43 wickets at an impressive average of 21.95.

Ali has made his way into the Test squad after grabbing 56 wickets in the last two domestic seasons and his tally of 24 wickets this season are the most by any fast bowler in the tournament.

England will play a Test series in Pakistan 17 years after last touring the country in 2005. Pakistan has twice hosted England during this period in the United Arab Emirates. England toured Pakistan before the T20 World Cup in Australia for a seven-match T20 series and went onto beat Pakistan in the T20 World Cup final at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Mohammad Ali has shown great patience and control, and his numbers speak for his con-

sistency," chief selector Mohammad Wasim said on Monday.

"Abrar is in outstanding form this season, so it does make sense to make him available to (captain) Babar Azam so he can use the confidence and talent of this youngster in the upcoming series."

England will be arriving later this week and will kick-off the tour with the first Test at Rawalpindi from December 1. Multan will host the second Test from December 9-13 before Karachi hosts the final Test from December 17-21.

Two more uncapped bowlers — fast bowler Mohammad Wasim and leg-spinner Zahid Mehmood — are also part of the squad. Both players were part of the squad for the home series against Australia but were not used.

Pakistan will be without key fast bowler Shaheen Afridi after the left-arm pacer underwent appendicitis surgery on Sunday. The selectors have also dropped seasoned leg-spinner Yasir Shah, middle order batter Fawad Alam and fast bowler Hasan Ali after below par performances in Pakistan's two test series, against Australia and Sri Lanka.

Williamson to miss third T20!

PTI ■ NAPIER

New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson will miss the third and final T20 against India to attend a pre-arrange medical appointment.

Mark Chapman has been named as Williamson's replacement in the squad. Senior pacer Tim Southee will lead the side in his absence.

Williamson will rejoin the squad on Wednesday when the ODI squad assembles in Auckland ahead of the series opener at Eden Park on Friday.

New Zealand head coach Gary Stead said the medical appointment had nothing to do with Williamson's recurring elbow issue.

"Kane's been trying to get this booked in for a while now, but unfortunately it hasn't been



able to fit into our schedule," Stead said in a statement issued by New Zealand Cricket.

"The health and well-being of our players and staff is paramount, and we look forward to seeing him in Auckland."

Stead said Chapman was excited to be back after featur-

ing in the recent T20 World Cup and Tri Series in Christchurch.

"He's a quality player who offers good versatility in the order," he added.

The Hong Kong-born cricketer has played seven ODIs and 40 T20s for New Zealand.

India's Devika, Preeti cruise into quarters

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's Devika Ghorpade and Preeti Dahiya posted emphatic victories to enter the quarterfinals of IBA Youth Men's and Women's World Boxing Championships in La Nucia, Spain on Monday.

The Pune-based Devika made light work of Ireland's Margaret Lambe in the 52kg bout. Her impressive attacking display right from the word go forced the referees to stop the contest in the third round and declare the Indian the winner by an RSC verdict.

Preeti, who hails from Haryana, also put up an equally dominant show in the 57kg bout and hardly allowed her opponent Benedicta Maekinen of Finland to score any point before winning it comprehensively by a unanimous decision.

However, it was heart-break for Mahak Sharma (66kg), Sahil Chauhan (71kg) and Bharat Joon (92kg) — whose challenge ended with losses in their respective bouts.

The seventh day of the prestigious tournament will see 10 Indians, including five women, fighting in the quarter-finals.

Kunjarani Devi Thongam (60kg), Lashu Yadav (70kg), Griyviya Devi Hudrom (54kg), Ravina (63kg) and Bhawna Sharma (48kg) will battle in the women's section whereas Vanshaj (63.5kg), Deepak (75kg), Mohit (86kg), Vishwanath Suresh (48kg) and Ashish (54kg) will fight it out in the men's category.

Jagadeesan breaks world record for highest ever List A score

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Tamil Nadu batter Narayan Jagadeesan on Monday shattered the world record for the highest ever individual score in men's List A cricket by hammering a 141-ball 277 against Arunachal Pradesh in the Vijay Hazare Trophy here.

Tamil Nadu won the Group C match by 435 runs, making it the biggest victory margin in a List A match. The previous record was Somerset's 346-run win over Devon in 1990.

The 26-year-old Jagadeesan bettered the record of Alistair Brown's previous high of 268 for Surrey against Glamorgan in 2002. The Indian record for highest List A score of 264 by Rohit Sharma in an ODI against Sri Lanka was also obliterated in the process.

Tamil Nadu's 506 for two in the match is also the highest team total in men's List A cricket,

bettering the previous best of 498 for four by England against the Netherlands earlier this year.

