

NATION 5

INDIA STANDS FOR RULE-BASED  
INDO-PACIFIC, SAYS RAJNATH

WORLD 8

RUSSIA RAINS MISSILES ON  
RECAPTURED UKRAINIAN CITY

MONEY 10

GOVT RELEASES ₹17K CR GST  
COMPENSATION TO STATES

NEW DELHI, SATURDAY NOVEMBER 26, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3

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NZ BEAT INDIA  
BY 7 WICKETS  
IN FIRST ODI  
12 SPORT

## CAPSULE

MAN DROWNS RAT: ACTIVIST  
DIVES IN DRAIN, FILES CASE

**Budaun:** A police station here received an unusual complaint on Friday, seeking action against a youth for drowning a rat. According to police, a youth identified as Manoj Kumar had thrown a rat in a drain after tying a stone to its tail. The incident was reported by an animal activist Vikendra Sharma who entered the ditch to save the rodent, which died after some time.

DON'T PUT CLOCK BACK:  
GOVT TO SC ON NOTE BAN

**New Delhi:** Resisting the Supreme Court's attempt to revisit the 2016 demonetisation exercise, the Government said on Friday the court cannot decide a matter when no tangible relief can be granted by way of "putting the clock back" and "unscrambling a scrambled egg". The remarks by the Attorney General came after the apex court asked the Union Government to explain whether it consulted the Central Board of Reserve Bank of India before undertaking demonetisation of ₹500 and ₹1,000 denomination notes in 2016.

26/11 ANNIVERSARY:  
SECURITY BEEFED UP

Railway Protection Force personnel with a sniffer dog check luggage of passengers waiting at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus on the eve of the 14th anniversary of 26/11 terror attacks in Mumbai on Friday. PTI

Correcting injustice to  
unsung heroes: Modi

Ours is history of warriors, victory, sacrifice, selflessness and bravery: PM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

India is correcting its past mistakes by celebrating its varied heritage and remembering its unsung bravehearts who were lost in the pages of history that was written as part of a conspiracy during the colonial era, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Friday.

Addressing the closing ceremony of the year-long 400th birth anniversary celebrations of Lachit Barphukan and releasing a book on him "Lachit — Assam's Hero who Halted the Mughals", the Prime Minister said the history of India was not just about slavery but also about its warriors.

Stating that Assamese warrior and General Lachit Barphukan had kept national interest above blood relations and did not hesitate to punish his close relative, Modi said "his life taught us that instead of nepotism and dynasty, the country should be supreme".

"India's history is the history of warriors, the history of victory, the history of sacrifice, selflessness and bravery," Modi said.

Barphukan (November 24,



Prime Minister Narendra Modi being presented a memento by Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma during the closing ceremony of the year-long celebrations of the 400th birth anniversary of Lachit Barphukan, at Vigyan Bhawan, in New Delhi on Friday  
Ranjan Dimri / Pioneer

1622-April 25, 1672) was the famous General of the Royal Army of the Ahom Kingdom of Assam, who defeated the Mughals and successfully halted their ever expanding ambitions under Aurangzeb.

The PM said unfortunately even after Independence, the history that was written as part of a conspiracy during the

colonial era continued to be taught. "After Independence there was a need to change the agenda of slavery but it did not happen," Modi said.

He said in every corner of the country, brave sons and daughters fought oppressors but this history was intentionally suppressed.

"Today, India has broken

the shackles of colonialism and is moving forward, celebrating our heritage and remembering our heroes with pride," he said.

"Lachit's life inspires us to rise above dynasty and think about the country. He had said that no relationship is bigger than the country," he said.

Continued on Page 2

Sisodia not charged,  
liquor scam fake: CM

In first chargesheet in  
Delhi Excise case, CBI  
names 7 persons

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

The CBI on Friday filed its first chargesheet against seven accused, including two arrested businessmen and two excise officials in the Delhi Excise policy scam case. Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, named in the CBI FIR as the prime accused, does not figure in the present chargesheet.

Besides the two arrested businessmen — Vijay Nair and Abhishek Boinpally — those named in the chargesheet are Arun RPillai, Mootha Gautham, Sameer Mahendru (promoter of liquor company Indospirit), then Excise Deputy Commissioner Kuldeep Singh and then Excise Assistant Commissioner Narendra Singh.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal asserted that attempts were made to frame his deputy Sisodia in the "fake" excise policy scam after his name did not figure in the CBI's first chargesheet, with the Aam Aadmi Party calling it "Satyamev Jayate" (truth alone triumphs).

On his part, Sisodia demanded that Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena and Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar be sacked, alleging that he has



been a "victim of their witch hunt". Hitting out at the BJP, Sisodia said the party sent the CBI and the ED, and raided his residence, but never found anything.

AAP chief spokesperson Saurabh Bhargava also lashed out at the saffron party for "gross abuse of legal procedure and investigative agencies for political gains".

The AAP also asked the BJP to tender an apology to Delhiites and the countrymen for "blatantly lying about the issue" and called Saxena and Kumar the "masterminds" behind the "conspiracy" against the Delhi Government.

"Manish's name is not in the CBI chargesheet. The whole case is fake. Nothing was found in the raids. A total of 800 officers found nothing in the probe for four months. Manish offered hope of a good future to crores of poor children in the country through a revolution in education. I am sorry that a conspiracy was hatched to defame such a person by implicating him in a false case,"

Kejriwal tweeted in Hindi.

The accused have been charged under Indian Penal Code (IPC) section 120-B (criminal conspiracy) and provisions of bribery under the Prevention of Corruption Act, officials said.

"Further investigation is continuing to investigate the role of FIR named accused and other persons on various allegations, including conspiracies with other licensees, money trails, cartelisation and larger conspiracies in the formulation and implementation of the Excise Policy," the CBI said in a statement. This means Sisodia may still not be off the hook.

The CBI has got an alleged "close associate" of Sisodia — Dinesh Arora — to spill beans by turning approver in the case, officials said.

Arora recorded his statement under section 164 of CrPC before the magistrate and was granted a pardon by a special court for helping in the investigation.

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Meghalaya-Assam border still  
tense; 4 cops among 7 injured

PNS ■ GUWAHATI/SHILLONG

After violence on Assam-Meghalaya border on Tuesday, tension continues to grip the hill State as arson and vandalism were reported late on Thursday. Violence erupted in Shillong shortly after a demonstration and a candlelight vigil concluded on Thursday night.

Police had to use teargas shells to bring the situation under control as unidentified miscreants lobbed petrol bombs at a police bus and at a jeep. They also pelted stones at the police men injuring four of them. Three civilians were also assaulted nearby, reports said.

Shops and business establishments run by non-tribals in Khyndailad, Lewduh and certain other areas in Shillong has remained shut since Thursday, apprehending violence.

Superintendent of Police of East Khasi Hills district Vivek Syiem said a traffic police booth was torched, a bus ferrying CRPF personnel was attacked, and a contingent of cops was hurled with stones



and petrol bombs amid a candlelight vigil for the victims. Seven people, including four cops, were reportedly injured in the violence late on Thursday.

Echoing similar sentiments, Deputy Commissioner (East) of Guwahati Police Sudhakar Singh said, "Yesterday in Shillong, the public burnt police vehicles. The situation is not very good. That's why we are advising people not to travel to Meghalaya."

Amid the lingering apprehension of violence, Assam Police on Friday issued a fresh advisory asking people not to travel to Meghalaya as the sit-

uation is still "not very good" in the neighbouring State.

Cachar Superintendent of Police Nomal Mahatta said a restriction on people and vehicles from Assam entering Meghalaya through his district also is in force.

However, in what could be a relief to the people in Meghalaya, the Assam Petroleum Mazdoor Union (APMU) decided to resume transportation of fuel to the neighbouring State, which it suspended on Thursday, following assurance of security of tankers and crew from the hill State.

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SC rejects NIA's plea  
against Teltumbde bailPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday dismissed NIA's plea challenging the bail granted by the Bombay High Court to activist Anand Teltumbde in the Elgar Parishad-Maoist links case.

A bench of Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and Justice Hima Kohli refused to interfere with the High Court's November 18 order granting bail to 73-year-old Teltumbde, who was arrested in the case in April 2020.

"We will not interfere," the bench said, while dismissing the plea filed by the NIA challenging the bail granted to him. "The petition is dismissed. However, the observations contained in the impugned judgment of the high court shall not be treated as conclusive final findings at the trial," the apex court noted.

During the hearing, the bench asked Additional Solicitor General (ASG) Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the NIA, about the "specific role" attributable to Teltumbde in the case.

"What is the specific role



attributable to him which will bring the provisions of the UAPA (Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act) into operation?" the bench asked. "You say that he is involved in Dalit mobilisation. Is that really preparatory to a terrorist act?" the bench asked. The ASG said he is an academican and a "front face".

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Teltumbde, said the documents which the ASG referred to were not recovered from the activist. "Wherever there is an issue of Dalit, he is out there as an academician to deal with it. If in the process there is some organisation which, according to them, is closely associated with some other organisation and I am speaking there as an academic, that does not make me (Teltumbde) a terrorist," Sibal argued.

PIO nurse who killed Oz  
woman nabbed in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police Special Cell arrested a 38-year-old Australian citizen of Indian origin with a million dollar bounty on his head for allegedly killing an Australian woman in Queensland in 2018.

According to the police, accused Rajwinder Singh, a nurse, fled to India days after killing Toyah Cordingley, 24. Singh was produced before the city court which remanded him in five-day judicial custody. Singh was sent to jail till November 30.

The Queensland Police had on November 3 declared a \$1 million reward for information about Singh, who had fled to India. This is believed to be the largest ever reward offered by the Queensland police.

Singh will now face extradition proceedings and may be sent back to Australia.

Police said based on inputs shared by CBI, nodal agency of the Interpol in India, and their Australian counterparts, the accused was nabbed from near GT Karnal Road at 6 am.

Continued on Page 2



Australian citizen of Indian-origin Rajwinder Singh, accused of killing a woman four years ago in Australia, after his arrest by the Delhi Police in New Delhi on Friday  
PTI

In a first, Egypt Prez  
R-day chief guestPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■  
NEW DELHI

Signalling its efforts to further enhance political and defence ties with Egypt, India has invited its President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi to be the chief guest on Republic Day on January 26 next year.

It is the first time an Egyptian head of state will be the chief guest at the grand event.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar extended the invitation to Sisi during his visit to Cairo in October, sources said on Friday.

Sisi has been the Egypt's President since 2014. The country is the second largest economy in Africa. This year, India and Egypt celebrated the



75th anniversary of diplomatic relations.

Sisi last visited India in 2016. Sisi had met Prime Minister Modi at the Third India-Africa Forum Summit in New Delhi in October 2015. The same year both the leaders met on the sidelines of the United Nations General Assembly session in New York.  
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## World Cup host's shortest journey ends!

AP ■ DOHA

World Cup host Qatar was eliminated on Friday, just six days and two matches into the tournament. Qatar can't advance to the knockout round after losing to Ecuador in the opener and to Senegal on Friday. It was the earliest exit by a host nation in the World Cup's 92-year history. Qatar's fate was sealed after the Netherlands and Ecuador drew 1-1 in the other Group A match.

Qatar still has one more match to play against the Netherlands on Tuesday. Qatar had previously made unwanted history as the first host to lose the opening game of the tournament and, while South Africa in 2010 is the only other host team to be eliminated in the group stage, the South Africans at least went out with



Senegal players in background celebrate their 3-1 win as Qatar players show their disappointment, after the World Cup group A soccer match between Qatar and Senegal, at the Al Thumama Stadium in Doha on Friday  
AP

a win and a draw from their three games.

The tiny Gulf nation spent around \$220 billion on the first World Cup in West Asia, according to estimates, but has found that great wealth can't buy a world-class soccer team. Qatar had never qualified for the game's biggest tournament before winning the right to host it 12 years ago.

Every squad member for the 2019 Asian champion plays for a local club. Senegal, on the other hand, got its campaign back on track after losing 2-0 to the Netherlands in the first match.

Senegal sent the host team to a second loss at its home tournament on Friday after seizing on a defensive error from the Qatar team for the opening goal in a 3-1 victory.

It has confirmed Qatar as the worst-performing host

team in the 92-year history of the World Cup.

Against Qatar, Senegal striker Boulaye Dia drilled in the first goal after defender Boualem Khoukhi tried to make a clearance under no pressure, didn't connect properly and landed on his backside. The ball dribbled away from Khoukhi. And Dia, grateful for the gift, lashed it in.

Famara Diedhiou made it 2-0 at the start of the second half with a header from a corner while two Qatar defenders failed to stop him.

Qatar was denied a penalty and the chance of the lead before Dia's goal, though, when Akram Afif was clear on the left and then knocked over by a charging Ismaila Sarr. Referee Antonio Mateu of Spain didn't award a penalty even though replays suggested that contact was made.



# ‘Maha-K’taka border row BJP’s damage control of Guv’s jibe’

Bomma raking up border dispute to divert people’s attention from Guv Koshyari’s insult to Shivaji, says Uddhav’s Sena

■ MUMBAI

In a new twist to the revived controversy over the Maharashtra-Karnataka border dispute, the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) on Friday accused the Basavaraj Bommai Government of raking up the issue to divert the people’s attention from the “insults” heaped by Governor Bhagat Singh Koshyari and BJP spokesperson Sudhanshu Trivedi on Maratha warrior Chhatrapati Shivaji.

Talking to media persons, Shiv Sena (UBT) spokesperson Sanjay Raut charged that Karnataka chief minister Basavaraj Bommai had suddenly raked up the issue of Maharashtra-Karnataka border row. “There appeared to be a conspiracy behind the “sudden” attack by the Karnataka government against the Eknath Shinde dispensation over the border row between the two states,” Raut said.

“Though people living in the border areas of the two states want to join Maharashtra, we had as such no issue with Karnataka in recent times. But, the Karnataka chief minister appeared to have raked up the border row to divert the attention of the people from the controversy over the insults heaped on Chhatrapati Shivaji by Koshyari and Trivedi,” Raut said.

Raut’s statement came a day after Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray said that Centre did not recall him within next few days, his party would call for a “Maharashtra bandh” or organise a massive protest morcha to demand the Governor’s recall from the state.

On his part, Raut has already met NCP chief Sharad Pawar. However, the three Maha Vikas Aghadi partners - Shiv Sena (UBT), NCP and Congress – have not taken a collective decision on calling



for a “Maharashtra bandh”

Raut said that earlier Koshyari had in the past insulted Marathi-speaking people with his comment that Mumbai would not remain the country’s financial capital if Gujaratis and Marwaris left the city.

Raut said that the people of Maharashtra would tolerate the “insults” heaped on Chhatrapati Shivaji. “People will not forget the insult to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj no matter how much you try” he said.

As the Opposition’s protests over Koshyari’s recent statement that that Maratha warrior Chhatrapati Shivaji was an icon of the “past era” continued, Uddhav had on

Thursday launched a stinging attack on the Governor, saying that the later “has lost his mind” and wondered as “to who is the brain behind him”.

Mincing no words in his criticism of Koshyari, the Senma (UBT) chief had said: “If the Centre did not recall the Governor, then the people across the state –cutting across the political lines – will have to come together to demand his recall. Given that he continues to heap insults on Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj and Maharashtra, we can ill-afford to keep quiet. This Governor is a parcel sent via Amazon to Maharashtra by the Centre. Let’s wait for another three to four days.

# Imitating Amitabh’s voice, image, traits illegal: Delhi HC

■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Friday passed an interim order restraining unauthorised use of actor Amitabh Bachchan’s voice, image or any other trait exclusively identifiable with him by any individual. The court’s order came on a lawsuit by the veteran actor alleging exploitation of his “publicity rights as a celebrity” by several individuals, including the persons behind a “KBC lottery”.

Justice Navin Chawla said it is undisputed that Bachchan is a well-known personality and is likely to suffer an irreparable loss and disrepute if relief is not granted at this stage. “I am of the view that the plaintiff has made out a prima facie case for grant of ex parte interim relief,” the Judge said. Senior lawyer Harish Salve represented

Bachchan.

The court directed telecom authorities to take action to pull down websites providing the content in violation of Bachchan’s rights. It also directed telecom service providers to block access to telephone numbers circulating infringing messages.

Salve said the relief of injunction was sought not only against the individuals named in the lawsuit but also against “john doe” parties or unknown parties who may be exploiting Bachchan’s publicity rights.

He said besides the lottery, domain names were registered under the actor’s name; there was “Amitabh Bachchan Video Call” and even T-shirts bearing his photographs.

Salve cited many misuse Bachchan’s popular TV game show Kaun Banega Crorepati (KBC).

## Now Aligarh can develop Defence equipment: Yogi

■ LUCKNOW | ALIGARH

Aligarh, famous for manufacturing locks and hardware, has the capacity to develop defence equipment to safeguard the country as well and efforts must be made in that direction, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said on Friday.

The Chief Minister said, “A course of defence studies must begin in the Maharaja Mahendra Pratap Singh University. The airport in Jewar will make the area a hub of logistics and transport, giving jobs to lakhs of youth.”

# EC orders suspension of 2 additional district poll officials on graft charges

■ NEW DELHI

The Election Commission on Friday ordered the suspension of two additional district election officials after allegations of “electoral fraud” in Karnataka and directed officials for a review of the deletions and additions in the electoral rolls of three Assembly seats in the State.

The EC also appointed officers from outside the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP), under which the three Assembly seats fall, to oversee the exercise of ensuring the purity of the electoral rolls.

The Election Commission directives came a day after the Congress petitioned the poll



authority, seeking a detailed investigation into the “voter information theft fraud” in Karnataka.

The poll watchdog directed the chief electoral officer to share a list of all deletions and additions made to the electoral rolls of the Shivajinagar, Chickpet and Mahadevapura Assembly seats after January 1, 2022 with all the recognised political parties so as to enable them to file claims and objections.

The Congress had alleged that 27 lakh names were deleted and 11 lakh voters added to the voters’ lists of the three Assembly constituencies, claiming that the employees of a private company had collected voters’ data impersonating as government officials.

## MCG to launch drive to free encroached streets in G’gram

■ GURUGRAM

In a bid to remove encroachments on city roads by illegal street vendors, the Municipal Corporation of Gurugram (MCG) will soon conduct a massive drive against hawkers operating outside designated vending zones.

According to the MCG officials, a 20-member team has been formed headed by Deputy municipal commissioner Vijaypal Yadav, to shift registered street vendors operating in unauthorised areas to designated vending sites.

Carts of vendors who haven’t registered with MCG will be confiscated, MCG officials said.

“A total of 10,000 street vendors have registered with the corporation, which has set up 273 designated street vending zones with a capacity to accommodate around 4500 vendors. Around 40% of carts have been shifted to concerned vending zones of the MCG,” MCG commissioner Mukesh Kumar Ahuja.

# Imposter backs Shraddha killing, held

■ LUCKNOW

With entire nation is still to recover from the shock of the brutal murder of Shraddha Walkar in the national capital, a 26-year-old youth from Bulandshahr surprised everyone by allegedly making inflammatory statements to justify the sensational killing.

The Bulandshahr police

on Friday arrested the accused, identified as Vikas Kumar, a resident of the district, and later booked him for involvement in deliberate and malicious acts with the intent to outrage religious feelings. Interestingly, the accused had identified himself as Rashid Khan before the media but later he was found to be Vikas Kumar.

Kumar told a journalist

that if a man is not in a good mood, he can chop a woman into 35 pieces.

Senior Superintendent of Police of Bulandshahr, Shlok Kumar, said, “Two days back, a video came to light in which a youth, who claimed to be Rashid Khan, was found making objectionable comments. A case was registered at the Sikandrabad police station.”

# PIO nurse who killed Oz woman...

From Page 1

The development was confirmed by Queensland Police on Twitter.

“INTERPOL had issued a Red Corner Notice (RCN), Control No. A-2639/3-2021 regarding the said accused; the CBI/INTERPOL, New Delhi had got issued a non-bailable warrant, under The Extradition Act, against his name from the Patiala House Court on 21/11/2022,” an official statement from the police read.

“On 25/11/2022 at 06:00 hrs, based upon inputs shared by CBI/INTERPOL and Australian counterparts, in an intelligence-based operation, the accused was apprehended from near GT Karnal Road and arrested by Special Cell u/s

41(1) CrPC,” it added.

Between October 28 and November 8 this year, Queensland police officers travelled to India and were working in tandem with agencies here to arrest Singh.

Toyah Cordingley (24) was walking her dog on Wangetti Beach in Queensland when she was killed in October 2018. Singh, who worked as a nurse in Innisfail, was the key suspect in the case. He fled Australia two days after Cordingley was killed, leaving behind his job, wife and three children. The Queensland Police had also released images of Singh at the Sydney International Airport earlier this month, just moments before he left the country. According to reports, Queensland Police had also set up a WhatsApp link to receive tips directly.

## Meghalay a-Assam...

The authorities have decided to extend the ban on mobile internet service in seven Meghalaya districts till Saturday morning. The suspension was imposed following Tuesday’s violence to check spread of rumours which could further worsen the law and order situation.

Violence had erupted at Mukroh village near the disputed border between the two States in the early hours of Tuesday after a truck allegedly laden with illegally felled timber was intercepted by forest guards from Assam. Six persons, including five tribal villagers from Meghalaya, a forest guard from Assam, were killed.

On Thursday, Meghalaya

Chief Minister Conrad Sangma met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi. Shah assured him that a CBI probe will be initiated into the border violence.

Several social organisations and student associations of Meghalaya, including the influential Khasi Students Union (KSU) and the Federation of Khasi Jaintia and Garo People, declared a “non-cooperation movement” following the incident.

“We urged our brothers and sisters working in both Central and State Governments to support us by not attending offices on Friday as a mark of respect to the victims of extra-judicial firing at Mukroh by Assam Police,” KSU General Secretary Donald V Thabab said.

In Meghalaya capital Shillong, attendance was thin in both Central and State Government offices. The situation is the same in the seven districts of Khasi Hills and Jaintia Hills region, officials

said.

The violence had led to the suspension of fuel supply from Assam to Meghalaya.

The Assam Petroleum Mazdoor Union had sent letters to IOC, HPCL and BPCL, informing them of its decision to not load fuel in tankers meant for Meghalaya following attacks on trucks supplying non-petroleum products in the last two days. However, the decision was changed on Friday.

“We have received assurance from the Meghalaya authorities that safety and security of the tankers, our drivers and other staff will be ensured. But we have also told them that if any untoward situation happens, we will immediately stop the vehicles once again,” APMU general secretary Ramen Das said.

Sangma on Friday said there is no shortage of petrol and diesel in the State and requested all citizens not to resort to panic buying of any essential commodities.

