

OPINION 6

CLIMATE FINANCE IS THE
PIVOT OF COP27

WORLD 8

BOMBED NOT BEATEN: KYIV FLIPS
TO SURVIVAL MODE

MONEY 10

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE DIPS TO
7.2% IN Q2: NSO SURVEY

RAIPUR, FRIDAY NOVEMBER 25, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3



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INDIA TO FACE
BLACK CAPS IN
1ST ODIC TODAY
12 SPORTWhat's tearing hurry in
picking Goel as EC: SCAG objects to SC's
observation: Arun's
profile more vital
than his voluntary
retirement for new
job appointmentPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday questioned the "haste" and "tearing hurry" in appointing Arun Goel as the Election Commissioner.

Goel's appointment file showed the entire process to place him as the Election Commissioner took less than 24 hours after the 1985 batch IAS officer got voluntary retirement from service.

The SC went through the original file of Goel's appointment as an EC. The Centre placed the file before the bench in pursuance of Wednesday's direction given by the SC.

The Centre vehemently resisted the observations, with Attorney General R Venkataramani saying the whole issue pertaining to the appointment of Goel be looked into its entirety. The SC reserved the matter for judgment.

A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Justice KM Joseph perused the Centre's original file pertaining to Goel's



appointment as EC. "What kind of evaluation is this? Although, we are not questioning the merits of Goel's credentials but the process," asked the judge pursuing the files.

"This was moved on November 18. Then the names are examined. Then the Prime Minister comes in ... Is it (usually) done in such haste, with such tearing urgency," Justice Joseph asked Attorney General R Venkataramani, who was appearing for the Central Government. "You did it in one day. On November 18. The file shows it," he added.

"According to your first page, this vacancy has been since May 15. Can you show us that from May to November, what was it that weighed on the Government that everything must be done superfast in November. We know that where there is a will there is a way," Justice Ajay Rastogi said. He also said the notification of appointment was issued the very same day, November 18.

As the bench questioned the "lightning speed" with

which Goel was appointed as an EC and also that his file did not even move within departments for 24 hours, the Centre through Venkataramani vehemently urged the bench not to make observations without looking into the entire issue pertaining to the appointment process.

During the hearing, lawyer Prashant Bhushan attempted to make submissions before the bench when the Attorney General was arguing. "Please hold your mouth for a while," the top-most law officer told Bhushan.

The top court reserved its verdict on a batch of pleas seeking a collegium-like system for the appointment of ECs and the Chief Election Commissioner and asked the parties to file written submission in five days. Justice Ajay Rastogi, who is also a part of the bench, told Venkataramani, "You have to listen to the court carefully and answer the questions. We are not on individual candidates but on the process." The Attorney General said he

is bound to answer the questions of the court.

The top court said the 1985-batch IAS officer got voluntary retirement from service in a single day, his file was cleared by the Law Ministry in a single day, a panel of four names was put up before the Prime Minister and Goel's name got the nod from the President within 24 hours. The bench, which also comprised Justices Aniruddha Bose, Hrishikesh Roy and C.T. Ravikumar, said none of the four names in the panel were "carefully hand-picked" by the Law Minister so that they could complete a six-year tenure.

Venkataramani responded that there is a mechanism and criteria for selection and there cannot be a scenario where the Government has to look back at every officers' track record and ensure that he completes the six-year tenure. Referring to Goel's appointment, the Attorney General said his profile is important and not the voluntary retirement which is being made an issue.

The bench said the 1991 Act says the EC's tenure is of six years and the Government has to ensure that the person who holds the post completes the stipulated period.

The top court said it is "struggling" to find the reasons and objects on how the Law Minister selected a panel of four names who were not going to complete the stipulated six-year tenure.

Pilot 'gaddar', took money from
BJP to topple my Govt: GehlotRaj CM's attack
widens fissures
in Cong ahead
of poll next yearPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI/JAIPUR

On a day when former Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister Sachin Pilot joined Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi in their ongoing Bharat Jodo Yatra, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot on Thursday made a shocking claim that he has enough proof that the BJP paid Pilot and his few associate MLAs ₹10 crore each to stage a rebellion against his Government two and half years ago.

In an interview to NDTV, Gehlot termed Pilot a "gaddar" (traitor) and said he did not know when the high command indicated to make Pilot Chief Minister since he is the only point man of high command in the State. "I do not have any indication. I am with the high command," he said.

On the question of the Gehlot camp not accepting Pilot, he said, "How will they accept the man who has committed betrayal? Our MLAs and I myself have suffered because of him."

This is the second time in a month that Gehlot vented his anger against Pilot in public. But today he virtually challenged the high command by indicating he would not accept Pilot as his replacement at any



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with his sister and the party's general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and party leader Sachin Pilot during the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Khandwa in Madhya Pradesh on Thursday PTI

cost. Gehlot's next move will be keenly watched now. His relation with Gandhis, in particular, all but ended after he refused to relinquish the post of CM for Pilot and head the Congress as its president.

Gehlot's scathing attack on Pilot has further widened the fissures in the Congress party in Rajasthan, where Assembly polls are slated next year. The Bharat Jodo Yatra, led by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, is also set to enter Rajasthan next weekend.

Pilot chose not to react directly and attack Gehlot, but he said it was unbecoming of

an experienced person like him to use such language and the priority should be to fight to defeat the BJP as well as strengthen Rahul's hand.

Pilot said, "Gehlot has been calling me 'nikamma, naakara, gaddar and so on' but it was not part of his upbringing to use such language."

"I have seen Gehlot's statements today aimed against me. Someone who is so experienced, senior and whom party has given so much, it is unbecoming of someone with such experience to use this language, make such completely false and baseless alle-

gations. It serves no purpose when we have to fight BJP unitedly....Previously also Ashok Gehlot ji has been making such allegations against me for a long time," the former Union Minister said.

The priority right now is to win the Assembly elections in Gujarat where Gehlot is the senior observer of the party and it is also important to strengthen the hand of Rahul, who has spent the last three months walking 2,000 km in the Bharat Jodo Yatra to challenge divisive forces, and that of the party, Pilot said.

Jama Masjid revokes ban on
women's entry after L-G's call

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

After his diktat banning the entry of a lone girl or a group of girls into the Jama Masjid created a furore and saw Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena's intervention, Shahi Imam Ahmed Bukhari on Thursday revoked the order.

The order barring the entry of women "who come alone" and use it as a place to "meet boys for dating" led to widespread outrage with National Commission for Women and the Delhi Commission for Women condemning the decision as "repressive" and "unacceptable."

Saxena spoke to Bukhari and requested him to rescind the order. The Shahi Imam agreed with the condition that the visitors respect and maintain the sanctity of the mosque.

Earlier, the Jama Masjid also posted signs outside the



A woman leaves the Jama Masjid in New Delhi on Thursday. The administration of Jama Masjid had put up notices outside the main gates banning the entry of 'girls', whether alone or in groups PTI

mosque notifying tourists that girls are not allowed inside.

"Jama Masjid mein ladki ya ladkiyon ka akele daakhla mana hai (the entry of a girl, or girls is not permitted to enter in Jama Masjid alone)," reads the notice by the administration.

However, the order said, women will be permitted to enter the mosque with their husbands or families. The notices, which have no date, came up a few days ago outside the three main entry gates, sources in the famed mosque's administration said.

Hatred, infidelity
lead to chopping of
woman in SitapurPREETAM SRIVASTAVA ■
LUCKNOW

With the Shraddha Walker murder case in Delhi making headlines in the national media, a similar incident has been reported from Sitapur in Uttar Pradesh where a man has been arrested for chopping his wife into pieces.

"My wife was addicted to drugs and she left home to stay with different people. This disturbed me as I could not tolerate her sleeping with other men so after all my attempts failed to check her behaviour, I decided to get rid of her," confessed Pankaj Maurya, the husband, arrested for brutally killing his wife Jyoti, alias Sneha, in Sitapur.

"With the help of my friends, I chopped my wife into pieces and disposed of them in different localities," he

said.

The police recovered the body parts of Jyoti from Gulariha area. Pankaj and his friend Durjan Pasi have been arrested.

This sensational killing came close on heels to the brutal murder of Shraddha Walker by her live-in partner Aftab Poonawalla, who killed her and sawed her body into 35 pieces in Delhi.

Besides Sitapur, another such brutal killing over 'hatred' came to light last week in Azamgarh, where a lover beheaded a girl, chopped her body into six pieces and threw them in a well. The accused, Prince Yadav, arrested by the police earlier this week, also confessed to have developed "hatred" for his lover Aradhana Prajapati (24) after she married another youth when he went to Dubai for a job.

Pulwama-famed ISI head
named Pak Army chiefLt Gen Asim Munir
crossed swords
with Imran KhanPNS/AGENCIES ■
NEW DELHI/ISLAMABAD

Lt General Asim Munir, a former Inter Intelligence Services (ISI) chief on Thursday was named as the new chief of the all powerful Pakistan Army. He was the spy agency head during the Pulwama fidayeen attack in Kashmir in 2019 where 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were killed.

Given the Pakistan Army and ISI's role in fomenting terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir and its hard stance vis-à-vis peace talks with India to restore normalcy, the Indian security establishment is not optimistic about any change in the present tense situation between the



two neighbours, sources said.

Munir will take over from incumbent General Qamar Javed Bajwa, who is set to retire on November 29 after a three-year extension. He declined another extension. Munir, a Frontier Force Regiment officer, is reported to be close to the outgoing chief, sources said.

Incidentally, Munir was all set to retire on November 27, two days before Bajwa before the announcement was made on Thursday. Reports indicated Pakistan Prime

Minister Shehbaz Sharif followed the principle of appointing the senior most officer as the Army chief. He will be the 17th Army chief of Pakistan.

As the Pakistan Army has dominated the country's politics for more than 50 years and greatly influenced its foreign policy, especially concerning India, the security establishment here will take a guarded approach and wait and watch how things unfold in the next few months after Munir takes over, sources said.

CAPSULE

INDIA UPSET AT MENTION
OF MODI BY US OFFICIAL

New Delhi: India is upset at a reference to Prime Minister Narendra Modi by a US State Department official while defending the immunity it had extended to Saudi Arabia's crown prince Mohammed bin Sultan, who is facing allegations of killing journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

SHRADDHA MURDER:
AFTAB'S KNIVES SEIZED

New Delhi: The Delhi Police has seized five knives from the flat of Mehrauli murder accused Aftab Amin Poonawala, who underwent a marathon polygraph test of nearly eight hours on Thursday at the Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL) here, officials said. However, police said the saw allegedly used by Poonawala to cut his live-in partner Shraddha Walker's body is yet to be recovered.

Israeli-Palestinian conflict catches up with Qatar World Cup

AP ■ DOHA

It was uncharted territory for the Israeli journalist. Wandering through the rustic outdoor marketplace in Doha before the start of the World Cup, he zeroed in on a Qatari man in his traditional head-dress and white flowing robe and asked for an interview.

"Which channel?" the Qatari asked. The journalist replied he was from Kan, Israel's public broadcaster.

The Qatari was stunned. "Where?"

"Israel," the journalist repeated. A split-second later, the interview was over.

The exchange ricocheted around social media, reflecting the latest political flash point at the first World Cup in the Arab world — never mind that neither Israeli nor Palestinian national teams are competing in the tournament. Controversy has followed

Israelis and Palestinians pouring into Doha, revealing just how entrenched and emotive their violent century-old conflict remains, including Israel's open-ended occupation of lands Palestinians want for a future state.

Palestinians shared footage of the Doha encounter between the Qatari man and the Israeli journalist, along with other clips of Palestinians and Qataris angrily confronting Israeli reporters live on TV. They viewed it as proof that although Qatar has permitted Israelis to fly directly to Doha and receive consular support for the first time in history, the conservative Muslim emirate has no intention of cozying up to Israel.

Israel's Channel 13 sports reporter, Tal Shorer, said he has been shoved, insulted and accosted by Palestinians and other Arab fans during his live reports from the tournament.



Portugal's Otavio, left, chases the ball during the World Cup group H soccer match between Portugal and Ghana, at the Stadium 974 in Doha on Thursday AP

"You are killing babies!" a few Arab fans yelled as they rammed into him during a broadcast this week.

Qatari media meanwhile has published some such videos with the caption: "No to normalization."

Officials in Qatar, with their history of public support to Palestinians, have insisted the temporary opening to Israelis was purely to comply with FIFA hosting requirements — not a step to normalizing ties like neighboring Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates did in 2020. Qatar has warned a spike in violence in the occupied West Bank or Gaza Strip would derail the arrangement. Nonetheless, thousands of Israeli soccer fans are expected to descend on Doha for the World Cup, diplomats say, including some on 10 direct flights planned over the next month.

Govt fixes ₹7,409 cr
for 'The Ashok' hotel
under National
Monetisation plan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Government has fixed an indicative value for Delhi's iconic "The Ashok" hotel at ₹7,409 crore under the national monetisation programme, according to sources.

The Ashok and hotel Samrat are among the eight ITDC assets listed under the National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman last year.

The sources said investor consultation has already been undertaken and a Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs note for the sale of the sprawling 25-acre property in the heart of Delhi is under consideration.

Ample possibilities for industry and investment in MP: CM

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan has said that sufficient land bank is available for industries in Madhya Pradesh. Madhya Pradesh is a power surplus state, Delhi's metro train is also running from Madhya Pradesh's solar plant.

There is sufficient availability of water in the state. Law and order situation is better with skilled manpower, people of the state believe in working peacefully, our bureaucracy is also pro-active. All these points are our strength for industrial development and investment. The State Government is ready to make necessary changes in its various policies as per the requirement of the industries.

There are ample possibilities for industry and invest-

ment in all sectors in the state. Industrialists and investors should come, hold talks and participate in the progress of the industry and the state. Chouhan was addressing a dialogue session on 'Investment Opportunities in Madhya Pradesh' in Bengaluru.

Industrial Policy and Investment Promotion Minister Rajvardhan Singh Dattigaon, Minister for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Science and Technology Om Prakash Sakhlecha, various industrialists and investors participated in the dialogue session at Hotel Taj Yeshwantpur, Bengaluru.

The Chief Minister said that this dialogue with the investors is not just a ritual, but it is a feeling generated by a yearning, determination, zeal and passion for the develop-

ment of the state, which I am committed to give a practical Chouhan said that Global Investors Summit is being held in Indore on 11 and 12 January 2023. Prior to this, there will be a Pravasi Bharatiya Sammelan from January 8 to 10, in which NRIs living in more than 80 countries will participate. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the conference and President Draupadi Murmu will attend the closing ceremony of the conference. Chouhan invited industrialists and investors to participate in the Global Investors Summit. Chouhan said that after discussing the possibilities of investment and setting up industries in Madhya Pradesh, I am inviting you with the belief that industrialists and investors will give a decisive shape to their future plans in the sum-

mit. A unique Shri Mahakal Lok has been created in Ujjain of Madhya Pradesh, the state is also Tiger State, Leopard State and Cheetah State. You come to the state, move forward decisively towards investment and get acquainted with the diversity of the state, this is the request.

Chief Minister Chouhan said that Madhya Pradesh is the cleanest state in the country. The state has become the leader of the country by making achievements in cleanliness for the sixth consecutive time. In the state 3 lakh kilometers of roads have been built. On the one hand inter-state connectivity will get a boost, on the other hand traffic from Delhi and Gujarat will also be smooth and in less time with Atal Expressway, Narmada Expressway.

Green field airport is being developed between Indore and Bhopal. Madhya Pradesh, once known as Bimaru State, has left Punjab behind in grain production in the field of agriculture. Basmati rice of the state is attracting a lot of attention in America and Canada. We are continuously moving forward in food processing. Our contribution to the country's GDP has increased from 3.6 to 4.6 percent and the growth rate is 19.36 percent at current prices.

Madhya Pradesh has made its own roadmap to achieve the target of making a five trillion dollar economy by the year 2026 by the Prime Minister Shri Modi. The state is also systematically moving towards creating new employment opportunities, IT sector and start-ups.



Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan addresses a meeting of investors and industrialists on the possibilities of investment in MP, in Bengaluru on Thursday. Pioneer photo

Neemuch police take action against illegal business of opium and hemp cultivation

PNS ■ NEEMUCH

Taking action against illegal drugs business in Neemuch district, police caught illegal cultivation of opium and hemp in large numbers near Palra village under Rampura police station area of the district; action was taken under direction of SP Suraj Verma.

According to the police, illegal cultivation of opium and hemp was being done in 8 to 10 bighas of land.

Manasa SDOP Yashasvi Shinde, along with about 100 police personnel of Rampura police station, along with 3 police station- in-charges, have recovered a large quantity of illegal opium and ganja plants in a raid

Police said opium and hemp crops were being grown in the guise of mustard. More than 11,000 plants were recovered by the police in 9 farms

in Palra village of Rampura area.

According to the police, opium and hemp crops were being grown in the guise of mustard. More than 11,000 plants were recovered by the police in 9 farms. Cultivation was being done illegally in 8 to 10 bighas. The cost of which could be in lakhs of

rupees.

Many plants of hemp were ready for use, many plants were kept in a well to dry, which have also been recovered.

Manasa SDOP Yashasvi Shinde said that if this opium and hemp crop were to be sold in the market, black marketing of these drugs would have taken place on a large scale.

Let us tell you that opium and hemp crops are often grown illegally in the interior forest area of Rampura.

Hemp cultivation has been caught several times, but this time such a large quantity of unauthorized crop of both ganja and opium has been found from here.

Beyond Key gets 'The pride of MP' Award

PNS ■ INDORE

Global software solutions and consulting company Beyond Key was presented the Pride of MP Award by Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Rajeev Chandrasekhar at the Invest Indore Programme; the event was organized by Sankalp Seva Sadan Mission.

The awards were given to the IT and ITE companies based in Indore for their contribution to the development of the city's business environment and IT space.

Over the past 16 years, Beyond Key has created a thriving business which has created various employment opportunities across different levels; they have also added significantly to the contribution of MP in terms of national as well as international IT-related innovations and world class services.

Mercury will further dip in next 24 hours

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

After witnessing moderate weather conditions for the past 2-3 days temperatures are likely to witness a steep dip in the temperatures in the next 24 hours and would prevail till next week.

While most of the divisions witnessed temperatures near normal temperature Gwalior, Shahdol, Sagar, Jabalpur and Bhopal divisions witnessed night temperatures below the normal temperatures. In the past 24 hours temperatures witnessed weather conditions around moderate levels of the season.

According to the Met, if the temperature of the night drops rapidly, then there will be the effect of a cold wave in many areas.

There will be a fall in the

Gwalior, Shahdol, Sagar, Jabalpur and Bhopal divisions witnessed night temperatures below the normal temperatures. In the past 24 hours temperatures witnessed weather conditions around moderate levels of the season

mercury of Nowgong as temperatures are recorded around 6 degree celsius.

From November 25, the minimum temperature across the state will drop rapidly. It can reach below 10 degree Celsius in most areas including Bhopal-Indore. This situation will be

witnessed for the period of November 25-28.

The temperature has reached below 10 degrees in Chhindwara, Jabalpur, Khajuraho, Umaria, Rajgarh, Khandwa, Betul, Datia, Gwalior, Raisen. In the coming days, as the cold increases, the mercury will fall further.

Day temperatures also registered a drop in many cities. In most places, the mercury is witnessed at 30 degree celsius.

If the Meteorological Department is to be believed then the weather pattern will be changed in the next 24 hours.

The minimum temperature of the night is expected to be 11 and the maximum temperature is expected to be 27 degrees. At the same time, cold winds will also blow at a speed of 12 kilometers per hour.

Synology Records 100% Growth in India since 2019

Bhopal: Synology, a pioneer and one of the world leaders in data storage and management, today unveiled its game plan for achieving 300% growth in 2023, riding on its track record of 100% growth YoY in India since 2019 and the strength of its new range of data storage and back-up, file collaboration, video surveillance, and network infrastructure solutions.