The previous highest List A total in India was 457 for four by Mumbai against Puducherry in Jaipur in 2021.

Veteran India cricketer and Dinesh Karthik congratulated him and said in a tweet: "WORLD RECORD alert. What an amazing effort by @jagadeesan_200 Couldn't be happier for him. Big things await. Sai Sudarshan what an amazing tournament so far. This opening combo is killing it. Well done boys."

Hinting at the gulf in standards, he said in another tweet: "Also on another side note Does it make sense to have the north east teams play the elite teams in the league phase. It just topples the run rates of teams and imagine if a match against



one of these teams gets rained off! Can't they have a separate group and then qualify?"

Arunachal was among the nine teams that joined the domestic circuit from the 2018-19 season.

It rained records as Jagadeesan went on the rampage against the hapless Arunachal bowling attack.

By reaching 200 in 114 balls, he made the joint fastest ever double ton in List A history. Travis Head had taken 114 balls to score his double century for South Australia against Queensland in Australia's Marsh Cup last year.

Jagadeesan's 15 sixes made it the highest by a batter in an innings in Vijay Hazare Trophy, improving on the 12 by Yashasvi Jaiswal during his knock of 203 in the 2019-20 season.

The right-handed batter also made a new mark by scoring his fifth consecutive List A

century.

Besides, he went past Prithvi Shaw (227 vs Puducherry in 2021) for the highest score ever in Vijay Hazare Trophy.

The Tamil Nadu wicket-keeper also became the sixth batter to hit a double ton in India's premier one-day competition.

Jagadeesan's opening wicket partnership of 416 with B Sai Sudharsan, who made 154 (102 balls, 19 fours, 2 six), is also a record for the highest partnership for any wicket in List 'A' cricket.

The previous highest partnership was 372 between Chris Gayle and Marlon Samuels for the second wicket for West Indies against Zimbabwe in an ODI in 2015.

The previous highest partnership in Indian domestic cricket was 338 by Sanju Samson and Sachin Baby for

Kerala against Goa in 2019.

On Saturday, he had joined Kumar Sangakkara, Alviro Petersen and Devdutt Padikkal by scoring his fourth consecutive hundreds in List A cricket.

Jagadeesan's tons in the ongoing Vijay Hazare Trophy tournament have come against Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Andhra and Goa, apart from Monday's monumental knock against Arunachal.

By scoring his fifth ton in the ongoing tournament, Jagadeesan went past the record of four in a single edition. Virat Kohli, Devdutt Padikkal, Prithvi Shaw and Rituraj Gaikwad had hit four hundreds each in previous years.

Jagadeesan was recently released by Chennai Super Kings ahead of the IPL auction next month.

Meanwhile, Arunachal's Chetan Anand leaked as many as 114 runs in his 10 overs.

Alcaraz-Nadal in historic 1-2 in final ATP rankings

AP ■ PARIS

Carlos Alcaraz and Rafael Nadal end the year first and second in the ATP rankings, the first time Spain has had the top two in the final standings.

The Spanish duo captured three of the four Grand Slam titles. Teenager Alcaraz won the US Open and Nadal took the Australian and French crowns.

Nadal will enter 2023 seeking to add to his record 22 Grand Slam titles though hotly pursued by Wimbledon champion Novak Djokovic, who is just one behind his great rival.

The 35-year-old Serbian

finished the year fifth in the rankings but ended with a flourish beating Norway's Casper Ruud to win a record-equalling sixth ATP Finals trophy.

Ruud finishes the year third — displacing Greek Stefanos Tsitsipas — after a highly successful, if frustrating campaign, in which he reached the French and US Open finals.

Rangers sack Van Bronckhorst

AP ■ GLASGOW

Rangers sacked manager Giovanni van Bronckhorst on Monday after just a year in charge at Ibrox.

The former Netherlands captain led the Glasgow giants to the Europa League final in May, but failed to win the Scottish Premiership last season and leaves with Rangers nine points behind Celtic in the title race.

"I want to thank Gio for the hard work he has put in over the last 12 months and, especially, the achievements of taking the club to the Europa League final and winning the Scottish Cup last season," said



Rangers chairman Douglas Park in a statement.

"Unfortunately, recent results have not met neither our nor Gio's expectations, and we have taken this difficult decision today. Everyone at Rangers wishes Gio every success in the future."

Van Bronckhorst, who played for Rangers between 1998 and 2001, replaced Steven Gerrard in November last year when the latter departed Ibrox to take charge of Aston Villa.

Despite a positive start, Rangers let a six-point lead over Celtic slip away as Ange Postecoglou claimed the title in his first season in charge of the Hoops.