## In a first, Egypt...

From Page 1

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had visited Egypt in September this year and held talks with his Egyptian counterpart General Mohamed Zaki on the entire spectrum of their bilateral defence relations.

Both the leaders also signed an MoU to focus on joint training, defence co-production and maintenance of equipment. Egypt is keen on buying India’s indigenously designed and manufactured Tejas light combat aircraft (LCA).

Given the growing ties between the two countries, Egypt was also invited to the India-Africa Defence Dialogue and Indian Ocean Region (IOR) Defence Ministers’ Conclave that took place on the sidelines of the 12th DefExpo in Gandhinagar, Gujarat in October. Moreover, Egypt is among the nine countries invited by India for the G-20 summit to be hosted in New Delhi in September 2023.

The air force of the two countries have close co-operation and IAF pilots trained Egyptian pilots from the 1960s until 1984. Egypt regularly provides transit facilities to IAF and Indian Navy aircraft ferrying to and from Russia, Europe and the USA.

Moreover, Egypt is among the nine countries invited by India for the G-20 summit to be hosted in New Delhi in September 2023.

Egypt is one of India’s most important trading partners in the African continent. Despite the pandemic, the volume of trade declined only marginally to US \$ 4.5 billion in 2019-20 and to US \$ 4.15 billion in 2020-21.

Amid the Russia-Ukraine conflict, India sent a wheat consignment to the country. Before the conflict, Egypt used to import almost 80 per cent of its wheat supplies from Russia and Ukraine. In April this year, the Egyptian Cabinet announced the inclusion of India in the list of accredited countries which can supply wheat to Egypt, thus ending a long pending non-tariff barrier.

# Correcting injustice... Sisodia not charged, liquor...

From Page 1

Terming Veer Lachit’s exploits a glorious chapter of the history of Assam, the Prime Minister said, “I salute this great tradition on the occasion of the festival of India’s eternal culture, eternal valour and eternal existence.”

The Prime Minister reiterated India’s mood to get rid of the mentality of slavery and take pride in its heritage. India is not only celebrating its cultural diversity but also acknowledging the unsung heroes and heroines of its history. “Immortal sons of Maa Bharati like Lachit are the inspiration of fulfilling the resolutions of the Amrit Kaal. They make us familiar with the identity and glory of our history and also spur us to dedicate ourselves to the nation,” the Prime Minister added.

Bravehearts like Lachit showed that forces of fanaticism and terror perish but the immortal light of Indian life remains eternal, the Prime Minister emphasised.

The Prime Minister complimented the Assam Government for taking steps to celebrate the legacy of its heroes. He mentioned the projects like a museum and a memorial in Assam to honour its heroes. He said such steps will help the younger generation to know the history of sacrifice and bravery.

The Prime Minister said, “Lachit’s life inspires us to live the mantra of ‘Nation First’. His life inspires us to rise above self and to give the highest priority to the national interest.

“His life teaches us that instead of nepotism and dynasty, the country should be supreme.”

The CBI, after registering a case against 15 persons in August this year, had carried out searches at various places.

It is alleged the Delhi Government’s policy to grant licences to liquor traders was influenced in favour of certain dealers who had allegedly paid bribes for it, a charge strongly refuted by the AAP.

Besides Sisodia, who holds the excise portfolio in the Delhi Government, the CBI has named then Excise Commissioner Arava Gopi Krishna, then Deputy Excise Commissioner Anand Kumar Tiwari, Assistant Excise Commissioner Pankaj Bhatnagar, nine businessmen and two companies as accused.

The agency has alleged that Sisodia and other accused public servants recommended and took decisions relating to the Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22 without the approval of competent authority with “an intention to extend undue favours to the licensees post tender”.

The agency alleged Amit Arora, director of Buddy Retail Pvt Limited in Gurgaon, Dinesh Arora and Arjun Pandey are “close associates” of Sisodia and were “actively involved in managing and diverting the undue pecu-

niary advantage collected from liquor licensees” for the accused public servants.

The CBI has alleged that Radha Industries managed by Dinesh Arora received Rs 1 crore from Sameer Mahendru of Indospirits.

A case was registered on August 17. Sisodia and others including then Commissioner (Excise), then Deputy Commissioner (Excise), then Assistant Commissioner (Excise), 10 liquor licensees, their associates and unknown others on a reference from the Union Home Ministry related to alleged irregularities in framing and implementation of the excise policy.

It was further alleged that irregularities were committed including in modifications in Excise Policy, extending undue favours to the licensees, waiver/reduction in licence fee and extension of L-1 license without approval among others, the CBI said.

It was also alleged that illegal gains on account of these acts were diverted to concerned public servants by private parties by making false entries in their books of accounts. Searches were earlier conducted at premises of the accused in various locations which led to recovery of incriminating documents/articles and digital records, the agency added.

THE PIONEER

CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Nikki D/O Anil Kumar Das R/O A-85, Laxmi Park, Nangloi, West Delhi-110041 Have Changed My Name From Nikki Kumari To Nikki For All Future Purposes.

PD(90206)A

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to all concern that Capt. PRADEEP PAL S/O SHRI PRITPA PAL GUPTA R/O FLAT NO. H-84, BLOCK-H, JALVAYU VIHAR, SECTOR-25, NOIDA, GAUTAM BUDH NAGAR, U.P., who is the original allottee of TYPE-VI, FLAT NO. H-84, SECOND FLOOR, BLOCK-H, JALVAYU VIHAR, SECTOR-25, NOIDA, GAUTAM BUDH NAGAR, U.P., had sold the said property on General Power of Attorney basis to DR. AMBIKA PRASAD DASH S/O LATE LOKNATH DASH R/O POWER MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE, SECTOR-16A, NOIDA, GAUTAM BUDH NAGAR, U.P. which is registered on dated 12-02-2004, and the Agreement to Sell was executed, which was not Registered. So it is informed to all concerned that the said flat in going to the transferred in favour of MRS. DIPTI DASH W/O SHRI AMBIKA PRASAD DASH R/O POWER MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE, SECTOR-16A, NOIDA, GAUTAM BUDH NAGAR, U.P., on basis of General Power of attorney. If any one has/have any objection he/she may file his/her objection along with the sufficient proof in the Group Housing Department of Noida authority within 15 days from the date of Publication of this Notice.

DR. AMBIKA PRASAD DASH

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that MRS. KAUSHLYA DEVI W/O MR. BASANT KUMAR is owner of through NOTARIZED GENERAL POWER ATTORNEY OF UPPER GROUND FLOOR, WITHOUT ROOF RIGHTS, BUILT-ON PLOT NO. RZ-F-2/22TA, OUT OF KHASRA NO. 458, SITUATED AT VILLAGE NAGARPUR, COLONY KNOWN AS GALI NO. 03, MAHAVIR ENCLAVE NEW DELHI., vide NOTARIZED GENERAL POWER ATTORNEY dated 05.01.2001, All persons are hereby informed that MRS. POONAM AGRAWAL & MR. PANKAJ KUMAR is purchasing the above-mentioned property from MRS. KAUSHLYA DEVI W/O MR. BASANT KUMAR by way of REGISTERED SALE DEED of the said above mentioned property with FULLERTON INDIA HOME FINANCE COMPANY, General public hereby informed that if anybody has any charge/interest/Title in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Mrs. Prasoon Lata, Advocate SG Associates (Law Firm) Unit No 7, Basement, Plot No C 78 Sector 2, Noida, UP 201301 E-MAIL: sgassociatespl@gmail.com Ph: 7011127264, 8130200837

**कार्यालय नगर पालिक निगम, भोपाल**  
**यांत्रिक विभाग ( मुख्यालय ) गोविंदपुरा ( बी.एच.ई.एन. )**  
**निविदा आमंत्रण घोषणा-पत्र**  
**क्र. 164/या.वि./2022**  
**भोपाल, दिनांक 25.11.2022**  
**निम्नलिखित निर्माण कार्य हेतु दो लिफाफा पद्धति के अनुसार म.प्र. लोक निर्माण विभाग में केन्द्रीकृत व्यवस्था के अंतर्गत पंजीकृत टेकदर परसेन्टेज मोहर बंद निविदायेँ निर्धारित प्रपत्र पर ऑनलाईन आमंत्रित की जाती है।**  

क्र.	ऑनलाईन निविदा क्र.	कार्य का नाम	अनुमानित राशि	धरोहर राशि	प्रपत्र राशि	कार्य हेतु निर्धारित एस्.ओ.आर.	कार्य की अवधि
01	2022_UAD_234318_1	CONSTRUCTION OF CC ROAD AND RCC DRAIN AT DIFFERENT PLACES OF ZONE NO 17	1,62,44,150	81,221/-	12,500	MPUAADD ISSR 2021	6 Month/-
02	2022_UAD_234314_1	CONST. OF CC ROAD AND RCC DRAIN AT DIFFERENT PLACES OF ZONE 17	1,68,21,926	84,110	12,500	MPUAADD ISSR 2021	6 Month/-
03	2022_UAD_234312_1	CONST. OF CC ROAD AND RCC DRAIN AT VARIOUS PLACES OF ZONE 17	1,58,98,353	79,492	12,500	MPUAADD ISSR 2021	6 Month/-
04	2022_UAD_234300_1	CONSTRUCTION OF CC ROAD AND RCC DRAIN AT VARIOUS PLACES OF ZONE NO 17	1,15,89,274	57,946	12,500	MPUAADD ISSR 2021	6 Month/-

- Interested bidders can view the NIT on website <https://www.mptenders.gov.in/>
- The Bid Document can be purchased only online from 10:30 A.M. (time) 25.11.2022 (date) to 17:30 P.M. (time) 26.12.2022 (date).
- Amendments to NIT (if any) would be published on website <https://www.mptenders.gov.in/> only, and not in newspaper.

**The initial period of 05 (Five) year after completion shall be treated as Defect Liability Period (DLP)**

**कार्यपालन खत्री ( सखिल )**  
**नगर निगम भोपाल**

**फ़ि.क्र. 898/022/023**



# DoV for probe into 2,405 classrooms' construction

**Sends report to CS; Sisodia says such reports are written in BJP's office**

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government's Directorate of Vigilance (DoV) has recommended a detailed probe by a "specialised agency" into alleged irregularities in the construction of 2,405 classrooms in 193 Government-run schools, alleging it involved a scam of Rs 1,300 crore. According to officials, the DoV has submitted its report to Delhi Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar.

Apart from several procedural lapses and violation of rules and manuals to tamper with the tender process, the DoV, in its report, has specifically underlined the role of private persons Babbar & Babbar Associates, who, without being



appointed as a consultant, not only attended a crucial meeting in the chamber of the then PWD Minister, but also influenced the Minister for post-tender changes done in the work contracts in the name of "richer specifications" that resulted in additional financial implications of Rs 205 crore, the report said.

It has also recommended forwarding its findings along with the replies of the PWD and Education Department to the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) for consideration. "Extra constitu-



tional agencies/persons (like M/s Babbar & Babbar Associates) were running the administration and dictating the terms and conditions to the officers and the entire administration both at policy level as well as the execution level were implementing such directions of a private person in a place like National Capital of the Country, which is not only against TBR, 1993 and other rules, regulations and guidelines, besides being a serious threat to securities aspect. This kind of approach will lead to administrative anarchy and

chaos," the report further reads. Responding to the report, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, who is also in charge of education and PWD portfolios, during a press conference on Friday said, "I just read somewhere that the reports have been submitted to the Chief Secretary and the vigilance has recommended this and it is shared with the media even before sending it to the Government.

The truth is that all such reports from FIRs, chargesheets, and others are written at the office of BJP. In the so-called scam in the classrooms construction, the vigilance report has been submitted to the media and the Chief Secretary. It has not been submitted to the Minister.

It was also not submitted to the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)."Meanwhile, the BJP said the DoV's report shows that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is only "worried about

black money flowing to him and not about children's education". Addressing a press conference, the BJP's national spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia demanded that Kejriwal either dismiss his corrupt Ministers or tender resignation.

He alleged "corrupt Gabbar" Kejriwal colluded with private company "Babbar and Babbar Associates" to construct classrooms without floating a tender, violating the guidelines of the CVC and PWD.

The CVC, in a report dated February 17, 2020, highlighted "glaring irregularities" in construction of over 2,400 classrooms in Delhi Government schools by the PWD.

It had sent report to DoV seeking its comments on matter but AAP Government did not pursue matter for two-and-half years until Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena, directed Chief Secretary to inquire into delay in August this year, and submit a report in this regard.

## Bid to frame Sisodia in excise policy case has failed: Kejriwal

**I'm victim of political witch-hunt: Sisodia**

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal called the excise policy scam case "fake" on Friday and alleged that attempts were made to frame Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia in it, whereas the CBI found nothing against him in its probe. The AAP called it "Satyamev Jayate", saying all allegations against Sisodia fell flat.

"Manish's name is not in the CBI chargesheet. The whole case is fake. Nothing was found in the raids. A total of 800 officers found nothing in the probe for four months.

Manish offered hope of a good future to crores of poor children in the country through a revolution in education. I am sorry that a conspiracy was hatched to defame such a person by implicating him in a false case," Kejriwal said in a tweet in Hindi. Later in the day, Sisodia demanded that Lieutenant-Governor VK Saxena and Chief Secretary



Naresh Kumar be sacked, alleging that he has been a "victim of their witch-hunt". Hitting out at the BJP, Sisodia said the party sent the CBI and the ED, and raided his residence, but never found anything.

"The CBI's chargesheet has made it clear that no Excise Scam has taken place in Delhi; rest of the allegations will be proven false in court. 800 officers were deployed to conduct over 500 raids across the country but the CBI couldn't find anything," he said.

The ruling AAP also asked the BJP to tender an apology to Delhiites and the countrymen for "blatantly lying about the issue" and called Saxena and Kumar the "masterminds" behind the "conspiracy" against the Delhi Government.

"CBI could not find even

an iota of evidence against Deputy CM Manish Sisodia. This makes it clear that all the allegations were a sham. Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena and Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar were masterminds behind the conspiracy against the Delhi Government; they have been exposed. BJP should tender an apology to the entire country, along with the children of Delhi and their parents; this is a victory of the people of Delhi," said senior AAP leader Saurabh Bhardwaj, while addressing the media.

AAP Delhi convener Gopal Rai said the BJP should tender an apology to Delhiites and the countrymen for blatantly lying about the issue."Under BJP's pressure, Sisodia was named as accused no 1'. A 10,000 page chargesheet has been filed in which the name of the first accused is not there.

Today it was proved that BJP is not Bharatiya Janata Party but Bharatiya Jhoothi Party. The BJP should apologise to the people of Delhi and India for spreading blatant lies. If the level of politics declines like this, it is a danger for democracy as well," he said.

## Sisodia: BJP hatching a conspiracy to kill Kejriwal; Manoj rubbishes charge

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A day after accusing the BJP of "hatching a conspiracy to assassinate" Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, fearing poll defeats in Gujarat and the MCD, his deputy Manish Sisodia Friday demanded a probe into it. A delegation of AAP leaders led by its spokesperson Saurabh Bhardwaj filed a complaint to the State Election Commission.

Meanwhile, BJP MP Manoj said he was concerned about the safety of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and rejected the allegation that his party was conspiring to kill him, saying it was an old script of the AAP.

Addressing a press conference here, Sisodia also alleged that the kind of language used by BJP leader Manoj Tiwari on Thursday against Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is an "open threat". "His language betrays the conspiracy being hatched to assassinate Arvind Kejriwal. We also demand that Manoj Tiwari be arrested for this



threat," Sisodia said. In a complaint to the State Election Commission, the AAP leaders have alleged that the BJP has made multiple unsuccessful attempts to defame and demoralize Arvind Kejriwal and his party through negative statements in the media and unfounded conspiracies. "With the MCD and Gujarat Assembly elections coming up, it is clear that Manoj Tiwari and BJP are aware and may be planning a conspiracy to

kill Arvind Kejriwal. There has never been a bigger threat to the democracy of our country," the party said. Meanwhile, Raj Niwas sources said tht Delhi Lieutenant Governor has taken

note of tweets and statements by AAP leaders, including Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia and asked the Police Commissioner to ensure that such eventuality- orchestrated, or other wise, do not happen, to the farthest possible extent.

Reacting on the allegations, BJP MP said he was concerned about the safety of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and rejected the allegation that his party was conspiring to kill him, saying it was an old script of the AAP. "AAP worker Sandeep Bhardwaj did not commit suicide but he has been murdered. The way an AAP MLA was thrashed by his own party volunteers for selling MCD poll tickets, I am concerned about the safety of Kejriwal.

Sisodia is reading the old script that BJP is conspiring to kill Kejriwal. He does this every year, claiming murder threat to Kejriwal. I don't understand what is going on as Kejriwal claims Sisodia will be arrested. Sisodia himself prophecies that Kejriwal will be murdered,"

## BJP releases 'Sankalp Patra' for MCD elections

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP released its manifesto for the MCD polls, promising flats to slum dwellers, cheap meals for Rs 5 through 50 Annapurna Rasois run by women, free bicycles to girl students, 1,000 permanent Chhath ghats, new cow shelters, development of "happiness" areas and additional exemption of five per cent in property tax to them and free cycles to girl students BJP if it comes to power in the civic body polls again.

In the manifesto, the party has listed out its women-centric initiatives that include providing an additional exemption of five per cent in the property tax from the existing 15 per cent for properties completely owned by women.

The party has promised to ensure self-employment opportunities, quality health facilities and dignified life to women. Delhi BJP's 12-point Municipal Corporation of Delhi poll man-



Union Minister Piyush Goyal, Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta and party leader Baijayant Jay Panda during release of BJP party manifesto ahead of MCD election in New Delhi on Friday.

ifesto titled 'Sankalp Patra', promising flats to slum dwellers, 1,000 permanent Chhath ghats, cow shelters and development of "happiness" areas, was released by party leaders, including Union Minister Piyush Goyal.

Releasing the manifesto, Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal alleged that the AAP government's achievements in Delhi are nothing except corruption and public-

ity. He said the Arvind Kejriwal-led party has been exposed and the "people betrayed by it will no longer be misled".

The manifesto also pledged various women-centric initiatives, including 50 Annapurna Rasois, which will provide meals to the needy for Rs 5 per plate, to be run by them. It also promised a 5-per cent additional rebate to women in property registration.

## 100 shops gutted in Chandni Chowk blaze

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Around 100 shops were gutted in a massive fire in the wholesale market of Bhagirath Palace area in Chandni Chowk here even as the cooling operations are currently underway. No injuries have been reported so far. Five major buildings got affected during the fire-fighting operations out of which three collapsed, according to fire department official.

Traders in Bhagirath Palace have blamed narrow lanes, poor infrastructure, and inflammable material for the blaze in the wholesale market and the delay in fire tenders reaching the spot. The firefighting operations

were "poorly executed" due to which the fire spread to several shops and caused losses worth "hundreds of crores", they claimed while demanding financial compensation from the government. According to the fire department, a call about the blaze was received at 9.19 pm on Thursday and 40 fire tenders were rushed to spot.

At present, 22 fire tenders are engaged in cooling process as fire has been brought under control after more than 12 hours, a fire department official said. The fire broke out in a shop in Mahalaxmi Market and soon spread to adjacent ones, all dealing in electrical appliances, officials said.



A massive fire broke out at the Bhagirath Palace market, in Delhi late on Thursday night.

## Delhi HC asks Govt to follow Manual Scavengers Act to a T

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court Friday directed the Delhi government to ensure strict compliance with the statutory provisions of the Employment As Manual Scavengers And Their Rehabilitation Act and the rules framed under it.

The high court noted the affidavits filed on record make it clear that the Delhi Commission for Safai Karamcharis (DCSK) is investigating, examining and monitoring all matters relating to the safeguards to be provided

to Safai Karamcharis residing in Delhi, as provided under the Act and the Constitution of India, and a periodical assessment is also carried out by the commission.

"The government shall also keep in mind the various recommendations submitted by the DCSK from time to time and shall take a decision positively within a period of 60 days of any such recommendation being made by the commission to the government," a bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Subramonium Prasad said.

# Anurag Thakur urges people of city to vote for BJP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Anurag Thakur on Friday held public meetings in Dilshad Colony, Welcome Colony, Lalita Park, and Patparganj wards and urged people to vote for the BJP.



Interacting with people, the Union Minister highlighted the works done by the BJP in the national Capital. He also requested the residents that if they want the development work to continue they should vote for the saffron party. Thakur said the AAP Government in Delhi has

become synonymous with anarchy, and alcohol, scams, and corruption are its three friends. Campaigning for the BJP ahead of the Delhi civic body polls on December 4, Thakur said Kejriwal penned an unforgettable chapter on "the politics of lies" in his seven years in power.

"The AAP Government in Delhi has become synonymous with anarchy. It has three friends, alcohol, scams and corruption," he said at public meetings in Dilshad Colony, Welcome Colony, Lalita Park and Patparganj.

Thakur said the AAP made tall claims in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand ahead of Assembly polls there but lost its security deposits. "As soon as the AAP formed the Government in Punjab, their Health Minister had to resign on charges of corruption. Delhi's Health Minister is in jail, enjoying massages and

having fun," a statement quoted him as saying. "From mineral water to massage, all five star facilities are available in jail. It can happen only in Kejriwal's model. AAP's Ministers do corruption and Kejriwal gives them certificates of honesty," Thakur said. The minister also accused Kejriwal of indulging in politics of appeasement. "He gave salary to clerics of mosques, but not to priests of temples and gurdwaras," he said. The Delhi BJP in a statement said 15 senior leaders, including Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami and party's General Secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya, addressed around 60 public meetings.

At a rally in city's north-eastern part, Dhami said this election will change fortunes of Delhi. He said Uttarakhand residents are reaping benefits of double-engine government in hill state and same is going to happen in Delhi as well.

## 'Choose AAP in MCD for all-round growth'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Friday held nukkad sabhas at various locations in the national Capital including Punjabi Bagh, Raghuvir Nagar, Paschim Vihar, Madipur, Rani Bagh, Janakpuri South, Mahavir Enclave, and Janakpuri West.

Sisodia appealed to the public to vote for the Kejriwal-led AAP into power in MCD and also choose an AAP councillor to ensure development in their ward.

"People of Delhi have given so much love and respect to Kejriwal that it is freaking out BJP leaders. They are frustrated because of their certain



defeat in upcoming MCD polls. It is sure that the public will wipe BJP out of MCD this time and now its leaders are conspiring to kill Kejriwal, threatening him for life openly," said

Sisodia. "People of Delhi are with Arvind Kejriwal and they will not tolerate any attack on their son Arvind Kejriwal, BJP must not forget this," Sisodia asserted. People across Delhi

have taken their decision to give a chance to Kejriwal in MCD too because when they gave a chance to Kejriwal in Delhi government, he did several works and made Delhi a better place to live.