Synology has been growing exponentially YoY in revenue, units shipped, installed base, customers, and active partner accounts since 2019. Synology server deployments in India have doubled YoY, especially among Small and Midsized Businesses (SMBs), emerging as key growth drivers for the company.

The manufacturing sector, seeking multi-site solutions to share and sync mission-critical data, accounts for more than 30% of Synology revenues in India. Professional services (ex. hospitals) seeking on-demand data protection, security and backup solutions, and the entertainment industry seeking PETA volume data storage and high I/O data management solutions follow with a 15% share each.



Municipal Corporation mobile court penalises traders over the issue of encroachment at new market locality in Bhopal on Thursday. Pioneer photo

New Market traders not ready to close shops

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

In the wake of the wedding season the Traders Federation has postponed the decision to keep the New Market of the capital Bhopal closed for three days which was called after traders were annoyed by the repeated removal of encroachments campaign of the Municipal Corporation.

The New Market Traders Federation had decided to keep the market closed for three days in the afternoon. However, the former office-bearers openly protested against this decision. Others including former president Satish Gangarade jumped into the fray.

He said that we all businessmen oppose the illogical statement of the Speaker. The wedding season has

The traders opposed saying wedding season has started and there is a constant rush of customers in the New Market

started and there is a constant rush of customers in the New Market. All the shops are still open.

New Market is the main market of the city. Where there are more than 1200 small and big shops and business worth lakhs of rupees is done every day. The market is crowded with customers from morning till night.

In the afternoon, the current president Sanjay Valecha had said about keeping this

market closed for the next three days. After this many shops were also closed, but with the passage of time the market started opening again.

Former president Gangarade said that the market is open and will remain open. Don't confuse the customer as we oppose the bandh call.

On the other hand, many traders closed their shops and gathered in front of the Khedapati Hanuman temple. Some officials also reached to close the shops. Shops started opening after a few hours. By evening most of the shops had reopened.

On Thursday, the challan vehicle of the Municipal Corporation reached the New Market and started taking action against the traders. Traders protested against this.

International mini symposium on inborn error of immunity organised

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

Dr Narendra presented a case study on an immune disease which was moderated by Dr Ujjawal Khurana of Pathology

Pediatrics were organising secretary of the symposium. Dr Narendra presented a case study on an immune disease which was moderated by Dr Ujjawal Khurana of Pathology. The symposium was well attended by Faculty, students and research fellows.

Prof. Ajai Singh, Director, AIIMS Bhopal felicitated Prof. Sudhir Gupta and appreciated his rigorous training during medical education because of which he is constantly delivering high quality research and serving the human society. He welcomed Prof. Gupta for the MoU signing to establish Centre for diagnosis in AIIMS Bhopal which will be of immense help to the population of Central Indian and provide forum for technical training of faculty and medical students.

HealthPlix presents 'EMR adoption landscape-India view- '2020-2022'

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

The company that pioneered the digitization of healthcare through its future-ready AI-powered EMR platform for doctors in India, releases first of kind EMR landscape highlighting the growth of EMR adoption in tinsel towns of Bharat.

According to the company, the adoption of its EMR platform has been consistently growing, esp. in the past 3 years. The pandemic induced growth saw cities beyond metro's witnessing a "hockey stick growth" since the start of 2020.

Further, the EMR Hotspots map indicates only two metro cities ranking for average growth in the Top 15 cities for the year 2022. EMR Hotspots are cities which have high EMR penetration and doctors from these cities prefer digital medical records over traditional pen and paper. Surprisingly, Satara from Maharashtra tops the list of Top15 cities for EMR adoption in India for the year 2022.

In line with the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission, the growth in EMR adoption is a healthy sign. EMR is the foundation for the healthcare industry to thrive and is the much-needed digital tool doctors in the country can rely on.

West Central Railway registers increase in goods loading

PNS ■ JABALPUR

West Central Railway has registered an increase in goods loading this year as compared to last year. Under the able guidance of WCR General Manager Sudhir Kumar Gupta and with the joint efforts of Commercial Department and Operations Department and BDU team, 29.54 million tonnes of goods have been transported in the current financial year from April to October 2022, which is 25.69 million tonnes in the same period last year.

There has been an increase of 15 percent as compared to tons. If we look at the month-wise figures, we will find that April is 4.34 million tonnes, May is 4.64 million tonnes, June is 4.31 million tonnes, July is 4.28 million tonnes, August is 4.11 million tonnes, September is 4.16 million tonnes and October 3.73 million tonnes of cargo was loaded.

It is noteworthy that in the commodity wise loading of goods traffic on West Central Railway, mainly 12 materials are loaded, in which 28 percent cement, 16 percent clinker, 9 percent coal, 14

29.54 million tonnes of goods have been transported in the current financial year from April to October 2022, which is 25.69 million tonnes in the same period last year

percent fertilizer and 15 percent share of food grains, which accounts for 82 percent of Western Railway's freight traffic. There are more than 120 goods sheds and sidings for loading goods at WCR.

To promote freight loading, Business Development Units (BDUs) have been set up at WCR HQ and all the three divisions.

Improvement in the working of goods terminals and reduction in detention of goods trains. This accelerated the operation of freight trains and increased freight traffic.

Round the clock loading and unloading services were started in the goods godowns.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with his sister and party's general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, her husband Robert Vadra during the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Khandwa, Madhya Pradesh on Thursday. Pioneer photo

Hema students excel in model making competition

STAFF REPORTER ■ BHOPAL

It was a red letter day for HEMA School when the students of age group 12-15 Category have bagged 1st prize in the Science model making competition held on 22 nd November 2022 organized by Vidhyapeeth Group of Institutions Bhopal.

The model was made under able guidance of Mrs. Khushali Patharkar. The students have presented the most innovative model of electric toilet cleaner, which would rather help in

maintaining hygiene and also make the most tedious work of cleaning the toilets simple and easy.

The budding innovators who put their labour behind are:- Tanish chatruvedi, Aryan Borasi, Ishant Mankar, and Prince Mahale.

The model presented by the team was well appreciated by the judges for the clarity of subjects, confidence in presentation and promptness of the students in answering the queries. As a token of appreciation cash award

of Rs. 5100/- was conferred to the budding innovators.

Manak Inspire Award another feather in HEMA'S cap was added by Mast. Vanshu Kashyap of class IX, who presented a model of posture correcting chair. He was awarded an amount of Rs 10000 by National Innovation Foundation and Organization, established for motivating the inherent talent of students in the field of science and technology. It was really a great achievement for HEMA School and also for our State.

Chhattisgarh cabinet approves Reservation Amendment Bill draft



STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

The cabinet on Thursday approved a draft proposal for the Reservation Amendment Bill 2022 for the Chhattisgarh Public Service (CGPSC) and admission for educational institutions for Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Class (OBC).

Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel chaired the cabinet meeting here.

Also, the cabinet gave its nod to the proposal to amend the new fisheries policy.

The Chhattisgarh Appropriation Bill 2022 was approved for presentation as the second supplementary estimate in the Legislative Assembly, which will be in session for two days on December 1 and 2.

The Chhattisgarh District Mineral Trust Rules 2015 will be amended to waive off the limitation on the expenditure on infrastructure works under District Mineral Institute Trust to a certain percentage of the amount.

The Chhattisgarh District Mineral Trust Rules 2015 will be amended to waive off the limitation on the expenditure on infrastructure works under District Mineral Institute Trust to a certain percentage of the amount

If the amendment is incorporated, the provision of spending 20 percent on other priority items in the general area and 40 percent in the notified area will be abolished.

The cabinet ratified the proposal to procure the products manufactured by

the forest produce-based industries.

This needs to be established under a tripartite MoU executed between the state government, the Chhattisgarh State Minor Forest Produce (Trading and Development) Co-operative Federation and private investors.

It would be sold under the Chhattisgarh Herbal brand at a discount of 40 percent and through Sanjeevani and other means.

The cabinet accepted a proposal to extend the fixed period for withdrawing cases of ordinary nature pending in various courts of the state in public interest, from December 31, 2017 to December 31, 2018.

The Chief Minister's proposal to increase the voluntary grant amount from Rs 70 crore to Rs 110 crore was approved.

Approval was given to the Revenue and Disaster Management Department to make amendments in the Revenue Book Circular Section 6 No. 4, as per the amendments made by the Indian government.

Two die, 70 hospitalized in diarrhoea outbreak in Bhilai

STAFF REPORTER ■
DURG

Two persons died and 70 others were hospitalized due to diarrhoea after drinking contaminated water in Bhilai city in Chhattisgarh, a health official said on Thursday.

The vector borne disease was reported on Wednesday in Vrindavan Nagar, JP Nagar, Santosh Para and other localities in Camp Area, he said.

The deceased were identified as M. Madhvi (12) and Kush Daharia (31), both from Bhilai city, Durg Chief Medical and Health Officer Dr J.P. Meshram said.

As many as 91 people were admitted, of which 21 have been discharged in the



last two days. But the number affected is increasing, Meshram added.

They have been admitted in the Urban Primary Health Centre, Civil

Hospital, B.M. Shah Hospital, S.S. Hospital and Ambe Hospital.

Durg Collector Pushpendra Kumar Meena and health officials visited

the medical establishments.

A nine-member team has been set up to check the reason behind the supply of contaminated drinking water. The team has to sub-

A nine-member team has been set up to check the reason behind the supply of contaminated drinking water. The team has to submit its report within 10 days

mit its report within 10 days, Bhilai Mayor Neeraj Pal said. The civic authority has sent tankers to supply filtered water to the affected residents, Pal added.

Baghel to take part in pre-budget meeting



STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel will participate in a pre-budget meeting chaired by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on November 25.

A meeting of Finance Ministers of all the states has been called at Vigyan

Baghel will present his proposals on economic issues related to the state's interests. He will also draw the attention of the Finance Minister on the pending demands of the state

Bhavan in New Delhi.

The Union Finance Ministry has invited suggestions and proposals from states for budget 2023-24.

Baghel will present his proposals on economic issues related to the state's interests. He will also draw the attention of the Finance Minister on the pending demands of the state.

PCC chief Markam to join Bharat Jodo Yatra in neighbouring MP



STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

PCC chief Mohan Markam will proceed to Madhya Pradesh on Friday to take part in the Bharat Jodo Yatra led by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

An official spokesperson in

The mass contact initiative of the Congress began on September 7 at Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu

PCC said Markam will march with the Congress leader for four days to Mortakka village, Mhow and Indore city.

The mass contact initiative of the Congress began on September 7 at Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu.

It will pass through 12 states before culminating in Jammu and Kashmir after spanning a distance of 3,570 km over nearly 150 days.

CS okays water supply augmentation under AMRUT

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

Chhattisgarh Chief Secretary Amitabh Jain on Thursday reviewed the water supply augmentation scheme under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT), at a high-power steering committee meeting.

A detailed report of water supply schemes with an estimated cost of Rs 550 crores was okayed to provide drinking water in various urban bodies under the second phase of Mission AMRUT.

Besides, the project report of water supply schemes under Nagar Panchayat Mana Camp,



Nagar Panchayat Samoda, Nagar Panchayat Mandir Hasaud and Nagar Panchayat Chandkhuri of Raipur district Under

Mission AMRUT was presented in the meeting.

Similarly, a project report was discussed in detail for the construction of

water supply schemes in Nagar Panchayat Fingeshwar in Gariyaband district, Nagar Panchayat Kumhari in Durg district, Nagar Panchayat Premnagar in Surajpur district, Nagar Panchayat Bodri in Bilaspur district and Nagar Panchayat Jhagarkhand, Nagar Panchayat Khogpani and Nagar Panchayat Ledri in Koriya district.

The Secretary (Urban Administration) Alarmel Mangai D, the Secretary (Water Resources), Anbalagan P, SUDA Chief Executive Officer Saumil Ranjan Choubey and officials of the Public Health Engineering Department and other departments attended the meeting.

C'garh cabinet okays new fisheries policy

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

The Chhattisgarh cabinet chaired by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel on Thursday approved amendments in the fisheries policy.

Agriculture Minister Ravindra Choubey had revealed the changes at a fishermen's conference on Monday.

As per the amendment, ponds and irrigation reservoirs for fish farming will no longer be auctioned but will be given on lease for 10 years, an official communication said.

In allotment of pond and reservoirs, priority will be



given to fishermen groups and the fishery cooperative society of traditional fishermen Dhimar, Nishad, Kenvat, Kahar, Kahra and Mallah in general area.

In Scheduled notified areas, it would be given to Scheduled Tribes. This is to protect the demand and interest of the traditional

fishermen community.

Instead of a maximum of one hectare in case of village pond, half a hectare water area will be allotted to fishermen groups and fishery cooperative societies or fishermen.

In case of irrigation reservoirs, instead of four hectares, two hectares of

water area will be allotted on the basis of per member/per person.

The Cooperative Department used to conduct audits. Now on, there will be joint teams of audit from the Cooperative and Fisheries Departments.

The gram panchayat will make the allocation up to 10 hectares average water area on lease for 10 years. The limit for District Panchayat is up to 100 hectares.

The Fisheries Department can give on lease up to 1,000 hectares and the water bodies in urban areas will be allotted by the urban body.

BJP Corporators object tender process in RMC

STAFF REPORTER ■
RAIPUR

The Raipur Municipal Corporation has violated the Chhattisgarh government rules of calling a single tender for the same kind of work. Instead, 12 different tenders were called, indicating corruption, alleged BJP corporators.

Raipur Municipal Corporation Leader of Opposition Meenal Choubey and other corporators said a tender was invited

for divider beautification from Telibandha police station square to VIP Road turning under Zone 10.

They said there is a provision banning invitation of different tenders for the same type of work. But RMC invited 12 tenders (October 30) for it. The financial approval of Rs 2 crore was given by the Mayor and the Commissioner.

They alleged that this act was to by-pass online tender process and allocate the work manually.



Similar violation was the clause of the Urban Administration Department for survey, research, test and study with necessary design,

drawing and report to be placed for administrative approval.

No such reports were provided for financial sanction, they said.

The day the tender was floated in the newspaper (October 30), half of the construction work was completed at the site. So, how the work was allocated to the contractor, they asked.

The work was undertaken on a property under the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI). It is also a

violation of rules for calling a tender without seeking permission and consent from NHAI, they said.

When the issue was raised, they were told that the work was done by the Confederation of Real Estate Developers Associations of India (CREDAI). Can CREDAI undertake work anywhere in the city, they asked.

With documentary proof, a complaint has been lodged with the Economic Offence Wing (EOW).

Man held for cheating six

STAFF REPORTER ■
DURG

Chhattisgarh Police on Thursday arrested a man for cheating six people of Rs 18.71 lakhs in Bhilai.

Durg Superintendent of Police Abhishek Pallava identified him as P Tirupati Rao alias Raja of Khursipar in the city.

He cheated the victims by promising them government jobs in government-run English medium schools and civic body, allocation of PM Awas Yojna houses and loan from a women self-help group, the officer said.

After arrest, Rao told the



police that he took Rs 1.56 lakhs from M. Jaswant Rao, Rs 2 lakhs from Rahul Bhujade, Rs 2.05 lakhs from Meena Devi, Rs 2.55 lakhs each from Dhaneshwari alias Asha Hirve and Nisha Kaur, and Rs 8 lakh from Murari

Sharma. The police seized Aadhaar cards, fake appointment letters and other documents from him.

He confessed to cheating several people worth Rs 30 lakhs in the same way.

Shah: Do research to highlight correct history

Country just cannot progress and take a leap into future without taking pride in its past, says HM at function to honour Ahom general Lachit

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Thursday exhorted historians and research scholars to identify 30 kingdoms that ruled for over 150 years besides 300 historical personalities, and conduct research in order to bring out correct history and relegate distorted history to the place it deserves.

Speaking at the plenary function to mark the 400th birth anniversary of iconic Ahom General Lachit Barphukan who defeated Mughals in a war in Assam, Shah said, "I have also been a student of history. We have been hearing that history has been distorted, it does not reflect the true past. But who is stopping you from recording correct history and all the other distorted accounts will then fade away as the truth has its own power. The time has come to rewrite history."

Asserting that a country just cannot progress and take leap into the future without taking pride in the past, the Home Minister recalled the contribution of Assamese General Lachit Barphukan who checked the onslaught of the Islamist Mughal armies.

"Had it not been for the



Union Home Minister Amit Shah being felicitated by Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma as Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal looks on, during the 400th birth anniversary celebrations of Ahom commander Lachit Barphukan, at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on Thursday.

contributions of valiant warrior, true nationalist and the love for the motherland of Ahom General Lachit Barphukan, the history of the Northeast would have been different, the Northeast would not have been a part of the country," he said.

He outlined that the Ahom kings ruled the region for six centuries and faced 22 invasions from the Mughal armies but even when there were spells of defeat, the victory of the enemies could not last led to the recapture of the lost territories.

He highlighted that when the Rajput king Ram Singh, son of Raja Jai Singh of Amber, a strong general himself holding significant sway from Kandahar to Bengal, when defeated by army of Lachit Barphukan, admitted that every soldier of Barphukan was trained not just in cavalry,

archery and battlecraft but also in operations of naval boats. The Ahom army also used intelligence gathering and modulating operations based on inputs extensively in battle craft.

Shah also highlighted that the great warrior rose from the ranks despite being a descendant of the royal family and placed his love motherland above every other consideration.

The Assam government is celebrating at a national level even to mark the 400th birth anniversary of Lachit Barphukan, the iconic general of Assam from November 23 to 25 here.

Son of great warrior-statesman Momai Tamuli Barbarua, Lachit Barphukan was born on November 24, 1622, and grew up during a turbulent period of Assam's history.

40mn kids missed measles jabs: WHO

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a spike in measles cases in pockets of States like Maharashtra, Gujarat, Haryana and Jharkhand, the WHO and the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) have set off an alarm pointing out that globally a record high of nearly 40 million kids have missed a dose of the measles vaccine last year due to hurdles created by the Covid-19 pandemic.

This is likely to result in the spiraling of cases given that the air-borne viral disease is highly contagious. In India, as preventive measures, the Centre has already asked all the States to consider administering one additional dose of Measles and Rubella vaccines to all children, aged 9 months to 5 years, in vulnerable areas.

So far, a high number of cases has been reported from certain districts of Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Kerala and Maharashtra where the contagious disease has claimed 11 kids and infected



over 223. However, to prevent the disease from spreading and to achieve herd immunity, the Government will have to ensure that at least 95 per cent of children need to receive the vaccine as also been suggested by the WHO and the CDC in their joint report released recently.

As per the US CDC, India has the highest number of cases in the world between April and September 2022. Pakistan is seventh on the list

with 3,635 cases, while the US has 33 cases so far.

Terming Measles, an "imminent threat" around the world, the top health bodies noted that despite a two-dose vaccine that is more than 97 per cent effective at preventing infection being available for decades, gains made at beating back the potentially dangerous childhood disease have been lost during the Covid-19 pandemic.

To prevent the disease from

India slams US report on rights, religious freedom

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Taking exception to a US report claiming that religious freedom and related human rights are under threat here, India on Thursday termed them as "biased and inaccurate."

Making this observation here, Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi also said the US Commission for International Religious Freedom's latest observations continues to be guided by its prejudices and pursues a motivated agenda.

The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is a Congressional-appointed body. Its recommendations are, however, not mandatory to be implemented by the US State Department.

Religious freedom and related human rights in India are under ongoing threat, the USCIRF alleged on Tuesday in an unusual year-end update of the status of its assessment of religious freedom in the country.

Asked about the report at a media briefing, Bagchi said,



"We consider these biased and inaccurate observations about India by USCIRF. They (USCIRF) have a tendency to consistently misrepresent facts and this shows their lack of understanding of India, our constitutional framework, plurality and our robust democratic system."

"Given its past record, we are not surprised to see that USCIRF continues to be guided by its prejudices and pursues a motivated agenda that calls into question its own credibility," Bagchi said.

In its 2022 Annual Report earlier this year, the USCIRF had recommended that the US Department of State designate India as a "country of particular concern" for engaging in or tolerating systematic, ongoing, and egregious religious freedom violations, as set forth

by the International Religious Freedom Act. The US State Department has refused to incorporate the commission's recommendations so far.