Door opens for Warner's Oz captaincy ban to be lifted

AP ■ SYDNEY

Cricket Australia amended its player code of conduct policy on Monday, paving the way for David Warner to apply to have his lifetime leadership ban lifted.

The dynamic opener and former Test vice-captain was banned from any leadership role in Australia over his part in the Cape Town ball tampering affair in 2018.

He was also slapped with a one-year playing suspension, but bounced back to reclaim his place in the national side across all three formats of the game.

Under Cricket Australia's amended policy, Warner will now be able to request a review of his captaincy ban by a panel of three code of conduct commissioners. The 36-year-old must show that "exceptional circumstances exist to justify modifying a sanction", including demonstrating remorse and evidence of improved behaviour.

The new rule "acknowledges that players and player support personnel are capable of genuine reform or rehabilitation".

It is intended to provide the player or player support personnel with an opportunity to resume their previously held positions or responsibilities in specific circumstances," CA added.

Under the previous code of conduct, players had no right to review a sanction once it had been accepted.

Pat Cummins is currently Australia's Test and ODI captain and Aaron Finch skipper of the T20 side.

A lifting of Warner's ban would make him a prime candidate to take over the T20 captaincy should Finch step down, as he recently did from the 50-over format.

Warner would also be in the mix, alongside Steve Smith, Josh Hazlewood and Alex Carey, to deputise for Cummins or act as his vice-captain. It could also allow him to lead his Big Bash League side Sydney Thunder.

Djokovic finishes troubled year with 'satisfying' ATP Finals title

AP ■ TURIN

Novak Djokovic said winning a record-equalling sixth ATP Tour Finals title on Sunday was a "deeply satisfying" ending to his troubled and truncated year.

The Serb beat Norwegian Casper Ruud 7-5, 6-3 in Turin to match Roger Federer's record of six titles in the year-ending tournament for the top-ranked players.

The 35-year-old Serb, the oldest player to win the Finals, ended in style after a season in which he missed two majors because of his vaccine status.

"It feels deeply satisfying and, at the same time, a huge relief because of the circumstances that I have been through this year, situations earlier this year, of course, with Australia," he said.

"We don't need to go back. We know what happened."

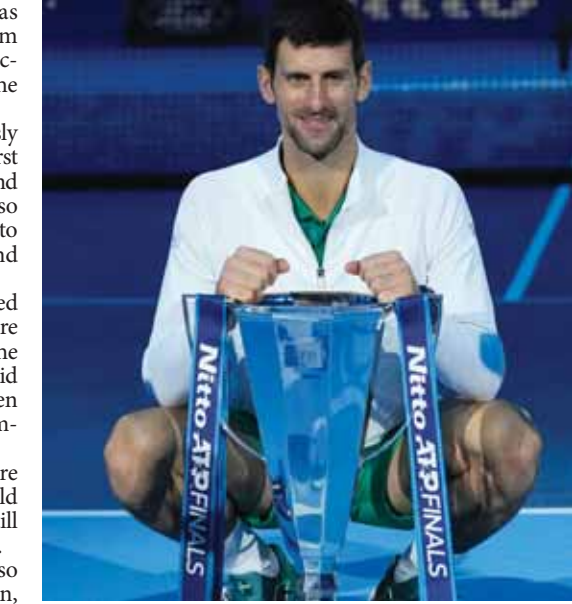
In January, Djokovic was detained and deported from Australia over his Covid non-vaccinated status and missed the Australian Open.

"That had an effect obviously on my start of the year. For the first several months, I was trying to find that balance game-wise but also mentally in order to be able to come back to the court and find that tennis level that I need."

Djokovic was initially barred from returning to Australia before 2025 but earlier in the week the new government in Canberra said the nine-time Australian Open champion would be free to compete in January's tournament.

"I don't know what the future holds but I know that what I hold in my mind is a huge hunger still to win trophies," said Djokovic.

The win in Turin, which also brings a cheque for \$4.7 million,



came seven years after his last ATP Finals victory and will lift him from eighth to fifth in Monday's new rankings at the end of a season in which he also won Wimbledon. Carlos Alcaraz, who missed the finals injured, is number one.

"In my mind I always see myself as the best player in the world, of course," he said. "I'm not. I'm fifth. This week I probably am. Overall the rankings are showing who had the best year, and Alcaraz is the No. 1 in the world."

For the 23-year-old Ruud it was a third near-miss of the year. He also lost the finals of the French and US Opens.

"In the end it's been disappointing to end up losing these big finals," he said.

"Overall if you gave me an offer to end the year at No. 3, play