"Delhiites need to understand that if there will be a Kejriwal government in MCD and councillors will be of BJP in any ward, then the chances of development in that particular area might reduce because after the elections, BJP councillors will have just one agenda which is to fight with CM and restrict development work.

The kind of development an AAP councillor will bring into the ward, that is not possible in the tenure of a BJP councillor," alleged Sisodia.



# Railways to roll out sleeper coaches of Vande Bharat



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

With the “success” of the current lot of fully air-conditioned Vande Bharat Express Trains, the Indian Railways has now decided to roll them out with sleeper coaches also to make it much affordable for the common man.

The latest version of the indigenous trains with sleeper coaches will be operational by the first quarter of 2024 and work on few routes to run the popular trains has started.

A senior railway official expressed confidence that the current set of Vande Bharat trains have already completed a running of eight lakh kilo-

meters which is enough to prove success of ‘Make in India’ product of train. Before new indigenous model goes to the world market to compete with China’s rolling stock capacity and capability, the railways is planning to clock 10-12 lakh kilometers on 75 Vande Bharat trains over the next few years.

Sources said Railways is exploring to export Vande Bharat trains by 2025-26 to markets in Europe, South America and East Asia. “The ecosystem to export trains has to be created over the next two to three years. We are on track to manufacture 475 Vande Bharat trains in the next three years and once they run successfully there will be confidence in global markets about

our product. The Vande Bharat trains meet all international standards,” he said. He also said that while present Vande Bharat trains are fit for broad gauge, the railways’ manufacturing units will customise trains to run on standard gauges used by countries across the world.

He also said that while the present Vande Bharat trains are fit for broad gauge, the railways’ manufacturing units will customise the trains to run on standard gauges used by countries across the world.

As per the study so far on Vande Bharat trains, it has a rider index of three, which means no or minimal jolts for passengers; and noise level of 65 decibel which is 100 times

less than sound produced in aircraft. Railways is constructing a 59 km testing track between Gudha-Thathana Mithri in Jodhpur Division (about 70 Km from Jaipur) for

carrying out tests/trials of various rolling stocks. This track can test trains running at a maximum speed of 220 kmph, maneuvering a variety of curves.

## Tilting trains by 2025-26

**New Delhi:** India will get its first tilting trains by 2025-26, with 100 Vande Bharat trains being manufactured using this technology which enables trains to maneuver curves at higher speeds, just as a motor-bike on a winding road, Railway officials said.

They said 100 of the 400 Vande Bharat trains to be manufactured by 2025 will

have this technology. Tilting trains have a mechanism enabling higher speed on regular broad-gauge tracks. They tilt while negotiating a bend or curve on the track.

Such trains are now operational in 11 countries — Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, Finland, Russia, the Czech Republic, the UK, Switzerland, China, Germany and Romania.

## Annual Defence Dialogue: India, France Ministers to hold talks, enhance cooperation

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

India and France will discuss the entire spectrum of their defence ties during talks here between French Defence Minister Sébastien Lecornu and his Indian counterpart Rajnath Singh on November 27-28. The talks are part of the India-French Annual Defence Dialogue.

As part of the Annual Defence Dialogue, Lecornu, who is visiting India for the first time as defence minister, will hold wide-ranging talks with Rajnath.

The parleys will cover all aspects of defence cooperation, including operational defence ties, counter-terrorism, maritime security in the Indo-Pacific, and industrial and technological partnerships in line with India’s “Atmanirbhar Bharat” policy. In his meeting



with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, he will discuss global issues of common concern, including the situation in Europe and in the Indo-Pacific, and will convey France’s full support for India’s Presidency of the G20, which is beginning on December one, French embassy statement said here on Friday.

Lecornu will also meet National Security Adviser (NSA) Ajit Doval for discussions on regional security issues and close cooperation in combating terrorism. During his visit, Lecornu will visit the

National War Memorial in Delhi to pay tribute to India’s soldiers who have laid down their lives in the line of duty.

In Kochi on November 27, Lecornu will visit INS Vikrant, India’s first indigenously designed and built aircraft carrier. He will take this opportunity to highlight the importance of Indo-French naval cooperation for security and stability in the Indo-Pacific. The visit reaffirms France’s engagement in the Indo-Pacific and India’s centrality in the French strategy for the region.

It comes in a year that has seen an acceleration of the French and Indian armed forces’ endeavours towards even greater interoperability through joint air, navy, and army exercises, such as IMEX 22 (March), Varuna (March-April), and the recently-concluded Garuda (October-November).

## Centre calls two all-party meets before Parl session

**PNS ■ NEW DELHI**

Ahead of the winter session of the Parliament commencing on December 7, the government has convened two all-party meetings — one on December 5 to inform leaders about India’s preparations for the G20 meetings that New Delhi will host over the next one year and another on December 6 to discuss the legislative business and important issues likely to be taken up in the session.

The session that will continue till December 29 will have 17 sittings spread over 23 days.

While India will officially assume the G20 Presidency from December 1, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi has invited presidents of nearly 40 parties for the meeting on G20 and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will also be present.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar is likely to attend the meeting at the Rashtrapati Bhavan, sources said. The next G20 Leaders’ Summit at the level of heads of state or government is scheduled to be held on September 9 and 10, next year, here. Several G20 meetings will be held in various parts of the country during the year-long period. Joshi



G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant (image) Twitter

also sent out invitations to the floor leaders of political parties in Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha for the December 6 meeting on Parliament’s legislative business. “It is my pleasure to invite you for a meeting of floor leaders of political parties in Lok Sabha/Rajya Sabha to discuss legislative business and important issues likely to be taken up in ensuing winter session of Parliament,” invite read.

## Don’t put clock back, Govt tells SC as court puts note ban under scanner

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Resisting the Supreme Court’s attempt to revisit the 2016 demonetisation exercise, the government said on Friday the court cannot decide a matter when no tangible relief can be granted by way of “putting the clock back” and “unscrambling a scrambled egg”. The remarks by Attorney General R Venkataramani came after the apex court asked the Centre to explain whether it consulted the Central Board of the RBI before undertaking demonetisation. A five-judge Constitution

bench headed by Justice S A Nazeer is hearing a batch of 58 petitions challenging the demonetisation exercise. “The only submission you have made is that these are all economic issues done by experts (so) don’t touch it. What is your opposition to the plea of the other side? Tell us what is your submission to counter their submissions. They said it is not in conformity with section 26 (2) of the RBI Act. “You are arguing that the objectives set out have been achieved. But, we want you to address the allegation that the process followed was flawed. Show us the

procedure was followed or not,” the Bench said.

The court’s observation came after Venkataramani defended the demonetisation policy and said the court should refrain from exercising judicial review of the executive decision. “It is well settled that if the relevance of scrutiny disappears, the court will not render opinion on questions of academic value. The court will not grant a declaration when no tangible relief can be granted by way of putting the clock back which is unscrambling a scrambled egg,” Venkataramani said.

## ‘Proposal to register digital media under PRB Act may be shelved’

**PTI ■ NEW DELHI**

The government plans to shelve the proposal for registration of digital media under the colonial era law dealing with registration of newspapers and periodicals, a senior official said on Friday.

The Information and Broadcasting Ministry had proposed to include registration of digital media as part of amendments to the Press and Registration of Books (PRB) Act, 1867, but is likely to shelve it after it received comments against the move. “We are

reviewing that proposal. Registration of digital media may not be there in the final version,” the official said.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur, at a media event, had said that the government planned to amend the PRB Act that dated back to the colonial era as part of its efforts aimed at “ease of doing business” in the media sector.

“Starting a newspaper was a cumbersome task. One had to do several rounds of the office of District Magistrate and offices in Delhi. I assure you

that this entire process will be done online. If it takes about four months to register a newspaper, it will happen within seven days,” Thakur said. He said the government had left the issue of regulation of print and digital media to the respective sectors.

“Be it digital or print, we have left it for self-regulation. Newspapers always publish news with authenticity, but social media does pose a challenge. We are treating this issue with utmost caution as we have to strike a fine balance in this regard,” Thakur said.

## SC seeks Centre’s response on pleas by gay couples for marriage registration

**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI**

The Supreme Court on Friday sought the Central Government’s response to separate pleas by two gay couples seeking registration of their marriages under the Special Marriage Act.

A bench, headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, who was also part of the Constitution bench which in 2018 decriminalised consensual gay sex, issued notice to

the Centre besides seeking the assistance of Attorney General for India R Venkataramani in dealing with the pleas. “Issue notice returnable in four weeks. Liberty to serve the central agency. Notice be also issued to the Attorney General for India as well,” the bench, which also comprised Justice Hima Kohli, said.

The top court’s five-judge Constitution bench, in a path-breaking unanimous judgement delivered on September 6, 2018, held consensual sex among adult homosexuals or heterosexuals in private space is not a crime while striking down a part of the British-era

penal law which criminalised it on the ground that it violated the constitutional right to equality and dignity.

Senior advocate Mukul Rohatgi, appearing for the gay couples, said the issue was a sequel to the Navtej Singh Johar and the Puttaswamy judgments (gay sex and right to privacy verdicts respectively). This is a living issue and not a property issue, he said, adding “we are only here talking about the Special Marriage Act.”

The pleas seek a direction that the right to marry a person of one’s choice be extended to LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender and

queer) people as part of their fundamental right. One of the petitions has sought interpretation of the Special Marriage Act, 1954 in a gender-neutral manner where a person is not discriminated due to their sexual orientation. The plea was filed by gay couple Supriyo Chakraborty and Abhay Dang who live in Hyderabad.

The second petition has been filed by Parth Phiroze Mehrotra and Uday Raj. Besides Rohatgi, senior advocates Saurabh Kirpal and Tahira Karanjawala appeared for the petitioner. A similar petition is already pending before Delhi High Court also.

## SC closes suo motu proceedings initiated in 2016 after Centre says 23 members appointed to AFT

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Friday closed the suo motu proceedings it had initiated in 2016 for filling up the vacancies in the Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT) after the Centre informed 23 members have been appointed to the panel including 11 judicial members earlier this month. A bench of Justices MR Shah and MM Sundresh took on record the Centre’s notification dated November 15

appointing 11 judicial members and 12 administrative members to the Tribunal.

The bench said, “At the relevant time, this court took suo motu cognizance of non-appointment of judicial members which has resulted in denial of justice in the absence of judicial members and orders of AFT were not enforced”.

It said the Centre has informed the court about the

notification issued by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) on November 15, 2022 giving effect to these appointments. “We take note of the notification dated November 15, 2022, and close the proceedings. If the bar association of the principal bench has any grievance, it should be raised before the appropriate forum to be considered as per law,” the bench said. (PTI)

## Night Sky Sanctuary work in full swing

**New Delhi:** India’s first-ever Night Sky Sanctuary, being set up by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), under Union Ministry of Science & Technology, in Ladakh’s Hanle is moving towards reality with work on it going on in full swing. It is likely to be completed in over a month’s time.

A first-of-its-kind unique initiative, the Night Sky Sanctuary in Ladakh is located at Hanle as a part of Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary.

Spanning 22 km in radius centred around Hanle observatory, the Sanctuary will boost Astro tourism in India and will be one of world’s highest-located sites for optical, infrared, and gamma-ray telescopes. “The Night Sky Sanctuary will attract tourists

from across the world to picturesque Ladakh and also boost astro-tourism in region,” said Union Minister of Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh after holding a meeting with Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, R K Mathur here.

In June, a tripartite pact was signed between officials of IIA, the Ladakh Union Territory administration and the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council.

The signing ceremony was held in the presence of Mathur, Professor Annapurni Subramaniam, director, Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA), Bengaluru and Jamyang Namgyal, MP, Ladakh and other officials.

Once declared as the Hanle Dark Sky Reserve (HDSR), the administration, local council members along with scien-

tists will collectively work towards preservation of night sky from unwanted light pollution and illumination — a serious threat to scientific observations and natural sky conditions and a growing menace, world over, said an official from the IIA.

Being a cold desert region, Ladakh holds great potential for undertaking uninterrupted astronomical observations. Dry weather and clear sky conditions prevail during most months of year, making Hanle a naturally perfect setup for sky gazing and setting up astronomical observatories, the official added.

At a height of 4,500 metres, Hanle is already home to an optical, a gamma ray and an infrared telescope at Indian Astronomical Observatory complex operated by IIA. PNS

**ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI**

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or drones, which were deployed to deliver Covid-19 vaccines to access compromised areas and strengthen the vaccine delivery system, can play a vital role in India’s battle against Tuberculosis (TB) by reducing sputum transportation time.

A team of researchers from the ICMR reached this conclusion after conducting a feasibility study comparing transportation test between two mode of vehicles — UAVs and conventional bikes in Chamba in Himachal Pradesh. Vishal Thakur, Parasuraman Ganeshkumar, Sundaramoorthy Lakshmanan and Polani Rubeshkumar from ICMR — National Institute of Epidemiology, Chennai observed that sputum trans-

portation by UAVs was feasible, cheaper and an efficacious potential alternative to conventional modes of transportation.

The study is published in the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene. The ICMR researchers had conducted a non-randomized interventional study and compared the advantages of sputum transport between UAVs and motorbikes (conventional).

At least, 151 transportation rounds were conducted and it was found that transportation by UAV was faster than by motorbike though the latter covered a greater distance than the former. The recurrent cost per transport using an UAV was also less than by motorbike. All 26 stakeholders agreed that UAVs would reduce the turnaround time for diagnosis of drug-resistant TB, said

the study. Unreliable transportation methods, an inadequate workforce, difficult terrains and improper cold chain pose challenges to specimen transportation in low- to middle-income countries.

The researchers also found that UAVs can overcome these challenges and could transport specimens at lower cost. “Transportation through UAVs will not affect the quality of specimens and results.

In India, under the Revised National Tuberculosis Control Program (RNTCP), early diagnosis of TB relies on passive case finding. The reported delay in diagnosing TB ranged from 25 to 185 days. Harnessing innovative delivery approaches would reduce the delay in diagnosis, and one such innovation is using UAVs for sample transportation. All 26 RNTCP managers who were

interviewed agreed on UAV implementation for sputum transport, saying it was a safer mode of transport and would reduce the turnaround time for diagnosing MDR-TB.

However, UAVs have limitations such as a limited capacity for the number of samples transported, and adverse weather conditions that can affect their flight, noted the study.

Based on the outcome, the researchers have called upon the government to modify its policies related to civilian use of UAVs, “which will bridge service delivery gaps in the healthcare system.”

The researchers have also suggested the Government to design and conduct well-structured interventional studies to document the effects of UAVs in improving operational and health-related outcomes.

## IN SHORT

### DCGI APPROVES INCOVACC BOOSTER DOSE FOR COVID

New Delhi: The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has given approval to Bharat Biotech’s Intranasal ‘INCOVACC’ booster dose for restricted use for Covid19. This is India’s first intranasal vaccine for Covid-19. According to the pharma firm, the nasal route has potential for vaccination due to the organized immune systems of the nasal mucosa.

### PM TO GRACE CONSTITUTION DAY CELEBRATION

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will participate in Constitution Day celebrations in the Supreme Court on Saturday. Since 2015, November 26 is observed as Constitution Day to commemorate the adoption of the Constitution of India by the Constituent Assembly in 1949. Earlier, the day was observed as Law Day. The PM will launch new initiatives under the e-court project.

### WEST BENGAL TO HOST G20 MEETINGS

New Delhi: West Bengal is all set to hold prestigious G-20 meets in Kolkata and Siliguri, Dr Shashi Panja, State Minister for Industries, Commerce & Enterprises and Department of Women and Child Development and Social Welfare said here on Friday on the occasion of West Bengal Day. She said the State has taken an array of infrastructural and mining projects and is well poised to emerge as a major supplier of oil and shale gas.

### SC STAYS CALCUTTA HC ORDER ON TEACHER SCAM

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Friday stayed the Calcutta High Court orders directing CBI investigation into filing of an application by the West Bengal Central School Service Commission (SSC) in a case related to the teachers’ recruitment scam.



# ‘BJP established permanent peace in Guj after 2002’

Cong supported perpetrators of violence: Shah

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday said anti-social elements earlier indulged in violence in Gujarat as the Congress supported them, but after the perpetrators were “taught a lesson” in 2002, they stopped such activities and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) established “permanent peace” in the state.

Parts of Gujarat had witnessed large-scale violence in 2002 following the train burning incident at Godhra railway station in February that year.

Addressing a rally in Mahudha town of Kheda district in support of BJP candidates ahead of the next month’s Assembly elections, Shah alleged, “During the Congress rule in Gujarat (before 1995), communal riots were rampant. Congress used to incite people of different communities and castes to fight against each other. Through such riots, Congress had strengthened its



vote bank and did injustice to a large section of the society.” Shah claimed that Gujarat witnessed riots in 2002 because perpetrators became habitual of indulging in violence due to the prolonged support they received from the Congress.

“But after they were taught a lesson in 2002, these elements left that path (of violence). They refrained from indulging in violence from 2002 till 2022. BJP has established permanent peace in Gujarat by taking strict action against those who used to indulge in communal violence,” the Union minister said.

Thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi for abrogating Article 370 from Jammu and Kashmir, Shah alleged that the Congress was against it because of its “vote bank”.

# Nearly 8L voters added to J&K’s electoral rolls

Total electorate rose from 75,86,899 to 83,59,771

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

After completion of delimitation and special summary revision of electoral rolls in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, a total number of 7.72 lakh voters have been added in the final electoral rolls. With this the total electorate has now risen from 75,86,899 to 83,59,771 voters in the 90 Assembly segments.

According to the press statement issued by the office of the Chief Electoral officer, J&K a net increase of 77,287 electors has been registered in the Final Electoral Roll, i.e. a 10.19% net increase of the registered electors over the Draft Roll. This was for the first time in the history of J&K that more than 11 lakh names were included in a single special summary revision period.

During this period a record 1,14,07,68 claims were received through Form- 6 for inclusion of names in the Electoral Rolls across the UT. Out of these, 1,12,86,72 claims were accepted



and only 12,096 claims were rejected. This included 30,196 claims of inclusion in the age group of 18-19.

A total of 4,12,157 requests for deletion were received out of which 35,82,22 were accepted and 53,935 were rejected.

“The final Electoral Rolls have a total of 83,59,771 electors, out of which 42,91,687 are Male, 184 are Third Gender and 40,67,900 are Females,” the official statement said.

In addition, the draft roll saw an addition of 613 new polling Stations, which resulted in the total Polling Station count as 11,370 for the UT of J&K.

The Photo coverage in the Electoral Roll was maintained at 99.99% showing that no new entry without a proper photograph has been allowed in the Electoral Roll. There are 57,253 marked PwD electors in the Final Electoral Roll, an increase of 46% over the draft roll. The Elector Population Ratio has also increased from 0.52 to 0.58 during this SSR. The Gender Ratio of the Final

Electoral Roll has increased from 921 to 948.

According to the office of the Chief electoral officer, the total Electors on Draft Electoral Rolls were 75,86,899 out of which 39,48,525 were Male Electors, 36,38,262 were Female Electors and 112 Third Gender Electors.

A total of 39,192 Electors were flagged as PwD and 12,26 as Marked Electors.

Photo coverage in the Electoral Roll stood at 99.99% as compared to 96.81% during final publication 2019. Gender ratio of the Draft Electoral Roll was 921 as compared to Census Gender ratio of 914, as per the projected population. Elector Population Ratio of the Draft Electoral Roll was 0.52.

The emphasis of the Commission led by Chief Election Commissioner, Rajiv Kumar on registration of young voters as well as the marginalised sections of society including Persons with Disabilities, Third Gender, Women, etc., has yielded positive results.

Claims and Objections were accepted from 15th September, 2022 to 25th October, 2022, i.e. for a period of 40 days. This was followed by a period of 15 days till 10th November, 2022 for the disposal of all claims and objections.

# HC on SSC job scam: Will ask EC to derecognise TMC

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Mamata Banerjee Government on Friday suffered a huge embarrassment after the Calcutta High Court warned the powers that be that it would not only recommend to the Election Commission of India to derecognise the Trinamool Congress but also make the entire State Cabinet a party in the school level recruitment case. The Court was hearing a matter on the filing of “benami application” seeking to regularise hundreds of ineligible candidates in school services who had earlier obtained their appointments through illegal means while thousands of eligible and empaneled candidates waited for their chances.

The Bench of Justice Abhijit Ganguli made the passing observation — which is however, not a part of his judgement — after Education Secretary — who was made to personally appear before the Court — said that he received the orders in the matter from Education Minister Bratya Basu.

The Minister reacting to the Secretary’s statements in the Court said that he had only communicated a Cabinet decision and directed the Department to consult legal



experts about the feasibility of appointing people in supernumerary posts.

Incidentally, former Education Minister Partha Chatterjee and TMC MLAManik Bhattacharya were presently already in jail in connection to their alleged roles in the school level recruitment cases.

Expressing dismay the Judge wondered whether a similar decision had been taken by an elected government to appoint unqualified people or regularise the services of illegally appointed people.

He was apparently referring to the government decision to create supernumerary posts to appoint the waitlisted candidates retaining the illegal ones who had purchased their jobs illegally for lakhs.

The Judge said that the Cabinet should either withdraw its notification or suffer the entire Cabinet being made a party to the case adding he would also go on to recommend

the derecognition of the ruling Trinamool Congress.

Fortunately for the ruling outfit and the Government the Supreme Court on Friday stayed all the orders passed in this regard by the High Court for three weeks.

## Mamata calls Suwendu to her chamber for meet

PNS ■ KOLKATA

The Bengal politics apparently took a break from the usual political mudslinging with Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Friday inviting Opposition Leader Suwendu Adhikari to her chamber in the State Assembly for a “courtesy meeting.” Adhikari who was accompanied by Chief Whip Manoj Tigga and another MLA Agnimitra Paul reportedly touched the feet of the Chief Minister and they had a dialogue in a “cordial atmosphere” sources said.

The 5-minute meeting was held on the occasion of the inauguration of the platinum jubilee memorial building in the Assembly campus.

This was the first one-to-one meeting between the two since Adhikari once the man Friday of Banerjee left the TMC and joined the BJP ahead of the 2021 Assembly elections.

Calling Adhikari a loving brother, the Chief Minister after the meeting said that “a person whom once I had treated as a younger brother is today saying that I am running a Government of the party for the party and for the party,” adding “what if I say that the Government they are running in Delhi is the government off the Agency, for the Agency and by the Agency.”