India upset at 'unnecessary' reference to Modi by American official

New Delhi: India is upset at a reference to Prime Minister Narendra Modi by a US State Department official while defending the immunity it had extended to Saudi Arabian ruler Mohammad bin Sultan, who is facing allegations of killing journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

"Frankly, I fail to understand how the comment on Prime Minister Modi was either relevant, necessary or contextual," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said responding to questions about a US official referring to Modi while explaining the reasons for granting immunity to the Saudi ruler.

Some facts about measles

Just 81 per cent of children globally have received 1st dose & 71 percent received 2nd dose, the lowest coverage seen worldwide since 2008.

There were 9 million cases of measles and 128,000 deaths around the world with at least 22 countries experiencing "large and disruptive outbreaks."

No region of the world has achieved and sustained measles elimination. Since 2016, at least 10 countries that had previously eliminated measles reported outbreaks – including the US.

One infected patient can infect at least 10 close contacts, not protected either through masking or vaccination.

spreading and to achieve herd immunity, the top health bodies say that at least 95 per cent of children need to receive the vaccine. The report found that specifically, 25 million missed their first dose and 14.7 million missed their second dose last year.

"The paradox of the pandemic is that while vaccines against Covid-19 were developed in record time and deployed in the largest vaccination campaign in history,

routine immunization programs were badly disrupted, and millions of kids missed out on life-saving vaccinations against deadly diseases like measles," said Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General, in a statement.

"Getting immunization programs back on track is absolutely critical. Behind every statistic in this report is a child at risk of a preventable disease," the statement continued.

IAF to hold joint humanitarian assistance & disaster relief exercise with ASEAN countries

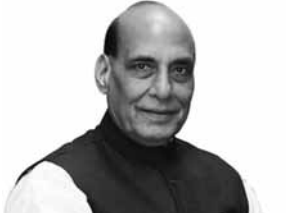
PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Air Force will conduct the annual joint humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) exercise 'Samanvay 2022' from November 28 to 30 at Air Force Station, Agra to assess the efficacy of institutional disaster management structures and contingency measures.

Along with involvement of various stakeholders from the country, the exercise will see participation by representatives from the Association of Southeast Nations (ASEAN) countries as well.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will be chief guest for the capability demonstration events planned during the exercise on 29 November, IAF officials said here on Thursday.

The exercise will comprise a seminar on disaster management, a 'Multi Agency Exercise' involving static and flying displays of various HADR assets and a 'Table Top Exercise.' 'Samanvay 2022' will promote a synergistic approach towards HADR by various national and regional stakeholders involved



in disaster management including the civil administration, the Armed Forces, National Disaster Management Authority (NDM), National Disaster Relief Force (NDRF), Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) besides others.

This multi agency engagement is expected to contribute in the evolution of institutional frameworks for effective communication, interoperability, cooperation and their application for successful conduct of HADR.

The exercise also aims to provide a unique platform for exchange of domain knowledge, experience and best practices with the participating ASEAN member countries.

'Right to regulate issue of bank notes entirely with RBI'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI



Calling the demonetisation of Rs 500 and Rs 1000 currency notes "deeply flawed", senior lawyer P Chidambaram told the Supreme Court on Thursday the Union Government cannot on its own initiate any proposal relating to legal tender which can only be done on the recommendation of the RBI's central board.

Chidambaram, appearing for one of the petitioners opposing the Centre's 2016 decision, submitted before a five-judge Constitution Bench headed by Justice SA Nazeer that the right to regulate the issue of bank notes is entirely with the Reserve Bank of India. "The Central Government cannot on its own initiate any pro-

posal relating to currency notes. It can only be on the central board's recommendation.

This decision making process should be struck down. ... This is the most outrageous decision making process which makes a mockery of the rule of law. This process must be struck down for being deeply flawed," Chidambaram told the bench which also comprised Justices B R Gavai, A S Bopanna, V Ramasubramanian, and BV Nagarathna.

Noting that demonetisation was a major economic decision which impacted every citizen of the country, the senior lawyer questioned the power of central government to invoke Section 26 of the Reserve Bank of India Act to demonetise currency notes and submitted that Section 26(2) gives power to Centre to cancel only certain series of cur-

rency notes and not the entire notes of a denomination.

Chidambaram, who argued for the whole day, alleged the possible "horrendous consequences" of demonetisation were not assessed, researched or documented. "Over 2,300 crore currency notes were demonetised while the government's printing presses could only print 300 crore notes per month. This gross mismatch meant it would take several months to print notes.

The Government did not even consider that over 2,15,000 ATMs would have to be recalibrated. In fact, in initial days ATMs did not take the Rs 2,000 note. The government did not take into account that two-third of bank branches were located in metros and only a third were in rural areas," he said.



SC to set up 5-Judge Bench to hear constitutional validity of Nikah Halala

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday said it will set up a new five-judge Constitution bench to hear the pleas challenging the constitutional validity of polygamy and 'nikah halala' among Muslims.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justices Hima Kohli and J B Pardiwala was urged by lawyer Ashwin Upadhyay, who has also filed a PIL on the issue, that a fresh five-judge bench was needed to be constituted as two judges of the previous bench have demitted office.

Many Muslim women also approached the apex court for banning 'nikah halala' after the verdict banning triple talaq. "We will form a bench," the CJ responded. Upadhyay, in his PIL, has sought a direction to declare polygamy and 'nikah halala' unconstitutional and illegal. The apex court had in July 2018 considered the plea and referred the matter to a Constitution bench already tasked with hearing a batch of similar petitions. The apex court had issued notice to the Centre on the petition filed by a woman named Farjana and tagged Upadhyay's plea to a batch of petitions to be heard

by the Constitution bench. The lawyer's petition sought declaring extrajudicial talaq a cruelty under Section 498A (husband or his relatives subjecting a woman to cruelty) of the IPC.

It claimed nikah halala is an offence under Section 375 (rape) of the IPC, and polygamy a crime under Section 494 (Marrying again during life-time of husband or wife) of the IPC, 1860.

The apex court, which on August 22, 2017 banned the age-old practice of instant 'triple talaq' among Sunni Muslims, had on March 26, 2018 decided to refer to a larg-

er bench a batch of pleas challenging the constitutional validity of polygamy and 'nikah halala'. While polygamy allows a Muslim man to have four wives, 'nikah halala' is a process under which a divorced Muslim woman has to first marry another person, consummate it and get a divorce from the second husband, if the couple were to remarry after a compromise. The apex court has already issued notices to the Law and Justice Ministry, the Minority Affairs Ministry and the NCW at that time. Some petitions have also challenged the practices of 'Nikah Muta' and 'Nikah Misyar'.

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a bid to digitally transform Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) and impart quality education to its tribal students, the Centre has joined hands with Microsoft. In the first phase, 36 EMRS have been selected for the digital transformation.

"Digital Transformation of EMRSs can play a key role in improving the learning experience for both students and teachers, where focus shall be on integration of digital technologies to improve teaching and learning.

Access to technology can lead the way forward for access to knowledge," said Asit Gopal, Commissioner, National Education Society for Tribal Students (NESTS), an autonomous organization established under the Union Tribal Affairs Ministry. He was speaking at an online workshop organized for EMRS principals and school heads on



"Education Transformation Framework" (ETF), in collaboration with Microsoft Corporation India Private Limited recently.

Emphasizing on the imperative need of digital transformation in EMRSs, Gopal said that such change keeping in with changing times can play a key role in improving the learning experience for both students and teachers, where focus shall be on integration of digital technologies to improve teaching and learning.

Gopal asserted that in the first phase, 36 EMRSs have been selected which shall walk their way forward to digitally transform schools and enhance the technological skills by use of Microsoft software and

application. The Union Tribal Ministry hopes to enroll 3.5 lakh students and recruit 36,000 teachers in its 740 Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) for tribal students schools targeted to be functional by 2026 across the country. Presently, as of November, a total of 688 EMRSs have been sanctioned, of which 392 are functional where around 105463 students are enrolled.

The current workshop on EMRSs digitization was first in its journey of transformation, other components include professional development of teachers using Microsoft Technologies and artificial intelligence (AI) applications; building exposure of students to AI and Coding; sharing of Coding Curriculum for Grade 6th to 12th & AI curriculum for Grade 8th to 12th; workshop on Microsoft Certified Educator (MCE) program etc, shared an official from the Ministry. Last year, the

Ministry on May 17 had inked a pact with Microsoft to help Tribal schools such as EMRS and Ashram Schools have digital transformation. As per the MoU, Microsoft is preparing bi-lingual Artificial Intelligence (AI) curriculum for tribal students in English and Hindi languages that will be taught at all EMRS schools to upskill both educators and students in next-generation technologies.

The project could not take off last year in full swings owing to the restrictions posed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the official said.

He explained that as part of the MoU, the teachers will also be trained in using productivity technologies like Office 365 and AI applications in teaching in a phased manner, where they can even earn certificates from Microsoft Education Centre. Microsoft will also mentor students from EMRS on AI projects to help pursue the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

SC Collegium recommends transfer of 7 HC judges

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Collegium headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud on Thursday recommended transfer of seven high court judges to different High Courts in the country.

The list of High Court judges, who have been recommended for transfer, does not include Justice Nikhil S Kariel of the Gujarat High Court. Media reports on Justice Kariel's proposed transfer to Patna High

Court had triggered protests by lawyers in the Gujarat High Court and later a delegation of bar leaders had met the CJ who was claimed to have assured them that the matter will be looked into.

The resolutions of the Collegium, which also comprises Justices S K Kaul and S A Nazeer, were uploaded on the apex court website. Seven judges, who have been sought to be transferred, included Justice V M Velumani, a judge in the Madras high court. He would be

joining Calcutta High Court.

Justice Battu Devanand has been sent from Andhra Pradesh High Court to Madras High Court. Justice D Ramesh has been transferred from Andhra Pradesh High Court to Allahabad High Court, while Justice Lalitha Kanneganti has been sent from Telangana High Court to Karnataka High Court. Justice D Nagarjun has been shifted from Telangana High Court to Madras High Court, while Justice T Raja has been sent from Madras High Court to

Rajasthan High Court.

Justice A Abhishek Reddy has been transferred from Telangana High Court to Patna High Court. Lawyers at Telangana High Court had also protested the proposed transfer of Justice Reddy and later a delegation of bar leaders had met the CJ.

The Collegium, in another meeting held on November 23, 2022, also approved proposal for elevation of two advocates as judges in Rajasthan High Court. The advocates

whose names have been approved are -- Anil Kumar Upman and Nupur Bhat. The three-member Collegium, which takes decisions with regard to high court judges, has also approved proposal for elevation of six Judicial Officers as Judges in Rajasthan High Court. The judicial officers whose names have been cleared are-- Rajendra Prakash Soni, Ashok Kumar Jain, Yogendra Kumar Purohit, Bhuvan Goyal, Praveer Bhatnagar, and Ashutosh Kumar.

Qatar denies extending an invitation to Naik

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India has raised the issue regarding the issue of its wanted fugitive Zakir Naik's extradition with Qatar and will continue with its efforts to make him face legal procedures here.

This assertion by the ministry of external affairs here on Thursday came following reports of Naik, now a Malaysian national, being invited to Qatar, where he is scheduled to deliver religious lectures



throughout the ongoing FIFA World Cup. Qatar reportedly has denied extending an invitation to Naik for the inauguration of the FIFA world cup on November 20 in Doha. The denial sent to India through official channels also said also

said deliberate disinformation was being spread by third countries to damage relations between the two countries.

The reported denial came after India informed Qatar that Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar's visit for World Cup inauguration on November 20 will be called off if Naik was invited for the event. Explaining India's stance, ministry of external affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said on Thursday "He [Zakir Naik] is an accused in India, under Indian law.

Slugfest over K'taka-Maha boundary dispute escalates

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The political heat over the inter-state border row has escalated with Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai hitting back at Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis terming his statement on the issue "provocative".

"No village in Maharashtra will go to Karnataka! The state government will fight strongly in the Supreme Court to get Marathi speaking villages in Karnataka including Belgaum-Karwar-Nipani!", said Fadnavis.

In a retort, Bommai, terming it a provocative statement, said: "His (Fadnavis) dream will never come true. Our government is committed to protecting our state's land, water and borders."

He further said that there was no question of giving up any space in the border districts of Karnataka.

In fact, he said: "Our demand is that the Kannada speaking areas of Maharashtra

like Solapur and Akkalkot should join Karnataka."

The dispute over Belagavi dates back to the 1960s after the reorganisation of States on linguistic lines.

Earlier this week, the Eknath Shinde government in Maharashtra appointed two ministers to coordinate with the legal team regarding the court case on the dispute set to come up in the Supreme Court.

Bommai said soon after that the State has deployed a battery of top lawyers, including Mukul Rohatgi and Shyam Diwan, to fight its case.

Bommai said since 2004, the Maharashtra government has filed a case in the Apex court over the border issue. "So far they have not succeeded and they will not succeed in future as well. We are geared up to strengthen our legal battle."

The Karnataka CM had claimed that the Panchayats in Jath Taluka in Sangli district of Maharashtra had passed a resolution in the past to merge with Karnataka when there was a severe drought situation



and acute drinking water crisis, and his government has evolved schemes to help them by providing water.

Responding to this, Fadnavis told reporters in Nagpur on Wednesday: "These villages (in Jat Taluk) had introduced a resolution on the issue of water scarcity in 2012. Presently, none of the villages have introduced any resolution."

Karnataka has repeatedly maintained that the Mahajan Commission report on the border issue is final, and "there is no question of letting go even an inch of Karnataka's border". Bommai reiterated this



week that there is no example to show that what had been done under the States Reorganisation Act was reviewed.

"The border dispute is a political tool used by all parties in Maharashtra. But they will never succeed," he had said.

Shinde said earlier this week: "Late Balasaheb Thackeray was always a staunch supporter of the state's demand to make Belgaum (Belagavi) a part of Maharashtra. We have concentrated our focus on solving the issue. If required, the number of lawyers would be increased".

Time to generate income from electricity instead of getting it free: Modi in Gujarat

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In the backdrop of the controversy over the efficacy of political freebies, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday, while campaigning in Gujarat, said it was time to generate income from electricity instead of getting it for "free."

Modi, who was electioneering in Modasa in Aravalli district in North Gujarat, made reference to free electricity to hit out at AAP which has for the second-time entered into the assembly poll fray and promised free electricity besides Rs 1000 to all women above age of 18 saying "it is not revadi –freebie- but their rights".

Modi said only he knows the art through which people will be able to earn money from electricity.The Prime Minister also slammed the Congress, saying it believes in the formula of "divide and rule" and focusses only on how to be in power.

AAP national convener and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has said his party would provide free electricity up to 300 units per

month if voted to power in Gujarat.

The opposition Congress has also joined the sop competitiveness and mentioned in its election manifesto that the party will also provide free electricity up to 300 units if voted to power in Gujarat, where the Assembly polls are scheduled on December 1 and 5.

On Thursday, Modi said he wants to see people across Gujarat earning money from excess electricity generated from solar rooftop systems instead of just getting it for free.

"You must have seen how the entire Modhera village (in Mehsana district) is now running on rooftop solar power. They are using electricity as per their need and sell excess power (to the government). I want to replicate this system across Gujarat," he said.

"Under this system, you can earn money by selling excess electricity generated from solar panels. Only Modi knows this art wherein people will be able to earn from electricity," said the PM.

He told the audience that a woman from Modhera is now planning to buy a refrigerator



and an air-conditioner as electricity has become affordable after the installation of rooftop solar power.

"She told me that though her family was able to afford the appliances earlier, they refrained because they could not bear the running cost. Now, they can afford it because electricity is free. I am working to bring this revolution at the doorstep of each and every household in Gujarat," the Prime Minister said.

Modi also slammed the Congress, saying the opposition party only believes in the formula of "divide and rule"

and it only focuses on how to get power.

"Rajasthan is near your border, have you seen any development in that state? Have you seen any good news coming out of that state? The Congress cannot do development," he said.

In another public rally at Palanpur in Banaskantha district in North-East Gujarat, Modi said the upcoming Assembly election in Gujarat is all about deciding the state's destiny for the next 25 years.

Voting in Banaskantha district will be held in the second phase on December 5.

PM package: Pandits seeking relocation hope Modi will address safety concerns

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Thousands of PM package Kashmiri Pandit employees, currently sitting on a dharna for 197 days in support of their single point demand of relocation to a safer area outside the Kashmir Valley, are pinning their hopes on Prime Minister Narendra Modi to understand their pain and address 'safety' concerns raised by them in the wake of targeted killings in the recent months.

The PM package employees on Thursday organised a sit in dharna outside the Press Club in Jammu where representatives of the Kashmiri Pandit employees while raising serious concerns over the indifferent attitude of the Union Territory administration made a passionate appeal to the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to intervene in the matter before it is too late.

The Kashmiri pandit package employees staged a massive



protest demonstration under the banner of All Migrant (Displaced) Employees Association, Kashmir to press their demand of relocation /attachment to Jammu.

They were also demanding that the government should frame a committee to look into their matter seriously. The agitating employees also wanted the government to frame a committee to initiate a process of dialogue with the employees so that an amicable and satis-

factory solution would be found on this vital issue.

Expressing their anguish over the callous attitude of the government towards them, the protesting employees said that the administration must understand that the issue of package employees is purely a security concern which they would not compromise at any cost. It was the duty of the government to ensure security of employees on which it has failed, they also said.

Pak handlers continue to rely on drones to airdrop arms, IED, cash in J&K

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Pakistan-based handlers of different terrorist outfits continue to rely on drones to airdrop arms and ammunition consignment for ferrying them to different parts of the Kashmir Valley via the International Border districts of Jammu. On Thursday, the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Police along with the special operations group recovered one suspicious package, possibly dropped by a drone from Pakistan, in the Vijaypur area of Samba district.

The J&K Police recovered one steel Improvised Explosive Device (IED), two pistols, 4 magazines, several batteries and a watch from the package. They also recovered cash of around Rs 5 lakh from the package. Briefing media persons in the border area, Additional SP



Samba, Surinder Chaudhary said, "Police team from Vijaypur Police Station recovered one suspicious sealed packet today in the field near Chhani Manhasan in Samba, following reliable inputs. The spot is undisturbed and intact."

According to the preliminary information, this is a case of a drone dropping from Pakistan's side attempting to smuggle in weapons and cash to the Indian side for carrying out terror-related activities in J&K. As per the officials, there was a movement of a drone that was spotted in the area of Vijayapur which is opposite to Sialkot-Pakistan border.

Opp stalling appointments in court: Didi

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

With her Government having suffered a massive loss of face in the wake of the school-level recruitment scam that saw a number of TMC leaders, including Ministers, legislators and senior functionaries going to jail, Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Thursday hit back at the Opposition for spiking her efforts to make fresh appointments in schools by filing "politically motivated cases."

Speaking in the State Assembly the Chief Minister said, "whenever we go to make fresh appointments some people with ulterior motive move the court to stall the recruitment process ... consequently a lot of public money is wasted in contesting the law suits ... this is very unfortunate."

The Chief Minister also appealed to the (High) Court to consider the situation while giving its orders. "From the floor of the State Assembly I would like to make an appeal to the (High) court to take cog-



nizance of the predicament we are while passing its judgments," she said.

Banerjee's statement came almost in tandem with a Division Bench of the Calcutta High Court on Thursday turning down the State's appeal to set aside a single Bench order seeking the appearance of the State Education Secretary regarding a particular case.

Earlier the Bench of Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay had directed the senior IAS officer to appear before it and reveal the name of the persons who had asked the School Service Commission to seek the Court's direction to make fresh appointments on supernumerary posts

specially created by the government apparently to regularise the appointments of

ineligible teachers who had purchased their posts for lakhs of rupees.

The scam involving thousands of illegal appointments saw senior TMC leader and Education Minister Partha Chatterjee and MLA Manik Bhattacharya going to jail.

The Division Bench preserved the single Bench order directing the Central Bureau of Investigation to find out who had directed the SSC to seek the Court's direction to regularise the ineligible candidates which the Judge said would go a distance in identifying the kingpin behind the multi-crore SSC scam.

The Opposition BJP and the Left had for long been alleging that the topmost leadership of the Bengal ruling outfit had masterminded all the scams that Bengal had witnessed in the past more than one decade.

In fact Opposition Leader Suwendu Adhikari on Wednesday said that in December the "biggest thief in the government and the Trinamool Congress will go to jail."

Tharoor looking for larger role in Kerala Congress?

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Factionalism and groupism in Kerala unit of the Indian National Congress which were in the backburner have made a comeback to the forefront thanks to some close associates of Shashi Tharoor, MP and the party's glamour boy.

Tharoor who lost the race for the post of party president has returned to Kerala and is

busily mobilising support for his bid to become the party's southern face. The immediate reason for his new found love for Kerala is the possibility of him being dumped as party candidate from Thiruvananthapuram in the 2024 Lok Sabha election. The London born Shashi Tharoor has been representing the Lok Sabha constituency of Thiruvananthapuram since 2009 but his

rivals in the party want the High Command to replace him as he has "dared to challenge the supremacy of the Nehru-Gandhi family."



MK Raghavan, MP who represents Kozhikode constituency, is drumming up support for Tharoor while K Sudhakaran, president of KPCC

maintains a studied silence over the issue. But Leader of Opposition VD Satheeshan has made it known that Tharoor is not indispensable.

Vernacular media and some young political observers are spreading the word that Tharoor is the man of the hour. "But this view is

held only by persons who do not know the ground realities in politics," said Mohammed Shiyaz, the Ernakulam District Congress Committee chief who is one of the young leaders on the rise. "The Congress has to be led by leaders who are accessible to the cadre and not by people who make appearance in television. All our present and past leaders belong to that genre. K Karunakaran, A K

Antony, Oommen Chandi, are some of the examples. Leaders who claim visibility in national media would not be able to lead the party," Shiyaz told *The Pioneer*.

Tharoor is on a mission to "rock" the Malabar region dominated by Muslims. His stance against the Supreme Court verdict allowing 10 per cent reservation to EWS among the upper caste has gone well with

the Islamist organisations. But Tharoor, a Nair has earned the wrath of Nair Service Society, a collective of Nairs who constitute 18 per cent of Kerala population. Congress in Kerala is doing well as was shown by the assembly by-poll result of Thrikkakkara which was won by the party with an unprecedented margin. The reservations expressed by AICC General Secretary KC

Venugopal, the former leader of opposition Ramesh Chennithala and VD Satheeshan point to the reality that Tharoor is not welcome in the State. If Venugopal, Chennithala, Sudhakaran and Satheesh (who are all the eyes and ears of the Congress High Command) put up a resistance, Shashi Tharoor's "literary talents" would come a cropper in Kerala.

Able-Eves workshop for divyangs to be held on Nov 27

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

What is common between Ira Singhal, Suvarna Pradeep Raj and Divanshi Joshi? Apart from being persons with disabilities, they did not give up despite all odds. The trio, among 25 other women with disabilities who have made their name in their respective fields, will be sharing their journey riddled with negligence and complications at Able-Eves Workshop for Empowerment of Women with Disabilities to be held here on Sunday.

The workshop will be inaugurated by Singhal who is suffering from scoliosis with 62% locomotor disability, will have sessions around inclusion and empowerment of women.

The other speakers will include Devanshi Joshi, a national awardee with Down Syndrome, Abha Khetarpal, president, Cross the Hurdles, Iytha Mallikarjuna, CEO, Inclusive Divyangjan Entrepreneur Association, Richa Sahni, Head of Corporate Partnership, Atypical Advantage, Suvarna Pradeep Raj, International Para-Athlete and Soujanya Rao, Gynaecologist-CMO (SG)/ Comdt. (Medical) CRPF.

Pradhan holds talks with Edu Ministers of Mauritius, Tanzania, Zimbabwe & Ghana

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan held a series of bilateral meetings with his counterparts from Mauritius, Tanzania, Zimbabwe and Ghana, on Thursday.

During a meeting with Leela Devi Dookun-Luchoomun, Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Tertiary Education, Science and Technology, Mauritius, Pradhan said, "India remains committed to work together with Mauritius and provide assistance in building capacities in all areas of education and skill development."

Pradhan, during his meeting with Deputy Minister of Education, Ghana, John Ntim Fordjour proposed setting up of institutional mechanisms and joint working groups between India and Ghana from pre-school to research.

Pradhan held a meeting with Raymore Machingura, Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education, Innovation, Science and Technology Development, Zimbabwe and with Zanzibar's Minister for Education and Vocational Training, Lela Muhamed Mussa.

TRS MLAs' poaching: BJP leader among 4 named as accused

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Senior BJP leader B L Santhosh and three others were named as accused by the Special Investigation Team (SIT) in the case of alleged conspiracy to poach four TRS MLAs, officials said on Thursday.

Following directions from the Telangana High Court, the SIT, probing the case, also issued a second notice to BJP National General Secretary (Organisation) Santhosh, who is yet to appear before it.

In the fresh notice, he has been asked to appear before SIT for questioning on November 26 or November 28, official sources told PTI.

Based on the investigations so far, the SIT filed a memo in a special Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) court here adding the names of Santhosh and two persons from Kerala-Jaggu Swami and Tushar Vellappally, besides B Srinivas, as accused in the case, they said.

Three persons -- Ramachandra Bharati alias Satish Sharma, Nanda Kumar and Simhayaji Swamy, were already named as accused in the case after a complaint was



lodged by TRS MLA Pilot Rohith Reddy, among four legislators, against them on October 26.

As per the FIR copy, Rohith Reddy alleged that the accused offered him Rs 100 crore and in return the legislator had to leave the TRS and contest as a BJP candidate in the next Assembly election.

The Telangana High Court on Wednesday had directed the SIT to again serve notice on Santhosh under Section 41A of the Code of Criminal Procedure (CrPC) to Santhosh.

Earlier, the Telangana SIT had issued notices to Santhosh and the two persons from Kerala to appear before it for questioning on November 21. However, they did not turn up before the probe panel. Srinivas, who was also summoned by the SIT, had appeared before it.

Mukroh clashes: Meghalaya CM in Delhi for talks

PTI ■ SHILLONG

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma on Thursday led a cabinet delegation to New Delhi to meet Union Home Minister Amit Shah and discuss the tense border situation between Assam and the hill state following clashes in Mukroh village, and also demanded a federal probe into the violence.

The meeting, comes a day after the Assam Cabinet announced that it will hand over the probe into the violence to the CBI, and asked the state police to show restraint while dealing with civilian disturbances. Trouble started after Assam forest guards intercepted a Meghalaya vehicle carrying what was suspected to be illegally felled timber in West Karbi Anglong district along the Assam-Meghalaya border in the early hours of Tuesday. In the melee that followed, five tribal villagers from Meghalaya and a forest guard were killed.

Tension brewed in border areas in the aftermath of the incident, with an Assam forest office being burnt down by angry villagers as well as some vehicles from neighbouring states.



People light earthen lamps as part of celebrations for 400th birth anniversary of Ahom Commander Lachit Borphukan in Nagaon district on Thursday



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Undead

The National Anti-profiteering Authority will live on as a part of Competition Commission of India

The Government has given the Competition Commission of India (CCI) the mandate that the National Anti-profiteering Authority (NAA) enjoys. The reason is that the NAA will cease to exist by the end of this month. The NAA has a mandate to ensure that reductions in goods and services tax (GST) are passed on to consumers. It was meant to check any profiteering by businesses; hence the name. The decision is reportedly in accordance with a recommendation by the GST Council, which has representation from the Centre as well as state governments. So now, even as the NAA will cease to exist, its work will be carried out by the CCI mandarins. Right from the beginning—that is, 2017 when the NAA came into being—it was an affront to the business class. In fact, the very word ‘profiteering’ has a ring of dirigisme around it; this is the reason that Leftists use it quite often. It presupposes that all businesspersons are unconscionable, blood-sucking villains who exploit their employees and fleece their customers. Added to the malice is the erroneous notion that government can control or check prices by coercive means. Right from the brutal regime of Alauddin Khilji to the pre-1991 days of Nehruvian socialism, such controls were put in place; they never brought any relief to the man on the street; invariably they led to shortages, black-marketing, and corruption. One of the most anti-business decisions in the last few years has been the setting up of the NAA.



It was supposed to complete its work of monitoring GST rollout in two years, so it was given a two-year term. But that was not to be. As the famous economist Milton Friedman said, nothing is so permanent as a temporary government programme. The NAA kept getting extensions; what was supposed to die in 2019 is still alive—and will remain so. It needs to be mentioned here that it is not just the Narendra Modi Government that is responsible for the perpetuation of a price control mechanism; the entire political class is involved in it, for the GST Council includes various states. The NAA perpetuation highlights a disturbing fact: our political masters have little faith in economic reforms. What liberalisation they have carried out in our country, they have done under compulsion, not by choice. This is not surprising, for liberalisation is essentially the process of the retreat of the State from the processes of economy; it involves less regulation, less intervention in the market. While all this is good for the economy and the people at large, it is not so good for politicians and a section of intellectuals who are ideologically wedded to the theories which are predicated upon the big State. Besides, there are a lot of people—bureaucrats, economists, technocrats, et al—who grew up reading and internalising Leftwing books. This is the reason that Leviathan marches on and abominations like NAA never die.

PICTALK



People light earthen lamps on 400th birth anniversary of Ahom Commander Lachit Borphukan in Nagaon

PTI

demonetization woes

The People have the right to know if demonetisation was a masterstroke or a blunder.

As the hearing on the demonetization gets underway in the Supreme Court, new facts and new arguments might tumble out after six years when the Prime Minister Modi had announced demonetization on November 8, 2016; banning high-denomination currency notes of Rs.500 and Rs.1000 and replacing them with the new currency notes of Rs. 500 and Rs. 2000 denomination. The standard argument at that time was that it would be a big blow to the black money and the economy would be purged in one stroke. The government sticks to its argument in the affidavit submitted to the apex court saying that it was a ‘well-considered decision’ taken after duly consulting the Reserve bank of India. The Union government filed the affidavit in response to a batch of 58 petitions that had challenged demonetisation. A five-judge constitution bench comprising Justices S.A. Nazeer, B.R. Gavai, A.S. Bopanna, V. Ramasubramanian, and B.V. Nagarathna is now hearing the matter again.



The new facts that have come to light through an RTI give a very different picture than what the govt would have us believe. The RBI was not in favour of demonetization as it maintained that black money in the country was not in the form of currency notes but its opinion was brushed aside. The govt submitted that demonetisation was executed on the specific recommendation of the RBI’s Central Board. However, according to RTI activist Venkatesh Nayak, who accessed the minutes of the 561st Meeting of the Central Board of Directors of the RBI through a RTI application, Para 4.4 of the minutes seems to indicate that the Board was simply not aware of this planning before the tabling of the Deputy Governor’s memorandum on the subject at its meeting less than six hours before the Prime Minister announced the decision to the country. The minutes provide that the Board was only “assured” that the matter had been under discussion between the Central government and the RBI. Nayak noted that the RBI’s directors had – contrary to the government’s stand – opined that most of the black money is not held as cash but in the form of real estate, jewellery etc. The matter is subjudice and it is for the court to decide upon the validity of the claims made by both sides but one thing is clear; there is more to demonetization than meets the eye. Apart from bringing hardships to people, it did not succeed in either curbing the black money or ending terrorist funding. Will people ever know the truth?

Climate finance is the pivot of COP27

The fight against climate change is not developing nations vs. developed ones. It’s against the fatal fallout of climate change vs the existence of humanity.

The global mean temperature of the planet is 1.15 degree Celsius above the pre-industrial average and we have been having the conference of parties (COP) every year since 1995, wherein world leaders come together to think of solutions to fight the looming dangers of climate change. This year the summit at Sharm El-Sheikh was attended by world leaders arriving in their respective private jets, close to 400 of them, contributing significantly to greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. One would think what a great way to kickstart the discourse around climate change.

Over the last decade or so, green washing has become a norm and we all have assumed that someone else would take care of the problem of climate change. The corporations have used the issue of climate change to fill in their coffers and the global leaders have done little to help either. Lip service has been the norm as far as climate change is concerned. Every year, these conferences signal hope. Eminent leaders from different parts of the world make pledges, talk of achieving net zero emissions by so and so year, promise aid to emerging economies and so on. But when it comes to progress on ground, the results are invariably dismal. They paint a sorry picture of our fight towards climate change. It is demoralizing and one can’t help but give in to the gnawing cynicism around these summits.

UN Secretary-General António Guterres said, “A third of Pakistan got flooded. We have seen Europe’s hottest summer in 500 years. The Philippines got hammered. The whole of Cuba was in blackout. And ... in the United States, Hurricane Ian has delivered a brutal reminder that no country and no economy is immune from the climate crisis.” All these events serve as a brutal reminder for entire humanity to get its act together.

The COP27 summit did set its agenda right with focus on mainly four focus aspects of mit-

igation, adaptation, finance and collaboration. What needs to be seen is how many countries significantly contribute to the said areas in all earnestness. One of the major themes of COP27 has been loss and damage. It is only this year that the developed nations agreed to put the subject into the formal agenda. An important issue for the group of developing nations, called G77, their leaders underscored how they needed aid from the wealthy nations to mitigate the causes of climate change and prepare against the fallouts of it in future. A positive headway has been made at the summit in this direction with respect to the creation of a ‘loss and damage’ fund. The fund may help the emerging economies to address the harmful effects of natural disasters like droughts, floods and cyclones etc. However, the details of how it will be used to stop climate change and who the list of donors would be is still unclear.

Back in 2009, the developed nations had made a pledge to supply \$100 billion every year by 2020 to less wealthy nations to help bring down further rises in temperature. But what happened to that? Wealthy nations have



THIS YEAR’S COP WAS CALLED THE COP FOR IMPLEMENTATION BECAUSE PLEDGES ALONE DON’T MAKE THE CUT. ONE NEEDS A DETAILED ROAD MAP AND MORE TRANSPARENCY WITH RESPECT TO CLIMATE FINANCE

clearly not delivered on the promise to date. The \$100 billion won’t even make the cut, as developing nations have clearly outlined that they would need \$6 trillion to \$11 trillion to meet climate targets. It is crucial for aid to come through to developing nations, without which they won’t be able to make much progress on reducing greenhouse emissions.

Speaking at a press conference at COP27, John Kerry, the U.S. presidential envoy on climate, asserted that the negotiations won’t end with rich countries signing up for open-ended liabilities. The emerging nations rallied against making a ‘loss and damage fund’, but the wealthy nations shrugged off the idea by saying they favoured existing financial channels.

This year’s COP was called the COP for implementation, because pledges alone don’t make the cut. One needs a detailed road map and more transparency with respect to climate finance. A case in point: The US president, Joe Biden, gave an assurance at the summit that the US would hit its climate targets by 2030 and apologized for pulling out of the Paris agreement. However,

he and other world leaders hardly explained why the promises made earlier were not met to date. Biden rightly said that the world faced a ‘pivotal moment’ in the fight against the climate crisis. But failed to lay out the steps that humanity should take.

With the COP27 having come to an end, some inspiration has been rekindled. What global leaders do in the coming years will be watched carefully, but at the same time, the citizenry all across the world must also do what they can at individual level. We need more people actively raising clamour around this subject. Young climate warriors need to come about and for that, introducing climate change as a subject in school curriculum will prove to be a step in the right direction.

Hope is clearly not a good strategy to adopt in view of climate change. Therefore, one must strive to surpass all hurdles, shun inhibition, deliberate and make a sincere endeavour to avert the global catastrophe awaiting us. We owe this to our collective future generations.

(The author writes on news pertaining to women rights, and social and environmental issues. Views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CLIMATE EMERGENCY

Sir — The climate emergency is a direct consequence of heavy land use and agriculture, transport, buildings, industrial processes and use of polluting energy sources. Without profound changes to these sectors and a drastic cut to carbon footprints, there is little hope of protecting the planet from the worst effects of a warmer world.

The UN environment programme (UNEP) stands at the core of the action in the fight against climate change. We call for greater responsibility from countries and recognition of the benefits of integrating natural systems into concrete climate action. A global fund for “loss and damage”, providing financial assistance to poor nations stricken by climate disaster is a solution. The deal was far from perfect, with several key elements flawed or lacking. Some countries on limiting temperatures to 1.5C represented progress on the Cop26 conference in Glasgow last year, but efforts for phasing out fossil fuels was weak. Countries have now agreed to finalise the details of the fund by 2024. Let’s hope for the best.

Mithlesh Panwar | Ujjain

MANAGING LIFESTYLE DISEASES

Sir — Despite the best advances in technology and drug research, the modern medicine is yet to find successful curative management of not only disorders like diabetes, hypertension, chronic gastrointestinal disorders etc but almost all neurological diseases and the psychiatric illnesses also, what to talk of the recent covid19 pandemic across the world. Even the best invention and abuse of antibiotics or hormonal interception and other drugs for neurological or psychiatric drugs have caused havoc of dangerous side effects rather than providing sustained relief to the patients. On the other hand Ayurveda along with Yoga offers drugs along with procedures such as Panchkarma and Yoga provides hope towards a healthy and happy life.

The need of the hour is to acknowledge the handicaps of modern medicine

Traffic congestion in Bengaluru



In light of exponential expansion of Bengaluru horizontally and the setting up of a large number of Information Technology parks(IT), increasing the number of vehicles and more so after Corona-19 people have started going to offices Physically.I would like to give some suggestions to ease out the traffic congestion in Bangalore,which can be examined. Though in these trying circumstances, Bengaluru traffic is doing good work.

Ramesh G Jethwani | Bengaluru

ic, the Assembly elections in Gujarat have become money-spinner for a large number of powerloom workers in Surat. Over a lakh workers are engaged in weaving, dyeing and stitching the election material and tricolour for the last month to meet the high demand from the political parties.

Workers are busy round the clock for stitching saffron colour caps for the BJP at a factory in Surat, Gujarat ahead of Gujarat Assembly Election and it is a make or break situation at present. Again, for 32 years BJP has had a stronghold as Modi and Amit Shah both hail from the same state and work in tandem to achieve a dream of winning again. The BJP IT section is also busy making the dream come true. The elections are indeed a boon to workers.

CK Dorai Ramani Suresh | Ghaziabad

ELECTIONS PROVIDING JOBS

Sir — After struggling for two years with no work due to the COVID-19 pandem-

SOUND BITE

The current challenge is to save the law and the democracy and we will do anything to save it.



Bihar Deputy CM — Tejshwi Yadav



What happened was everybody – Germans, French, Italians, everybody, (US President) Joe Biden – saw that there was simply no option. Because you couldn’t negotiate with this guy (Putin). That’s the key point.

Former UK Prime Minister — Boris Johnson

I have had people wanting to jeopardise my career, take away from my work, make sure I wasn’t cast just because I was doing well in what I was doing. In India, very few of us are happy for somebody else’s success.



Actor — Priyanka Chopra



One-day cricket was probably my best format in international cricket, so it’s nice to be playing some white ball and Ford Trophy. I’m really looking forward to it.

New Zealand cricketer — Ross Taylor

I am sure India took it up and will take it up. But the point is he is a Malaysian national and if he is invited somewhere... whether they knew, I have no knowledge of that.

Union Minister — Hardeep Puri

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FIRST COLUMN

INDIA-UAE TRADE PACT:
PATH TO PROSPERITY

India is close to starting free trade negotiations with GCC



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

Qatar was in news, not just for dazzling the world with billions of dollars of investments for showcasing and hosting one of the largest sports events of all time, the FIFA world cup, but also for pulling off one of its kind supply deals with China. Qatar signed a 27-year natural gas supply deal with China, which is being touted as one of the longest in the history of hydrocarbons.