# India stands for rule-based Indo-Pacific, says Rajnath

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh here on Friday said India stands for a free, open and rules-based Indo-Pacific as it is important for the economic development of not only the region but also the wider global community. This observation was in an apparent reference to aggressive Chinese posturing in the region.

In an obvious pointer towards the ongoing Ukraine conflict, Rajnath also said India does not believe in a world order where a few are considered superior to others and asserted New Delhi’s actions are guided by the essence of human equality and dignity that is part of its ancient ethos.

Making these observations at the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue (IPRD) 2022, he said India has always seen security



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh with Navy chief Admiral R Hari Kumar during the Indo-Pacific Regional Dialogue 2022, at the Manekshaw Centre, in New Delhi on Friday

and prosperity as a “collective pursuit” of the entire humankind.

Rajnath also said “It is my firm belief that if security becomes a truly collective enterprise, then we can think of

creating a global order that is beneficial for all of us.”

The defence minister said now “we require to elevate the paradigm of collective security” to a level of shared interests and shared security.

# Cong chief seeks time from Sonia on Raj spat

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a dilemma over how to diffuse the renewed crisis in Rajasthan, newly elected Congress president M Mallikarjun Kharge has sought time from his predecessor Sonia Gandhi to discuss a resolution for the prevailing tension.

While the party said that the meeting is to discuss the strategy for the Winter Session of Parliament and also modalities of the Plenary session to be convened, sources said the Gehlot-Pilot tussle is top on the agenda.

In the meantime, the Congress on Friday said Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot using the term “Gaddar” (traitor) for party colleague Sachin Pilot was “unexpected” and the party needs both the warring leaders. At the

same time, it said the crisis in the Rajasthan unit will be resolved keeping in mind the interests of the organization and not individuals.

The tussle between Gehlot and Pilot has flared up at a time when the Rahul Gandhi-led Bharat Jodo Yatra is poised to enter Rajasthan in a few days.

The renewed face-off is a major challenge for Kharge, who took over the reins of the party last month and was one of the Observers along with Ajay Maken deputed by the party to conduct a legislature party meeting in September last week.

Maken has, however, stepped down as the Rajasthan state in-charge over the rebellion of state legislators on September 25 that roiled the party ahead of last month’s internal elections.

Expressing his “inability

and unwillingness” to continue as the leader in-charge of Rajasthan, Maken wrote to Kharge seeking “the party’s interest in having a new in charge of Rajasthan.”

Party’s chief spokesman Jairam Ramesh described Pilot as a “youthful, energetic, popular and a charismatic leader.” “Gehlot is a senior and experienced leader of the Congress. But the term used by him in an interview (for Pilot) is unexpected and even I am surprised,” Ramesh said.

Maken had suggested a quick replacement as the Bharat Jodo Yatra is scheduled to enter Rajasthan in the first week of December and a by-

election is due on December 4 and the State goes to the assembly polls next year.

“The party needs both Gehlot and Pilot. There are some differences but we are not running away from this. The leadership will find an appropriate solution to the Rajasthan issue, but it will be done keeping in mind the party organization and not the individuals,” he further said.

In a swipe at the BJP, Ramesh said, “Congress leaders can speak from their heart without any fear because the party leadership does not take any decision like a dictator, and this is the difference between the Congress and BJP.”

# Congress dubs video of ‘Pakistan Zindabad’ at Bharat Jodo Yatra in MP as doctored, slams BJP

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Friday termed as “fake” and “doctored” a video posted by the BJP IT cell head claiming that “Pakistan Zindabad” slogans were raised during the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Madhya Pradesh, and said there will be “pay-back” for such tactics by the ruling party’s “dirty tricks department”. The party said such tactics are being adopted due to the resounding success of the Bharat Jodo Yatra and claimed that the BJP should delete the videos else be ready to face legal action.

BJP IT cell head Amit Malviya posted a video of the Yatra in which former Congress president Rahul Gandhi, party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and Madhya Pradesh Congress president Kamal Nath are seen walking and a voice purportedly shouting “Pakistan

Zindabad” is heard towards the end of the 21 second clip.

“After Richa Chaddha’s public application to join Rahul Gandhi’s Bharat Jodo Yatra, ‘Pakistan Zindabad’ (listen towards the end of the video) slogans raised in Khargaon. INCM posted the video and then deleted it after the faux pas came to light. This is Congress’s truth...” Malviya tweeted. Hitting back, Congress’ general secretary in-charge communications Jairam Ramesh said we are taking the necessary legal action immediately. We are prepared for such tactics. In another tweet, Ramesh also alleged that the Madhya Pradesh government “intimidated” and aggressively prevented tribal families displaced by the diamond mining project in Chhatarpur district from meeting Rahul Gandhi this afternoon. “This is democracy-BJP style,” the Congress leader said.

# Cong complains to EC on Modi’s use of kids in Gujarat poll campaign

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A delegation of Congress leaders on Friday met the Election Commission and complained against Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the alleged misuse of children in election campaign in Gujarat after he shared a video of a child campaigning for the BJP. The delegation demanded that those responsible for the act should be brought to book as the issue was serious.

The delegation comprised former Union minister Salman Khurshid, AICC in-charge for Jammu and Kashmir, Rajni Patil, and AICC secretary Ranjeet Ranjan. Congress alleged that the prime minister shared a video of a girl child campaigning for the BJP and the same was shared by several union ministers, which is in violation of law.

“We are apprising you of the actions of the BJP and Narendra Modi ji, which are not only illegal, but also in clear violation of your Commission as well as the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR).

“We hope, in the present case, you shall take the strictest and immediate action against the offenders in question who are egregiously, and without a shred of doubt, used a minor child for express campaign purposes”, the party memorandum to EC said.

# NE Christian body terms forced conversion charge ‘false’, expresses concern

PTI ■ GUWAHATI

A month after 10 European tourists were deported to their respective countries from Assam after accusations that they were engaged in missionary work, a prominent Northeastern Christian organisation on Friday expressed concern over “false allegations” of conversion.

Claiming that it is an effort to “malign” the community, the United Christian Forum of North East India (NEI), said it has rendered yeoman service in the field of education, health and social development to all sections in society irrespective of caste, creed, or ethnicity.

Spokesperson of United Christian Forum, NEI, Allen Brooks said in a release the “alarming news being spread about conversion has caused us great anxiety”.

Christian leaders representing all the Churches of the region, including the Council of Baptist Church in North East India, Church of North India, Presbyterian Church of India, North East Christian Council (all Protestant churches), Evangelical Fellowship Of India (all Pentecostal churches) and Regional Catholic Bishops Conference of North East India (all Catholic churches of NEI) had met here on Thursday to discuss the issue.

# SGNP gets 2 Asiatic lions from Gujarat in exchange of 2 tigers

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a development that came after the death of a lion, the Sanjay Gandhi National Park (SGNP) in Borivali has acquired a pair of young Asiatic Lions from the Sakkarbaug Zoological Park (SZP) at Junagadh from the neighbouring Gujarat, in exchange for a youthful tiger pair.

The lion pair (D11 – Panthera Leo Persica) and D22 (Panthera Leo Persica), both aged three years each, arrived at SGNP from Gujarat on Friday, while the tiger pair — Bajrang (Panthera Tigris Tigris—6 years) and Durga (Panthera Tigris Tigris-3 years) are being sent to SZP at Junagadh either on Friday night or on Saturday.

The barter deal between



the SGNP and SZP came after the Central Zoo Authority (CZA) go ahead for it in the wake of the death of 17-year-old lion Ravindra on October 17, 2022.

Following the CZA clearance, the SGNP despatched a pair of young tigers – Bajrang to the SZP in a swap with the male and female Asiatic Lions.

While Bajrang and Durga were caught from the forests of Chandrapur district in eastern Maharashtra, the two incoming lions were born in the wild and



trapped by the SZP.

Currently, there’s only one 11-year-old male lion left at the SGNP. The ailing lion Jespa has been kept isolated as he is found suffering from aging problems.

“Jespa lion has been suffering from severe chronic osteoarthritis leading to progressive muscular degeneration of hind muscles. This has led to multiple decubitus ulcers (bed sores) and septic wounds and abscess. He has been unable to get up for the last 15 days,” a senior SGNP official said.



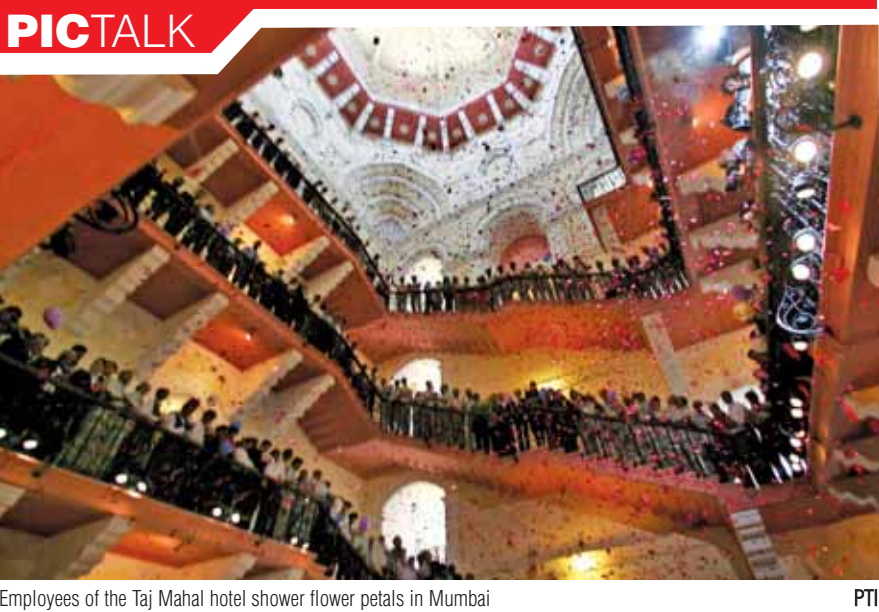
# Incompetence

The Congress has utterly failed in forcing a truce between Gehlot and Pilot in Rajasthan

There is no end to the Mahabharat in Rajasthan with Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot firing the latest salvo, calling his rival Sachin Pilot a traitor to the Congress, as someone who hobnobs with the Bharatiya Janata Party to topple his own party's Government in the state. The reference was to Pilot's fruitless rebellion in 2020. The grand old party indeed faces a dilemma. On the one hand, there is the stalwart Chief Minister, who enjoys the loyalty of most of the party MLAs and was even considered to head the party not long ago. He is unwilling to lose control of the state, the biggest state where the GOP is in power; he even chose chief-ministership over party presidency. On the other hand, there is the young leader who is impatient to hold the reins of the state—and is as determined as his 70-year-old arch-rival in this regard. The seething conflict, which was dormant for a few weeks, brimmed over on Thursday when Gehlot made the traitor statement in an interview to a news channel. The timing was conspicuous, for at that time Pilot was participating in the Bharat Jodo Yatra at Burhanpur in Madhya Pradesh. It was also jarring as the “traitor” was being photographed with Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. “A gaddar [traitor] cannot be made the CM. The high command cannot make Pilot the CM,” Gehlot thundered. The Rajasthan Chief Minister was almost challenging the Congress high command as well—or, to be precise, he is letting the challenge (which was made at the time of the Congress president election) continue.



Obviously, the Congress leadership has utterly failed in resolving the issue of Gehlot-Pilot rivalry in the state, the biggest state where the GOP is in power. The Gandhi family seems to be feckless and entitled; none of the members have the capacity or even the resolve to sort out things. Rahul Gandhi appears to be living in another era; his own party is withering away, and he is worried about... well, Bharat Jodo. This is not to say that uniting the country is a lesser job; perhaps it is greater than running a political party. But if someone is in-charge of a party—and let's not fool ourselves that party president Mallikarjun Kharge is the most important man in the GOP—it is their responsibility to ensure that it is kept united, strong, and fighting fit. At a time when the election campaign is in full swing in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh, Rahul is busy with his yatra. And when he is not walking, he is triggering debates which are best left to historians. Worse, his Savarkar remarks annoyed a Congress ally, the Uddhav Shiv Sena. He has time and energy for such arcane issues but not for Rajasthan. It is astonishing that the Congress top brass has been unable to coax or force a truce in Rajasthan. Incompetence is monumental.



Employees of the Taj Mahal hotel shower flower petals in Mumbai

## What about Delhi?

Like most elections these days, the real issues are absent from the campaigns of the political parties

As the Municipal corporations of Delhi (MCD) elections get closer the Delhi local political circles are abuzz with hectic political activity. This would be the first MCD election after three MCDs were merged. It is an interesting fight as MCD has been dominated by the BJP and the state assembly by the AAP. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi is one of the largest municipal bodies in the world. It provides civic services to approximately 20 million citizens of Delhi. Around 1.46 crore people are expected to cast their votes for 250 municipal wards in the national capital. A total of 2,021 candidates have filed their nomination papers with the poll authorities for the upcoming civic elections in Delhi. Three major parties – the AAP, the BJP, and the Congress are in the race to run the MCD. AAP performed well in 2017 and managed to win 49 wards with a 26.23 per cent vote share and which gives AAP a morale boost. A plethora of issues are presently haunting Delhi, but interestingly the candidates are focusing on the leaders of their respective parties. While the BJP harps upon the Prime Minister for harvesting votes, the AAP is banking upon the charisma of Arvind Kejriwal, “ek mauka Kejriwal ko” is their catchphrase.

But no one is talking about the broken roads and overflowing sewer lines which needs to be fixed. Due to improper drainage systems, residents face water-logging issues in rainy season in East Delhi. Broken roads, waterlogging and garbage mismanagement are some of the key issues that the residents in the national capital have been facing for years. The residents are jittery about the sloppy services they are getting but interestingly neither of the two main contenders are focusing on the real issues but promising things which may take forever to materialize. The civic infrastructure of the city especially in the north and east is falling apart. MCD has been ruled by the BJP since 2007 and so suffers from anti-incumbency and very achievements to showcase which gives AAP an edge. There are problems that the BJP could not address in its tenures like the delays and unsatisfactory work by the contractors. Besides, there are issues of garbage collection, cleaning of lanes, street lighting, mosquito control, etc. on which the BJP-ruled MCD is found wanting. But it is not promising anything that would instill confidence among voters apart from Modi's rule at the centre. Will people buy it? We shall know on December 7 when the votes are counted.

# ‘Gaadi off’ flop campaign offed

Delhi LG Vinay Kumar Saxena has set an example that governors can act as Ombudsman to clip the wings of chief ministers' arbitrary & fanciful actions

Discretion' when qualified by word 'administrative' should be initiated with reference to the rules of reason and justice and not according to personal whims and fancies. Delhi Government has been indulging in organising flop shows called, "Red Light On, Gaadi Off" for the past two years beginning from October 16, 2020, which was repeated from October 18, 2021, onwards on the pretext of pollution control; whereas, the hidden motive of Delhi's Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal appeared to satisfy his fetish for projecting his personality cult through unending desire of displaying his photos at every inch of Delhi roads.

Another hidden motive of Kejriwal behind this futile exercise may be his vote bank politics. If we presume that each of the 2500 volunteers has a household of five people, then with the simple calculation, Kejriwal gets the sympathy of 12500 voters straightaway.

The nature of the mindless campaign is that Delhi Government employs and deploys around 2500 civil defence volunteers on 100 crossroads of Delhi, for about a month in a year, holding placards displaying Kejriwal's photo with a short slogan, "Red Light On, Gaadi Off". This year, LG Delhi, in his wisdom returned the file of the useless campaign and advised the CM to reconsider the proposal saying it was 'inhuman' and 'exploitative' to place civil defence volunteers at extreme polluted traffic junctions that does not have any parallel in any other civilised metropolitan city." LG also questioned the efficacy and effectiveness of such an 'ad-hoc' measure in mitigating air pollution as the capital reels under high air pollution.

LG is right by arguing the plight of the volunteers of all ages including the women who are made to remain standing in utter discomfort for eight hours continuously. They are not allowed to move leaving the post for water, tea or natural calls in total disregard to their human rights.

In another mindless and mis-



placed Deshbhakti campaign, Delhi Government had last year spent Rs. 104.37 crore on installing 35 metre high national flags at 500 locations in the city.

The Delhi government had also come out with a series of TV advertisements claiming that it had improved governance in Delhi. This advertisement had received flak from various quarters including former AAP member and Swaraj Abhiyan leader Prashant Bhushan calling it an example of political corruption. The outfit in a statement had said, "The heart of the problem ..... is that this TV commercial unashamedly abuses public funds to create a personality cult for Arvind Kejriwal. It sings the praises of the AAP leader and tries to project him as a messiah."

Imagine, these heavy amounts could have been spent in providing bread to the starving citizens and shelters to the homeless living on the footpaths like reptiles and stray street animals.

Kejriwal has spent crores of rupees on promotion of his personality cult. In response to a query by a RTI activist Amit Gupta, under the Right to Information Act, the Delhi Government had reportedly disclosed in September, 2021,

LG IS RIGHT IN BY ARGUING THE PLIGHT OF THE VOLUNTEERS OF ALL AGES INCLUDING WOMEN WHO ARE MADE TO REMAIN STANDING IN UTTER DISCOMFORT FOR EIGHT HOURS CONTINUOUSLY

that it spent over 940 crore on publicity for campaigns against pollution in the last seven years beginning from 2015.

Kejriwal has not left any newspaper, bus, bus stops, metro stations, without displaying his photograph. He was however, not content with this spree of extravagance at the cost of taxpayers' money and thus invented the new idiosyncratic idea of 'Gaadi off' for his self promotion unmindful of the cost involved.

As a matter of fact, no desirable results were manifestly visible during the two preceding years. Habits die hard. The drivers on red lights were least bothered towards the presence of five to eight volunteers displaying CM's photo.

It's a good idea that on red lights, drivers switch off their engines but from the 'principle of reasonableness' what is the need of deploying 2500 volunteers. The placards depicting this message rather in bigger size can be affixed at traffic signals as advisory from traffic police or pollution control board instead of projecting and promoting the photo-happy CM. Will the CM agree to put LG's photograph on the placards or else can he opt to display the placards without anybody's photo?



HASAN KHURSHID

In addition, these volunteers are called 'marshals' which is a highly distinguished and dignified rank in the Indian Air Force like Air Marshal and Field Marshal in the Indian Army. The civil defence volunteers wear police like uniforms which besides being unlawful misleads the gullible citizens who presume them as cops. The Commissioner of Police, Delhi, vide his Circular no. 59/C&T/AC-II/2003, had issued an Order to ban the wearing and use of uniforms of police and armed forces. This Circular was issued on the directions of LG, Delhi, under Section 37 of Delhi Police Act, 1978.

In May, 2015, the Supreme Court had said that ruling parties cannot publish photographs of political leaders in government-funded advertisements. However, in June, 2015, an advertisement on a big hoardings showing Kejriwal's photo had been put up near ITO, in which Kejriwal is congratulating Delhi students, sidestepping the order of the Supreme Court. The practice of abusing taxpayers' money is unashamedly being carried out by politicians. (The writer is a legal journalist and author. The views expressed are personal)

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### HITTING BELOW THE BELT

Sir — It is very unfortunate that Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot called the senior Congress leader Sachin Pilot a “gaddar” (traitor) which does not suit a person like Gehlot to use such language and the priority should be to fight unitedly to defeat the BJP as well as strengthen Rahul Gandhi's hand. Days before the Kanyakumari-to-Kashmir yatra led by Rahul Gandhi enters Rajasthan, Gehlot launched a scathing attack on Pilot dubbing him a "gaddar" (traitor) and said he can never be made the chief minister of the state.

Ashok Gehlot is an experienced, and senior Congress leader whom the party has given so much, it is unbecoming of someone with such experience to use this language, and make such completely false and baseless allegations. The priority right now is for the Congress Party to win the Assembly elections in Gujarat where Ashok Gehlot is the senior observer of the party and it is also important to strengthen the hand of Rahul Gandhi, who has spent the last three months walking 2,000 km in the Bharat Jodo Yatra to challenge divisive forces. It is high time the Congress high command must intervene in this matter and defuse the situation, failing which it will damage the prospect of the Congress Party in assembly elections in Gujarat.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

### EXPOSING CHILDREN TO PUBLIC GLARE

Sir — Bollywood star Alia Bhat is right. Children (of celebrities or anyone else) should be kept away from the public eye. At least till their college education is completed. They should be kept in an environment of confidentiality for security, peaceful-coexistence without any disturbances and headaches.

Chinese President Jinping's daughter studied with an alias name at Harvard University (Massachusetts, USA). Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi took the name of Rahul Vinci when he studied for a year at Trinity College,

## Dealing with Health catastrophe



Even before the deadly covid pandemic made headway, a major part of the world witnessed a health catastrophe in which a greater portion of the population was wiped off the face of the earth, if recent revelations brought out by scientists are to be believed. This can shed fresh insights into the causative agent as well as how to arrest the alarming rate of deadly pathogens.

A study on Global Burden of Diseases Studies 2019 carried out by Lancet recently revealed that bacterial infections remain a leading cause of death globally. It caused about 77 lakh deaths associated with 33 bacterial pathogens across 11 major infectious syn-

dromes in 2019. In India alone at least 6.8 lakh deaths occurred due to five bacteria – Escherichia Coli, Streptococcus Pneumonia, K pneumoniae, S aureus, and P aeruginosa in the same year. Bacterial infections are also closely linked to poverty and low-income countries like in Sub-Saharan Africa where it was found to be higher compared to high-income regions like Western Europe and North America where it showed a lower trajectory.

The results present a dark picture of global health initiatives. Collective actions and greater mitigation efforts are a must so that a deeper dive into the pathogens can be made.

To minimize the burden of bacterial infections which is taking a heavy toll on human beings, stronger health facilities, and greater diagnostic laboratory capacity, mitigating efforts and controlled use of antibiotics on a war footing are needed. Lack of cleanliness in urban suburbs from stinking severe lines to mountains of garbage, and unhealthy eating habits are breeding grounds that are mainly responsible for these deadly pathogens to take root in India.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

Cambridge, (from October 1994 to July 1995 and was awarded an M Phil in development studies in 1995).

Madhu Nivriti PS | Secunderabad

### UPSET GALORE

Sir — After the upset win of Saudi Arabia defeating Argentina by a 2-1 margin in the first-round matches of the FIFA World Cup, one more top team Germany suffered a humiliating defeat at the hands of Japan by a similar margin. Late goals by Ritsu Doan and Takuma Asano gave Japan an incredible 2-1 comeback victory over Germany in the World Cup after the four-time champions had looked to be cruising to victory via an Ilkay Guendogan penalty but paid a fatal price for missing chances.