The agreement according to Chinese government officials would also provide access to the strategic North Field South Project in (NFS) in Qatar. The NFS expansion project is a mega LNG transport train which promises to make Qatar one of the largest natural gas traders in the world in a decade. The expansion project allows international enterprises participation and so far all western big names from Total, Shell, Exxon Mobil, etc., are partners for helping Qatar reach its stated target. In comes China, with a long agreement with Qatar and it also wants to have full access and share in the hydrocarbon-led geopolitical rubric playing out. This agreement with China comes at a time when the European Union is scrambling for securing natural gas supplies from sources other than Russia.

The traditional European inertia to get into long term binding contracts is one of the other reasons such agreements between the West and Qatar are not maturing. In the middle of all this, India is close to starting Free Trade Negotiations with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) of which Qatar is an important member. The GCC is an intergovernmen-



tal, political, economic union consisting of six Arab nations. India has had a framework agreement with the GCC since 2004. The framework, according to the commerce ministry, provides for exploring ways and means for extending and liberalizing trade relations and initiating dialogue towards a free trade agreement.

However, despite two formal dialogues in 2006 and 2008 the GCC, according to the Government of India, could not persuade its member countries to move further to a Free Trade Agreement level negotiation. Regional economic issues among the Arab states, their bilateral relations with India played a significant role in the delay.

The recent pandemic has made Gulf countries willing to expand their economic clout beyond hydrocarbons; this has led to a change in the mindset. India signed a CEPA (Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement) with one of the most influential GCC countries, the UAE, earlier this year. This CEPA allows India's goods to have preferential access for 97 per cent tariff lines, which accounts for 99 per cent of India's exports to the UAE. India primarily exports gems and jewellery, textiles, leather footwear, sports goods, plastics, furniture, wood products, engineering products, pharma and medical devices to the UAE.

India's major import from UAE is primarily energy. The CEPA, one of the first off the block, agreed by India after it has been dragging its feet on getting into binding trade agreements for more than a decade aims to achieve \$115 billion bilateral trade of goods and services in just five years. India had earlier walked out of Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, one of the largest economic partnerships, citing a China dictated framework.

India now realises the importance of trade as a significant contributor to the national GDP. India realises that trade in goods and services will be a key contributor towards the economy reaching \$40 trillion in the next two decades. India signed a Free Trade Agreement with Australia earlier. Similarly, a free trade agreement negotiation with the UK has been progressing for more than six months now. FTA negotiations with GCC, if concluded successfully, could be another milestone in India's multi trillion-dollar economic path.

(The author is a foreign affairs commentator)

BJP aims record haul in a three-way poll



DEEPAK K UPRETI

The BJP is set on its target again, lest an undercurrent shakes it off or throws a fractured delivery

After 27 years in the saddle in Gujarat, the Bharatiya Janata Party wants to do it again. And when one says it is 'the BJP contesting the poll' in Gujarat, it actually translates into Prime Minister Narendra Modi who may have vacated Gandhinagar in 2014 but it is he who is seeking mandate for the seventh time in the western Indian state in 2022 and in turn in his decisive run-up to the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Another win for the saffron party tiding over almost three-decade anti-incumbency would possibly press a 'delete' button on the Congress and allow the 'third-factor' Aam Admi party (AAP) to rise in the western shores.

Ironical as it may sound for the BJP backers, the Congress despite the BJP's 'double-engine' domination over the power, in last 2017 state elections not only increased its Assembly seats tally but also improved upon its vote share. In contrast, there has been a steady decline in the number of seats collected by the BJP since 2002.

The BJP's seats at 99 went downwards in 2017 from 116 of 2012 Assembly results, but its vote share at 49.1 increased by 1.25 per cent. The Congress, which had won 60 seats in 2012 Gujarat assembly elections, had gained significantly in 2017 by winning 77 seats. The main opposition party had thus not only improved its position by 17 seats but also collected 41.5 per cent vote share, a jump of 2.57 per cent from 2012 Gujarat Assembly polls.

The Congress could not gather enough steam in 2017 to beat the BJP, which had the formidable advantage of its well-oiled organizational machinery and Modi's 'realpolitik' checks and balances to keep the voters interest in the party vis-a-vis a faceless Gujarat Congress and its unimaginative central leadership.

As the stage is set for 2022 December one and five poll for the 15th Gujarat assembly polls, the dynamics of Gujarat elections can be read as "waveless" which could be won by technical management which is 'right selection' of candidates coupled with 'right booth handling' that is ensuring good turnout of the support base.

Palpably anxious of declining number of seats in successive assembly polls, the BJP has denied tickets to 40 of its sitting MLAs and given place to the fresh and young, not loaded with the burden of anti-incumbency. With winnability being the prime factor for all political parties vis-à-vis the 'ideology', the BJP too has, so far, blessed 10 out of 19 Congress MLAs who resigned and joined the BJP after the 2017 elections with its tickets.

In contrast, Congress has, 'understandably', retained most of its sitting MLAs as party candidates. It is indeed a game of reshuffling of the available players on the ground for both the parties and creating a 'new rainbow' before the voters.

To defend its Gujarat fort and make



PALPABLY ANXIOUS OF DECLINING NUMBER OF SEATS IN SUCCESSIVE ASSEMBLY POLLS, THE BJP HAS DENIED TICKETS TO 40 OF ITS SITTING MLAS AND GIVEN PLACE TO THE FRESH AND YOUNG, NOT LOADED WITH THE BURDEN OF ANTI-INCUMBENCY

it 'unbreachable', the BJP has selected the Congress turncoat Patidar Hardik Patel, 29, who crossed-over to the saffron party in July from 'Viramgram', his home town, which had been twice won by the Congress. The roping in of the leader of 2015 OBC reservation stir would further consolidate the BJP's hold over the influential Patel community.

Among other young and new faces also include Cricketer Ravindra Jadeja's wife Rivaba, 28, who is the BJP candidate from Jamnagar North seat. Before joining the BJP, she served as the leader of the Rajput Community's throwback organisation 'karni Sena'.

The choice of Kantilal Amrutiya, 60, for the Morbi assembly seat, which witnessed a bridge collapse disaster, killing over 135 people, is another reflection of the BJP's 'careful micro-management' of seat distribution. Following the tragedy, the saffron party denied ticket to the sitting MLA of Morbi and selected Atrutiya after videos showed him jumping into the river to save lives. A former MLA, Amrutiya had lost in 2017 assembly polls.

Apart from the main rivals of the past – Congress and the BJP -- the entry of AAP has introduced an X factor in the Gujarat polls, leaving political players wondering which way it would impact the elections and to whose advantage. The freebie announcements by AAP's mercurial leader Arvind Kejriwal has prompted many to anticipate that it may nibble into the urban votes of the BJP and may do less

harm to Congress which is rather strong in rural pockets of Gujarat.

The BJP's state president CR Patil thinks otherwise, saying the AAP would cut into Congress votes and thus help BJP's prospects. The AAP has banked heavily on the Patidar community and fielded its Gujarat president Gopal Italia from Katargam in Surat as well as former Patidar agitation leader Alpesh Kathiriya from Varachha in Surat city.

Currently, campaigning most aggressively, the AAP is now banking on its success in Gujarat in 2021 civic polls when it ousted congress from the Surat municipal corporation, winning over Patidar votes. The AAP also won one seat in Gandhinagar Municipal Corporation.

In the 2022 Gujarat poll, the AAP is not without some resonance and digging deep to create its place as against the well-entrenched BJP and Congress. The AAP's approach to Patidars and fielding of backward community member Isudan Gadhvi as the chief Ministerial candidate indicates its calculated long-term planning after scoring victory in Punjab.

The 'Hindutava' card of Kejriwal, however, may not pay its dividend against the BJP which has its master key with itself.

The main challenger to the ruling BJP, the Congress is currently on to its 'door-to-door' silent campaigning, bridging the connection it left uncovered in 2017.

As for the BJP, its 'guarav yatra' apart, the Prime Minister has laid out a slew of mega projects in

Gujarat, two of which shifted from Maharashtra to convince voters that continuity in its governance would ensure uninterrupted 'development' in the state with the guarantee of funds from the central government. The hair-splitting analysis of television anchors notwithstanding, the election match in Gujarat, in a way, seem to be dominated by 'turncoats', including the likes of Hardik Patel and Alpesh Thakor.

Italia, one-time Patidar agitation spearhead and close associate of Hardik, who is famous for hurling a shoe at a BJP minister Pradipsinh Jadeja outside the legislative assembly 2017, is now an AAP nominee. The BJP is set on its target again, lest an undercurrent shakes it off or throws a fractured delivery.

The 'facts' laid-out can, however, be deceptive at times. In 1985 Congress in Gujarat returned to power with 149 seats and 55 per cent votes and in the 2002 assembly poll BJP won 127 seats and gained 49.8 per cent of the votes and cycles are slowly reversing again.

If journalism is said to be 'history written in a hurry', it would not be irrelevant to quote historian EH Carr from his noted book 'What is History?' to put elections in a perspective.

"It used to be said that facts speak for themselves. This is, of course, untrue. The facts speak only when the historian calls on them: it is he who decides to which facts to give the floor, and in what order or context... a fact is like a sack—it won't stand up till you have put something in it..". Please, take your pick from Gujarat!

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

VOTES FROM SOME MACHINES SHOULD BE "INVALIDATED."

— OUTGOING BRAZILIAN PRESIDENT JAIR BOLSONARO



NO MORE PROCRASTINATION, IRRESPONSIBILITY, INSULTS TO INSTITUTIONS AND DEMOCRACY .THE ELECTION WAS DECIDED IN THE VOTE AND BRAZIL NEEDS PEACE TO BUILD A BETTER FUTURE.

— THE PRESIDENT OF LULA'S WORKERS PARTY GLEISI HOFFMANN



RBI must opt for alternatives to digital currency

Many transactions can be made compulsory through digital mode and there can be limits on cash payments

The Reserve Bank of India on October 7 released a concept note on Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC). The purpose behind the issue, as claimed by the RBI, is to create awareness about CBDCs in general and the planned features of the Digital Rupee (e?), in particular. It explains the objectives, choices, benefits, and risks of issuing a CBDC in India. The Note also seeks to explain Reserve Bank's approach towards introduction of the CBDC, which has been launched on a pilot basis now.

As explained by the RBI the e? will provide an additional option to the currently available forms of money. It is substantially not different from banknotes, but

KALYAN SUNDARAM

(The author is a retired banker)

being digital it is likely to be easier, faster and cheaper. It also has all the transactional benefits of other forms of digital money.

The RBI claims that its approach is governed by two basic considerations – to create a digital Rupee that is as close as possible to a paper currency and to manage the process of introducing digital Rupee in a seamless manner.

The concept paper lists out the following as features of CBDC:

- CBDC is sovereign currency issued by Central Banks in alignment with their monetary policy
- It appears as a liability on the central bank's balance sheet
- Must be accepted as a medium of payment, legal

tender, and a safe store of value by all citizens, enterprises, and government agencies.

- Freely convertible against commercial bank money and cash
- Fungible legal tender for which holders need not have a bank account
- Expected to lower the cost of issuance of money and transactions.

There can be two types of currencies which are used for settlement of transactions. One is physical currencies and another digital form of currency. As we have now all the bank deposits which can be transacted through digital platforms are part of digital currencies only. So whose custody is not important. How digitally it can be trans-

acted only matters.

Hence the question arises why there should be a digital currency from the RBI now? If the aim is to completely wipe out the physical currency, it is a different matter. Not only is our country, no other country in the world is aiming for any such proposition.

Our bank accounts provide seamless digital transactions by means of debit cards, credit cards, NEFT, RTGS, IMPS, UPI etc. Now in this concept paper RBI broadly defines CBDC as the legal tender issued by a central bank in a digital form. It is akin to sovereign paper currency but takes a different form, exchangeable at par with the existing currency and shall be accepted as a

medium of payment, legal tender and a safe store of value. Hence, it is almost identical to the digital transactions provided by banks except the sovereignty.

The RBI says that the key motivations for exploring the issuance of CBDC in India among others include reduction in operational costs involved in physical cash management, fostering financial inclusion, bringing resilience, efficiency, and innovation in payments system, adding efficiency to the settlement system, boosting innovation in cross-border payments space and providing public with uses that any private virtual currencies can provide, without the associated risks. Again, these are already available for digital

transactions through bank accounts.

The RBI claims that CBDCs have some clear advantages over other digital payments systems, as it being a sovereign currency, ensures settlement finality and thus reduces settlement risk in the financial system. This may be theoretically and conceptually true. But then this undermines the banking system we have under the same RBI regulation. If any bank fails in any settlement system, then it will speak about RBI's supervision.

As per the scheme, the CBDC issued will be the liability of the RBI and whoever wants to have this will have to pay to RBI to acquire this CBDC. Hence it is similar to deposits obtained by com-

mercial banks. But the RBI has decided not to pay any interest on this. As it is primarily introduced as a method of payments like cash, it would not bear interest.

Instead of going in for CBDC, the RBI can further improve penetration of digital transactions by making many transactions compulsory through digital mode. There can be limits on cash payments. There can even be restricted use of cheques. This will reduce cost for the economy as well as arrest illegal and unaccounted transactions.

Irrespective of the form of money, in any economy, money performs three primary functions—medium of exchange, a unit of account and a store of value.

Bombed not beaten: Kyiv flips to survival mode

AP ■ KYIV

Residents of Ukraine's bombed but undaunted capital clutched empty bottles in search of water and crowded into cafés for power and warmth on Thursday, switching defiantly into survival mode after new Russian missile strikes a day earlier plunged the city and much of the country into the dark.

In scenes hard to believe in a sophisticated city of 3 million, some Kyiv residents resorted to collecting rainwater from drainpipes, as repair teams laboured to reconnect supplies. Friends and family members exchanged messages to find out who had electricity and water back.

Some had one but not the other. The previous day's aerial onslaught on Ukraine's power grid left many with neither.

Cafés in Kyiv that by some small miracle had both quickly became oases of comfort on Thursday.

Oleksiy Rashchupkin, a 39-year-old investment banker, awoke to find that water had been reconnected to his third-floor flat but power had not. His freezer thawed in the blackout, leaving a puddle on his floor.

So he hopped in a cab and crossed the Dnieper River from left bank to right, to a café that he'd noticed had stayed open after previous Russian strikes.

Sure enough, it was open, serving hot drinks, hot food and with the music and WiFi on. "I'm here because there is heating, coffee and light," he said. "Here is life."

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said about 70 per cent of the Ukrainian capital was still without power on Thursday morning.

With cold rain falling and the remnants of a previous snowfall still on the streets, the mood was grim but steady.

The winter promises to be a long one. But Ukrainians say that if Russian President Vladimir



Putin's intention is to break them, then he should think again.

"Nobody will compromise their will and principles just for electricity," said Alina Dubeiko, 34. She, too, sought out the comfort of another, equally crowded, warm and lit café. Without electricity, heating and water at home, she was determined to keep up her work routine. Adapting to life shorn of its usual comforts, Dubeiko said she uses two glasses of water to wash, then ties her hair in a ponytail and is ready for her working day.

She said she'd rather live without power than live with the Russian invasion, which crossed the nine-month mark on Thursday.

"Without light or you? Without you," she said, echoing remarks President Volodymyr Zelenskyy made when Russia on October 10 unleashed the first of what has now become a series of aerial onslaughts on key Ukrainian infrastructure.

Klitschko said in a Telegram statement that power engineers "are doing their best" to restore electricity.

Water repair teams were making progress, too. In the early afternoon, Klitschko announced that water supplies had been restored across the capital, with the caveat that "some consumers may still experience low water pressure." People lined up at public water points to fill plastic bottles. In a strange new war-time first for her, 31-year-old Health Department employee Kateryna Luchkina resorted to collecting rainwater from a drainpipe, so she could at least wash her hands at work, which had no water.

She filled two plastic bottles, waiting patiently in the rain until they had water to the brim. A colleague followed behind her, doing the same.

"We Ukrainians are so resourceful, we will think of something. We do not lose our spirit," Luchkina said.

Ukraine works to restore power after devastating strikes

AP ■ KYIV

About 70 per cent of the Ukrainian capital was left without power, Kyiv's mayor said on Thursday, a day after Moscow unleashed yet another devastating missile and drone barrage on Ukraine's energy infrastructure.

Wednesday's renewed Russian attack on Ukrainian infrastructure caused power outages across large parts of the country, further hobbling Ukraine's already battered power network and adding to the misery for civilians as temperatures plunge.

The strikes also caused power outages in neighbouring Moldova.

Russia has been targeting Ukraine's power infrastructure following a string of battlefield setbacks its forces suffered during the full scale war it launched February 24, exactly nine months ago on Thursday.

Kyiv Mayor Vitali Klitschko said in a Telegram statement that "power engineers are doing their best to get (electricity) back as soon as possible" and added that the water supply has been restored in about half of Kyiv on the left bank of the Dnieper River.

Ukraine's General Staff reported on Thursday morning that Russian forces fired 67 cruise missiles and 10 drones during Wednesday's "massive attack on residential buildings and energy infrastructure" in Kyiv and several other regions in Ukraine.

Efforts to restore power, heating and water supplies dis-



rupted by the Wednesday attacks were underway elsewhere in Ukraine as well.

Ukraine's energy minister Herman Haluschenko said three out of four nuclear power stations that are fully functioning and which had been forced offline by Wednesday's strikes were subsequently reconnected to the grid.

Governor of the Poltava region Dmytro Lunin said "an optimistic scenario" suggested that electricity will come back to residents of his central Ukrainian region on Thursday.

"In the next few hours, we will start supplying energy to critical infrastructure, and then to the majority of household consumers," Lunin said on Telegram, noting that power has already been restored for 15,500 people and 1,500 legal entities in the region.

Lunin added that water supplies resumed in several parts of the city of Poltava, and four boiler stations have started to heat regional hospitals.

The Kirovohrad and the Vinnytsia regions were reconnected to the power grid early on Thursday, adding to more

than a dozen other regions that were reconnected on Wednesday night, according to Deputy head of Ukraine's presidential office Kyrylo Tymoshenko.

In the southeastern Dnipropetrovsk region, power has been restored for up to 50 per cent of consumers, Gov Valentyn Reznichenko said, but noted that "the situation with energy is complicated."

As Russia continues to assail Ukraine's power network, Ukrainian authorities started opening what they call "points of invincibility" — heated and powered spaces where people could go for hot meals, electricity to recharge their devices and to connect to the internet.

Kyrylo Tymoshenko, deputy head of Ukraine's presidential office, said on Thursday morning that a total of 3,720 such spaces have been opened across the country.

According to the initiative's website, various venues have been converted to such points including government buildings, schools and kindergartens and emergency services offices.

Poland upsets some by rebuffing German air defence system

AP ■ WARSAW

Poland's government says an anti-missile system which Germany offered to send to Ukraine, a proposal that is a likely non-starter for Berlin because it would significantly ratchet up NATO involvement in Ukraine.

Poland's surprising response to Berlin's offer was welcomed by Ukraine, which is desperate to protect its airspace as barrage upon barrage of Russian missiles have knocked out power across the country.

But Germany's defence Minister Christine Lambrecht stressed that use of NATO defence systems outside its territory needs to be agreed by all member states.

"It is important to us that Poland can rely on allies to stand by each other, even in difficult times, and especially Poland in its exposed position," Lambrecht told reporters in Berlin. "That's why we have offered to support air policing and Patriots, but these Patriots are part of an integrated air defence of NATO, that is, they are intended for NATO territory," the minister said.

"If they are used outside the NATO area, then it has to be agreed with NATO and with the allies beforehand."



In Poland, critics of the populist ruling party accused it of sacrificing the country's security with a war next door in Ukraine for the sake of a domestic political struggle which exploits anti-German sentiment for short-term gain.

The Rzeczpospolita daily called the new proposal by Poland's leaders "shocking," arguing that it would require sending German soldiers operating the system to Ukraine, and "that, in turn, would involve NATO in a direct clash with

Russia, something the alliance has been trying to avoid from the beginning."

"This proposal affects Poland's credibility and, worst of all, its security. The Germans get a clear signal that we do not want their help, so the defence potential of the Polish sky will be lower," deputy editor Michal Szuldrzynski wrote.

"In the worst war in Europe since 1945, this is an unforgivable mistake."

Poland's populist ruling party, facing elections next fall with its popularity dented by 18 per cent inflation, has been ratcheting up its anti-German messaging, long a staple of the party's campaign rhetoric.

Party leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski has also been trying to link his domestic opponents, particularly Donald Tusk, a former European Union leader, to Germany, saying on Sunday that if Tusk's party wins next year, Poland would find itself "under the German boot."

When Germany recently offered Warsaw Eurofighter planes and Patriot air defence

missile batteries, Poland's Defence Minister Mariusz Blaszczak initially said it was an offer he would accept with "satisfaction." The offer came after two men were killed when an apparently stray Ukrainian defence projectile fell in Poland near the border with Ukraine on November 15.

But Poland's tune changed after Kaczynski gave an interview to the state news agency PAP on Wednesday, saying that the offer is "interesting," but that "it would be best for Poland's security if Germany handed the equipment to the Ukrainians."

Since then, both Blaszczak and Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki have repeated the position of Kaczynski, the country's most powerful leader.

After Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine on February 24, NATO beefed up its defences along its eastern flank, including Poland, while Warsaw has worked to strengthen the nation's own military with massive armaments purchases.



Zelenskyy accuses Russia of 'crimes against humanity'

IAN S ■ KIEV

In his address to the UN Security Council, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has accused Russia of committing "crimes against humanity" after a new barrage of missile strikes have caused widespread power outages across the war-torn nation.

"Russia has long been trying to turn the UN Security Council into a platform for rhetoric. But it was created as the world's most powerful platform for decisions and actions. Therefore, the Security Council must give a clear assessment of the actions of the terrorist state," he told the UN body in a video address on Wednesday.

"Ukraine proposes that the Security Council adopt such a resolution condemning all forms of energy terror. I confirm the invitation from Ukraine regarding the mission of UN experts to critical infrastructure facilities of our country that have been or may be hit by Russian missiles."

"It is necessary to give a proper assessment of damage and destruction. It should be stated that these are strikes against the very infrastructure that ensures the lives of tens of millions of people."

"The world should not be held hostage by one international terrorist," the President added.

The recent 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.

According to the President, 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.

As a result, nuclear power plants in the country also went off-line.

Later in his nightly video address to the nation, Zelenskyy said due to the missile strikes which even continued on Wednesday, the situation in Kiev remained "very difficult" and efforts would continue through the night to restore electricity.

Indonesian rescuers focus on landslide as quake toll rises

AP ■ CIANJUR (INDONESIA)

On the fourth day of an increasingly urgent search, Indonesian rescuers narrowed their focus Thursday to a landslide where dozens of people were believed trapped after an earthquake killed at least 272, more than a third of them children. Many of the more than 1,000 rescuers were using backhoes, sniffer dogs and life detectors — as well as their bare hands — to search the worst-hit area of Cijendil village in mountainous Cianjur district where a landslide set off by Monday's quake left tons of mud, rocks and broken trees.

Suharyanto, chief of the National Disaster Mitigation Agency, said the rescuers are planning to use more heavy equipment to search the landslide after using maximum human power. "Hopefully in the next two days, after the weather is good, we can use heavy equipment and more victims will be found," Suharyanto said. Rescue efforts were temporarily suspended Wednesday as heavy monsoon rains fell.

Indonesian President Joko Widodo visited Cianjur on Thursday and said rescuers will focus on one location where 39 people are missing.

"The search process will be our priority for now," Widodo said. "The soil is unstable, so you need to be careful," he warned.

He said distribution of relief supplies has been difficult because the injured and displaced are spread out and hard to reach. "We hope all victims can be found soon," said Henri Alfandi, chief of the National Search and Rescue Agency.

On Wednesday, searchers rescued a 6-year-old boy who was trapped for two days under the rubble of his collapsed house.

Data from National Disaster Mitigation Agency showed that 100 of the 272 confirmed deaths were children.

Monday's magnitude 5.6 quake injured more than 2,000 people, damaged at least 56,000 houses and displaced at least 62,000 people to evacuation centers and other shelters. The agency said 171 public facilities were destroyed, including 31 schools.

US increasingly fearful Putin will use unconventional weapons in Ukraine

IAN S ■ LONDON

Russian President Vladimir Putin could resort to using Novichok in mass chemical weapon attacks in Ukraine if his troops continue to lose ground, US officials fear, according to a media report.

As the progress of the war has gone increasingly in Kiev's favour, fears that Russia could take extreme measures to force Ukraine to surrender — such as launching a nuclear strike or a dirty bomb attack — have been rising, Daily Mail reported.

But according to six people with knowledge of the matter, Putin is prepared to use chemical weapons in a mass-casualty event before resorting to a nuclear confrontation with NATO.

According to the sources, cited by Politico, President Joe Biden's administration is working to ensure its western allies are prepared for such an attack.

The sources said that Washington predicts Russia will use chemical weapons in the event of further losses on the battlefield, or a total collapse of



Putin's army.

Top US officials strategising for such an attack believe Moscow could deploy chemical weapons Russia has been known to use in the past — including those used in the poisoning of opposition leader Alexei Navalny (on a flight to Moscow) and former Russian military intelligence officer Sergei Skripal (in Salisbury, Britain), Daily Mail reported.

Both were poisoned with a Novichok nerve agent and were hospitalised in a critical condition. Against the odds, they both survived the attack.

While in the past, the nerve agent has been used by Russia to target individuals, US officials have said it can also be used to carry out a mass-casualty event.

US aid to Ukraine puts pressure on Pentagon's arms stockpile

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The intense firefight over Ukraine has the Pentagon rethinking its weapons stockpiles. If another major war broke out today, would the United States have enough ammunition to fight? It's a question confronting Pentagon planners, not only as they aim to supply Ukraine for a war with Russia that could stretch years longer, but also as they look ahead to a potential conflict with China.

Russia is firing as many as 20,000 rounds a day, ranging from bullets for automatic rifles to truck-sized cruise missiles. Ukraine is answering with as many as 7,000 rounds a day, firing 155 mm howitzer rounds, Stinger anti-aircraft missiles and now NASAMS air defense munitions, and thousands of rounds of small arms fire.

Much of Ukraine's firepower is being supplied through U.S. government-funded weapons that are pushed almost weekly to the front lines. On Wednesday, the Biden administration announced an additional round of aid that will provide 20 million more rounds of small arms ammunition to Kyiv. "We've not



been in a position where we've got only a few days of some critical munition left," Pentagon comptroller Michael McCord told reporters this month. "But we are now supporting a partner who is."

U.S. defense production lines are not scaled to supply a major land war, and some, like for the Stinger, were previously shut down.

That's putting pressure on U.S. reserves and has officials asking whether U.S. weapons stockpiles are big enough. Would the U.S. be ready to respond to a major conflict today, for example if China invaded Taiwan?

"What would happen if something blew up in Indo-Pacem? Not five years from now, not 10 years from now, what if it happened next week?" Bill LaPlante, the Pentagon's top weapons buyer, said, referring to the military's Indo-Pacific Command. He spoke at a defense acquisitions conference this month at George Mason University in Virginia.

"What do we have in any degree of quantity? That will actually be effective? Those are the questions we're asking right this minute," he said.

The Army uses many of the same munitions that have proven

most critical in Ukraine, including High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, known as HIMARS, Stinger missiles and 155 mm howitzer rounds, and is now reviewing its stockpile requirements, Doug Bush, the Army's assistant secretary for acquisition, told reporters Monday.

"They're seeing what Ukraine is using, what we can produce and how fast we can ramp up, all of which are factors you would work into, 'OK, how (big) does your pre-war stockpile need to be?'" Bush said. "The slower you ramp up, the bigger the pile needs to be at the start."

The military aid packages the U.S. sends either pull inventory from stockpiles or fund contracts with industry to step up production. At least \$19 billion in military aid has been committed to date, including 924,000 artillery rounds for 155mm howitzers, more than 8,500 Javelin anti-tank systems, 1,600 Stinger anti-aircraft systems and hundreds of vehicles and drones. It's also provided advanced air defense systems and 38 HIMARS, although the Pentagon does not disclose how many rounds of ammunition it sends with the rocket systems.

Philippines asks China for explanation over latest sea feud

AP ■ MANILA

The Philippines has sought an explanation from China after a Filipino military commander reported that the Chinese coast guard forcibly seized Chinese rocket debris in the possession of Filipino navy personnel in the disputed South China Sea, officials said on Thursday.

Sunday's incident off Philippine-occupied Thitu island is the latest flare-up in the long-seething territorial disputes involving China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Taiwan.

China has denied its coast guard forcibly seized the debris from the Filipino sailors.

Department of Foreign Affairs spokesperson in Manila, Maria Theresa Daza, said without elaborating that a diplomatic note was relayed to China for "clarification from the Chinese side over the incident."

Vice Adm. Alberto Carlos, who heads the military's Western Command, said the Filipino sailors, using a long-range camera, spotted the debris drifting in strong waves near a sandbar about 800 yards (540 metres) offshore.

They set out on a boat and



retrieved the floating object and started to tow it back to Thitu Island. As they were travelling back to the island, "they noticed that a China coast guard vessel with bow number 5203 was approaching their location and subsequently blocked their pre-plotted course twice," Carlos said in a statement.

The Chinese coast guard vessel then deployed an inflatable boat with personnel who "forcefully retrieved said floating object by cutting the towing line" attached to the Filipino sailors' rubber boat.

The sailors decided to return to their island, Carlos

said, without detailing what happened.

Chinese coast guard ships have blocked Philippine supply boats delivering supplies to Filipino forces in the disputed waters in the past but seizing objects in the possession of another nation's military constitutes a more brazen act.

China's Foreign Ministry in Beijing has denied that the debris was seized forcibly.

"The Philippine side salvaged and towed the object first. After friendly consultation at the site, the Philippine side returned the object to China, and China expressed appreciation for that," ministry spokeswoman Mao

Ning said on Monday. "There was no such thing as interception or forcible seizure at the scene."

Responding to China's denial, top Philippine defense official Jose Faustino Jr. stood by the accounts of the Filipino navy personnel and said the debris was "rudely" taken from them by the Chinese coast guard. President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said he would also seek clarification when he visits Beijing in January to meet China's leader Xi Jinping.

Faustino said a separate Philippine investigation was underway after Filipino villagers on Thitu reported hearing unexplained explosions on Sunday.

It was not clear where the thunder-like blasts, which caused slight tremors on the ground, came from and what were their nature. Villagers on the island were alarmed, officials said, adding they prepared an evacuation plan in case there would be a need for it.

Thitu, which Filipinos call Pagasa, or hope, hosts a fishing community and Filipino forces and lies near Subi, one of seven disputed reefs that China has turned into missile-protected islands in the disputed waters.

NEPAL PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

Deuba's NC-led ruling coalition leads in counting

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Nepal Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba's Nepali Congress (NC)-led ruling coalition was on Thursday on its way to winning Nepal's parliamentary elections and has bagged 40 seats out of 65 declared so far.

Out of the 275 Members of Parliament, 165 will be elected through direct voting, while the remaining 110 will be elected through a proportional electoral system.

Till now, the Nepali Congress has won 25 seats and is leading in 31 more.

The CPN-Maoist Centre has bagged 7 seats, CPN-Unified Socialist 6 and Rastriya Janamorchha and Lokatantrik Samajwadi Party one each. They all are part of the ruling coalition.

The Maoist Centre and CPN-Unified Socialist have been leading in 10 and 5 seats respectively.

The main Opposition CPN-UML led by former premier K P Sharma Oli has won 15 seats and is leading in 29 others.

The CPN-UML partners -



the Rastriya Prajatantra Party and Janata Samajwadi Party - have won two and one seats respectively.

The newly-formed Rastriya Swatantra Party has won five seats and is leading in four seats.

Rastriya Prajatantra Party has won two seats and is leading in three seats.

Nagarik Unmukti Party, Janmat Party, Lokatantrik Samajwadi Party, Rastriya Janamorchha and independent candidates have secured one seat each.

If trends continue, the NC-led five-party alliance will be in a position to form a coalition government.

However, the CPN-UML has secured the highest number of votes under the proportionate voting system, which gives it an advantage.

Under the proportionate system, the CPN-UML has so far received 3,65,505 votes whereas the NC and Maoist Centre received 3,37,328 and 1,61,069 votes respectively.

In Nepal's capital city Kathmandu, the CPN-UML could bag just one seat, down from the six it had bagged in 2017.

Out of the 10 seats in the district, the ruling Nepali Congress (NC) has secured five and Rastriya Swatantra Party (RSP) bagged four.



Long-time reformist leader Anwar sworn in as Malaysia PM

AP ■ KUALA LUMPUR

Long-time opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim was sworn in as Malaysia's prime minister Thursday, in a victory for political reformers locked in a battle with Malay nationalists for days after the divisive general election produced a hung Parliament.

Broadcast live on national television, Anwar took his oath of office Thursday evening in a simple ceremony at the national palace.

Malaysia's king, Sultan Abdullah Sultan Ahmad Shah, named Anwar, 75, as the nation's 10th leader after saying he was satisfied that Anwar is the candidate who is likely to have majority support.

Anwar's Alliance of Hope led Saturday's election with 82 seats, short of the 112 needed for a majority.

An unexpected surge of ethnic Malay support propelled Former Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin's right-leaning National Alliance to win 73 seats, with its ally Pan-Malaysian Islamic Party emerging as the biggest single party with 49 seats.

Kim's sister makes insulting threats to Seoul

AP ■ SEOUL

The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un attacked South Korea with a string of insults on Thursday for considering new unilateral sanctions against the North, calling its president and his government "idiots" and "a running wild dog gnawing on a bone given by the US."

Kim Yo Jong's diatribe came two days after South Korea's Foreign Ministry said it was considering additional sanctions on North Korea over its recent barrage of missile tests.

The ministry said it would also consider taking action against alleged cyber attacks by North Korea — believed to be a key new source of funding



for its weapons program — if the North conducts a major provocation like a nuclear test.

"I wonder what sanctions' the South Korean group, no more than a running wild dog gnawing on a bone given by the US, impudently will impose on North Korea," Kim Yo Jong said in a statement carried by state media. "What a spectacle sight!"

She called South Korea's conservative President Yoon Suk Yeol and his administration "idiots who continue creating the dangerous situation."

She added that South Korea "had not been our target" when Moon Jae-in — Yoon's liberal predecessor who sought reconciliation with North Korea — was in power.

The comment could be seen as an attempt to foster anti-Yoon sentiment in South Korea.

"We warn the impudent and stupid once again that the desperate sanctions and pressure of the US and its South Korean stooges against (North Korea) will add fuel to the latter's hostility and anger and they will serve as a noose for them," Kim Yo Jong said.

Kim Yo Jong's official title is vice department director of the Central Committee of the North's ruling Workers' Party.

But South Korea's spy agency says she is the North's second-most powerful person after her brother and handles relations with South Korea and the United States.

While it's not the first time Kim Yo Jong has used crude invectives toward South Korea, North Korea is expected to further escalate military tensions on the Korean Peninsula given that she's in charge of relations with South Korea and wields some influences on the North's military, said analyst Cheong Seong-Chang at the private Sejong Institute in South Korea.

Body of Israeli teen, taken by militants, is returned

AP ■ JERUSALEM

The body of an Israeli teen that was taken by Palestinian militants from a West Bank hospital was returned to his family on Thursday, the Israeli military said. Relatives of Tiran Fero, 17, said Palestinian militants in the occupied West Bank city of Jenin entered the hospital where Fero was seeking treatment after a car crash. They disconnected him from hospital equipment while still alive, according to his father, and removed him from the hospital.

The Israeli military said Fero was already dead when he was snatched and that the circumstances of the teenager's death remained under probe. Incident threatened to ratchet up already boiling tensions between Israel and the Palestinians, but the body's return appeared to defuse that for now.

Ousted Lanka Prez summoned in court over presidential pardon to murder convict

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's ousted President Gotabaya Rajapaksa was issued a notice by the Supreme Court on Thursday over a presidential pardon granted by him to a former lawmaker of his party who was convicted in a murder of a party colleague in 2011.

Rajapaksa, who pardoned Duminda Silva -- a former parliamentarian from his Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) party, has been issued a second summons since he left office in July this year.

Silva who was sentenced to death in 2017 for involvement in the 2011 murder of a party colleague and ex-MP, Bharatha Lakshman Premachandra, and four others, was freed in June 2021 after Rajapaksa granted him a presidential pardon.

However, the Supreme Court in May this year quashed the pardoning and



ordered Silva to be arrested again. He is expected to appear as a respondent before the Supreme Court on December 16 for the hearing of a fundamental rights petition filed by Premachandra's wife and daughter.

Similarly, in mid-October, the highest court issued a summons to him to appear in court over the 2011 disappearance of two rights activists Lalith Weeraratne and Kugan

Murugananthan from the northern province.

The disappearances took place 12 years ago soon after the end of the country's long civil war when Rajapaksa was a powerful official at the Defence Ministry under the presidency of his elder brother, Mahinda Rajapaksa.

At the time, he was accused of overseeing abduction squads that whisked away rebel suspects, critical journalists, and activists, many of them never to be seen again.

He has previously denied any wrongdoing.

Rajapaksa, 73, was ousted in a popular uprising against him in July this year following months of street protests that called for his resignation.

He fled to the Maldives in mid-July and announced his resignation from Singapore.

In early September, he returned to the country from Thailand.

Writer who accused Trump of 1990s rape files new lawsuit

AP ■ NEW YORK

A writer who accused former President Donald Trump of rape filed an upgraded lawsuit against him on Thursday in New York, minutes after a new state law took effect allowing victims of sexual violence to sue over attacks that occurred decades ago.

E. Jean Carroll's lawyer filed the legal papers electronically as the Adult Survivor's Act temporarily lifted the state's usual deadlines for suing over sexual assault. She sought unspecified compensatory and punitive damages for pain and suffering, psychological harms, dignity loss and reputation damage.

Carroll, a longtime advice columnist for Elle magazine, first made the claim in a 2019 book, saying Trump raped her in the dressing room of a Manhattan luxury department



store in 1995 or 1996.

Trump responded to the book's allegations by saying it could never have happened because Carroll was "not my type." His remarks led Carroll to file a defamation lawsuit against him, but that lawsuit has been tied up in appeals courts as judges decide whether he is protected from legal claims for comments made while he was

president.

Previously, Carroll had been barred by state law from suing over the alleged rape because too many years had passed since the incident.

New York's new law, however, gives sex crime victims who missed deadlines associated with statute of limitations a second chance to file a lawsuit. A window for such suits will open for one year, after which the usual time limits will be reinstated.

At least hundreds of lawsuits are expected, including many filed by women who say they were assaulted by co-workers, prison guards, medical providers or others.

In her new claims, Carroll maintains that Trump committed battery "when he forcibly raped and groped her" and that he defamed her when he denied raping her last month.

Trump said in his statement that Carroll "completely made up a story that I met her at the doors of this crowded New York City Department Store and, within minutes, swooned" her. It is a Hoax and a lie, just like all the other Hoaxes that have been played on me for the past seven years."

Carroll's new ability to sue Trump for rape could help her sidestep a potentially fatal legal flaw in her original defamation case.