The shock result was a repeat of their 2018 World Cup nightmare when,

as defending champions, they lost their opener to Mexico and, after another defeat by South Korea, were condemned to an unheard-of group-stage exit. Argentina has won the World Cup twice – in 1978 and 1986 – but at Qatar 2022 La Albiceleste wrote its name into the history books in an altogether different way. Thus Japan came from behind to stun Germany 2-1. Some more upsets are expected in this world cup as the standard of goalkeeping by most of the teams has gone up and as a result scoring goals is not an easy task. It is a lesson for the top teams that no match is won or lost until the final whistle is blown.

CK Subramanaim | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: [letterstopioneer@gmail.com](mailto:letterstopioneer@gmail.com)

## SOUND BITE

There were no VVIP facilities in jail for Satyendar Jain. All that he got was according to the jail manual.



Delhi CM

— Arvind Kejriwal

New Twitter policy is freedom of speech, not freedom of reach...Negative/hate tweets will be max-

deboosted & demonetized, so no ads or other revenue to Twitter.

Twitter Chief

—Elon Musk

Actors post pictures of their food, vacations and cars on social media. It makes the viewers question them. My hero is someone who will achieve something big and bring a change. It isn't happening.



Actor

— Sunil Shetty

To be honest, my thing is simple, if I do one match or one series, I will lead the team my way, how I see and perceive the game. Whenever I am given the opportunity, I will always go out and play the brand of cricket I know.

Indian cricketer

— Hardik Pandya

I hear many times that our history has been misrepresented... but who can stop us now from rewriting our history with pride?



Union Home Minister

— Amit Shah



FIRST COLUMN

BE AWARE OF KARMA  
TO HEAL WOUNDS

Stress must be dealt with awareness  
of actions, results



RAJYOGI **BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI**

With the kind of stressful environment everywhere today, many of us get this thought that 'it would have been better if we were small babies'. That's because a small baby is perhaps the only one among us who is always stress free, with no burden of the past and no apprehension about the future.

According to behavioural scientists, stress is simply an inability to deal with whatever is going on around us. There might be innumerable reasons for this condition. However, one of the greatest is the remorse or that deep feeling of repentance from unresolved situations of the past as well as the uncertainty and fear about the future. Both leave us insecure. Hence, when there is pressure from our roles, relationships, commitments, family, work, debt and so on, we are left with no power and energy. There is no denial about the fact that in real life the pressures are real. However, if there is a disposition to understand and accept and the ability to remain in the present as a detached observer, it becomes much easier.

One must always keep this in mind that we are all on a journey of lifelong learning. Hence, learning to let go of ego, dishonesty or superficial interaction with others is not a small thing. There are many fears to be faced and in this whole journey, the heart is often broken, disillusioned and in pain. We try best to cover these wounds with many attractive bandages, but eventually we need to remove them



and begin the process of healing the wounds and become whole again.

Just as a stable building is one that has a broad and deep foundation, we need to develop breadth and depth in the way we deal with situations and people. In this context, having a broad intellect that is firmly established in the present yet is aware of past antecedents and future consequences of any action or behavior.


Knowing the full extent of the law of karma, we only receive the return for our own actions and not for someone else's. So, that person will surely receive the return for their anger. However, if we also react angrily, then yes, we too will receive the future return for that. Remember! angry words from someone are just noise, and regressive behaviour is just their way of bringing out frustration, hence worrying about them is useless.

Moreover, individual karmic accounts have led to accumulation of unlimited negativity in one's samskaras, thereby compelling souls to forget their original loving nature of peace and love and behave rudely. Today, we see that the vices of greed have penetrated at all the levels in society, be it political, civil and even medicine too. With massive scandals happening on a daily basis, there has been a "trust deficit" in society at a mass scale, putting the entire humanity in turmoil. Under such a scenario, how can one even think of experiencing inner power and inner peace?

The only hope for humankind under such a crisis lies in the almighty's wisdom and connectivity, by which we feel blessed, energetic and secured, for it is this divine wisdom which empowers us to have a clear vision of ourselves and our roles in this world drama. With trust and courage, if we take a step of determination, then we would surely receive the strength to shed the false accoutrements and make ourselves clean and free from dependencies. It is a small price to pay for the great gain of personal freedom, fulfillment and independence.

*(The author is a spiritual educator)*

# Coordination between agencies need of hour



NISHTHA KAUSHIKI

## On the 14th anniversary of 26/11, we must ponder over steps for civil-military fusion which can be a potent defence against the challenges nation faces

The families of the victims of 26/11 are yet to get justice. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India has been actively trying to build a uniform and united narrative against the menace of terrorism. The country understands that there exists a symbiotic relationship between terrorism and transnational organised criminal networks that help such groups to raise finance for their activities.

According to the Indian delegation in 2019 at the Third Committee, which deals with social, humanitarian affairs and human rights issues, the illicit activities of such criminal groups include "counterfeiting, money laundering, arms dealing, drug trafficking and smuggling terrorists across the borders". Recently, the Counter-Terrorism Committee of the UN, which India is currently chairing, met in Mumbai to deliberate on the financial funding of Pakistan-based terror groups. It was followed by the 'No Money for Terror' conference in the capital. The two developments came in the background of China's veto for designating Pakistan-sponsored terrorists as 'global terrorists'.

It is unlikely that Pakistan will discontinue its 'bait and bleed' policy against India. Pakistan is a highly motivated, determined and innovative adversary ready to suffer losses if it is at the cost of 'bleeding India'. Nevertheless, expecting the world powers like the US and China to financially squeeze out Pakistan entirely to finish off the terror groups based in Pakistan is unrealistic.

Geopolitically, if seen from the prism of the triangular dynamics of India, Pakistan and the US, apart from China, Pakistan and India, Islamabad has been a 'weaker' nation but is able to tilt the balance in its Washington's or Beijing's favour to prevent a rising India. Thus, each power fears losing out its 'hegemony' and hence, to save its 'sphere of influence', resorts to an 'asymmetrical power balancing', consequently side-lining India's core concerns.

This will continue in the coming times, and the US F16 package to Pakistan after its removal from the 'grey list' of the FATF and China's aforesaid veto proves the assertion. Many recommendations have been given for external balancing against adversaries' mala fide intentions. However, exploring what can be done further at a domestic level becomes pertinent and more important.

It is a well-established fact that external and internal security is interlinked. Although post 26/11 the country has witnessed almost negligible terrorist attacks in cities, that has been possible with the establishment of Multi-Agency Coordination Centres (MACCs) and Subsidiary Multi-Agency Coordination Centres (SMACCs). Other contributory factors include an active vessel management system, the Coastal Security Scheme, gapless electronic surveillance along the coastline, etc.



IT IS UNLIKELY THAT PAKISTAN WILL DISCONTINUE ITS 'BAIT AND BLEED' POLICY AGAINST INDIA. PAKISTAN IS A HIGHLY MOTIVATED, DETERMINED AND INNOVATIVE ADVERSARY READY TO SUFFER LOSSES IF IT IS AT THE COST OF 'BLEEDING INDIA'

The author is Associate Professor in Central University of Punjab, Bathinda



However, there is still much scope for increasing interoperability amongst the various agencies.

At the operational level, the decision at the apex level needs to be initiated to re-energise and redirect the country's efforts towards issue-based (illegal immigration, coastal security, narco-terrorism, cyber security, etc.) inter-agency cooperation between the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the Indian armed forces with the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS) as a central coordinating agency. Active cooperation between bureaucracy, intelligence and the security forces is a must.

Even the state services authorities should be inculcating a maritime domain awareness strategy apart from being in the loop of the inter-agency cooperation structure. The three agencies cannot secure India externally and internally while working independently. Proper sharing and communication of the intelligence data, the building of narratives and a more profound civil-military fusion are essential to combat Pakistan-sponsored terrorism. For instance, simple issues of consensus building such as information sharing, arranging financial resources, and the jurisdiction of the matter falling within the purview of MHA, defence forces or NSCS shouldn't be the debate. Instead, well-coordinated efforts with a comprehensive approach are required to enhance the nation's security.

Since different security agencies have one single goal of securing India, there should be greater consensus on consciously building joint narratives, which finally have to percolate at various levels—

national, regional and international in well-coordinated collaborative efforts through favourable perception management and agenda-setting. In a nutshell, it has to be complete teamwork of different agencies at different levels.

Next, India has to highlight the violations of its sovereignty and its counter responses at various global platforms to avoid any escalation in future developments, if any. One of the most critical steps in this direction can relate to adopting the practice of publishing scientifically established data on breaches in India's maritime security. Half-yearly information on the increasing number of Chinese and Pakistani warships and surveillance ships in the Indian Ocean Region should be made available in the public domain by the concerned security agency.

There is a lack of data on the number of maritime violations. Unless security experts and scholars cite the Indian statistics on territorial and maritime violations, the national interests cannot be taken care of. A fully activated civil-military fusion has now become unavoidable. Although the Government has taken appreciable steps in this direction, it needs to pick up the pace. First, the private sector security personnel of private critical national infrastructure usually take the adversary's first assault. Their technical and physical training from highly specialised security agencies is a must.

Second, the grassroots level too requires a high level of civil-military fusion. Routine surveillance and the reporting of the recordings of the CCTV cameras at critical national infrastructure can pick up the suspicious activities of the people who

take multiple rounds of their target to identify the 'weak spots'. Such reporting isn't possible without an active civil-military fusion. Using biology-driven AI surveillance mechanisms, robotics, satellite tracking, and multiple target tracking by sophisticated technology equipment has become essential.



In this line of thought, given the narrow interests of different powers, every time expecting the allies to upgrade our technologies would be a self-defeating purpose. Surveillance mechanisms should continue to be upgraded through the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' in the defence sector initiative. Moreover, active cooperation between different public and private agencies must be increased to strengthen DRDO's Technology Development Fund and other such agencies.

Finally, the challenge of hyper-social media interconnecting the different parts of the world also contributes to agenda setting. No sooner have narratives been constructed by the Government agencies, anti-national elements attempt to deconstruct them. The momentum of "talks and terror cannot go together" should not be slowed, and instead should be taken to the next higher level through the implementation of the National Educational Policy.

The adversaries' misadventures of 26/11 and other terrorist attacks and the country's counter responses should be incorporated into the national curriculum. It will ensure a civil-military fusion from a very early stage. In a nutshell, bring 'uniformity and unity' at the domestic level when there are uncertainties at the regional and international level. A united India is thus essential.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

EFFORTS BY THE WEST TO IMPOSE A PRICE CAP ON RUSSIAN OIL ARE "CONTRARY TO THE PRINCIPLES OF MARKET RELATIONS AND ARE HIGHLY LIKELY TO LEAD TO GRAVE CONSEQUENCES FOR GLOBAL ENERGY MARKETS."  
— RUSSIAN PRESIDENT  
VLADIMIR PUTIN



NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE U.S. AND ITS ALLIES OVER IMPOSING A PRICE CAP ON RUSSIAN OIL ARE ONGOING ... I HAVE SPOKEN TO TREASURY SECRETARY JANET YELLEN ABOUT THE ISSUE.  
— US PRESIDENT  
JOE BIDEN

# Time to eliminate violence against women is now

## International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, on November 25, should result in more action

Recently the National Crime Records Bureau Report (NCRB) 2021 revealed more than 15 per cent rise in crime against women. The year witnessed a spike in the rate of crimes against women (number of incidents per one lakh population), which rose from 56.5 per cent in 2020 to 64.5 per cent in 2021. A majority of the cases (nearly 32 per cent) pertained to "cruelty by husband or his relatives" and almost 21 per cent pertained to "assault on women with intent to outrage her modesty", followed by kidnapping and abduction (17.6 per cent) and rapes (7.4 per cent). Are these just figures? Or a reflection of the safety and status of women in Indian society?



JAGDISH KAUR

Writer is President, Women's Initiative for Liberation, Growth & Action

The northern belt, which

worships the goddess twice every year with a lot of fanfare, topped the list of crimes against women, with Uttar Pradesh holding the first rank followed by Rajasthan and Maharashtra. On the other hand, the northeastern state of Nagaland reported the lowest number of crimes against women in 2021. Among the metropolitan cities, Delhi, the capital remains the most unsafe city for women with the number of cases surging over the past three years, from 13,395 in 2019 to 14,277 in 2021 which amounts to more than 32 per cent of total crimes in the 19 metropolitan cities in the country. The sexual harassment at workplace continues unabated.

What perpetuates the violence has been much dis-

cussed over the years, be it the result of many systems of sexism and patriarchy within Indian culture, gender-based inequality from early childhood, lack of education opportunities for the girl child and complexity of social and cultural beliefs where girls and women are at the receiving end, irrespective of their age.

Women remain the custodians of family honour and any action on their part to break the norms or traditions meet with a violent response from family and community.

The Covid-19 pandemic witnesses sudden and acute rise in cases of violence against women. The pandemic led to the loss of jobs of men and women. The men vented out their stress and frustration on

the women. The women who lost their jobs became more dependent on abusive partners. The lockdown phase obstructed women seeking help when facing violence.

The International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women is yet another day marked by the notion of activities and promises to act against this menace plaguing the Indian society. While the traditional causes of violence such as dowry deaths, sexual assaults, acid attacks and honour-killings continue, there have been rising cases of intimate partner violence, including heinous crimes such as most foul murders.

Besides the legal solutions available, which are mostly not sought or remain outside the purview of most victims/sur-

vivors, the focus on change of basic mindset and conduct at the societal level is crucial. More work for gender sensitisation, education, employment opportunities, safe workplaces, strict enforcement of existing laws, creating women-friendly environments for reporting the crimes, follow-ups, facilitative judicial procedures, new laws with enhanced punishment, and timely justice will go a long way in securing safe environments for women at home and outside. Rehabilitation of the survivors, acceptance and community support are crucial to instill confidence to regain and sustain normal life for the victims of all forms of violence.

To date, most efforts to eliminate violence against

women and girls have mainly focused on responding to and providing services for survivors of violence. Prevention—i.e., addressing the structural causes, as well as the risk and protective factors associated with violence—is pivotal to eliminating violence against women and girls. Prevention requires political commitment, implementing laws that promote gender equality, investing in women's organisations, and addressing the multiple forms of discrimination women face daily.

The prevention strategy should focus on equal education opportunities for the girl child, respectful family and work relationships with men and boys, and promoting equality and equity through

media, job-opportunities, sports, and other fields.

Every individual has a role to play in eliminating violence against women. We all can contribute by being sensitive to the issue, listening to and believing survivors, increasing visibility of women in matters and decisions related to their safety, standing up against normalization of all forms of violence against women, educating ourselves on gender-based issues, challenging gender-norms leading to inequality, holding ourselves and other people accountable, supporting each other and condemning violence against women at all platforms.

The time to act is TODAY! Speak up and join the moment!



# Russia rains missiles on recaptured Ukrainian city

AP ■ KHERSON (UKRAINE)

Natalia Kristenko's dead body lay covered in a blanket in the doorway of her apartment building for hours overnight. City workers were at first too overwhelmed to retrieve her as they responded to a deadly barrage of attacks that shook Ukraine's southern city of Kherson.

The 62-year-old had walked outside her home with her husband on Thursday evening after drinking tea when the building was struck.

Kristenko was killed instantly from a wound to the head. Her husband died hours later in the hospital from internal bleeding.

"Russians took the two most precious people from me," their bereft daughter, Lilia Kristenko, 38, said, clutching her cat inside her coat as she watched on in

horror on Friday as responders finally arrived to transport her mother to the morgue.

"They lived so well, they lived differently," she told The Associated Press. "But they died in one day."

A barrage of missiles struck the recently liberated city of Kherson for the second day on Friday in a marked escalation of attacks since Russia withdrew from the city two weeks ago.

The city was shelled 17 times before midday on Thursday, and strikes continued into the evening, killing at least four people and injuring 10, according to Kherson's military administration.

Soldiers in the region had warned that Kherson would face intensified strikes as Russian troops dig in across the Dnieper River.

Scores of people were injured in the strikes that hit res-



A resident wounded after a Russian attack lies inside an ambulance before being taken to a hospital in Kherson, southern Ukraine (AP)

idential and commercial buildings, lighting some on fire, blowing ash into the air and littering the streets with shattered glass.

The attacks wrought destruction on some residential neighbourhoods not previously hit in the war that has just entered its tenth month.

After Kristenko's parents were hit, she tried to call an ambulance but there was no phone network, she said.

Her 66-year-old father was clutching his stomach wound and screaming "it hurts so much I'm doing to die," she said. He eventually was taken by ambulance to the hospital but died during surgery.

On Friday morning, people sifted through what little remained of their destroyed houses and shops. Containers of food lined the floor of a shattered meat store, while across the

street customers lined up at a coffee shop where residents said four people died the night before.

"I don't even know what to say, it was unexpected," said Diana Samsonova, who works at the coffee shop, which remained open throughout Russia's occupation and has no plans to close despite the attacks.

The violence is compounding what's become a dire humanitarian crisis. As Russians retreated, they destroyed key infrastructure, leaving people with little water and electricity. People have become so desperate they're finding some salvation amid the wreckage.

Outside an apartment building that was badly damaged, residents filled buckets with water that pooled on the ground. Workers at the morgue used puddles to clean their bloody hands.

Valerii Parkhomenko had just parked his car and gone into a coffee shop when a rocket destroyed his vehicle.

"We were all crouching on the floor inside," he said, showing the ash on his hands. "I feel awful, my car is destroyed, I need this car for work to feed my family," he said.

Outside shelled apartment buildings residents picked up debris and frantically searched for relatives while paramedics helped the injured.

"I think it's so bad and I think all countries need to do something about this because it's not normal," said Ivan Mashkarynets, a man in his early 20s who was at home with his mother when the apartment block next to him was struck.

"There's no army, there's no soldiers. There are just people living here and they're (still) firing," he said.

## Europe scrambles to help Ukraine keep heat, lights on

AP ■ KYIV

European officials are scrambling to help Ukraine stay warm and keep functioning through the bitter winter months, pledging on Friday to send more support that will mitigate the Russian military's efforts to turn off the heat and lights.

Nine months after Russia invaded its neighbour, the Kremlin's forces have zeroed in on Ukraine's power grid and other critical civilian infrastructure in a bid to tighten the screw on Kyiv.

Officials estimate that around 50 per cent of Ukraine's energy facilities have been damaged in the recent strikes.

France is sending 100 high-powered generators to Ukraine to help people get through the coming months, French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna said on Friday.

She said Russia is "weaponising" winter and plunging Ukraine's civilian population into hardship.

British Foreign Secretary James Cleverly, arriving on Friday in Kyiv for an unannounced visit, said a promised air-defence package, which Britain valued at 50 million pounds (USD 60 million), would help Ukraine defend itself against Russia's bombardments.

"Words are not enough. Words won't keep the lights on this winter. Words won't defend against Russian missiles," Cleverly said in a tweet about the military aid.



The package includes radar and other technology to counter the Iran-supplied exploding drones that Russia has used against Ukrainian targets, especially the power grid. It comes on top of a delivery of more than 1,000 anti-air missiles that Britain announced earlier this month.

"As winter sets in, Russia is continuing to try and break Ukrainian resolve through its brutal attacks on civilians, hospitals and energy infrastructure," Cleverly said.

His visit came a day after European officials launched a scheme called "Generators of Hope" which calls on more than 200 cities across the continent to donate power generators and electricity transformers.

The generators are intended to help keep essential Ukrainian facilities running, providing power to hospitals,

schools and water pumping stations, among other infrastructure.

Generators may provide only a tiny amount of the energy that Ukraine will need during the cold and dark winter months.

But the comfort and relief they provide is already evident, as winter begins in earnest and power outages occur regularly. The whine and rumble of generators is becoming commonplace, allowing stores that have them to stay open and Ukraine's ubiquitous coffee shops to keep serving hot drinks that maintain a semblance of normality.

Ukrainian authorities are opening thousands of so-called "points of invincibility" — heated and powered spaces offering hot meals, electricity and internet connections.

Ukrainian President Zelenskyy said late on Thursday that

almost 4,400 such spaces have opened across most of the country.

He scoffed at Moscow's attempts to intimidate Ukrainian civilians, saying that was the Russian military's only option after a string of battlefield setbacks.

"Either energy terror, or artillery terror, or missile terror — that's all that Russia has dwindled to under its current leaders," Zelenskyy said.

Elsewhere, Ukrainian officials and energy workers continued their push to restore supplies after a nationwide barrage on Wednesday left tens of millions without power and water.

Kyiv's mayor Vitali Klitschko said on Friday morning that heating was back on in a third of the capital's households, but that half of its population still lacked electricity.

Writing on Telegram, Klitschko added that authorities hoped to provide all consumers in Kyiv with electricity for a period of three hours on Friday, following a pre-set schedule.

As of Friday morning in Kharkiv, all residents of Ukraine's second-largest city had had their electricity supplies restored, but more than 100,000 in the outlying region continued to see interruptions, the regional governor said.

In the south, authorities in the city of Mykolayiv said that running water was set to start flowing again after supplies were cut off by Russian strikes on Thursday.



## NATO vows to aid Ukraine 'for as long as it takes'

AP ■ BRUSSELS

NATO is determined to help Ukraine defend itself against Russia for "as long as it takes" and will help the war-wrecked country transform its armed forces into a modern army up to Western standards, the alliance's Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg vowed on Friday.

Speaking to reporters ahead of a meeting of NATO foreign ministers in Romania next week, Stoltenberg urged countries that want to, either individually or in groups, to keep providing air defense systems and other weapons to Ukraine. NATO as an organisation does not supply weapons.

"NATO will continue to stand with Ukraine for as long as it takes. We will not back down," the former Norwegian prime minister said. "Allies are providing unprecedented military support, and I expect foreign ministers will also agree to step up non-lethal support."

Stoltenberg said that members of the 30-nation security

organisation have been delivering fuel, generators, medical supplies, winter equipment and drone jamming devices, but that more will be needed as winter closes in, particularly as Russia attacks Ukraine's energy infrastructure.

"At our meeting in Bucharest, I will call for more," he said. "Over the longer term we will help Ukraine transition from Soviet era equipment to modern NATO standards, doctrine and training."

Stoltenberg said Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba would join the ministers to discuss his country's most pressing needs but also what kind of long-term support that NATO can provide. NATO's top civilian official said the support will help Ukraine move toward joining the alliance one day.

The Nov 29-30 meeting in Bucharest is being held almost 15 years after NATO promised that Ukraine and Georgia would one day become members of the organisation, a pledge that deeply angered Russia.

Also attending the meeting

will be the foreign ministers of Bosnia, Georgia and Moldova - three partners that NATO says are coming under increasing Russian pressure. Stoltenberg said the meeting would see NATO "take further steps to help them protect their independence, and strengthen their ability to defend themselves."

Since President Vladimir Putin ordered the invasion 10 months ago, NATO has bolstered the defences of allies neighbouring Ukraine and Russia but has carefully sought to avoid being dragged into a wider war with a major nuclear power.

But Stoltenberg put no pressure on Ukraine to enter peace talks with Russia, and indeed NATO and European diplomats have said that Putin does not appear willing to come to the table.

"Most wars end with negotiations," he said. "But what happens at the negotiating table depends on what happens on the battlefield. Therefore, the best way to increase the chances for a peaceful solution is to support Ukraine."



## 2 Swedish men charged with spying for Russia go on trial

AP ■ STOCKHOLM

A trial opened on Friday in Sweden in the case of two Iranian-born Swedish brothers who have been charged with spying for Russia and its military intelligence service GRU for a decade.

Peyman Kia, 42, and Payam Kia, 35, appeared before the Stockholm District Court to face accusations of having worked jointly to pass information to Russia between September 28 in 2011 and September 20, 2021.

Between 2014 and 2015, Peyman Kia worked for Sweden's domestic intelligence agency but also for Sweden's armed forces.

Sweden's prosecutors allege that the data they gave the Russians originated from several authorities within the Swedish security and intelligence service, known by its acronym SAPO.

Swedish media said that Peyman Kia worked for the armed forces' foreign defence intelligence agency, whose Swedish acronym is MUST, and reportedly worked with a top secret unit under MUST which was dealing with Swedish spies abroad.

## Russia will send Ukraine back to the 18th century, says Putin ally Tolstoy



IAN S ■ LONDON

Vladimir Putin will "send Ukraine back to the 18th century" by pushing ahead with attacks on the country's energy facilities, one of his top allies has claimed, said a media report.

Pyotr Tolstoy, the deputy speaker of the Duma, warned that there would be no let-up in the Russian strikes on Ukrainian power stations ahead of winter, Daily Mail reported.

"The infrastructure of Ukraine will be destroyed, and Ukraine will be sent back to the 18th century," the member of Putin's United Russia party declared, Daily Mail reported.

In a tirade on French broadcaster BFM, the MP from Russia's rubber-stamp parliament, who has been sanctioned by the US, the EU and Britain, warned that Ukraine's allies "will pay the price."

He added that the West should "prepare itself for a war that will last years." But Tolstoy's bizarre intervention appears to be at odds with a statement made by the Russian defence ministry on Thursday.

Officials in Moscow made the baseless claim that the damage to the Ukrainian capital's critical infrastructure had been caused by "foreign and Ukrainian" air defence missiles.

"Not a single strike was made on targets within the city of Kyiv," the Russian defence ministry said, although it failed to address similar attacks that knocked out power elsewhere.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov later said Ukraine could "end the suffering" by backing down in "such a way as to fulfil the requirement of the Russian side."

"The leadership of Ukraine has every opportunity to bring the situation back to normal," Peskov, Putin's long-serving propagandist, said, Daily Mail reported. Moscow has repeatedly rejected Ukraine's demand that they pull out of the country before peace talks can begin.

Since the start of October, Russia has fired a barrage of missiles and sent Iranian-made drones towards energy targets across Ukraine to cripple its power grid as temperatures plummet below freezing.

## Ukraine sets up 4K shelters amid widespread power outage

IAN S ■ KIEV

Ukrainian authorities have set up 3,720 emergency shelters across the country after a latest barrage of Russian missile strikes caused widespread electricity outage across the war-torn nation, a top official said here.

According to Kyrylo Tymoshenko, deputy head of the Ukrainian president's office, the shelters, equipped with power generators, will provide people with heat, electricity, water, internet and medicines, reports Xinhua news agency.

About 70 per cent of house-



holds in Kiev did not have electricity access as of Thursday, the capital city's Mayor Vitali Klitschko said.

On Wednesday, Russia carried out the fresh missile strikes against Ukraine, resulting in 10 deaths, according to authorities in Kiev.

The attack disconnected the country's all four operating nuclear power plants and other major power facilities from the grid and triggered massive outages.

The continued Russian attacks have damaged almost half of Ukraine's energy system

and millions of people are without power as temperatures drop for winter.

Blackouts, both scheduled and unscheduled, have become common in many parts of Ukraine, as Russia aims regular waves of missile attacks at parts of the energy infrastructure.

At least seven people were killed and more than 20 million others were left without electricity on November 8 when Russia carried out over a 100 missile strikes in what is believed to be Moscow's biggest wave of missile strikes since the invasion began on February 24.

## Colorado Springs reckons with past after gay club shooting

AP ■ COLORADO SPRINGS (US)

When officials unfurled a 25-foot rainbow flag in front of Colorado Springs City Hall this week, people gathered to mourn the victims of a mass shooting at a popular gay club couldn't help but reflect on how such a display of support would have been unthinkable just days earlier.

With a growing and diversifying population, the city nestled at the foothills of the Rockies is a patchwork of disparate social and cultural fabrics.

It's a place full of art shops and breweries; megachurches and military bases; a liberal arts college and the Air Force Academy. For years it's marketed itself as an outdoorsy boomtown with a population set to top Denver's by 2050.

But last weekend's shooting



has raised uneasy questions about the lasting legacy of cultural conflicts that caught fire decades ago and gave Colorado Springs a reputation as a cauldron of religion-infused conservatism, where LGBTQ people didn't fit in with the most vocal community leaders' idea of family values.

For some, merely seeing police being careful to refer to the victims using their correct pronouns this week signalled a seismic change. For others, the

shocking act of violence in a space considered an LGBTQ refuge shattered a sense of optimism pervading everywhere from the city's revitalised downtown to the sprawling subdivisions on its outskirts.

"It feels like the city is kind of at this tipping point," said Candace Woods, a queer minister and chaplain who has called Colorado Springs home for 18 years. "It feels interesting and strange, like there's this tension: How are we going to decide how we want to move forward as a community?"

In recent decades the population has almost doubled to 480,000 people. More than one-third of residents are nonwhite — twice as many as in 1980. The median age is 35. Politics here lean more conservative than in comparable-size cities. City council debates revolve around

issues familiar throughout the Mountain West, such as water, housing and the threat of wildfires.

Residents take pride in describing Colorado Springs as a place defined by reinvention. In the early 20th century, newcomers sought to establish a resort town in the shadow of Pikes Peak. In the 1940s, military bases arrived. In the 1990s it became known as a home base for evangelical nonprofits and Christian ministries including the broadcast ministry Focus on the Family and the Fellowship of Christian Cowboys.

"I have been thinking for years, we're in the middle of a transition about what Colorado Springs is, who we are, and what we've become," said Matt Mayberry, a historian who directs the Colorado Springs Pioneers Museum.

## Swedish activists sue state over its climate policies

AP ■ STOCKHOLM (SWEDEN)

Hundreds of activists, among them Greta Thunberg, marched through the Swedish capital to a court on Friday to file a lawsuit against the Swedish state for what they say is insufficient climate action.

More than 600 young people under the age of 26 signed the 87-page document that is the basis for the lawsuit which was filed in the Stockholm District Court.

They want the court to determine that the country has violated its citizen's human rights with its climate policies.

"Sweden has never treated the climate crisis like a crisis," said Anton Foley, spokesman of

the youth-led initiative Aurora, which prepared and filed the lawsuit. "Sweden is failing in its responsibility and breaking the law."

The action comes as scientists warn that chances are slipping away to limit future warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 degrees Fahrenheit) since pre-industrial times.

At a recent UN climate conference in Egypt earlier this month, leaders tried to keep that goal alive but did not ratchet up calls for reducing carbon emissions.

Another activist, Ida Edling, said that Sweden "is pursuing a climate policy the research is very clear will contribute to a climate disaster in the future."



# Panic-buying in Beijing as city adds new quarantine centres

AP ■ BEIJING

Residents of some parts of China's capital were emptying supermarket shelves and overwhelming delivery apps Friday as the city government ordered faster construction of COVID-19 quarantine centers and field hospitals.

Uncertainty and scattered, unconfirmed reports of lockdowns in at least some Beijing districts have fueled demand for food and other supplies, something not seen in the city for months. Unusually large numbers of shoppers in the city's northern suburbs left shelves bare in markets, but customers were relatively few in the center of the city of 21 million, where supplies remained abundant.

Daily cases of COVID-19 across the country are hitting records, with 32,695 reported Friday. Of those, 1,860 were in Beijing, the majority of them asymptomatic.

Improvised quarantine centers and field hospitals hastily thrown up in gymnasiums, exhibition centers and other large, open indoor spaces have become notorious for overcrowding, poor sanitation, scarce food supplies and lights that stay on 24 hours.

Most residents of the city have already been advised not to leave their compounds, some of which are being fenced in. At entrances, workers clad head to toe in white hazmat suits stop unauthorized people and make sure residents show a recent negative COVID-19 test result on their cellphone health apps to

gain entry.

Several university campuses have been closed off and students in lower grades have been shifted to online classes.

Meanwhile, some of Beijing's grocery delivery services have reached capacity.

An increase in demand combined with a worker shortage left some customers unable to book same-day delivery slots on Friday for food and supplies from popular online grocery services such as Alibaba's Freshippo and Meituan Maicai.

Online, some Chinese users said some delivery personnel were unable to work because their compounds were locked down. The reports could not be verified. Alibaba did not immediately comment.

At a Friday afternoon news conference, city government spokesperson Xu Hejian said it was necessary "to strengthen the management and service guarantee" of quarantine centers and field hospitals where people who test positive for COVID-19 or have been in close contact with an infected person are taken by police.

Authorities must "further accelerate" their construction and "coordinate the allocation of space, facilities, materials, personnel and other resources," Xu said.

Officials have in recent days repeatedly insisted that China must stick with its hard-line "zero-COVID" policy that mandates lockdowns, mass testing and quarantines for anyone suspected of having come into contact with the virus.



A resident carries her groceries near cashier machines at a supermarket in Beijing, on Friday. Residents of China's capital were emptying supermarket shelves and overwhelming delivery apps on Friday as the city government ordered accelerated construction of Covid-19 quarantine centers and field hospitals (AP)

## 10 killed in fire at apartment under Covid lockdown

PTI ■ BEIJING

At least 10 people were killed and nine injured in a fire at a high-rise residential building reportedly under coronavirus lockdown restrictions in China's Xinjiang province, officials said on Friday, days after another major blaze left 38 people dead in central China.

It took firefighters about three hours to douse the fire in the bedroom of a 21-floor residential building, with the furniture, bedding, and other daily necessities catching fire, in Tianshan district of Urumqi, the capital of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, on Thursday night, the local fire

department said. Ten people died despite emergency treatment, and nine others who sustained injuries are stable, the state-run Xinhua news agency reported. However, later reports and social media posts said the building was under COVID lockdown restrictions.

According to a report in the state-run Global Times, the community where the building is located is a COVID low-risk area and the residents could go down.

But a report in the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post said such official media reports were greeted with skepticism online, with web users questioning whether that was really the case.



## Lanka's Tamil parties to meet to push for federalism ahead of talks with Govt

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's all Tamil political Sparties based in the East and the North are set to meet on Friday to push for federalism ahead of President Ranil Wickremesinghe's proposed all-party meeting next month to address the long-held demand for political autonomy for the minority community in the country.

The meeting will be held at the Colombo residence of R Sampanthan, the 89-year-old leader of the Tamil National Alliance, sources in the party said.

Wickremesinghe told parliament on Wednesday that it was important to build trust between the majority Sinhalese and the Tamils to resolve the long-standing conflict.

He proposed the all-party meeting under his chair to discuss the issue to strike a solution by February 4 next year which is the 75th anniversary of the country's independence from Britain.

"Regardless of inter and

intra-party differences, the bottom line is that all Sri Lankan Tamil nationalist parties are firmly supportive of a power-sharing arrangement based upon federal principles of the federal idea," M A Sumanthiran, a leading Tamil politician tweeted.

The Tamil and the main opposition parties have expressed willingness to meet to discuss the issue while at least one Sinhala majority headline parliamentarian objected to the proposal.

Sri Lanka has had a long history of failed negotiations with the Tamils.

An Indian effort in 1987, which created the system of a joint provincial council for the Tamil-dominated north and east, faltered as the minority community claimed it fell short of full autonomy.

Wickremesinghe himself tried a constitutional effort between 2015-19 which too came to be scuttled by the hard-line majority politicians.

India has been consistently calling upon Sri Lanka to fulfill

its commitments to protect the interests of the Tamil community and preserve the island nation's character as a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society.

Over the years, the Sri Lankan government has been aggressive against Tamilian groups following its war with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

The LTTE ran a military campaign for a separate Tamil homeland in the northern and eastern provinces of the island nation for nearly 30 years before its collapse in 2009 after the Sri Lankan Army killed its supreme leader Velupillai Prabhakaran.

According to Sri Lankan government figures, over 20,000 people are missing due to various conflicts including the three-decade brutal war with Lankan Tamils in the north and east which claimed at least 100,000 lives.

International rights groups claim at least 40,000 ethnic Tamil civilians were killed in the final stages of the war, but the Sri Lankan government has disputed the figures.

## 'Walmart shooter seemed to target certain people'



AP ■ CHESAPEAKE, VA

The Walmart supervisor who shot and killed six co-workers in Virginia seemed to target people and fired at some victims after they were already hit and appeared to be dead, said a witness who was present when the shooting started.

Jessica Wilczewski said workers were gathered in a store break room to begin their overnight shift late Tuesday when team leader Andre Bing entered and opened fire with a handgun. While another witness has described Bing as shooting wildly, Wilczewski said she observed him target certain people.

"The way he was acting — he was going hunting," Wilczewski told The Associated Press on Thursday. "The way he was looking at people's faces and the way he did what he did, he was picking people out."

She said she observed him shoot at people who were already on the ground.

"What I do know is that he made sure who he wanted dead, was dead," she said. "He went back and shot dead bodies that were already dead. To make sure."

Wilczewski said she had only worked at the store for five days and didn't know with whom Bing got along or had problems. She said being a new employee may have been the reason she was spared.

# Security review after protesters disrupt Berlin air traffic

AP ■ BERLIN

Authorities in Germany on Friday were reviewing security measures at Berlin's airport a day after six climate activists invaded the grounds and briefly disrupted flights.

German news agency dpa quoted a spokesman for Berlin Brandenburg Airport saying that Thursday's incident was being reviewed to determine what further action may be required.

Police said four protesters glued themselves to the ground near the runway, while two others cycled across the premises. The group Uprising of the Last Generation, which has staged numerous road blockades and other



stunts to highlight the need for action against climate change, claimed responsibility. The group said it wanted to highlight the problem of fossil fuel subsidies, such as for jet fuel, which allow a minority of the world's population to fly while the majority suffer the consequences of climate change stoked by greenhouse gas emissions.

It said the activists notified police of their plans before entering the airport grounds.

The protest was widely criticised by German lawmakers across political lines, though Martin Schirdewan, co-leader of the Left party, said the activists had "put their finger on the wound of political inaction in view of

the climate catastrophe." Police said five men and one woman aged between 20 and 32 were detained. Five people were released, while the sixth remains in custody. All six are being investigated on suspicion of endangering air traffic, property damage and trespassing.

Airport authorities said 15 planes had to be diverted to nearby airports while five departures were delayed. About 750 passengers were affected by the disruption, it said.

Earlier this month, hundreds of climate protesters blocked private jets from leaving Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport.

## Poll: PM Sunak much more liked than UK governing party

PTI ■ LONDON

One month on since Rishi Sunak took charge as Britain's first Indian-origin Prime Minister, indications on Friday are that his popularity with the UK electorate remains on stronger ground than that of the governing Conservative Party.

The 42-year-old former chancellor had pitched himself as a steady hand to steer the country's economy through a tumultuous cost-of-living crisis in the wake of the COVID pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict.

With predecessor Liz Truss making the dubious history of being Britain's shortest incumbent at 10 Downing Street after a disastrous unfunded mini-budget, his message of clamping down on inflation on a war footing seems to have inspired faith in his leadership.

According to the "November Ipsos Political Monitor", a survey conducted earlier this month, Sunak started his premiership relatively liked and even overtook Opposition Labour Party Leader Keir Starmer for having what it takes to be a good Prime Minister.

However, the opinion poll also found that the proportion saying they like the Conservative Party has fallen further since June to its lowest level since Ipsos started asking the question in 2007, while the proportion who like the Labour Party slightly rises.

"Nearly half (47 per cent) say they like Rishi Sunak, against two in five (41 per cent) who dislike him. This makes Sunak more liked than Boris Johnson earlier this year," Ipsos said.

"However, just one in four (26 per cent) say they like the Conservative Party, which is their worst rating since June 2007 when they scored 29 per

cent under [then Prime Minister] David Cameron. With 62 per cent saying they dislike them, the party's current net likeability rating of -36 also beats their previous low of -30 under Boris Jonson this June," it notes.

Perceptions of Sunak have received a small boost since he took charge on October 25 following the shocking resignation of Liz Truss after she lost the backing of her own party members.

Two in five or 42 per cent agree Sunak has what it takes to be a good prime minister, which is up seven points since the Conservative leadership race in July, against a third or 34 per cent who disagree, which is down 9 points.

This puts the British Indian leader slightly ahead of Starmer, where opinion is more divided as 35 per cent agree he has what it takes, and 37 per cent disagree, although he performs better among his own party supporters.

The personal endorsement will come as a welcome outcome for Sunak but the declining popularity of the Tories — also in line with an anti-incumbency factor after 12 years of a Conservative-led government — will be a worry for someone who will be looking ahead to leading the party into a general election by 2024.

## Iran bolsters border security to prevent 'infiltration'

AP ■ BAGHDAD

Iran has sent additional units of special forces to fortify its northern border with Iraq and clamp down on what it says is infiltration by Kurdish opposition groups, Iranian state media reported on Friday.

Gen Mohammad Pakpour, chief of ground forces of the paramilitary Iranian Revolutionary Guard, said "armoured and special forces" units had been deployed to west and north-west provinces to bolster existing border security, the official IRNA news agency reported.

The deployment aims to prevent infiltration and the smuggling of weapons in the north by Kurdish opposition groups exiled in Iraq that Tehran claims is orchestrating country-wide anti-government protests. It is a claim the Kurdish groups deny



and to date Iran has not provided any evidence to support it. Iran has several military bases near the Iraqi border and forces have been present there on a rotating basis for decades.

The troop movement also comes after Iraq issued directives for boosting security along its side of the border to prevent further bombardment by Iran, according to a statement issued by Iraq's military spokesman Maj. Gen. Yahya Rasool. Kurdish opposition groups have bases in Iraq's Kurdistan northern region.

Earlier this week, Iranian officials were quoted in state-run media as

saying they did not have plans to conduct a ground military operation to root out opposition groups from the bases, despite having reportedly threatened to do so during the visit by top general Esmail Ghaani to Baghdad last week.

Country-wide protests engulfed Iran in September following the death of a young woman in police custody for violating the Islamic Republic's strict dress code for women. The protests have become one of the greatest challenges to Iran's theocracy since the chaotic years after its 1979 Islamic Revolution.

## Ruling alliance heading towards majority in Nepal election; NC emerging as largest party

PT ■ KATHMANDU

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba's Nepali Congress-led ruling coalition was on Friday heading towards winning a clear majority in Nepal's parliamentary elections with the alliance bagging 67 seats out of the 124 declared so far.

In the 275-member House of Representatives, 165 will be elected through direct voting, while the remaining 110 will be elected through a proportional electoral system.

A party or a coalition needs 138 seats to win a clear majority. The Nepali Congress (NC) was set to emerge as the single-largest party after winning 42 seats alone under the direct voting system.

Its alliance partners — CPN-Maoist Centre and CPN-Unified Socialist have won 12, 10



seats. The Lokatantrik Samajwadi and Rastriya Janamorchha have bagged two and one seats respectively. They all are part of the ruling alliance.

The Opposition alliance led by former premier K P Sharma Oli-led CPN-UML has bagged 38 seats. The CPN-UML has won 30 seats. The CPN-UML partners — the Rastriya Prajatantra Party and Janata Samajwadi Party — have won five and three seats respectively.

## Far-right Ben-Gvir to be Israel's national security minister

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Extremist politician Itamar Ben-Gvir, who has a long record of anti-Arab rhetoric and stunts, will become Israel's next minister of national security, according to the first of what are expected to be several coalition deals struck by former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's Likud party.

Likud announced the agreement with Ben-Gvir's Jewish Power party on Friday.

Negotiations with three other potential far-right and ultra-Orthodox coalition partners are continuing.

If successful, Netanyahu would return to the prime minister's office and preside over the most right-wing and religious government in Israel's history.

The awarding of the sensitive role to Ben-Gvir raises concerns of a further escalation in Israeli-Palestinian tensions.

Ben-Gvir and his allies hope to grant immunity to Israeli soldiers who shoot at Palestinians, deport rival lawmakers and impose the death penalty on Palestinians convicted of attacks on Jews.

**PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT**  
**e-TENDER CALL NOTICE No. AD/OE/ GL-72 /15(PlV)/2979 Dtd. 22.11.2022**

**Name of the work :- "Watch & ward of Port properties at different sites of PPA round the clock for a period of one year". Estimated cost put to tender **₹3,06,67,891/-** (excluding GST@18% & Contractor's commission). The last date & time of submission of bid is 12.12.2022 upto 1700 Hrs. For details please refer our website **www.paradipport.gov.in/https://eprocure.gov.in/eprocure/app**.  
**Sd/-Statistical & Research Officer, Paradip Port Authority**  
PPA/PR/209/22-23 Dt. 25.11.2022**

**HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**  
**J & K LAKE CONSERVATION & MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY SRINAGAR**

**Head Office,**  
**Vice Chairman,**  
**J & K Lake Conservation and Management Authority,**  
**e-mail :- vicechairmanjklcma@gmail.com**  
**Fax :- +91- 194-2451025**  
**Phone :- +91-194-2451073**

**Implementing Agency**  
**Executive Engineer,**  
**Lake Division 2nd STP Nasrabem**  
**Bagh Hazratbal**  
**Srinagar 190006**  
**email: xenlakediv2nd@gmail.com**

**Extension Notice No.2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**Subject:-** Formulation of a Local Area Plan (LAP) and Project Development and Management Consultancy (PDMC) Services for Implementation of the Project-"Construction of Western Foreshore Road along Western side of Dal Lake from SaidaKadal Bridge to Konakhun Dalgate, Srinagar J&K.  
**Reference:-** NIT No.26 of 2022-23, issued vide No.LD-II/3844-71 dated:17.10.2022, read with extension notice issued vide No.LD-II/4668-95 dated:16.11.2022.  
The online bidding schedule for the above subject job is hereby extended as under:  
**End date for submission of proposal: 02.12.2022 4:P.M**  
**Date of Opening of Technical bids: 03.12.2022 2:P.M**  
For and on behalf Of the Governor of Jammu & Kashmir UT  
**Sd/-**  
**Executive Engineer,**  
**Lake Division 2nd JKLCMA**  
**Date:- 22.11.2022**

**NO:- No:- LD-II/4832-59**  
**DIPK-NB-5173/22**

**Executive Engineer Transmission Line Maintenance**  
**Division -VII Srinagar**

**Power Development Corporation**  
**(JKPTCL) Srinagar PIN-190010**

**Tele Fax :- 0194-3516481**  
**e-mail :- tlm7.jkptcl@gmail.com**

**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
**e- NIT No- TLMD-VII/ TS/09 of 2022.**  
**Dated:- 22.11.2022.**  
For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of UT of Jammu & Kashmir State, e-tenders (in Two Covers) valid for 60 days from reputed, experienced and financially sound Contractors/ Firms /Original Manufacturers fulfilling the eligibility criteria specified in the Standard Bidding Documents are invited for the works detailed below. e- Tenders need to be accompanied by earnest money deposit (EMD) @ 2% of the estimated cost in the shape of DD/CDF/FDR/BG from any Nationalized/Scheduled Bank tendered to Superintending Engineer O & M Circle-II JKPTCL Srinagar.  
The Cost of Tender Documents shall be deposited through Bank Account of Executive Engineer Transmission Line Maintenance Division-7, Srinagar bearing CD A/C No. 0367010200000182 and the bank receipt shall be uploaded.  
The complete bidding process is online. However, hardcopies consisting of Tender fee in Cover-I and Techno-Commercial bid (as per SBD) in Cover- II should reach to the office of Executive Engineer Trans. Line Maintn. Division-VII PDD Complex, Bemina, Srinagar (Phone No. 0194-3516481), one day before the last date of submission of e-bid. Financial bids must be submitted online only as per prescribed format.  
The Standard Bidding Document is available at website **http://jktenders.gov.in**.

S. No.	Scope of Work	Qty	Estimated Cost	EMD @ 2%	Tender Fee	Time of Completion
1.	Supply Installation Testing & Commissioning of Electrical Equipment & Related Accessories including Supply and Erection of Columns and Supporting Structures for (2) Two Number 132kV Line Bays for 132/33kV Grid Sub Station Nowbug, Chadura at 220/132/33kV Grid Sub Station Budgam in Kashmir Valley.	Complete Job	195.00Lac	3.90Lac	2000.00 Rs.	03Months

**The information regarding schedule of downloading of the tender document, seeking of clarifications and submission dates thereof is as per the table below:**  
**CRITICAL DATES**  

(i)	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	22-11-2022
(ii)	Online Start date of downloading of Tender Documents	23-11-2022 (14:00 Hrs.)
(iii)	Online Start date & time of e-Bid submission	23-10-2022 (16:00 Hrs.)
(iv)	Pre Bid Conference/ clarifications	05-12-2022 to 08-12-2022.
(v)	Online Last date & time of e-Bid submission	15-12-2022 (14:00 Hrs.)
(vi)	Last date for submission of Hard Copies	14-12-2022 (14:00 Hrs.)
(vii)	Online Techno-Commercial Bids Opening Date & time	16-12-2022 (12:00Hrs.)
(VIII)	Venue for opening of Bids	Office of the Superintending Engineer O&M Circle-II JKPTCL, Srinagar

- \* Only the bidders possessing the qualifying criteria as mentioned in the SBD should participate in the bidding process.
- \* Clarifications if any can be sought from the office of the under signed one-mail tlm7.jkptcl@gmail.com
- \* Before participating in the bids, the bidder shall acquaint himself with the site of work and local conditions.
- \* The Department reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof.

**No: TLMD-VII/TS/2514-18**  
**Dated: 22 : 11: 2022**  
**DIPK-NB-5182/22**

**SD/-**  
**Executive Engineer**  
**TLMD-VII Srinagar**



# Govt releases ₹17k cr GST compensation to States

Total ₹1.15 lakh crore released this fiscal year

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Central Government has released ₹17,000 crore to states towards balance GST compensation, taking the total amount released so far this fiscal to over ₹1.15 lakh crore, the Finance Ministry said on Friday. "With this release, the Centre has released, in advance, the entire amount of Cess estimated to be collected this year till March-end available for payment of compensation to States," the ministry said in a statement.

Goods and Services Tax (GST) was introduced in the country with effect from July 1, 2017, and states were assured of compensation for the loss of any revenue arising on account of the implementation of GST for a period of five years.



For providing compensation to states, a cess is levied on certain goods and the amount of cess collected is credited to the compensation fund.

The central government released an amount of Rs 17,000 crore to states/UTs on November 24, 2022, towards the balance GST compensation for the period April to June 2022. The total amount of compensation released to the states/UTs so far, including the aforesaid amount, during the year 2022-23 is ₹1,15,662 crore,

the statement added.

"This is despite the fact that total Cess collection till October 2022 is only ₹72,147 crore and the balance of ₹43,515 crore is being released by the Centre from its own resources," the ministry said.

This decision was taken to assist the states in managing their resources and ensuring that their programmes, especially the expenditure on capital are carried out successfully during the financial year, it added.

# Sensex, Nifty scale fresh lifetime highs as Reliance, Wipro advance

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex and Nifty advanced further to settle at record highs for the second day in a row on Friday, helped by intense buying in index majors Reliance Industries, Wipro and Maruti.

In a choppy and range-bound trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex rose by 20.96 points or 0.03 per cent to settle at 62,293.64, its fresh record closing high. During the day, it jumped 175.05 points or 0.28 per cent to 62,447.73 — its lifetime intra-day peak.

Likewise, broader NSE Nifty went up by 28.65 points or 0.15 per cent to end at 18,512.75, its all-time high.

The key indices had gained over 1 per cent on Thursday to end at record high levels. The indices have extended the winning run for the fourth day with the Sensex rising by 1,140 points or close to 2 per cent and Nifty gaining 352 points or 2.29 per cent.

Reliance Industries emerged as the biggest gainer among the Sensex firms, rising 1.34 per cent, followed by Wipro, Tech Mahindra, Axis Bank, IndusInd Bank, Maruti, Tata Steel and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the major winners.

On the other hand, Nestle, Kotak Mahindra Bank, ICICI Bank and HCL Technologies were the major laggards.

"Markets ended flat in a



sluggish trading session, as investors stayed on the sidelines due to lack of cues from the US markets, which was shut on Thursday. While most of the Asian gauges ended in the red, local benchmarks managed to eke out modest gains amid thin volumes," said Amol Athawale, Deputy Vice President - Technical Research, Kotak Securities Ltd.

"Benchmark indices ended on a positive note amid volatility. Overall domestic markets are continuously showing strength amid global macro concerns and we believe that Indian markets would continuously outperform global indices backed by strong corporate earnings and healthy demand," said Mohit Nigam, Fund Manager & Head - PMS, Hem Securities.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.77 per cent and smallcap index jumped 0.69 per cent.

# Stock brokers to face 'financial disincentives' for tech glitches

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets watchdog Sebi on Friday directed stock exchanges to impose "financial disincentives" on stock brokers for technical glitches at their end, amid instances of snags at the brokers' end impacting the overall trading system.

Besides, the stock brokers would have to inform the bourses within one hour of any glitch happening in their trading systems as well as submit a preliminary incident report in one day.

As part of tightening the regulations, Sebi also said that the bourses should disseminate on their websites the instances of technical glitches occurring in the trading systems of stock brokers along with the Root Cause Analysis (RCA) of such issues. The new framework would be effective from April 1, 2023, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a circular.

"Stock exchanges shall put in place a structure of financial disincentives applicable to stock brokers for technical glitches occurring in their trading systems and non-compliance of the provisions made in this regard," Sebi said.

Against the backdrop of multiple instances of technical glitches in trading systems at the end of the stock brokers, the regulator had constituted a working group to recommend suitable measures to address the issues.



The latest framework has been put in place based on the recommendations of the working group and views obtained from stakeholders and industry experts.

Sebi did not mention about the specific "financial disincentives" that are likely to be faced by the stock brokers for the glitches.

"Rapid technological developments have increased the ease of electronic trading in securities markets. Technology-related interruptions and glitches (technical glitches) and their impact on the investors' opportunity to trade constitutes major technology-related risk," Sebi said.

Apart from informing the stock exchanges within one hour of the glitch happening, stock brokers would also have to submit a Preliminary Incident Report to the bourses within T+1 day of the inci-

dent (T being the date of the incident).

The report would include the date and time of the incident, the details of the incident, effect of the incident and the immediate action taken to rectify the problem.

Further, the stock brokers would have to submit a RCA report of the technical glitch to the stock exchange, within 14 days from the date of the incident. Sebi asked the stock brokers to do capacity planning for entire trading infrastructure - server capacities, network availability, and the serving capacity of trading applications. Also, they would have to monitor peak load in their trading applications, servers and network architecture.

The peak load would be determined on the basis of highest peak load observed by the broker during a calendar quarter.

# 'India capable of generating 9% growth'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India is capable of generating a 9 per cent growth rate but in view of the geopolitical situation, we should be satisfied with a 6.5-7 per cent economic expansion, says Sanjiv Sanyal, member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister.

India is following an "investment and export-driven growth model" and against the backdrop of "turbulent" global times, the RBI and the government have followed a restrained macro-economic approach, which is a correct step.

"It is a very turbulent time and we are generating a 7 per cent growth rate already. Nothing to sniff at. But if we get an open road, this economic machinery that we have built is capable of generating a 9 per cent growth rate," Sanyal said at the Times Now Summit 2022. The global economy is facing supply chain disruptions following the outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war in February.

In its World Economic Outlook released last month,

the International Monetary Fund (IMF) forecast global growth to slow from 6 per cent in 2021 to 3.2 per cent in 2022 and 2.7 per cent in 2023.

A Finance Ministry report has said that India is well placed to grow at a "moderately brisk rate" in the coming years on the back of macroeconomic stability, despite global monetary tightening.

Sanyal said, "This is not the time to try and overextend ourselves. Any growth rate between 6.5-7 per cent growth rate is not to be sniffed at. Even in the best of times. So let us be satisfied for now. But the time has come when we will be able to press the accelerator and I'm assuring you that the Indian supply side is ready for the big time." He said India is getting inserted into the global supply chain.

"With the problems happening in the Foxconn factory in China, the only other place where Apple has a sizeable capacity is in India. There is an opportunity for us to insert in the global supply chain and we are already doing this," Sanyal added.

# Forex kitty grows for second week; rises \$2.54 bn to \$547.25 billion

PTI ■ MUMBAI

In the second consecutive week of an increase in the kitty, India's forex reserves have grown by USD 2.537 billion to USD 547.252 billion for the week ended November 18, the RBI said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the overall kitty had swelled by USD 14.721 billion in the highest weekly rise since August 2021 to \$544.715 billion. It can be noted that in October 2021, the country's forex kitty had reached an all-time high of \$645 billion. The reserves have been declining as the central bank deploys the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused by global developments.

Foreign currency assets (FCA), a major component of the overall reserves, increased by \$1.76 billion to \$484.288 billion during the week to November 18, according to the Weekly Statistical Supplement released by the RBI on Friday. Expressed in dollar terms, the foreign currency assets include the effect of appreciation or depreciation of non-US units like the euro, pound and yen held in the foreign exchange reserves.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The state finance ministers' panel for GST levy on casinos, online gaming and horse racing will submit its report to the GST Council next week, Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma said on Friday.

Sangma-headed Group of Ministers (GoM) held its final meeting on the issue earlier this week and is understood to have recommended a GST levy of 28 per cent on online gaming, irrespective of whether it is a game of skill or chance.

However, in the absence of consensus on whether the tax should be levied on only the fees charged by the portal or the entire consideration, including the bet amount received from participants, the GoM has decided to refer all the suggestions to the GST Council for a final decision.

Asked when the GoM would send the report to the council, Sangma said: "We will submit the report next week."

Currently, online gaming attracts 18 per cent GST. The tax is levied on gross gaming revenue, which is the fees charged by online gaming portals. The GoM in its earlier report submitted to the council in June had suggested a 28 per cent GST on the full value of the consideration, including the contest entry fee, paid by the play-

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# Gold falls ₹270; silver tumbles ₹705

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices fell by ₹270 to ₹52,837 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday amid weak global trends, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had settled at ₹53,107 per 10 grams.

Silver also tumbled by ₹705 to ₹61,875 per kg.

"Stronger rupee and risk-on sentiments weighed on the domestic gold prices," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst at HDFC Securities.

Bullion has rallied about 8 per cent in November amid dollar weakness, Parmar said.

The rupee appreciated 16 paise to 81.54 against the US dollar in early trade on Friday on broad dollar weakness and in line with its Asian peers.

# Coal India to boost production; aims to achieve FY23 output target

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Coal India on Friday said it will further boost production in the coming months and is optimistic that the company will achieve the output target set for the current financial year.

Coal India (CIL), which accounts for over 80 per cent of domestic coal production, is eyeing an output of 700 million tonnes (MT) for FY23.

"We began FY23 requiring 78 MT jump in volume terms to touch the target of 700 MT. As of November 24, the company has already achieved an increase of nearly 58 MTs.

"In the ensuing months we aim to sustain the tempo and



further scale up the production and feel upbeat about achieving the target," the PSU said in a statement.

Following the end of the monsoon season, most of the mines have been dewatered. The festive season is also over. There will be greater availability of machines and manpower leading to better production and productivity in the coming months, the company said.

The PSU produced 400 million tonnes (MT) of coal as on November 24 of the current financial year, registering a growth of 17 per cent.

As of November 24, 2021 CIL had produced 342 MT of coal.

The PSU said that its increased production brought down the asking annual growth rate to 6.9 per cent from 12.4 per cent at the start of the year.

Paving the path to increased production in the remaining months of the current financial year, the company's overburden removal (OBR) has been consistently logging an average of 5.4 million cubic metres (MCuM) per day during November till now.

# Rupee rises 8 paise to close at 81.62 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee settled for the day 8 paise higher at 81.62 (provisional) against the American currency on Friday on broad dollar weakness and improved risk sentiments.

Forex traders said positive domestic equities and foreign fund inflows supported the local unit. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 81.69 and touched an intra-day high of 81.44 and a low of 81.71 against the greenback.

The local unit finally settled at 81.62, registering a rise of 8 paise over its previous close. On Thursday, the rupee appre-

ciated by 23 paise to close at 81.70 against the US dollar.

The Indian rupee appreciated on positive domestic equities and a weak US Dollar. Foreign fund inflows also supported Rupee, said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

The US dollar declined on extended losses as the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) minutes showed that a majority of Federal Reserve policymakers agree that it would likely soon be appropriate to slow the pace of rate hike.



# Adani to raise ₹20K crore through fresh share issue

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Billionaire Gautam Adani's conglomerate on Friday said it will raise ₹20,000 crore in equity to fund the massive expansion at his sprawling business empire that now spans from ports to energy to cement.

Adani Enterprises Ltd, the flagship firm of Asia's richest person, will raise funds through the issue of fresh equity shares, it said in a stock exchange filing.

The public offering will help Adani Enterprises Ltd



(AEL), which is the business incubator for the group and currently houses businesses from civil aviation to data centres, diversify the shareholder

base and build its credibility and acceptance among investors.

Promoters currently hold 72.63 per cent shares of AEL. Of the remaining 27.37 per cent, almost 20 per cent is held by insurance companies and foreign portfolio investors.

Shares of AEL have more than doubled in the last one year, giving it a market value of ₹4.46 lakh crore.

Benchmark S&P BSE Sensex index has risen just 5.4 per cent over the same period.

# Merger with HDFC to take 8-10 months: HDFC Bank

PTI ■ MUMBAI

HDFC Bank expects to amalgamate its home loan major parent HDFC into itself by September next year, a top official said on Friday.

Both HDFC and HDFC Bank held general meetings on Friday to seek shareholder approvals for what is billed as the largest merger in Indian corporate history at over USD 40 billion.

At the time of announcing the merger on April 4 this year, the entities had said the merg-



er will take 12-18 months.

"We believe going by the past practice and going by past trends, it will take about 8-10 months time before an effective date is announced," HDFC Bank's chief executive and managing director Sashidharan Jagdishan said at the meeting.

# WABAG, Asian Development Bank tie up to raise ₹200 crore

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Water treatment player Va Tech WABAG Ltd has signed an agreement with Asian Development Bank to raise ₹200 crore through unlisted non-convertible debentures, the company said on Friday.

This would be Asian Development Bank's first investment in a water sector company in the country. Signed an agreement

with Asian Development Bank towards raising ₹200 crore through unlisted non-convertible debentures carrying a five year and three months tenure which will be subscribed by ADB over 12 months," Va Tech WABAG said in a statement.

The capital raised would be used for working capital requirements of the company and would be within the current borrowing limits thereby not increasing the debt-level of the company, it said.



# SAMBA HO!

## RICHARLISON DOUBLE GIVES BRAZIL WORLD CUP WIN OVER SERBIA

AP ■ LUSAIL

A second-half brace by Richarlison, including a stunning overhead scissor kick, gave tournament favorites Brazil a 2-0 win over Serbia in their opening World Cup game at the Lusail Stadium on Thursday.

The record five-time winners had toiled at times in the first half but improved after the break and were rewarded when Tottenham Hotspur striker Richarlison followed in to score the opener in the 62nd minute when a Vinicius Junior shot was saved.

Vinicius then set up Richarlison to score again in the 73rd minute with a stunning acrobatic effort that is surely the goal of the World Cup so far.

The result continues Brazil's superb record in the World Cup group stage, in which their last defeat came in 1998 against Norway, when they had already secured a place in the next round.

Tite's side are now already on top of Group G ahead of Switzerland, who beat Cameroon 1-0 earlier and who are Brazil's next opponents.

The scoreline here was the same as when these sides met in the group stage in 2018 but Brazil are determined to do far better than four years ago, when they lost to Belgium in the quarter-finals.

They have come to Qatar as the favorites for a sixth title, two decades



after their last victory.

Other results in the opening round of matches in Qatar served as a warning, with their great rivals Argentina suffering a shock defeat to Saudi Arabia at the same stadium and Germany being shocked by Japan.

However, Brazil would have known not to take Serbia lightly, given that the side who lie 21st in the FIFA rankings

are one of Europe's most improved teams and topped their qualifying group above Portugal. Yet it still would have been a huge shock for Brazil to lose at a ground where they intend to return for the final on December 18.

Tite sent out a very attack-minded side, with Neymar in support of Richarlison while Raphinha and Vinicius occupied the wings and Lucas

Paqueta added creativity in central midfield. Neymar, the world's most expensive player, kicked off needing just two goals to equal Pelé's all-time record tally of 77 for Brazil, but he will have to wait a little longer to get them.

The best Brazilian moments in the first half came when Thiago Silva's defense-splitting pass found Vinicius in the box, only for goalkeeper Vanja

Milinkovic-Savic to thwart the Real Madrid man, and when Raphinha played a one-two with Paqueta before his shot was saved.

Barcelona winger Raphinha was involved again within a minute of the restart when he hounded Nemanja Gudelj out of possession but was again denied by the goalkeeper.

However, Serbia's resistance was broken just after the hour mark.

The warning had come when Alex Sandro lashed a left-foot shot off an upright and two minutes later the goal arrived.

Neymar set up Vinicius for a shot that Milinkovic-Savic got a hand to, but the ball broke to Richarlison who followed in to score.

Serbia responded by bringing on Dusan Vlahovic, the exciting Juventus striker who had been struggling with injury.

Yet Brazil had now found their stride and the second goal when it came was worthy of the biggest stage.

A Vinicius cross with the outside of his right boot was controlled by Richarlison who then spun around and leapt to score with an outrageous acrobatic effort.

Brazil could have scored more, with Casemiro seeing a shot come back off the crossbar, but this was a very promising start.



## Brazil face anxious wait after Neymar injury scare

AP ■ DOHA

Brazil were sweating on the fitness of Neymar on Friday after their talisman sprained his ankle in the World Cup win over Serbia.

The forward suffered the injury in a collision with Nikola Milenkovic during the second half. The 30-year-old Paris Saint-Germain player attempted to continue but was substituted with about 10 minutes to go, shortly after Richarlison put Brazil two goals ahead.

Neymar was seen limping heavily after the game in Doha and photos showed swelling on his right ankle.

He declined to speak to journalists as he left the stadium, but posted a light-hearted message on Twitter, without making reference to his injury.

"Tough game but it was important to win," he said. "Congratulations team, first step taken... six to go."

Team doctor Rodrigo Lasmar said it was too early to jump to conclusions.

"We need to wait 24 to 48 hours to have a better assessment," said Lasmar. "We have not scheduled any MRI (scan) and tomorrow we'll have a new assessment."

"We need to wait, we cannot make any premature comments about his evolution."

Coach Tite was optimistic that Neymar would be back to lead Brazil's bid for a record-extending sixth World Cup crown.

They next face Switzerland on Monday, with their final Group G match against Cameroon. "You can be certain that Neymar is going to play in the World Cup," Tite said, adding that the attacker had initially stayed on the pitch after hurting his ankle "because the team needed him".

## Iran sink Wales at World Cup Qatar loses 3-1 to Senegal, host nearing WC exit



AP ■ DOHA

Iran claimed a famous 2-0 victory over 10-man Wales on Friday as Carlos Queiroz's men scored two goals deep into added time to keep their World Cup campaign alive.

The Iran players sent their thousands of supporters at the Ahmad Bin Ali Stadium delirious by beating a European team at a World Cup for the first time.

Wales goalkeeper Wayne Hennessey became the first player to be sent off in the

Qatar tournament for clattering into Mehdi Taremi late in the game.

Iran, who had earlier twice struck the woodwork, finally broke the deadlock in the 98th minute through substitute Rouzbeh Cheshmi's powerful drive.

Ramin Rezaeian clipped in a second on the counter-attack three minutes later.

Iran, who would have been eliminated with a defeat, instead climbed to second in Group B behind England, against whom they had lost

6-2 in their opening game.

Wales tumbled to the bottom of the group and will have to defeat neighbours England in their final match next week to have any chance of reaching the knockout phase in their first World Cup since 1958.

The United States take on England later on Friday.

### Iran team sing national anthem



AP ■ DOHA

Iran's team sang the national anthem before Friday's World Cup match against Wales, having opted not to do so in their tournament opener in Qatar.

The Iranian players had stood impassively during their anthem before their 6-2 defeat to England on Monday in an apparent gesture of solidarity with anti-government protesters in the Islamic republic.

Some Iranian fans were in tears during the singing of the anthem.

Qatar is staring at the World Cup exit.

Senegal sent the host team to a second loss at its home tournament on Friday after seizing on a defensive error from the Qatar team for the opening goal in a 3-1 victory.

Qatar's elimination from the World Cup could now come on Friday and less than a week into the tournament it's been preparing to play in for 12 years if Netherlands and Ecuador draw in the day's other Group A game, or if the Dutch win.

It would confirm Qatar as the worst-performing host team in the 92-year history of the World Cup.

Senegal, on the other hand, got its campaign back on track after losing 2-0 to the Netherlands in the first match.

Against Qatar, Senegal striker Boulaye Dia drilled in the first goal after defender Boualem Khoukhi tried to make a clearance under no pressure, didn't connect properly and landed on his backside. The ball dribbled away from Khoukhi.

And Dia, grateful for the gift, lashed it in.



Famara Diedhiou made it 2-0 at the start of the second half with a header from a corner while two Qatar defenders failed to stop him.

Qatar was denied a penalty and the chance of the lead before Dia's goal, though, when Akram Afif was clear on the left and then knocked over by a charging Ismaila Sarr. Referee Antonio Mateu of Spain didn't award a penalty even though replays suggested that contact was made.

Qatar did at least score a goal through substitute Mohamed Muntari.

## Denmark coach unafraid of 'spectacular' France

AP ■ DOHA

Denmark coach Kasper Hjulmand says he has no fears about facing World Cup holders France on Saturday having twice beaten them in the Nations League this year.

The Danes drew 0-0 with Tunisia in their opening game but know a positive result against France at Stadium 974 will leave them well placed in Group D before playing Australia in their final match.

"It's an important game for us after the start we had. They're opponents who belong at the very top of world football, they're the reigning champions," Hjulmand told a news conference on Friday.

"The quality and talent they have in



France at the moment is spectacular. I have great respect for them but we also know how strong we are."

Euro 2020 semi-finalists Denmark

defeated France home and away in the Nations League and arrived in Qatar as one of the pre-tournament dark horses.

The two teams also met in the group

stage at the last World Cup, playing out the only goalless draw four years ago in Russia.

"We know if we play our very best we know we have a chance of getting a good result against France. To be able to do that we have to take a big step forward from the first match," said Hjulmand.

Asked if there was a particular plan to counter Mbappe, Hjulmand replied: "I don't think it's good to be frightened of anything."

"In the last game we played in Copenhagen (against France in September) we had a good plan. He had two or three big chances."

"No matter what plans you have against top-class players such as Mbappe, you can't keep a top player like that down."

## Lewandowski still on penalties despite WC miss: Poland coach



AP ■ DOHA

Robert Lewandowski is still Poland's penalty-taker despite missing in their World Cup opener and is primed to break his tournament duck, coach Czeslaw Michniewicz said on Friday.

The Barcelona predator has plundered 76 goals for his country, but none have come at a World Cup and he had a tame penalty saved in Poland's 0-0

draw with Mexico on Tuesday.

That put pressure on Poland to beat Saudi Arabia - who stunned Argentina 2-1 in the opening round of games - on Saturday if they are to progress to the last 16 in Qatar.

"When it comes penalties, Robert is still number one," said Michniewicz.

He added: "He feels ready to score for Poland."

Defender Jan Bednarek also backed Lewandowski to find the net, but said the 34-year-old striker would not be too concerned as long as he was helping the team.

"Robert Lewandowski is our captain, he is a striker and wants to score as many goals as he can," said the Aston Villa player.

"But for him the team is more important. He swallows his pride and really focuses on working as hard as he can, it isn't important for him if he scores or not."

"This is the best striker in the world," Bednarek added.

"I hope tomorrow he will lead us to victory."

## Messi on brink as Argentina look to salvage World Cup

AP ■ DOHA

It was not supposed to be this way. Before the World Cup started, hopes were high in Argentina that Lionel Messi was set for a glorious swansong.

The diminutive superstar with magic in his boots insisted he was in fine shape physically ahead of what he suggested would be his final tilt at World Cup success.

After winning La Liga 10 times, the Ballon d'Or seven times, the Champions League four times and the Copa America once, this trophy is all that is missing from Messi's massive collection of personal and collective accolades.

Argentina came into the tournament on a remarkable 36-match unbeaten streak having stunned bitter rivals Brazil in their own back yard to win last year's Copa America.

Pundits and fans the world over were proclaiming Argentina one of - if not the - favourites.

Argentines were allowing themselves to dream: one of the greatest players the world has ever seen was about to lift football's greatest prize.

But Tuesday's shock 2-1 defeat to a tactically superior and more athletic Saudi Arabia has brought them back down to earth with a bump.

The realisation is that far from coating an already delicious cake with icing, Messi's World Cup story may just be about to end in ignominious fashion.



The autopsy has already begun in Argentina. Football pundits and fans alike are speculating whether or not the 'Pibe' was truly fit.

He had sat out a couple of group training sessions, following his own personal programme apart, because of a knock on his calf.

A picture went viral on social media of his apparently deformed ankle - although he was merely wearing an ice pack.

Fingers were even pointed at his club Paris Saint-Germain, seemingly for daring to play him week in, week out rather than

wrap him in cotton wool so he could arrive at the World Cup in the best possible shape to help his country.

Coach Lionel Scaloni also came under fire for his perceived inability to spring the Saudis' high defensive line as his side were caught offside seven times in the first half.

He was also castigated for their inability to break down a stubborn defence that dropped deeper once they took the lead.

Messi will have to lift himself above the poor fare produced against Saudi if Argentina are to beat Mexico on Saturday and keep their hopes of progressing alive.

## De Bruyne demands bravery against Morocco



AP ■ DOHA

Kevin De Bruyne called on his Belgium team-mates to be braver on Friday, insisting he also needs improve ahead of Sunday's World Cup clash with Morocco.

The Red Devils scraped a narrow 1-0 win over Canada in their opening Group F game on Wednesday despite an unimpressive performance in which De Bruyne won a man-of-the-match award he then said he didn't deserve.

During the game he was visibly annoyed with Belgium's performance and only a Thibaut Courtois save from Alphonso Davies' penalty stopped spirited Canada from taking an early lead.

"We can show more bravery, be better on the ball, and overall improve our performance, and individually it's the same," De Bruyne told reporters.

"I was on the level that the team was playing at, I was below average, I expect myself to be way better than that. That's what I'm going to try and do in the next game."

A victory over Morocco would secure them a place in the last 16, with striker Romelu Lukaku potentially an option from the bench after training with his teammates on Friday following a thigh injury.

"Romelu's return will not change the way we play, but of course he is a top striker," said De Bruyne.



# BLACK CAPS THRASH INDIA IN 1st ODI

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

Indian bowlers crumbled in the face of Tom Latham's counter-attacking hundred as New Zealand rallied to crush India by seven wickets in the first ODI here on Friday.

On a ground where a 300-plus total had been chased only once, India fancied their chances after posting 306 for seven and then leaving the New Zealanders at 88 for three in the 20th over.

The hosts had the last laugh in the end though, reaching the target with 17 balls to spare thanks to Latham's unbeaten 104-ball 145 and skipper Kane Williamson's 94 not out off 98 deliveries as they added 221 runs for an unbeaten fourth-wicket partnership.

At the end of the 39th over, New Zealand needed 91 in 66 balls at nearly 8.30 runs an over.

By the time Shardul Thakur (1/63) had completed a forgettable 40th over, the hosts were in total control of the game, with Latham amassing 25 runs with the help of four fours and a six.

That over swung the match firmly in New Zealand's favour as the visitors struggled to contain Latham who galloped towards victory.

Latham's belligerent innings comprised as many as 19 boundaries and five sixes, while Williamson hit seven fours and one maximum.



Tearaway pacer Umran Malik (2/66) made his presence felt on debut with his thunderbolts after an impressive show by the Indian batters, though the youngster from Jammu proved to be expensive.

Coming off a first-ball duck,

Shreyas Iyer found form with a neat half-century before Washington Sundar blazed away to a 16-ball 37 to guide India to a competitive total.

Besides Iyer's 76-ball 80, Shikhar Dhawan (72 off 77 balls) and Shubman Gill (50 off

65), too, struck fluent fifties after the tourists were sent in to bat.

Umran bagged his maiden ODI wicket when Devon Conway went for an expansive drive off a quick delivery, only to get an outside edge for Rishabh Pant to complete an

easy catch. Daryl Mitchell became Umran's second victim when he slashed one towards deep point. That wasn't one the best of deliveries bowled by him on the day but the pressure he generated with his earing pace certainly helped him in getting the wicket.

However, Williamson and Latham rallied to lift the Kiwis to victory with a big partnership, leaving the Indians stunned.

Earlier, Sundar smashed three sixes and as many fours to prop up India at the death, while Iyer hit four maximums and four boundaries, having entered the game after his duck in the final T20 International two days ago.

New Zealand decided to field first after winning the toss and while Kane Williamson's bowlers prevented the Indians from getting off to a flyer, skipper Dhawan and Gill opened up after being watchful.

Having reached 40 in the

first 10 overs after Gill was dropped by Lockie Ferguson off the bowling of Matt Henry, the Indian openers sought to improve the run rate and looked for boundaries.

Their quest paid off as India went past 100 in the 21st over with both Dhawan and Gill clearing the ropes on a regular basis.

Dhawan slashed Henry behind deep point and clipped him off pads in the 15th over to get two successive fours.

The India captain then got two more boundaries, off Adam Milne, including a smart upper cut to bring up India's hundred.

Having already hit two sixes over long-on and third man, for which he employed an excellent ramp shot, Gill got his third maximum when he smashed left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner down the ground and into the sightscreen.

Even as Dhawan got two boundaries against Tim Southee, Gill swept Santner for a boundary and closed in on fifty. However, right after reaching his half-century, Gill got out after failing to clear Devon Conway in the deep off Ferguson.

Looking in fine fettle, Dhawan too was dismissed soon after as he hit Southee straight to Finn Allen at point.

When on 11, Iyer was offered a life by Tom Latham after the batter had attempted the ramp shot against a short Milne delivery.

However, a ball after guiding Ferguson to the fine leg boundary, Pant went for the pull and dragged it onto his stumps, bringing to an end an innings that failed to inspire confidence.

That brought into the middle the man-in-form, Suryakumar Yadav, who got off the mark with an exquisite cover drive. But, two balls, later, he was walking back to the dressing room after edging the nippy Ferguson to Allen at first slip.

The duo of Iyer and Sanju Smanon (36 off 38 balls) then forged a 94-run partnership to steady the ship until the latter fell to a brilliant catch by Glenn Phillips.



## We need to introspect and comeback stronger in next game: Iyer

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

India batter Shreyas Iyer admitted that a "few things didn't go their way" in the opening ODI against New Zealand and as a team, they need to "introspect" and comeback stronger in the remaining two games of the series.

"The situation we were in and from there to reach 307 is a commendable total. Definitely, some things didn't go our way today but it's a learning curve, we can introspect, comeback with new ideas in the next game," he said in the post-match press conference.

The right-handed batter said India can't afford to get bogged down by the defeat and approach the next two matches with a positive frame of mind.

"It's not easy to directly come from India and play here. Wickets keep on changing in every place and this is a challenge which you need to face. You have to be mentally strong, just have to adapt to the situations," Iyer said.

He lauded the fearless approach of Tom Latham and skipper Kane Williamson, which made a big difference.

"Both of them (Latham and Williamson) played fantastic knocks. They knew which bowlers to target at a specific time. I believe their partnership completely changed the scenario of the game and that was a crucial phase for us to get wickets.

"If we would have got one wicket we would have been under their skin and the situation could have been completely different. But kudos to them that they found the strength to convert those loose balls into boundaries and sixes. They were fearless in their approach and I feel that's what helped them," Iyer added.

Chasing a required run rate of over eight, Latham hammered Shardul Thakur for 25 runs in the 40th over that included a six and four boundaries that shifted the momentum of the match.

"The way Latham took over that over (40th), I think that completely shifted the momentum towards them. He wanted to come in and he wanted to build that partnerships. Since they have been playing together for so many years so they know their strengths and weaknesses pretty closely," Iyer said.

## We bowled too short against Latham: Dhawan

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

India captain Shikhar Dhawan feels his bowlers failed to execute their plans and bowled too short to an attacking batter like Tom Latham, who cashed in on the opportunity to register his career-best ODI score here on Friday. Latham hit an attacking unbeaten 145 off 104 balls while skipper Kane Williamson struck an unconquered 94 off 98 deliveries.

"We felt good with the total. The ball was seaming in



the first 15 overs. This ground is a bit different than other grounds. We bowled a lot on a short of a length, and Latham attacked. We misfielded on a few balls," a disappointed Dhawan said.

"But as I said, we were quite short to Latham, and that's where he took the game away. He hit four boundaries in the 40th over, and that's where the game shifted. Surely lots of learning for the boys."

New Zealand skipper Williamson said Latham played

a special knock at the Eden Park, where anything is chaseable because of the dimensions of the square boundaries. "It was a competitive total. If you build partnerships here at Eden Park, you can chase anything. Incredible innings from Tom Latham.

"On these drop-in pitches, you bowl full and straight, and it can be difficult. It was one of the most special ODI knocks I have seen. You are always in the game with the dimensions," Williamson said.



## In 90s, rival teams wanted to copy Oz, now it's us: Moeen

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

Star all-rounder Moeen Ali sees nothing wrong in rival teams trying to "copy" the much-talked-about England template in white-ball cricket following their resounding success in global events.

With their recent triumph in Australia, England became the first team to hold the ODI and T20 World Cup trophy in the same cycle.

Eoin Morgan brought about a radical change in mindset and playing style following England's dismal campaign in the 2015 World Cup and Jos Buttler is carrying forward his legacy.

An important member of the English white-ball team, Moeen feels it is natural for other teams to emulate their aggressive approach to the game. He also drew a parallel with the all-conquering Australian team of the 1990s and early 2000s.

"The template was spoken about long ago. I feel we have become a better team now. Morgs (Morgan) did a brilliant job to change the mindset, which is the hardest part, to put the template there.

"Now we can adapt to different conditions, different teams, use different bowlers in the death and there is flexibility in the batting order. This team is going to get even better," Moeen said.

On the England template which has become the benchmark in international cricket, the 35-year-old said: "Whenever a team is winning, for example Australia. They used to win all the trophies. Everyone wanted to copy them. Now England have

won 50 over and T20 world titles and teams want to copy us."

England had lost to India and South Africa at home earlier this year and Moeen said it was a timely wake-up call for them.

"We played South Africa and India in the summer. They beat us because they were playing the same brand of cricket we were playing.

"So we knew we had to get better and it is a good template to follow. I won't be surprised if other teams follow that template," said Moeen.

England had lost to India at home but they gave them a hiding in the World Cup semifinals with a 10-wicket win.

England have won two world titles in the last three years while India await their first ICC trophy since 2013.

Asked about India's inability to win global events while they consistently do well in bilateral cricket: Moeen said: "The pressure is different, we felt a lot of pressure this time as we were desperate to win the trophy.

"We also know the other teams are feeling the same pressure. In a bilateral series, there is a lot to consider and you can rest players.

"When it comes to ICC, there are different venues, the pressure is different. That is where the mindset comes into play.

"If you have the team ethos where you don't worry about getting out, that helps. We played our best cricket against India that day. If you play a certain brand of cricket you will fail but you have to stick with the players as long as you can."

## He doesn't get the accolades he deserves: Shastri on Dhawan

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

With attention mostly centered around the likes of Virat Kohli, seasoned opener Shikhar Dhawan "doesn't get the accolades that he deserves" despite delivering both as a player and captain, feels former India coach Ravi Shastri.

Leading the Indian team in the three-match ODI series in New Zealand, Dhawan led from the front in the opener here on Friday, scoring a fluent 77-ball 72 at the top of the order while adding 124 runs for the first wicket with Shubman Gill.

Impressed by the left-handed Dhawan's effort, Shastri said on broadcasters Prime Video, "He's vastly experienced. He doesn't get the accolades that he deserves." "To be honest, most of the spotlight is on Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma. But when you look at his one-day cricket record, and you look at some of the innings he has played against top teams in big games, it's an outstanding record."

Shastri, during whose coaching tenure Dhawan has played in the national team, said the 36-year-old opener has got all the shots to succeed against quality fast bowlers.

"A left-hander at the top makes a lot of difference. He is a natural stroke player, he has got all the shots to counter top class fast bowling, the pull, the cut, and the drive. He likes it when the ball is coming onto the bat,



and I think his experience will be handy here.

"There are a lot of talented youngsters around, but I think in this format of the game, his experience will be in value," said Shastri who had called Dhawan a gun player earlier in the year.

During his stay in the middle at Eden Park, Dhawan, who has got over 6500 runs in ODIs, found the fence 13 times and looked good for more before hitting one straight to point.

It is not the first time that Dhawan is wearing the captain's hat as he has led a second-string Indian team in the past and enjoyed good results against Sri Lanka (2-1), South Africa (2-1) and West Indies (3-0).

Dhawan was recently handed the captaincy of IPL side Punjab Kings, who have been struggling to reach the play-offs.

## INDIA CONTINUE TO LEAD CRICKET WC SUPER LEAGUE STANDINGS

PTI ■ DUBAI

Hosts India continued to top the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup Super League standings despite suffering a seven-wicket defeat against New Zealand in the opening ODI but the Black Caps climbed two spots to fourth position by virtue of that win.

India are at the top with 129 points from 19 matches, fol-

lowed by England (125 points from 18 games), Australia (120 points from 18 matches), New Zealand (120 points from 16 games) and Bangladesh (120 points from 18 games).

New Zealand rose in the League standings on the back of brilliant knocks from Tom Latham and Kane Williamson in the first ODI against India in Auckland. The win gave New Zealand 10 CWCSSL points.



## Italy, Canada set up Davis Cup semifinal showdown

AP ■ MALAGA

Fabio Fognini and Simone Bolleli cruised to victory in the deciding doubles as Italy beat the US 2-1 in their Davis Cup quarterfinal in Malaga on Thursday.

Victory set up a semifinal clash on Saturday against Canada who also triumphed in the deciding doubles of their last-eight tie against Germany to win 2-1.

"I am really happy, I am here with my 'brother'. We played really well," said Fognini, after the pair beat Jack Sock and Tommy Paul 6-4, 6-4.

Italy, shorn of their two top players, world No. 15 Jannik Sinner and 16th-ranked Matteo Berrettini, eliminated an American team led by ninth-ranked Taylor Fritz and Francis Tiafoe, who is in the top 20.

Lorenzo Sonego, ranked 45th, opened the tie by coming from a set down to beat Tiafoe 6-3, 7-6 (9/7).

Fritz leveled when he survived a tough first set to beat Lorenzo Musetti 7-6 (10/8), 6-3. Fognini and Bolleli, the 2015 Australian Open champions, broke in the ninth game of the first set and the seventh game of the second to win.

Jan-Lennard Struff, ranked a lowly 152 in the world, gave Germany the lead in their quarterfinal with a stunning 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (7/2) win over 18th-ranked Denis Shapovalov.

Struff has now defeated the Canadian six times in nine meetings and on Thursday survived an 18-ace barrage from the left-hander.

Felix Auger-Aliassime, the highest-ranked man in Malaga at six in the world, leveled the quarter-final with a 7-6 (7/1), 6-4 win over Oscar Otte, Germany's 65th-ranked player.

Shapovalov and Vasek Pospisil then teamed-up to defeat Kevin Krawietz and Tim Puetz 2-6, 6-3, 6-3 to seal a spot in the semifinals for the fourth time.

## World Team Chess: India loses to Uzbekistan in semifinals

PTI ■ JERUSALEM

India went down 1-3 to Uzbekistan in the semifinal of the FIDE World Team Chess Championship here on Friday.

The two teams shared honours in the first round at 2-2 scoreline with S L Narayanan's superb win with black pieces over Shamsiddin Vokhidov being offset by S P Sethuraman's loss to Jakhongir Vokhidov.

Vidit Santosh Gujrathi drew with Nordirbek Yakubboev on the top board, followed by an identical result in the tie between Nihal Sarin and Javokhir Sindharov.

In the second round, Gujrathi and Sarin lost to Yakubboev and Sindharov respectively.

Narayanan beat Vokhidov in 44 moves but that was not enough as K Sasikiran, playing on the fourth board in place of Sethuraman, drew with Sindharov to hand Uzbekistan, winner of the Open title in the Chess Olympiad earlier this year, a 2.5-1.5 victory for a place in the final.

A win in a round gives a team two points while a draw is worth one point.

In the other semifinal, China got the better of Spain to advance to the summit clash. After the first round saw honours being shared, China won the second 3-1 to book a final clash with the Uzbeks.

## Indian men's hockey team faces Australia test

PTI ■ ADELAIDE

The Indian men's hockey team will get another chance to reassess its strength and weakness ahead of the World Cup when it squares off against world number one Australia in a five-match series, starting here on Saturday.

It has always been a herculean task for India to challenge the might of the Australians, who are dominant force in World Hockey.

It will be the first time they meet since Australia thrashed India 7-0 in the CWG final in Birmingham.

World No.5 India will clearly start as underdogs against the Kookaburras though Graham

Reid's team has been a force to reckon with since winning a historic bonze in the Tokyo Olympics last year.

India are coming into the match after two victories against New Zealand and mixed results (1W, 1L) against Spain in Bhubaneswar in the fresh FIH Pro League season.

Both Spain and New Zealand are lower-ranked sides — at eighth and ninth respectively — and facing Australia at home will be an altogether different proposition for the Indian side.

Talking about the series, India head coach Reid said, "There is no better place to come than Australia for preparation for the World Cup.



"Australia's way of play is very grounded in India. What's great about this series is that both teams get to learn about the different skills that both bring to the table," said the Australian during the pre-match press conference on Friday.

With the FIH World Cup in Bhubaneswar-Rourkela less than 50 days away, captain Harmanpreet Singh said each match against Australia will prove vital in their preparations for the marquee event at home.

"This series is really important for us. When you are preparing for a mega event like the World Cup, it's always good to play against the best in the lead up," said the ace drag-flicker.

The FIH Player of the Year is also hoping that his team will get enough support from the Indians residing in Australia.

"It is great to be in Australia after so many years gap. Due to Covid we couldn't travel here, there are many passionate Indian hockey fans here and we always love playing in front of them. I am looking forward to good matches here."

The Australian squad will be led by co-captains Aran Zalewski and Eddie Ockenden, who is set to play his 400th international in the second match on Sunday.

The other four matches will also be played here on November 27, 30, December 3 and 4.