If the courts ultimately hold that Trump's original disparaging comments about Carroll's rape allegation were part of his job duties, as president, she would be barred from suing him over those remarks, as federal employees are protected from defamation claims. No such protection would cover things he did prior to becoming president.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Be it known to all that, my client SHRI PARASH RAM S/O Shri Ram Avadh R/o G-409, Gali No. 13/4, Tripaafactri Bhagratni Vihar, Johri Pur, Dayapur, Delhi-110094, have disowned his son DINESH from all his moveable and immovable estate. My client and his estate shall not be responsible in any manner for any act/deed done by his son any person dealing with them shall deal at his/her own risk & cost thereof and further shall be dealt with as per the law.
AMIT BATRA (Advocate)
26-B/1, D.B. Gupta Road, Karol Bagh, New Delhi-110005, Mob: 9868066199

PUBLIC NOTICE
Be it known to all that, I, **Sudesh Kapahi W/O Late Kewal Kumar R/O-UG Flat No. 4-B, First Floor, Block-A, Madipur, Delhi** I am the legal owner of UG Flat No.4-B, first floor, Block-A, Madipur, Delhi, File No. L-73(11983)/MP/UG which is allotted by the DDA. Original Possession Letter & Water & Electric Connection NOC of the above flat has been lost. An FIR/NCR in this effect has lodged in P.S. Crime Branch, Delhi vide LR No.104508/2022, Dated-24.11.2022. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above address/phone No.999495288 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. Any person claiming any right, interest, or having any objections with respect to this property can also personally inform/contact me.

PUBLIC NOTICE FOR LOST OF DOCUMENTS
To be known to all that I, **VIMAL GOEL S/O S.B. BHAGAT RAM, R/o B-3350, FIRST FLOOR, PASCHIM VIHAR, Delhi-110063**, have lost his original property Document i.e. Possession, Possession slip, Allotment letter and Demand letter in respect of the Property Bearing No. Y-206, Y Block, Lohia Mandi (W.H.S), NCR, New Delhi-110026, have been lost, an NCR vide LR No. 1014191/2022 against this effect has been lodged in Crime Branch Police Station Delhi.
Any persons claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents may write contact with above named person at above address/phone No. 981114864 with 15 days from the date of publication of this notice.

NORTHERN RAILWAY OPEN E-TENDER NOTICE
The Dy. Principal Engineer-I/V, Northern Railway, Delhi Division for and on behalf of the President of India invites E-Tender on prescribed form for the following work:
Invitation of tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)
1. **Name of work with its location:** Upgradation of level crossing in DLI-BTI section of Sr. DEN-IV/DLI (NIT 62-W-IV-22-23)
2. **App. Cost of the work :** (1) Rs. 45,18,957.39
3. **Earnest Money :** (1) Rs. 90,400.00
4. **Date & Time of submission of tender and opening of tender :** Bidding Start date for work no. Up to 15:00 Hrs. on 02.12.2022 opening of e-Tender at 15:00 hrs. on 16.12.2022
5. **Website particulars published e-tender, notice location etc. complete details of tender can be seen and website where the tender form can be downloaded :** Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in
No.: 128-W/260/Tender Notice/62-W/IV/22-23 Date: 23.11.2022 31/17/2022
Serving Customers with a Smile

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE
The Dy. Chief Engineer/Const-I, Northern Railway, State Entry Road, New Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites open e-tender under Two Packet System for the under noted work:-
Description of the property
House No.41, Flat No.3 Gali No.-1, Harijan Basti Neb Sarai, New Delhi-110068
Priyanka Raina Saini Advocate DELHI HIGH COURT Office Address:-04, Kharsa No.-139 Street No.-2, Neb Sarai, New Delhi - 110068. Mob. No.-7982726049
PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to general public that my client is intending to purchase from Mrs. Shalini Garg, w/o Sanjay Garg, r/o House No. 333, sector 16, Faridabad Haryana 121002, Property with the following details: Agricultural Land bearing numbers: Mustil No. 69 Kila Nos. 22/2/2; Mustil No.73 Kila No. 2 & 9 and having 50% share in Mustil No. 73 Kila Nos. 3, 8/1, 8/3, 13, 18 & 23/1 of village Samratthia, Tehsil Sohna, Dist. Gurgaon, Haryana.
May be further known that:
1. That Mrs. Shalini Garg have lost the original sales deed documents for the above-mentioned property vide Vaska No. 768 dt. 27/05/1994 and Vaska No. 5257 dt. 07/02/1996 both executed at Sub-Registrar office of Sohna Tehsil and I have lodged an FIR for the same with the Police.
2. That if any person happens to find the above said original documents they must urgently contact me for delivering the same against reasonable reward.
3. That if any person/entity (corporate or otherwise) has any right, title, interest, benefit, claim or demand in or to the above mentioned property or any part thereof by way of sale, exchange, gift, lease, tenancy, license, assignment, mortgage, charge, lien, trust, possession, easement, development rights, order/ decree/ judgment of any Court or any other agreement, understanding or otherwise, such person/entity (corporate or otherwise) may lodge their claims and objection to me, against transfer of the above said property to my client by way of sales deed, with all documentary proofs supporting the claims and objections within 15 days of the date of publication of this notice failing which it shall be deemed that there are no claims or objections from anyone for the proposed sale of the above mentioned property to my client or that any such claims and objections shall be considered as waived and/or abandoned.
Date: 25/11/2022
Sanjeev Divivedi (Advocate) 48, Caganand Block, Tis Hazari Courts, ND-54 Mob: +91-99997 33612 placid_chap@hotmail.com

NORTHERN RAILWAY TENDER NOTICE
The Dy. Chief Engineer/TMC/Line, Northern Railway, State Entry Road, New Delhi for and on behalf of the President of India invites Open E-tender under One Packet System for the under noted work:-
(1) POH (Periodic Overhaul) of FRM-1866 machine at NR Track Machine Workshop including mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic, electrical, cabin repair and other ancillary works.
(2) POH (Periodic Overhaul) of WST-8083 & 8088 machine at NR Track Machine Workshop including mechanical, hydraulic, pneumatic, electrical, cabin repair and other ancillary works.
1. **Name of work and location:**
2. **Completion period of the work** (1) 120 Days. (2) 120 Days.
3. **Approx. cost of work** (1) Rs. 93,17,143.00 (2) Rs. 52,44,357.00
4. **Earnest Money amount (to be deposited Online)** (1) Rs. 1,86,343.00 (2) Rs. 1,04,887.00
5. **Cost of Tender Document (to be deposited Online)** Rs. Nil.
6. **Similar Nature of Work** (1) IOH/POH/Major repair of track machines including electrical works, final testing and commissioning of ON Track Machines after IOH/POH. (2) IOH/POH/Major repair of track machines including electrical works, final testing and commissioning of ON Track Machines after IOH/POH.
7. **Date & Time for submission of E-tender and opening of tender** Tender document remain available on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 02.12.2022 upto 15:00 Hrs. on 23.12.2022 Tender Bids may be uploaded from 10.12.2022 & upto 15:00 Hrs on 23.12.2022 on IREPS web site. The tender will be opened soon after 15:30 hrs on 23.12.2022.
8. **Detailed Tender Notice & Tender Document** The detailed tender document is available on www.ireps.gov.in. Above tender document will be available for online submission of offer on IREPS website i.e. www.ireps.gov.in from 10.12.2022 to 23.12.2022. All other terms and conditions in respect of above tenders are given in tender document. The detailed tender notice also can be seen on the Notice Board of the above office.
Tender Notice No. 1-W-D/CETMC-10-FRM-1866-22-23 & 11-WST-8083-8088 Dated: 23.11.2022 3133/2022
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

PUBLIC NOTICE
It is notified that the Flat No 59-D, Block-A-5, Sector-7/1, Noida (UP) has been allotted in the name of Baidya Nath Hembram S/o Late Shri Gopi Nath Hembram R/o College Tola Pawrah House No.14, Ghatshila East Singhum Jharkhand, had sold the said flat on the basis of GPA to the following persons - A GPA was executed in favour of Lekh Raj Singh S/o Shri Adal Singh R/o House No. 111/186, Aali Village, Sarita Vihar, South Delhi-110076, on 09.12.2021 at Sub Registrar Sadar/ Gautam Budh Nagar, Vide Book No-IV, Volume no. 1701 on pages 317 to 336 at Document No. 1377 Dated 09.12.2021. That the agreement to sell was not registered. The said property is going to be transferred in favour of Pinki W/o Arun Kumar R/o H.No.197, Abrahimpur Jundapur Urf Moazpur, PO-Khurji, Dist. Bulandshahr U.P. 201332, Now, If any person has/have any objection he/she may submit his/her objection in the Housing Department of Noida Authority along with sufficient proofs within 15 days of the publication of this notice. **Lekh Raj Singh**

PUBLIC NOTICE
Subject: Transfer of ownership in respect of Residential Flat no. 204 on Second Floor, in Pocket-2, Sector-19, situated in the Layout Plan of Housing Estate at Dwarka, New Delhi.
In respect of 100% share upon the intestate death of Sneh Gupta resident of Residential Flat no. 204 on Second Floor, in Pocket-2, Sector-19, situated in the Layout Plan of Housing Estate at Dwarka, New Delhi.
WHEREAS Sneh Gupta was the owner of Residential Flat no. 204 on Second Floor, in Pocket-2, Sector-19, situated in the Layout Plan of Housing Estate at Dwarka, New Delhi.
WHEREAS the said Sneh Gupta has died on 29.11.2019.
WHEREAS Mr. Ajay Kumar Gupta and Mr. Sanjeev Kumar Gupta (sons) are the legal heirs of the said Late Sneh Gupta.
WHEREAS Mr. Ajay Kumar Gupta and Mr. Sanjeev Kumar Gupta intend to apply for the transfer of the said property in their favour as they are the only Class 1 legal heirs of the said Sneh Gupta.
If any person is having any objection against the transfer of said property Residential Flat no. 204 on Second Floor, in Pocket-2, Sector-19, situated in the Layout Plan of Housing Estate at Dwarka, New Delhi in favour of Mr. Ajay Kumar Gupta and Mr. Sanjeev Kumar Gupta (Sons), legal heirs of the said Late Sneh Gupta, he/she /they can submit objection in writing to the office of the undersigned, alongwith supporting documents within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice failing which the concerned Authority may sanction the mutation of the property as per the records & may not entertain subsequent claim, thereupon.

Mr. Subash Bhat (Advocate)
Address: Trinity Legal Partners, C-401, The Courtyard, Nirvana Country, Sector 50, Gurgaon, Haryana. subash.bhat@trinitylegalpartners.com

Unemployment rate dips to 7.2% in Q2: NSO survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Unemployment rate for persons aged 15 years and above in urban areas declined to 7.2 per cent during July-September 2022 from 9.8 per cent a year ago, the National Statistical Office (NSO) said on Thursday.

Joblessness or unemployment rate is defined as the percentage of unemployed persons among the labour force. Joblessness was high in July-September 2021 mainly due to the staggering impact of Covid-related restrictions in the country.

The latest data based on a periodic labour force survey, underlining a decline in the unemployment rate amid an improved labour force participation ratio, point towards a sustained economic recovery from the shadow of the pandemic.

The unemployment rate for persons aged 15 years and above in April-June 2022 was 7.6 per cent in urban areas, the 16th Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) showed.

It also showed that the unemployment rate among females (aged 15 years and above) in urban areas declined to 9.4 per cent in July-September, 2022 from 11.6 per cent a year ago. It was 9.5 per cent in April-June, 2022.

Among males, the unemployment rate in urban areas dipped to 6.6 per cent in July-September 2022 compared to 9.3 per cent a year ago. It was 7.1 per cent in April-June 2022.

Labour force participation rate in CWS (Current Weekly Status) in urban areas for persons aged 15 years and above increased to 47.9 per cent in the July-September quarter of 2022, from 46.9 per cent in the same period a year ago. It was 47.5 per cent in April-June 2022.

Labour force refers to the part of the population which supplies or offers to supply labour for pursuing economic activities for the production of goods and services and, therefore, includes both employed and unemployed persons.

NSO launched PLFS in April 2017. On the basis of PLFS, a quarterly bulletin is



brought out giving estimates of labour force indicators namely unemployment rate, Worker Population Ratio (WPR), Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR), distribution of workers by broad status in employment and industry of work in CWS. The estimates of unemployed persons in CWS give an average picture of unemployment in a short period of seven days during the survey period. In the CWS approach, a person is considered unemployed if he/she did not work even for one hour on any day during the week but sought or was available for work at least for one hour on any day during the period.

Labour force, according to

CWS, is the number of persons either employed or unemployed on average in a week preceding the date of the survey. LFPR is defined as the percentage of the population in the labour force. WPR (in per cent) in CWS in urban areas for persons aged 15 years and above stood at 44.5 per cent in July-September, 2022, up from 42.3 per cent in the same period a year ago. It was 43.9 per cent in April-June, 2022.

Fifteen Quarterly Bulletins of PLFS corresponding to the quarter ending December 2018 to the quarter ending June 2022 have already been released. The present Quarterly Bulletin is the sixteenth in the series for the quarter of July-September 2022.

Sensex hits record high, Nifty jumps 216 pts amid firm global equities

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark BSE Sensex closed at an all-time high of 62,272.68 on Thursday, tracking a firm trend in global markets after the US Fed minutes indicated a slower pace of rate increase that bolstered investors' sentiment.

Extending its rally to the third straight day, the 30-share BSE benchmark rallied 762.10 points or 1.24 per cent to settle at 62,272.68, its record closing peak. During the day, it jumped 901.75 points or 1.46 per cent to its lifetime high of 62,412.33.

The broader NSE Nifty gained 216.85 points or 1.19 per cent to end at 18,484.10. During the day, it hit its 52-week high of 18,529.70, higher by 262.45 points or 1.43 per cent.

"Two triggers assisted the Sensex rally to record highs. One, in the mother market US, the market construct turned favourable with rising equities, declining bond yields and falling dollar. Two, macro developments in India show steady rise in credit growth and capex indicating strong economic recovery.

"Along with this, sharp correction in crude is a big pos-



itive. This has facilitated this Sensex rally led by large-caps, mainly the HDFC twins, Infosys, TCS and RIL," said V K Vijayakumar, Chief Investment Strategist at Geojit Financial Services.

From the Sensex pack, HCL Technologies, Infosys, Wipro, Power Grid, Tech Mahindra, Tata Consultancy Services, Hindustan Unilever, HDFC, HDFC Bank and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the major winners.

Bajaj Finserv, Tata Steel, Bajaj Finance and Kotak Mahindra Bank were the laggards.

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

Equity exchanges in Europe were trading in the green in the afternoon trade. Wall Street had ended higher

on Wednesday.

"Led by broad-based buying, domestic indices witnessed solid gains as investors digested the latest Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting minutes, which hinted that the rate hike cycle may be slowing down. The optimism was further boosted by falling crude prices and the declining dollar index. Crude oil prices dropped over talks of a possible price cap on Russian oil and a rise in US product stockpiles," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

International oil benchmark Brent crude was trading 0.46 per cent lower at USD 85.02 per barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded shares worth Rs 789.86 crore on Wednesday, as per exchange data.

Rupee gains 30 paise to close at 81.63 against USD



PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee appreciated 30 paise to close at 81.63 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday as a weak greenback in the overseas market and a rally in domestic equities boosted investor sentiments.

Forex traders said the dollar fell in international trade post the weak US data and dovish Fed minutes.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 81.72 and touched an intra-day high of 81.60 and a low of 81.77 against the greenback.

The local unit finally settled at 81.63, registering a rise of 30 paise over its previous close.

On Wednesday, the rupee depreciated 26 paise to close at 81.93 against the US currency.

India to grow at 'moderately brisk rate', inflation to ease: FinMin

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



India is well placed to grow at "moderately brisk rate" in the coming years on the back of macroeconomic stability, despite global monetary tightening, a finance ministry report said on Thursday.

It further said inflationary pressures will ease in the coming months with the arrival of kharif crops and at the same time job opportunities will increase with improvement in business prospects.

The 'Monthly Economic Review for October 2022' also cautioned that the US monetary tightening is a "future risk" which could lead to dip in stock prices, weaker currencies and higher bond yields, resulting in higher borrowing costs for many governments around the world.

It said a rapid deterioration in global growth prospects, high inflation, and worsening financial conditions have increased fears of an impending global recession.

The spillovers of the glob-

al slowdown may dampen India's exports businesses outlook. However, resilient domestic demand, a re-invigorated investment cycle along with strengthened financial system and structural reforms will provide impetus to economic growth going forward.

"In a world where monetary tightening has weakened growth prospects, India appears well placed to grow at a moderately brisk rate in the coming years on account of the priority it accorded (to) macroeconomic stability," the report said.

The ministry said, so far in current year, India's food security concerns have been addressed and will continue to receive the utmost priority from the government.

"Easing international com-

modity prices and new kharif arrival are also set to dampen inflationary pressures in the coming months," it said.

India's wholesale and retail price inflation fell in October after remaining high for most part of the year mainly due to supply chain disruptions following outbreak of the Russia-Ukraine war in February.

Retail or CPI inflation fell to 3-month low of 6.7 per cent, while wholesale or WPI inflation was at 19-month low of 8.39 per cent.

Russia and Ukraine are among the most important producers of essential agricultural commodities, including wheat, maize, sunflower seeds and inputs like fertilisers.

Together with other countries bordering the Black Sea, they constitute the world's breadbasket.

Along with an uncertain macroeconomic outlook, the year 2022 also brought to the fore the vulnerability and interconnectedness of the global food system to shocks, the ministry said.

Exporters demand fiscal incentives, credit at affordable rates in Budget

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Exporters on Thursday demanded fiscal incentives, tweaking in customs duties on certain products and credit at affordable rates in the forthcoming Budget to boost exports and create jobs.

In a pre-budget virtual meeting with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) said the depreciation of the rupee against the US dollar is affecting exports' competitiveness and the sector requires more support.

"Creation of employment is the biggest challenge faced by the country...We would urge the government to provide fiscal support to units which provide additional employment in the export sector," the exporter's body said.

It said that incentives may be provided based on twin criteria of growth in exports and the creation of additional jobs.

The body stated that at a time when global demand for



goods is declining, it has become fundamental to go for "aggressive" marketing.

It argued that the Rs 200 crore support given under Market Development Assistance (MDA) scheme for promoting exports to USD 460-470 billion is just a "drop in the ocean".

"Therefore, for aggressive marketing, there is a need for the creation of an Export Development Fund with a corpus of minimum 0.5 per cent of preceding year's exports," it suggested adding a special scheme for goods exported by MSME can be introduced in the Budget.

On the direct tax front, it

has demanded an increase in the deduction for investment. On R&D, and procedural simplification by the abolition of TCS (Tax Collected at Source) has been sought.

It also asked for a 200 per cent tax deduction on the expenditure made by exporters for overseas marketing; and extension of tax incentives for the private sector to set up a global Indian shipping line to tap the market.

On loans to MSMEs (micro, small and medium enterprises), FIEO said the credit rate is currently between 11-13 per cent and it may increase further in the next few months.

Gold climbs ₹323; silver rises ₹639

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices rose by Rs 323 to Rs 53,039 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday amid gains in the precious metal in overseas markets, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had settled at Rs 52,716 per 10 grams.

Silver also surged Rs 639 to Rs 62,590 per kg.

"Gold and silver prices rebounded from intraday lows after the dollar fell against its major crosses as the Fed meeting minutes suggest that the central bank was less hawkish as compared to expectations," said Navneet Damani, Senior

VP - Commodity Research at Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

In the international market, gold was trading in green at USD 1,755.75 per ounce while silver was up at USD 21.55 per ounce.

"COMEX gold rose for the third day after the Federal Reserve's latest meeting minutes showed officials support moderating the pace of interest rate increase soon. After yesterday's Fed meeting minutes, the outlook for the yellow metal turns bullish and we could see metal heading towards USD 1,800 an ounce," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst at HDFC Securities.

SEA urges Govt to hike refined palm oil import duty to 20% to save local refiners



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Edible oil industry body SEA has written to the Union food minister Piyush Goyal to increase import duty on refined palm oil to 20 per cent from the current 12.5 per cent in order to protect domestic refiners.

The Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA) pointed out that the duty difference between crude palm oil (CPO) and refined palm oil is only 7.5 per cent, resulting in higher imports of refined palm oil and lower capacity utilisation of the domestic refining industry.

"The low duty difference of 7.5 per cent is a boon for Indonesian and Malaysia refiners. The duty difference between CPO and refined palmolein/palm oil needs to be increased from the current 7.5 per cent to at least 15 per cent.

"This may be done by increasing RBD Palmolein duty from the current 12.5 per cent to 20 per cent without any change in CPO duty," said the letter, signed by SEA President Ajay Jhunjhunwala and Atul Chaturvedi, Chairman of Asian Palm Oil Alliance (APOA).

The association has argued that a 15 per cent duty difference would help reduce refined palmolein imports and replace the same with crude palm oil imports.

WB FM Mitra criticises Centre for depending on China for trade



PTI ■ KOLKATA

In the backdrop of China's rising exports to India, former West Bengal Finance Minister Amit Mitra Thursday took a dig at the Centre's dependence on trade with that country and termed it as a threat to the nation's security.

Mitra, who is currently the principal chief adviser to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, predicted that India's dependence on imports from China is set to double that of 2014.

"The dependence of India on China will widen Chinese premier Xi Jinping's Mona Lisa smile in the coming G20 summit in New Delhi September next year".

Chinese exports to India has witnessed a rise of about 31 per cent.

"Modi regime's 'China nirbhar' (dependence on China) is a threat to India's national security.

India's dependence on imports from China is set to double since 2014 (\$60 billion to \$120 billion in 2022). Now you can read more into Xi's 'Mona Lisa smile' at Modi at G-20," Mitra tweeted.

Rooftop solar capacity installations fall 29% to 320 MW in Jul-Sep: Mercom report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Rooftop solar capacity installations in India fell 29 per cent to 320 megawatt (MW) in July-September 2022, according to Mercom Research India.

The country added 448 MW rooftop solar capacity in the same quarter a year ago, the research firm said in a report on Thursday.

During January-September, the installations at 1,165 MW were also down 11 per cent compared to 1,310 MW in the corresponding nine-month period of the last year, the report titled 'Mercom India Rooftop Solar Market Report Q3 2022' said.

In the third quarter of 2022, 46 per cent of rooftop solar capacity was installed in

the industrial sector, followed by 32 per cent in residential, commercial 21 per cent and the remaining in the government sector.

According to the report, at the end of Q3 2022, cumulative rooftop solar installations reached 8.3 GW.

"We are seeing rooftop solar installations trending down as costs have risen. The market is struggling with supply issues because of the Approved List of Module and Manufacturers (ALMM), and installers are finding it a tough

environment to operate in overall," said Raj Prabhu, CEO of Mercom Capital Group.

The tendering process increased 46 per cent year-on-year to around 311 MW of rooftop solar projects in July-September 2022, of which 33 per cent were announced by the Uttar Pradesh New and Renewable Energy Development Agency, 16 per cent by Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) and 51 per cent by other state agencies.

Gujarat became the leading state with the highest rooftop solar installations, followed by Maharashtra and Rajasthan. The top 10 states accounted for approximately 73 per cent of cumulative rooftop solar installations.

Need concentrated global push of millets amid challenges of Covid, conflict & climate: Jaishankar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Thursday said a concentrated global push for millets is needed as the three Cs of climate change, Covid-19 and conflict are impacting food security in some way or the other.

Millets are grown in 130 countries, including India, and a concentrated push by these countries for millets would enhance food security, increase self-reliance and global availability, the minister said.

Speaking at a pre-launch celebration of 2023 as the International Year of Millets, the minister shared how each of the 3Cs has impacted food security putting the global economy at risk due to the con-



centration of production centres and trade disruption.

He said de-risking the global economy requires more decentralised production and more self-reliance as well as "willingness" on part of the country not only to grow for themselves but to help each other.

Against this backdrop, the minister asked High Commissioners and Ambassadors to India to give much greater attention to food security and think of millets

TOTAL
FOOTBALL 2022

the pioneer

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South Korea holds Uruguay to 0-0 draw at World Cup The returning Son Heung-min could not inspire South Korea as the Tigers of Asia started their World Cup Group H campaign with a 0-0 draw against Uruguay in Qatar on Thursday

South Korea, with forward Son Heung-min wearing a mask to protect a broken left eye socket, always looked the more likely to score against the more experienced Uruguayans. The South Koreans were quicker, pressing from the

South Korea always looked

SOUTH KOREA
ATTACKED FROM THE
START AND SON
EXCITED THE CROWD
EVERY TIME HE
TOUCHED THE BALL.
HE MANAGED ONE
THREATENING ATTACK
IN THE FIRST HALF,
HOWEVER, AND DID
LESS IN THE SECOND

Uruguay coach Diego Alonso sent in Edinson Cavani for Luis Suarez in 64th minute as the pace of the match slowed until Valverde hit the post in the final minutes.



It was before David lashed the rebound over the crossbar.

to get that first goal.

Akanji glanced wide at a

they were again caught napping at the start the second half.
Granit Xhaka and Remo

Only a desperate block prevented Haris Seferovic from adding a late second.

"He had a scan to make



"He was feeling ill and that was affecting his vision.

Asked if Joshua Kimmich's place in defensive midfield was



"You can understand that we are discussing every matter of personnel and every position," Flick said. "We do that before every game. 'It's our job as a coaching team to set up the team

The coach confirmed that winger Leroy Sane, who was controversially left out of the squad by former coach Joachim Loew in 2018, could return against Spain after missing the Japan match with a knee injury.

However, while the Spain coach thinks that too much flattery can weaken a team's resolve, he is confident his side will stay grounded and focused. "I have no doubt that we will play the next game with the same spirit, if not more," Luis Enrique told reporters.



"(It won't happen) because there will be changes in the lineup, because they want to com-

The coach said he was surprised Germany lost their opening Group E game, although he

"Japan are a very good team, they're a dynamic team,

Ferran Torres netted twice, while Spain's other goalscorers were Dani Olmo, Marco Asensio and man-of-the-match Gavi.

"We hope that now we are free from all the pressure that we had in the opening match," he said at his pre-match press



"The last match is history now," he said. "I think we are

Mohamad said Qatar had taken inspiration from shock wins for Saudi Arabia, who beat Argentina, and Japan, who beat Germany.

INDIA START 50 OVER AUDITIONS UNDER DHAWAN

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

Copping a lot of flak for its archaic approach in T20Is, the Indian cricket team is expected to turn a new leaf in a different format as it takes on New Zealand in a three-match ODI series, which will mark the start of preparations for next year's World Cup.

India had endured a nightmare back in 2020 in New Zealand when Virat Kohli's side was blanked 0-3 in one of the most lopsided series where the bowling effort was below par.

Exactly 11 months are left for the marquee event in India and the series starting on Friday will give the team an initial idea about some of the middle-order slots and also the bowling arsenal in India's armoury.

With five seniors -- skipper Rohit Sharma, the talismanic Virat Kohli, team management's favourite KL Rahul, pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah and No.1 ODI all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja not part of this series, the management can only get a rough idea in which direction the team would move.

All these big guns will now play a lot of ODI cricket, starting with the Bangladesh series, and the team combination will undergo a sea change once they all come back in due course.

Just like the dilemmas of T20Is, Indian coach Rahul Dravid will have a lot on his plate but for now, his understudy VVS Laxman also needs to do a tight rope walking as far as this series is concerned.

Dhawan will be close to 38 during next year's World Cup and in ODIs in the last two years, he has scored nearly 1000 runs.



This is the only international format he plays. Since T20 got more precedence, his appearances has been pretty sporadic.

But to put things in perspective, both Kohli and Rohit have played one third of the ODIs that Dhawan played as they concentrated more on Tests and T20Is with World Test Championship and back-to-back T20 World Cups lined up.

In the meantime, Shubman Gill has shown his prowess as an ODI opener in a dozen of games he has played so far with an average of 57 plus and a strike-rate

of 100 plus.

But even in this format, Dhawan has been a cautious starter in Powerplays and then picked up pace. Team's philosophy will be the main thing along with a decision whether the Delhi southpaw would be persisted for next one year with Rohit, Rahul and Gill also there.

Rahul, in ODIs, has started batting down the order at times and Shreyas Iyer has been one of India's consistent ODI players despite his problems with short ball. Suryakumar Yadav, who is in the form of his life can't

Rahul, in ODIs, has started batting down the order at times and Shreyas Iyer has been one of India's consistent ODI players despite his problems with short ball.

be dropped from the middle-order if he is fit to play.

Sanju Samson, the phenomenal talent from Kerala, with his wide range of strokes can't be ignored for a long time either and Deepak Hooda brings his all-round skills to the table.

BOWLING ATTACK

Coming back to the series, there are three 50-over games in a space of five days and fast bowlers' recovery period will be paramount.

Deepak Chahar is expect-

ed to start and is likely to have the seasoned Shardul Thakur for company since both offer decent batting option lower down the order.

Arshdeep Singh is likely to be the third option but he has been constantly playing so there could be a chance to check out a Kuldeep Sen or an Umran Malik. The flip side is short ground. There is every chance that their pace could become a disadvantage. Washington Sundar is also likely to be in playing XI and due to the short dimensions of Eden Park ground, with its awkward angles, Dhawan might prefer an extra pacer instead of an extra spinner.

New Zealand's core for the series is more or less same like the T20s. With swing bowler Tim Southee, tearaway quicks Adam Milne, Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry and spinner Mitchell Santner in its raks, the home teams' attack looks formidable on paper.

SQUADS

India: Shikhar Dhawan (captain), Shubman Gill, Suryakumar Yadav, Shreyas Iyer, Rishabh Pant (wk), Sanju Samson (wk), Deepak Hooda, Shahbaz Ahmed, Washington Sundar, Kuldeep Yadav, Yuzvendra Chahal, Deepak Chahar, Arshdeep Singh, Shardul Thakur, Kuldeep Sen, Umran Malik.

New Zealand: Kane Williamson (captain), Finn Allen, Devin Conway, Tom Latham, Daryl Mitchell, Glenn Phillips, Michael Bracewell, Tim Southee, Matt Henry, Adam Milne, Jimmy Neesham, Mitchell Santner, Lockie Ferguson.

Not hurt that captaincy was taken away from me for Zimbabwe tour: Dhawan

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

Shikhar Dhawan has a lot of faith in God's plans and purely for that reason it "didn't hurt him" when he was asked to hand back the India captaincy to KL Rahul during the tour of Zimbabwe.

Dhawan, who usually leads the India ODI team in the absence of Rohit Sharma, was named captain for the three-match ODI tour of Zimbabwe in August this year but later was demoted by the former national selection committee once KL Rahul was declared fit and available.

"I wasn't hurt as I believe certain things are pre-destined and whatever happens is for our own good," said Dhawan, who is back in the captain's saddle for the ODI leg of New Zealand tour.

"And if you look at it, after Zimbabwe, I again captained against SA at home and the same selection committee handed me the leadership reins. So I am not at all hurt by what transpired in Zimbabwe. There must be something good hidden somewhere (in God's design)," the veteran opener said. In fact, he believes in counting his blessings. In the twilight phase of his career, he got a chance to lead the national team.

"I am very fortunate that



at this juncture of my career, I have got a chance to lead India," he said.

He also explained how he rationalised Rahul's elevation in Zimbabwe and he was kept as his deputy. "Look in Zimbabwe, KL was made the captain because he is the vice-captain of the main team. And since he was going to Asia Cup (after that series) and in case Rohit got injured over there (in UAE) and Rahul had to captain, it was better that he captained in Zimbabwe and remained ready on leadership front.



Hardik's leadership skills can immensely help India in T20s: Miller

PTI ■ ABU DHABI

South Africa's go-to man in pressure situations, David Miller believes that as captain Hardik Pandya can infuse much needed fearlessness into India's T20 set-up with his exemplary clarity of mind and work ethic.

Hardik is seen as the leader of the Indian team at the 2024 T20 World Cup with current skipper Rohit Sharma not expected to carry on in the shortest format for another two years.

Miller, who has finally realised his rich potential and became one of the best finishers in the game over the last couple of years, said Hardik had played a crucial role in steering Gujarat Titans to the title on their IPL debut. "Just playing under him

in the IPL, I feel he is a natural leader. People follow him. He allows you to play the way that you feel like you can. He is very inclusive as a leader, he wants everyone to be close to each other," the South African said.

"At the same time, he is clear with discipline. He has got a lot of good attributes of a leader.

"In IPL he got better and better as the season progressed and I see him doing that (with the Indian team as well)," Miller said.

India are in desperate need for a change in mindset, especially in the powerplay. Can Hardik effect that change and let the players not worry about fear of failure?

"Yes. He will make the players a lot better in the mindset. 100 percent.

PTI ■ AUCKLAND

New Zealand skipper Kane Williamson says increasing volume of cricket could be a reason for low attendance during the recent England-Australia series and going forward, bilateral series would require "more context" for attracting fans to the stadiums.

A sparse crowd witnessed the recent ODI series between the Ashes rivals Down Under. Only a handful of fans gathered at the MCG for the final match.

The series had started less than four days after England's T20 World Cup triumph Down Under.

"It was unfortunate to see, but it also shows the volume of cricket that's being held. Because no doubt the ICC tournaments are incredibly popular and there has been a lot of cricket on. They (Australia) also had a World Cup on. So, there was a lot on in their country too.

"So, we must ensure there is a lot more context as possible in games, especially the bilateral series," Williamson said on the eve of New Zealand's opening ODI against India.

The proliferation of T20 leagues around the world and a hectic international calendar has led to a debate over the existence of 50-over cricket.



Asked if ODI cricket is slowly dying, Williamson said, "It's tough."

"But yeah, it will settle somewhere. I don't know what it will look like. A lot of teams now have two teams at the moment.

"I don't know where it will settle, but there are always conversations about trying to make it more appealing in any context like rule change etc so..."

England's T20 World Cup triumph has intensified the debate on split coaching and picking different players for different formats and the Kiwi skipper feels the packed schedule also has a part to play with players needing rest.

"Yes, it appears to be happening more and more and you can understand why. There is so much on and you can't do everything. That's why you see a lot of teams with those sort of make up."

A modern-day batting great, Williamson's credentials as a T20 player has come under scrutiny after his underwhelming performance at the T20 World Cup and the 52-ball 61 in the second T20I against India.

"I still love playing all three formats, and enjoy changing between the three, as a player I'm looking to keep improving and I certainly have the motivation.

HI to give complimentary tickets to Olympians and former players for men's WC

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

All the country's hockey Olympians and former international players will be given complimentary tickets to watch the upcoming men's World Cup in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela, Hockey India announced on Thursday.

The 16-team men's showpiece is scheduled to be held from January 13-29.

The matches will be held simultaneously at the Kalinga Stadium here and the newly-built Birsamunda International Stadium in Rourkela.

HI secretary general Bholanath Singh said it would be

a privilege for the national federation to invite all Indian stalwarts of the game, including the Olympians. "The presence of former Indian hockey players will certainly boost the morale of the Indian men's team in the men's World Cup," Singh said in a release.

"Keeping in mind the

immense contribution of former hockey stalwarts, Hockey India continues to recognise their efforts and welcome them in Odisha to watch the matches, inspire and cheer all the teams."

Earlier on Thursday, HI marked the 50-day countdown for the prestigious event by opening the ticket sales online.

Sreenidi Deccan beat TRAU FC 1-0 in I-League

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Sreenidi Deccan FC registered a 1-0 win against TRAU FC in their I-League match at the newly-inaugurated Deccan Arena here on Thursday.

Playing their first match at the new home venue, Sreenidi Deccan took the lead in the 41st minute through David Castaneda Munoz, which ultimately proved to be the difference between the two teams.

It was Sreenidi's second



win on the bounce after their loss in the first round. On the other hand, TRAU suffered their first defeat of the season.

7 Indians enter finals at Youth World Championships



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian boxers continued their dominance at the youth men's and women's World Championships as seven of them stormed into the finals after stunning victories in La Nucia, Spain.

Youth Asian champions Vanshaj and Vishwanath Suresh marched into the summit clash along with Ashish to maintain all-win record for

India in the men's semifinals, whereas Kirti (+81kg), Bhawna Sharma (48kg), Devika Ghorpade (52kg) and Ravina (63kg) advanced to the finals in the women's section.

While Vishwanath claimed 4-1 win over Juanma Lopez of Puerto Rico, Vanshaj (63.5kg) and Ashish (54kg) posted close 3-2 and 4-3 triumphs against USA's Deshawn Crocklem and Uzbekistan's Khujanazar Nortojev respectively in their

thrilling semifinal bouts. Women boxers, on the other hand, recorded comfortable wins apart from Kirti's 3-2 victory against Kazakhstan's Assel Toktassyn.

Ravina and Bhawna out-punched their Kazakh opponents Assem Tanatar and Gulnaz Buribayeva respectively by unanimous decision. Devika got the better of USA's Aameedah Joy with a 4-1 margin.

Meanwhile, four other Indian women in action -- Tamanna (50kg), Kunjarani Devi Thongam (60kg), Muskan (75kg) and Lashu Yadav (70kg) -- signed off with bronze medals after defeats in their respective semifinal bouts.

Indian boxers asserted their supremacy at the prestigious championships as 11 out of 17 quarterfinalists went on to confirm medals -- highest for any country at the on-going edition, wherein close to 600 boxers have participated from 73 countries.



World team chess: India edges out France, reaches last four

PTI ■ JERUSALEM

India defeated France in a thrilling tie-breaker to enter the semifinals of the FIDE World Team Chess Championship here. After the two sets of matches were shared by the teams by a 3-1 margin, the Indians won the blitz tie-break 2.5-1.5. Nihal Sarin and S L Narayanan did the star turn with victories over Jules Moussard and Laurent Fressinet respectively early on Thursday.

Vidit Gujrathi, India's top player, held the top French star Maxime Vachier-Lagrave to a draw in 45 moves while the experienced K Sasikiran was beaten by Maxime Lagarde in 55 moves but the wins by Sarin and Narayanan did the trick. India will take on Uzbekistan in the semifinals.

Earlier in the first of the two matches, Gujrathi pulled off a win over Lagrave and Narayanan defeated Fressinet. win.



Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, Landmark Building, 4th Floor, 228A, AJC Bose Road, Kolkata- 700020 CIN No: L65190GJ1994PLC021012, www.icicibank.com

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset / Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Tekeshwar Prasad Sahu/ Bharati Sahu/ Basti Para Near Bazar Chowk Siltara H No. 189 Siltara Chattisgarh Raipur- 493252/ LBRPR00003517001/ LBRPR00005119947	Land No. 173, Kharsa No. 545/2, Part Land No. B-24, P.H. No. 90/20, House No. 50, Mouja Gram Shiltara, R.N.M Dharsiva. 1, G.K. Township, Tehsil and District Raipur Chattishgarh (Admeasuring an Area of Rakba: 1000 Sq. Feet, on 750 Sq. feet of Land A Single Stroeyd House	October 21, 2022/ Rs. 14,14,533.36/-	06/07/ 2021
2.	Annu Kumari/ Pranav Kumar Singh/ Siltara Geekay Township Siltara House No. 200 Raipur Chattisgarh Raipur- 493252/ LBRPR00003644325/ LBRPR00005115676/ LBRPR00004859519	Flat No. 108 on First Floor in Rhea Residency Multi Stored Residential Building Located in G.k Township, Kharsa No. 562/22-77, Mouja Shiltara, P.H. No. 90/20, Tahsiland District Raipur, Chattisgarh, (Admeasuring an Area of Super Built Up Area 500 Sq.ft	October 21, 2022 Rs. 8,15,488/-	06/08/ 2022
3.	Shikha Kashyap/ Harish Kashyap/ Divdania Regency Ring N 01 Dindyal Upadhyay Nagar Flat No. 218 Raipur Chhattisgarh Raipur- 492001/ LBRPR00004937900/ LBRPR00005338767	Flat No. 218, on The 6th Floor, Building Name "Divdania Regency Complex", P.H.No. 104, Kharsa No. 325/35, 325/55, 325/54, 325/16, 2316/4, Mouza Raipura, Ph. No. 104, Ward No. 54, R.N.M. Raipur, Tehsil and District Raipur Chattisgarh. (Admeasuring an Area of Super Built Up Area 1182 Sq. feet or 109.85 Sq. Mt	October 21, 2022 Rs. 25,76,656.76/-	31/10/ 2021

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

Date : November 25, 2022
Place : Raipur

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited