

OPINION 6

GEN CHAUHAN: THE
RIGHT MAN AS CDS

WORLD 9

NORTH KOREA SENDS MISSILE
SOARING OVER JAPAN IN ESCALATION

MONEY 10

HOUSING PRICES, OFFICE RENT SOAR
IN Q2; BENGALURU TOPS

NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 5, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3

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BAIRSTOW
WILL NOT PLAY
AGAIN IN 2022
12 SPORT10 killed, many trapped
in Uttarkashi avalanche4 bodies found;
8 of 41-member
mountaineering
team rescued

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

Ten mountaineers were killed as a 41-member team from the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (NIM) in Uttarkashi was hit by an avalanche at Mount Draupadi Ka Danda-II peak on Tuesday.

A team of 34 trainee mountaineers and seven instructors from the NIM was caught in an avalanche around 8.45am while returning, NIM Principal Colonel Amit Bisht said, adding that ten bodies were spotted and four bodies have been recovered. The bodies have been kept at NIM-based camp in Dokrani.

Undergoing an advanced training course at NIM, the team of mountaineering trainees along with their instructors had gone to the peak for high altitude navigation, Col Bisht said.

The toll from the avalanche is expected to rise. According to information provided by the State Emergency Operations Centre, the 41-



SDRF teams leave from Sahasradhara helipad to rescue the trainees trapped in an avalanche in Draupadi's Danda-2 mountain peak, in Dehradun district

PTI

member team was trekking from the high altitude camp-I to Draupadi Ka Danda-02 mountain.

About 8.45 am when the team was descending, an avalanche struck it at an altitude of 17,000 feet. Many of the team members were trapped in crevasses due to the avalanche. The trapped members of the team were being rescued by their team members.

Uttarkashi Disaster Management Officer Devendra Patwal said eight of those

trapped were rescued by their team members.

A private helicopter was used to drop a five-member State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) team and three NIM trainers at Dokrani Bamak glacier. Two helicopters from the IAF station in Sarsawa, Uttar Pradesh, were used to reconnoiter the site. Aerial citing has confirmed that those affected by the avalanche were stranded at about 17,000 feet.

An Army ALH helicopter from Air Force Station in

Bareilly is also waiting at the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) helipad in Matli to join the search and rescue operation on Wednesday morning.

According to officials, the affected areas have been witnessing continued snowfall and very low visibility which has hampered rescue efforts which have been halted for the night.

Fresh snow, massive crevasses and accessibility are also posing a major challenge to the rescue operations.

Continued on Page 2

Gujjar, Bakerwal, Pahari
in J&K to get job quotaAmit Shah's gift
defuses tension
over ST status

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday managed to defuse growing tensions among members of the Gujjar, Bakerwal and Pahari communities in Jammu & Kashmir by promising job reservation to all of them. If implemented, this quota will be the first instance of a linguistic group earning reservation in India.

The Central Government will have to amend the Reservations Act in Parliament for it.

Addressing a mammoth rally in the frontier district of Rajouri, Shah said that the Centre would implement reservations for the Gujjar, Bakerwal and Pahari communities, as recommended by the GD Sharma committee set up to examine quota benefits.

Striking an emotional chord with the cheerful audience in the huge pandal, raised in the new bus stand area of Rajouri, Shah said, "If the reservation was granted to the Pahari community, it will not affect the reservation for Gujjar and Bakerwal communities under the Scheduled Tribes category. The GD Sharma commission set up by the Government has sent the report and recommended



Union Home Minister Amit Shah at a public rally for the inauguration and foundation laying of various projects related to health and education, in Rajouri district on Tuesday

PTI

reservation for Gujjar, Bakarwal and Pahari communities. It will be given soon."

He claimed such reservation became possible only after the special status of Jammu & Kashmir under Article 370 was struck down. "Now, minorities, Dalits, tribals, Paharis here will get their rights."

Hopes were running high among the members of the Pahari community who were expecting some statement from the Union Home Minister over the issue of granting them the Scheduled Tribe status, thus bringing them at par with the Gujjar, Bakerwal and others.

Explaining the circumstances behind the long delay in extending these benefits to them, Shah said there were political parties that never wanted the Paharis to get their rights.

"There are political leaders who want to suppress the rights of the Paharis. Now is the time that Paharis get their rights," he said.

The Gujjars, who already have reservation under the ST category, had apprehensions that granting of the ST status to the Paharis would dilute their quota.

"Believe me, there will be no effect on the reservation of Gujjars even by one per cent," Shah said.

Attacking those who were against the abrogation of Article 370, Shah said, "In today's rally, you can hear slogans praising Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This is the answer to those who used to say that if Article 370 is removed, there would be fire in Jammu and Kashmir, rivers of blood would flow."

Continued on Page 2

Parties must tell voters
about financial viability
of promises, says ECAsks parties
to respond to
pro-forma
proposal in MCC

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

As the freebies or "revadi" debate rages ahead of the Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh Assembly polls, the Election Commission (EC) wants political parties to inform voters about the financial feasibility of election promises in manifestos and also whether they are sustainable within the financial space of the State or the Union Government.

In a letter to all recognised national and State political parties, the EC also has proposed standardised pro forma to be added to the Model Code of Conduct (MCC), by way of amendment to bring clarity to

the process of declaration.

The proposed pro forma seeks details of revenue generation ways (through additional tax, if any), rationalising expenditure (cutting some schemes, if so required), impact on committed liabilities and/or raising of further debt and its impact on Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management Act (FRBM) limits.

By proposing the reform, the EC aims to inform voters about the financial feasibility of election promises in manifestos and also whether they are sustainable within the financial space of the State or the Union government.

"Disclosure pro forma mandates declaration of quantification of physical coverage, financial implications of the promises and availability of the financial resources," the EC said.

Continued on Page 2

LG orders probe into
power DBT goof-up,
AAP cries 'Guj fear'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has directed Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar to conduct an enquiry into non-implementation of power subsidy payment through direct benefit transfer (DBT) as was ordered by the DERC in 2018.

Delhi Chief Secretary has been asked to submit a report within a week. Saxena's action followed a complaint filed at the L-G Secretariat which raised issues of "impropriety and discrepancies" in the power subsidy scheme of the Kejriwal Government, the sources said.

Slamming the L-G's move, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal linked it to the Gujarat polls and claimed it was aimed at stalling the free electricity initiative. Kejriwal in a tweet in Hindi said, "Gujarat is liking AAP's guarantee of giving free electricity. That's why the BJP wants to stop it in Delhi."

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on

Tuesday wrote to L-G, accusing him of bypassing the elected Government and ordering enquiries into its works in a "politically motivated and unconstitutional" manner. This is the latest matter in which the L-G has intervened amid the AAP-Centre standoff.

The LG ordered the enquiry after the Raj Niwas received a complaint flagging several issues of impropriety and discrepancies in the power subsidy matter.

According to sources at the L-G office, the complainants, including eminent lawyers and jurists, have alleged that a massive scam took place after the Delhi Government appointed Jasmine Shah, and Naveen Gupta, as the directors of the private discoms.

Jasmine is spokesperson of the AAP and Vice Chairman, Dialogue and Development Commission of Delhi (DDC) whereas Naveen Gupta is son of AAP MP ND Gupta.

Continued on Page 2

No terror angle in
J&K DG Prisons'
murder, says DGPSuspect domestic
help arrested

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The initial investigation into the murder of Jammu & Kashmir Director General (Prisons) Hemant Kumar Lohia did not lead towards the terror angle, Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbagh Singh told reporters in Jammu.

A domestic help, Yasir Lohar (23), has emerged as the main suspect. He was arrested from a field in the Kanhachak area. Yasir is a resident of Halla-Dhandrath village in Ramban district.

Lohia, one of the top cops of the Jammu & Kashmir Police, holding the charge of Director General Prisons Department, was found murdered under mysterious circumstances with his throat slit open inside one of the rooms



Yasir, domestic help of Jammu & Kashmir's Director General (Prisons) Hemant K Lohia, who was found murdered at his residence, in the Udaiwala area on the outskirts of Jammu, late on Monday

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of the house of a close friend in Udaiwala area of Jammu late Monday night. Marks of even burn injuries were present on his body, police said.

The incident came to light barely hours after the Union Home Minister Amit Shah landed in Jammu amid tight security arrangements.

Continued on Page 2

Modi speaks to Zelenskyy,
calls for talks, diplomacy
to end war with RussiaPIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday spoke to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and reiterated his call for an earliest cessation of hostilities with Russia and the need to follow the path of dialogue and diplomacy.

Incidentally, in a message to Russian President Vladimir Putin in mid-September, Modi had called for an end to violence. The two leaders had met on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in Uzbekistan.

It was the first meeting between Modi and Putin since Russian military action against Ukraine in late February.

Earlier, Modi had held telephonic conversations with Putin and Zelenskyy in the initial stage of the conflict and urged them to hold one to one talks to sort issues.

Giving details of the latest

talks with the Ukrainian President, the Ministry of External Affairs said Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated his call for an earliest cessation of hostilities with Russia. The PM also conveyed India's readiness to contribute to any peace process between the two countries.

Modi also laid stress on the UN Charter, International Law, and the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all states.

The Prime Minister emphasised the importance India attaches to the safety and security of nuclear installations, including in Ukraine.

He underlined the endangerment of nuclear facilities that could have far-reaching and catastrophic impact on public health and the environment.

The two leaders also touched upon important areas of bilateral cooperation, following up on their last meeting in Glasgow in November 2021.

Collegium divided on
CJI's letter method to
elevate judges to SC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Differences have cropped up in the Supreme Court Collegium over the procedure adopted by the Chief Justice of India, UU Lalit, for appointment of four judges to the apex court.

Two judges of the SC Collegium have objected to a letter circulated by the CJI seeking their consent to appoint four judges to the apex court.

It is learned that the two judges in the Collegium have not differed on the choice of the shortlisted judges, but to the unprecedented way of circulation of letters instead of physical meeting of the Collegiums

consisting Chief Justice and four senior most judges.

As per the usual convention, the Collegium holds physical meetings to discuss names for elevation, at which consensus of the five judges is sought.

As judges in the Collegium were out of Delhi due to Dussehra holidays, CJI Lalit through a letter sent to them suggested four new names — High Court Chief Justices Ravi Shankar Jha (Punjab & Haryana HC), Sanjay Karol (Patna HC), PV Sanjay Kumar (Manipur HC) and senior Advocate KV Viswanathan — for the appointment in the apex court.

Continued on Page 2



Devi Durga idol at a community puja pandal at Chittaranjan Park in Delhi on Tuesday

Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Russian JEE hacker helped 820
students; sent to CBI custody

AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI

A Delhi court on Tuesday sent a Russian national, arrested for alleged manipulation of JEE (Mains) examination last year, to two days' CBI custody. Duty Magistrate Vaibhav Mehta sent the accused, Mikhail Shargin, to CBI custody till October 6 after he was produced before the court and the agency requested for his remand to unravel the conspiracy.

"This court is of the view that for the purpose of carrying out investigation PC (police custody) remand of the accused is necessary and so this court partly allows the application moved by the IO and grants police custody remand of the



accused for two days only," the judge said.

Russian hacker Mikhail Shargin allegedly helped cheating by 820 students by working on the online system in 2001's JEE-Mains, the CBI is reported to have told the court.

In its application seeking a five-day remand of the accused, the CBI told the court he was to be quizzed about the data present in his phone, laptop and external hard disk.

Mikhail hacked into the system so that students could grant "remote access" to his

associates, who then solved the question papers on computers elsewhere, says the probe. Simply put, "teachers" or "coaches" outside the centres were able to take charge of the students' computers and solve the questions.

The CBI had issued a 'Look Out Circular' against Shargin, suspected to be main hacker, for manipulation of the prestigious examination.

The investigation indicated Shargin tampered with the iLearn software, the platform on which the JEE (Main)-2021 examination was conducted, and also helped other accused in hacking the computer systems of suspect candidates during the examination, it said.

Continued on Page 2

NCR POLICE

SISODIA APPROVES ROAD PROJECTS WORTH ₹11.36 CR
New Delhi: Delhi Deputy Chief Minister, Manish Sisodia approved projects worth Rs 11.36 crore for the strengthening and beautification of 5 major roads in North and North-West Delhi of 7.78 km length. These roads include Swami Narayan Marg, Nand Lal Marg, Link Road, Pratap Nagar Road and Shah Alam Dam Road under the Adarsh Nagar constituency.

AAP MLA INSPECTS ARTIFICIAL GHATS
New Delhi: AAP MLA from Greater Kailash and Delhi Jal Board Vice-Chairman, Saurabh Bhardwaj visited the artificial ghats or ponds that have been created for the immersions of Maa Durga idols in CR Park and other areas that fall in his constituency at the conclusion of Durga Puja. The artificial ghats have been created under the direction of the DJB Vice-Chairman to stop pollution in River Yamuna.

LG REVIEWS PROGRESS OF PM-TB MBA
New Delhi: Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Tuesday reviewed the progress of Prime Minister's - Tuberculosis Mukht Bharat Abhiyan (PM-TB MBA) in Delhi and directed officials to work in a mission-mode to achieve the target of eradicating Tuberculosis in the National Capital during the next eight months, ahead of the goal of year 2025, set by the PM Narendra Modi.

24-YR-OLD MAN WHO JUMPED BAIL ARRESTED
New Delhi: A 24-year-old man who allegedly jumped bail from Kanpur in a murder case was arrested from south Delhi's Mehrauli area. A non-bailable warrant was also issued against the accused, Sumit Nigam, a resident of Kanpur in Uttar Pradesh. Chandan Chowdhary, the DCP, South district said they received a tip-off regarding Nigam and traced his location to Mehrauli. A police team laid a trap near the apartment where he was hiding and apprehended him.

MCD INAUGURATES 3RD BOX OF KISHANGANJ RUB
New Delhi: The Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on Tuesday inaugurated the third box of Kishanganj Railway Under Bridge (RUB), in the national capital. Speaking on the occasion, Special Officer, Ashwini Kumar informed that four boxes are being constructed by the Railways on Kishanganj RUB. The corporation has already opened it for traffic by constructing RCC road on the third box and today it has been dedicated to the citizens after completion of the construction work of RCC road on the third box.

AIIMS prohibits on-duty use of mobiles by outsourced staff at OPD registration counters

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

AIIMS has issued an order prohibiting the use of mobile phones by outsourced employees at outpatient department (OPD) registration counters during their duty hours from October 16, citing that such practices cause delay in service delivery and inconvenience to patients. According to a series of orders issued by the new AIIMS Director Dr M Srinivas on Monday, the administration has also decided to deploy 50 more additional battery-powered buses, besides the existing fleet, via CSR contributions for transporting patients and attendants and other support staff within the institute. Further, from October 10 onwards, patients attending OPD in Surgical Block will be registered in the Surgical Block itself. Presently, they are being registered in New RAK OPD, causing inconvenience to

patients and their attendants. It is being done to streamline the flow of patients into new RAK OPD, an order said. In an order issued on September 30, AIIMS has already waived off fee collection of Rs 10 for a new OPD card while introducing a 'slot wise' token number appointment system for patients without prior appointments. According to the order issued by the AIIMS Director on Monday, outsourced employees at outpatient department (OPD) registration counters will have to deposit their cell phones in a safe box provided by respective area in-charges before starting their shift duty. The order said it has been noticed that the outsourced staff working at the OPD registration counters are often using mobile phones while patients are waiting in queue, thereby causing delay in service delivery and inconvenience to patients.

Vehicles sans PUC certificate may lose registration in Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Transport Department is issuing notices to owners whose vehicles do not have a valid PUC. The officials said that the vehicles without a valid PUC may face suspension of registration certificate. The officials also said that after the notice is served and the vehicle's owner does not get the certificate within a week, their registration certificates may be suspended. According to a senior transport official, there are around 19 lakh vehicles that do not have a valid PUC but there is no technology to know



whether such vehicles are coming on the roads. "So, the enforcement teams have been formed to carry out checks, while SMSes are also being sent to vehicle owners warning them that their registration certificates may be suspended if they do not get a valid PUC within a week," said the senior transport official. Vehicles are periodically

tested for their emission standards for various pollutants such as carbon monoxide (CO) and carbon dioxide (CO2) after which they are given PUC certificates. There are over 900 pollution checking centres authorised by the transport department in Delhi. These are set up at petrol pumps and workshops spread all over the city so motorists can get it done easily. The fee for pollution checking in case of petrol and CNG-driven two and three-wheelers is Rs 60. It is Rs 80 for four-wheelers (petrol) and Rs 100 for diesel-run four-wheelers.

10 killed...

From Page 1
Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Home Minister Amit Shah, and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi expressed grief at the loss of lives in the incident. The PM said, "It is saddening that we have lost precious lives of those associated with a NIM Uttarkashi mountaineering expedition. Condolences to the bereaved families. Rescue operations are underway and the situation is being closely monitored by the authorities."

Shah, who is currently in Jammu and Kashmir, tweeted in Hindi, "The avalanche incident in Uttarkashi is very sad. I have spoken to officials in this regard. Local administration, SDRF, NDRE, ITBP and Army teams are promptly engaged in relief and rescue works." Expressing grief at the loss of lives, Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami reached the disaster control room in Dehradun during the evening to seek the latest update and monitor the situation.

Collegium divided on CJI's letter method...

From Page 1
Collegium meetings are held physically and the meeting fixed on September 30 did not take place as Justice DY Chandrachud's court held the proceedings till 9.30 pm. Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Abdul Nazeer and KM Joseph are the other three members of the Collegium. The CJI's letter is dated on October 1. A Bar & Bench quoted a source to claim that the CJI had sent the letter to all the judges of the Collegium on October 1, but two judges refused to grant consent. "This is an unprecedented act. There are reasons, merits and demerits why a judge is not elevated and putting them in writing is not proper. It was also declined as a matter of process. The solemnity of the process cannot be compromised," Bar & Bench said, citing the source close to the development.

Russian...

From Page 1
In September last year, the agency had booked Affinity Education Pvt Ltd and its three directors, Siddharth Krishna, Vishwambhar Mani Tripathi and Govind Varshney, besides other touts and associates for alleged manipulation of examination. It was alleged that the three directors, in conspiracy with other associates and touts, were manipulating the online examination of JEE (Mains) and facilitating aspiring students to get admission in top National Institutes of Technology in exchange for huge amounts of money. They used to solve the questions through remote access from a chosen examination centre in Sonapat (Haryana). "It was also alleged that the accused used to obtain class 10 and 12 mark sheets, user IDs, passwords, and post dated cheques of aspiring students in different parts of the country as security and once admission was done, they used to collect heavy amount ranging from 12-15 lakh (approx) per candidate," the CBI said.

Part of JNU's Godavari hostel room ceiling collapses; all safe

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In yet another incident, the ceiling of a hostel room at Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) partially collapsed, exposing the crumbling condition of the varsity infrastructure. The incident took place in Godavari Hostel when parts of the ceiling fell directly on a study table. Residents of the room did not suffer any injury but a laptop was damaged, said Swati Singh, who lives in the same hostel. "A part of the ceiling fell off in a room in the Godavari Hostel in JNU. Although there were no injuries to any resident, the residents of the room were sleeping nearby and the ceiling

fell directly on their study table thereby damaging the laptop," said Swati Singh, president of the Democratic Students Federation (DSF). This is not the first time that such an incident has happened in JNU. In April, a student in Sabarmati Hostel was seriously injured when the bathroom roof collapsed on him. Despite several complaints to the authorities, no action has been taken as of now, Swati lamented. The dilapidated condition of JNU hostels has been highlighted by students time and again. Student groups have held a series of protests in the past few months over the issue. JNU students have

demanded that the overall renovation of the Godavari hostel including waterproofing treatment must be done on an immediate basis. "We, the residents of Godavari Hostel clearly want to state that if any unfortunate incident happens to any resident, the wardens and the administration should be held accountable for the same as they are not taking the issue of crumbling hostel infrastructure seriously," the residents said in a statement. After several days of protest, a notice was released by the administration last month where it was mentioned that the renovation would be undertaken in a phased manner.

Illegal hospital which provided ambulance to Mukhtar Ansari sealed

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A hospital in Mau district that provided an ambulance to gangster-turned-politician Mukhtar Ansari and was running allegedly on fake documents has been sealed, police said on Tuesday. Police also said Mau-based doctor Alka Rai, who was accused of helping Ansari get an ambulance, along with her brother Sheshnath Rai had been booked under the Gangsters Act. Both of them co-own Shyam Sanjeevani Hospital in Mau district, which has been sealed, the police added. The vehicle was registered with a fake address in Barabanki district. On September 29, the Barabanki district magistrate had ordered police officials to seal the hos-



pital. Mau Circle Officer Dhananjay Mishra along with a large contingent of police personnel reached the nursing home and produced the sealing orders before Rai, who was present in the hospital. "Shyam Sanjeevani Hospital has been sealed on the orders of the Barabanki district magistrate," Mishra said. In April 2021, the Barabanki police had lodged an FIR against Ansari and his associates in connection with the use of fake papers for registering an ambulance.

Yogi leads grand Vijayadashami procession in Gorakhpur

PNS ■ GORAKHPUR/LUCKNOW

On the occasion of Navami, the ninth day of Navratri, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, who is also the head of Gorakshpeeth, performed Kanya puja and offered prayers to 'Matrishakti' (mother power) by washing the feet of maidens in Gorakhpur on Tuesday and led a Vijayadashmi procession. He also performed 'aarti', served food to girls and gave them gifts while seeking their blessings. Following the tradition, the chief minister also performed Batuk puja. On occasion, the chief minister also interacted with the children while performing the puja. At the same time, the children also expressed their happiness and enthusiasm at being greeted by the chief minister himself.

Gujjar, Bakerwal, Pahari in J&K to get job...

From Page 1
"It was only after the Government changed in the country and Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister in 2014, that Modi ji first conducted panchayat elections in Jammu and Kashmir. Just three families used to rule Jammu and Kashmir, but now power is with 30,000 people elected to panchayats, district councils," Shah said. He further added, "Today

Modi ji is bearing the full cost of health up to five lakhs to 27 lakh families across Jammu and Kashmir... What did these three families give in 70 years?" Speaking on stone pelting cases in the Union Territory, Shah said, "Earlier, news of stone pelting used to come from Jammu and Kashmir. Today there is no news of stone pelting. Modi ji has worked to empower the youth

of Jammu and Kashmir." The Home Minister said that now no one can suppress the rights of people as Prime Minister Modi has ensured that democracy is not restricted within three families, but 30 thousand people become part of it. Shah said that after the abrogation of Article 370, Prime Minister Modi had promised that elections would be held at the earliest and for

this delimitation was necessary. The earlier delimitation was not done as per the rules of the commission, but to benefit only the three families. But now for the first time after Independence, a real delimitation has been completed and seats have been increased in the hill areas. By initiating the delimitation process, Prime Minister Modi has ensured justice to the

people in Rajouri, Poonch, Doda and Kishtwar. He said that the three families left no stone unturned in indulging in corruption during their rule. Shah also said that from Independence until 2019, investments worth Rs 15,000 crore had been made. He added, "In these three years from 2019 till now, industrial investment of Rs 56,000 crore has come in the whole

of Jammu and Kashmir." Before his speech in Rajouri, Shah visited the Vaishno Devi Temple in Jammu. Shah is set to fly to Srinagar, where he will hold a security review and address a rally in Baramulla on Wednesday. Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Manoj Sinha and Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh were also present on the occasion.

Traffic snarls in city due to Dussehra celebrations

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of Dussehra and Durga Puja celebrations, the vehicular traffic came to a grinding halt in parts of central Delhi on Tuesday.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General public that MR. VIJAY KUMAR GARG S/O MR. GULAB RAI is owner of a Freehold Residential House No. 62/51 addressing area 180 sq. yd. (151 sq. mtr.) Situated at Mohalla Teachers Colony Tehsil & Distt. Bulandshahr (U.P.) vide REPLY TO PUBLIC SALE DEED dated 29/09/1997 registration No. 1034 of Sub Registrar II, BULANDSHAH (U.P.) All persons are hereby informed that MR. VIJAY KUMAR GARG S/O MR. GULAB RAI has approached MOS HINDUJA HOUSING FINANCE LTD (MHFL) to take a loan and they have lost REGISTERED SALE DEED dated 29.09.1990 in respect of said property Enclosed by Mr. Dharampal S/o Mr. Budha Singh in favour of Mrs. Neena D/Mr. Gurpreet/Mr. Jitendra registered at sub registrar office - 3945, (U.P.) vide documents No. 3945, volume no. 113/148, dated 29.09.1990. MR. VIJAY KUMAR GARG S/O MR. GULAB RAI has informed the UP Police dated 03.10.2022. REPLY TO PUBLIC SALE DEED, MERUIT about the loss of the above-mentioned sale deed. If anybody has any charge/interestable in the said property or any kind of dispute kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 7 days of the present.
Mrs. Prasoon Late, Advocate, SG Associates (Law Firm) Unit No. 7, Basement, Plot No C-78 Sector 2, Noida, UP 201301. E-MAIL: sgassociatespl@gmail.com, Ph: 7011172764, 8130200937

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that my client Krian is the owner of Plot Measuring 245.89 Sq. Yds. situated at Municipality Ward No. 5, Delhi Gate, Jhajjar, Tehsil & Distt. Jhajjar, Haryana by virtue of Transfer Deed 22.12.2017 (Doc No. 4991) executed by Tarun Kumar. And whereas she has lost the following original document pertaining to the said property read with FIR dated 14/7/22.
1. Transfer Deed dated 15.09.2016 executed by RajBala, Jyoti and Krian in favour of Tarun Kumar, duly registered in the office of SR Jhajjar, as DocNo. 3995, Book No. 1, dated 16.09.2016. All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable) registered or otherwise, gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise whatsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.
Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate) Shop No. 5 & 6, Pkt-E, CSC, Vihar Vinay-II, Delhi-91, Mob. 9810083351

Delhi Traffic Police restricted bus movement on Pahari Bhojla, Chitli Qabar, Matia Mahal, Jama Masjid, Chawri Bazar, Hauzi Quazi, Ajmeri Gate, Paharganj, Chemsford Road, Connaught Place outer circle, Parliament Street, Rafi Marg, Sunehri Bagh Road, Tughlak Road, Arobindo Marg and Jor Bagh. The restrictions were in effect from 2 PM to 9.30 PM. Traffic movement was also affected on Jantar Mantar Road, Ashoka Road, inner and outer circles of Connaught Place, near New Delhi Railway Station, Patel Chowk and areas surrounding Red Fort. Vehicular movement towards AIIMS in south Delhi was also affected, the traffic police said. A senior traffic official said, "We have deployed extra staff to clear the jams and make way for vehicles. We had already issued an advisory since the Tazia procession was scheduled."

"In areas of south Delhi, traffic is affected due to Durga Puja celebrations. However, we have made necessary arrangements," he said. "Raisina Marg was also closed for traffic, leading to snarls on the adjoining stretches of Ashoka Road and Jantar Mantar, among others. Traffic was also affected in the carriageway from Janakpuri towards Uttam Nagar due to ongoing work being carried out by the Delhi Jal Board under Janakpuri West metro station," a traffic police officer said and advised commuters to avoid the stretch.

No terror angle in J&K DG Prisons...

From Page 1
The shocking incident not only exposed the vulnerability of the senior cops and the loopholes in the security apparatus it also brought to light the element of complacency that has set in the belt force that even the mandatory verification was not done before attaching a domestic servant with the top cop. A lesser known terrorist outfit the People's Anti-Fascist Force (PAFF) has claimed the responsibility for the murder. "Our special squad carried out an intelligence based operation in Udaiwala, Jammu, eliminating DG of police, prisons department HK Lohia, a high value target," the PAFF said in a release. However, the police have rejected the claim. The PAFF has also owned

all recent terror attacks in Jammu and Kashmir, including the attacks on non-locals. Threatening to carry out more such high-profile operations, the terror group warned that it can strike anytime and anywhere with precision. "This is a small gift to their visiting Home Minister amid such a security grid," the PAFF said, referring to Amit Shah who is on a three-day visit to Jammu and Kashmir. DGP Dilbag Singh said Yasir had even tried to set ablaze the body of 57-year-old Lohia, who was promoted and appointed as Director General of Prisons in the Union Territory in August. Additional Director General of Police, Jammu zone, Mukesh Singh, who visited the house of Lohia's friend at Udaiwala

on the outskirts of Jammu, said the 1992-batch IPS officer was found dead on Monday night, with burns on his body and his throat slit. A preliminary examination of the crime scene indicated that Lohia must have been applying some oil on his foot which showed swelling. The killer suffocated Lohia to death and also used a broken ketchup bottle to slit his throat and later tried to set the body afire, he said. The ADGP said the CCTV footage collected from the incident site showed the accused running away after committing the crime. "Yasir was working in the house for nearly six months. Initial investigation revealed that he was quite aggressive in his behaviour and was also under

depression," he said. "A thorough probe is on to rule out any possibility. The weapon has been seized besides some documentary evidence showing the domestic help's mental state," he said. Officials said the body of the deceased officer was sent to Government Medical College and Hospital, Jammu, for post-mortem. According to the preliminary reports, Lohia was staying with his close friend along with his wife and a domestic help since Sunday. On Monday evening Lohia arrived there around 7.00 p.m and his escort vehicle left the venue after dropping him. Lohia chose to stay there as his own Government accommodation was receiving a facelift.

LG orders probe into power DBT goof-up, AAP cries ‘Guj...

From Page 1
The complainants have alleged the AAP Government, instead of recovering the dues of Rs 21,200 crore allegedly owed by the BSES discoms for power purchased by them from State generation companies, allowed them (discoms) to settle their outstanding through subsidy reimbursements, the sources said. It was also alleged the discoms were allowed to charge Late Payment Surcharge (LPSC) at a rate of 18 per cent from consumers while they themselves paid LPSC at 12 per cent to the Delhi Government owned

power generation companies. "In the process, the discoms were provided a windfall gain of Rs 8,500 crore at the cost of the State exchequer," alleged the complainants. Terming the Delhi Lt Governor's probe order into the free electricity scheme in the national Capital as "yet another conspiracy" of the BJP to stop Arvind Kejriwal's "victory chariot" in poll-bound Gujarat, the AAP said authorities can go ahead with the probe but the AAP government in Delhi and Punjab will not stop the implementation of the free electricity scheme.

Parties must tell voters about financial viability of promises, says..

"The Commission desires to solicit the views of the political parties before proceeding with the proposed amendment in sub para 3(iii) of Part VIII of MCC, as mentioned in paragraph 10 above. Accordingly, it is requested to kindly convey the views of your party in this regard, by 19th October, 2022. If no response is received by then it will be presumed that your party has nothing specific to say on the proposed amendment in the MCC," the EC wrote to political parties, soliciting views for proceeding with proposed amendment for

bringing out a standardised disclosure pro-forma with the aim of "not only strengthening MCC guidance for political parties and candidates but also ensuring authentic information to the voters to assess financial viability of election promises made by political parties." "While the existing guidelines under MCC require the political parties and candidates to explain the rationale for promises made therein as well as the possible ways and means to finance such promises, the commission found that the declarations are quite routine, ambiguous and do not

provide adequate information to voters to exercise informed choice in an election," it said. The election body has suggested an amendment in the MMC, so as to add an additional form that includes the declarations of the extent and expanse of coverage (example, individual, family, community, BPL or all population, etc.); quantification of physical coverage as in (i) above; quantification of financial implications of the promise (s) made; availability of the financial resources; ways and means of raising resources for meeting the additional expenditure to

be incurred in fulfilling the promises; impact of the additional resource raising plan (for fulfilling promises) on fiscal sustainability of the State or the Union Government, as the case may be. The EC said empty poll promises have far-reaching ramifications, and added it cannot overlook the undesirable impact inadequate disclosures on election promises have on financial sustainability. "The Commission notes that the consequences of inadequate disclosures by political parties get attenuated by the fact that elections are held fre-

quently, providing opportunities for political parties to indulge in competitive electoral promises, particularly in multi-phase elections, without having to spell out their financial implications more particularly on committed expenditure," the letter said. The poll panel said it is of the considered view that with adequate disclosures on the financial implications of the promises made, the Indian electorate will be able to exercise informed poll choices. "Although implementation of election promises could have several ramifications, the

Commission proposes to confine the disclosures to only the financial implications of the promises in terms of the financial resources required..." the letter said. The poll panel in a recent meeting led by Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar and attended by Election Commissioner Anup Chandra Pandey decided it cannot remain a "mute spectator" and overlook the undesirable impact of some of the promises and offers, on the conduct of free and fair elections and maintaining level playing field, sources said.

No-Mask fine revoked as Covid cases dip: DDMA

SAURAV GUPTA ■ NEW DELHI

A mid fall in the Covid-19 cases and positivity rate at one per cent across the national Capital, the Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA) on Tuesday revoked the fine of Rs 500 for not wearing the mask in the national Capital. The decision was taken in the DDMA meeting chaired by the Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena on Tuesday.

According to the DDMA order, it was agreed that the order of compulsory wearing of masks under the Epidemic Act may not be extended beyond September 30, 2022. Hence the fine of Rs. 500 for not wearing masks in public places would also stand withdrawn. "Another major decision taken in the meeting is that the Land on which the three Covid Care Centres (CCC) have come up, that is Radha Saomi Satsang, Chhattarpur; Sawan Kiral, Burari; Sant Nirankari, Burari, may be handed back to the concerned organisations.

"It was also decided that the medical equipment and medical stores in these Covid Care Centres would be transferred to the hospitals where it was required. A proper inventory of such equipment and stores would be prepared," it stated.

"Another decision is that the engagement of contractual or outsourced manpower against sanctioned vacant posts in Covid hospitals is permitted upto December 31, 2022 only in Covid Hospitals," it said. "It was further decided that 12 oxygen tankers may be operated by Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) on outsourcing basis and the 6000 oxygen cylinders should also be utilized on outsourcing basis," the order further stated. During the meeting the

Chief Secretary of Delhi Government Naresh Kumar also gave a brief background of the Covid situation, as emerged since March, 2020.

Kumar said that Delhi reported its first confirmed case of Covid-19 in March, 2020 and by the time National Lockdown was imposed the city Government had started issuing orders under the legal framework of Disaster Management Act, 2005. Kumar also mentioned about the coverage of high levels of first and second dose of vaccinations among the eligible population of Delhi and further informed that the precaution dose coverage is about 24 per cent of the eligible population.

Meanwhile, Secretary (II&FW), Delhi Government informed that testing in Delhi has been above the National average. "As on September, 20, 2022, a total of 21,13,462 cumulative tests per million population have been done in Delhi that is more than three times the National average which is 6.5 lakh test per million," he said.

Regarding daily positivity trend he informed that positivity trend slightly increased in the month of August, 2022 and the number of cases rose nearly to around 2000 per day but the cases have declined substantially after August, 25, 2022 and now there are only around 100 cases per day in Delhi.

"Daily monitoring of Covid situation is being done by the H&FW Department, Delhi Government. A Health bulletin is issued daily by the Department, for information of the general public and other stakeholders. The net positivity rate as on September 20, 2022 was 0.82 per cent in Delhi, whereas the all India average was 1.33 per cent," he said.

4 with PFI connections arrested under UAPA

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Police has arrested four persons allegedly linked to the banned Popular Front of India (PFI) under the stringent Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. This is the first arrest of any PFI member in the national capital after the outfit was banned by the Centre on September 28. Earlier, Delhi Police had conducted raids at PFI units spread across six districts of the city and detained 33 people allegedly linked with the group.

According to a senior police official, four members of the outlawed outfit have been arrested in a case registered against them under the UAPA at Shaheen Bagh

police station of southeast district of Delhi Police.

Suman Nalwa, the spokesperson of Delhi Police said on September 29, a case under IPC sections 120 B (criminal conspiracy) and 153 A (promoting enmity between different groups) along with section 10 of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) was registered at Shaheen Bagh police station following certain information against proscribed organisation PFI and its other associates and fronts. "During investigation, four accused persons named Mohammad Shoaib, Habib Asgar Jamali, Abdul Rabb and Warish were arrested," she said.

Dry days in city to return to 21 from 3

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Government has increased the number of 'dry days' to 21 with closing of liquor vends on such upcoming festivals as Dussehra, Diwali, Eid Milad-un-Nabi, and Valmiki Jayanti among others.

Earlier, there were only three dry days, January 26, August 25, and October 2, under the previous excise policy (2021-22)

The Excise department in an order on Monday said that all liquor vends will be closed on Dussehra on October 5, Eid-Milad-un-Nabi, Maharshi Valmiki Jayanti on October 9, Diwali on October 24, Guru Nanak Jayanti on November 8, and Guru Teg Bahadur's martyrdom day on November 24.

According to the order, the licensees will not be paid any compensation for the dry days and they will exhibit the dry day order at some conspicuous place at their business premises. "In the old Excise regime, the number of

dry days was 21. It is the government's discretion to fix the dry days numbers. Traditionally, the list of dry days is issued every three months," the officer said. However, the hotels, clubs, and restaurants serving liquor will remain open, he said. The hotels, clubs, and restaurants are not allowed to serve liquor on three national holidays — Republic Day, Independence Day, and Gandhi Jayanti.

The AAP government in Delhi had withdrawn its Excise Policy 2021-22 after LG V K Saxena in July this year recommended a CBI probe alleging irregularities in its implementation.

The government reverted back to the old excise policy that was in operation before November 17, 2021, under which there were 21 dry days.

BJP, the main opposition party in Delhi, had attacked AAP over reduced number of dry days in its policy, besides slamming it for encouraging liquor trade in the city with its liberal policies.

L-G orders probe in AAP's free power scheme

CS asked to submit report within a week

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) VK Saxena has directed Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar to conduct an enquiry into the alleged non-implementation of power subsidy payment to consumers through direct benefit transfer (DBT) as was ordered by the Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission (DERC) in 2018.

Kumar has been asked to submit a report within a week. Saxena's action followed a complaint filed at the L-G Secretariat which raised issues of alleged "impropriety and discrepancies" in the power subsidy scheme of the Kejriwal Government, sources at the L-G office said.

Sources said the complainants, including eminent lawyers and jurists, have alleged that a scam was affected after Delhi Government appointed J Shah, spokesperson of AAP and Vice Chairman, Dialogue and Development Commission of Delhi (DDC) and Naveen Gupta, who is son of AAP MP, ND Gupta as directors of private dis-

coms. "The LG has also asked the Chief Secretary to probe the subsidy amount allegedly given by the AAP Government to BSES discoms," a source said.

"The complainants have alleged that the AAP Government, instead of recovering the dues of Rs 21,200 crore allegedly owed by the BSES discoms for power purchased by them from State generation companies, allowed (discoms) to settle their outstanding through subsidy reimbursements," the sources said. "This amounted to a sum of Rs 11,550 crore being settled as reimbursements.

"Delhi Government unduly allowed the discoms to charge Late Payment Surcharge (LPSC) at a rate of 18 per cent from the people and pay the same at a rate of 12 per cent to Government-owned power generation companies, in the process providing them a windfall gain of Rs. 8,500 crore at cost to State exchequer. The Government violated its own decision of 2015-16, that entailed the audit of BRPL and BYPL be conducted every year for electricity subsidy paid to them by Delhi Government," they alleged.

Probe order unconstitutional, bid to stop Kejriwal in Gujarat: AAP

NEW DELHI: Terming Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) VK Saxena's order to the Chief Secretary to conduct an enquiry as "politically motivated and unconstitutional", the AAP on Tuesday said it is "yet another conspiracy" of the BJP to stop Arvind Kejriwal's "victory chariot" in poll-bound Gujarat.

In a series of tweets in Hindi, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal said, "Gujarat is liking AAP's guarantee of giving free electricity. That's why the BJP wants to stop it in Delhi." Kejriwal said that he will "not allow this to happen under any circumstances".

Kejriwal further said, "People of Delhi, have faith. I will not let your free electricity stop under any circumstances. People of Gujarat, I assure you that if the Government is formed, your electricity will also be free from March 1." "You have imposed so much tax on everything. You have increased inflation and you are sucking people's blood. In such a situation, if I give some relief to my people by giving them free elec-

tricity, that too, will not be tolerated by you? Do you want to stop that too?" he said in the following tweet.

Meanwhile, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia on Tuesday wrote to Saxena, accusing him of bypassing the elected Government in Delhi and ordering inquiries into its works in a "politically motivated and unconstitutional" manner.

He said the L-G has no power to issue orders on any matters concerning the Delhi Government except for land, police, and law and order. Stating that the L-G has been regularly ordering probes into decisions taken by the elected Government, Sisodia said these inquiries were "illegal and unconstitutional".

Nothing has come out of the probe into the "so-called" bus procurement scam, school scam, liquor scam, but it weakens the morale of officers, Sisodia said.

The AAP spokesperson, Saurabh Bharadwaj said the BJP has a huge conspiracy to stop Delhi's free power scheme to stop AAP in Gujarat.

BJP: Every scheme motivated by graft

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP on Tuesday took a jibe at the Delhi Government and said that by nominating his people to the power board, Kejriwal indulged in corruption. Addressing the media, national spokesperson Dr Sudhanshu Trivedi accused the Government of waiving off dues of Rs 3,229 crore of power firms. State BJP president Adesh Gupta said that every scheme of Kejriwal is motivated by corruption.

'No reply to RTI query on tariffs in 3 years'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader Ajay Maken on Tuesday said that he had filed an RTI in 2019 after Delhi Government had claimed that power tariffs in the national Capital were lowest in country but Maken said that he is still waiting for reply.

"Kejriwal came to power on the promise of audit of power companies and now without consumer audit, 18,000 crore given to private power company," he tweeted.



(A Maharatna Company)

Diversifying Growth Consolidating Strengths

I am pleased to announce that, during FY 2021-22, we have delivered the highest ever net profit of ₹10,022 crore, up 19% from the previous fiscal. On a consolidated basis, the company earned net profit of ₹18,768 crore, a 19% increase from FY 2020-21. To reward our shareholders, PFC has declared a total dividend of 120% i.e. ₹12 per share during FY 2021-22, which is the highest pay out in the history of PFC.

Ravinder Singh Dhillon
Chairman & Managing Director

CHAIRMAN'S SPEECH at the 36th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING held on 21st September, 2022

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

Welcome to the 36th Annual General Meeting of your company. The pandemic had a significant impact on a wide range of businesses and industries in the last two years. Our economy is gradually emerging from its debilitating impact, with the revival of consumption demand and easing of supply chain constraints. Power demand has also surpassed the pre-pandemic highs, with peak demand hitting new lifetime highs in 2022. However, the war in Ukraine and comeback of inflation after almost a decade have posed a new set of hurdles to the global economic recovery. With prices of fuel and other commodities, especially of food items remaining volatile, inflation is likely to remain elevated in the near term. Under these unusual circumstances, your company was able to measure up to the challenges and deliver excellent results.

PFC IS NOW A MAHARATNA COMPANY

During the year, your company was conferred 'Maharatna' status by Government of India, the highest recognition for a public sector company. This is an endorsement of PFC's enhanced stature and an acknowledgement of its sterling role in turning a power deficit country into a power surplus state with universal access to electricity. Maharatna status will give PFC greater operational and financial autonomy and enable diversification of its operations to further accelerate its business growth.

OPERATIONAL & FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

I am pleased to announce that, during FY 2021-22, we have delivered the highest ever net profit of 10,022 crore, up 19% from the previous fiscal. On a consolidated basis, the company earned net profit of ₹18,768 crore, a 19% increase from FY 2020-21. At the end of the fiscal year, PFC's loan assets stood at ₹ 3.73 lakh crore on standalone basis and ₹ 7.59 lakh crore on consolidated basis. The Net Worth of your company was ₹ 59,350 crore as on 31.03.2022 and the Capital to Risk Weighted Assets Ratio was at a healthy level of 23.48%, with Tier I capital ratio of 20.00%. To reward our shareholders, PFC has declared a total dividend of 120% i.e. ₹ 12 per share during FY 2021-22, which is the highest pay out in the history of PFC.

East UP Transmission and Jhabua Power are in advanced stages of resolution in NCLT. Your company took various measures to reduce the cost of borrowing and as a result, the cost of funds reduced by 18 bps in FY 2021-22 to 7.30%. In September 2021, PFC issued its first ever Euro Green Bonds amounting to EUR 300 million at a coupon of 1.841%. This was the first ever

investors' confidence in the sector. Your company has been publishing performance report on state power utilities on an annual basis and is also the co-ordinating agency for Integrated Rating exercise carried out as per framework approved by Ministry of Power. The 10th Integrated Rating & Ranking of Power Distribution Utilities marked a new milestone with the inclusion of Private Distribution Utilities and Power Departments covering a total of 71 utilities across India. These reports are widely used by stakeholders including utilities, policy makers, developers, lenders, equity analysts and regulators, for decision making.

LEADING THE FIGHT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Shift in energy consumption to cleaner and green options will play a significant role in economic growth globally. During the COP 26 summit held in Glasgow in October

capacity addition of 18 GW, which is 16% of the country's installed renewable capacity. During the last fiscal, 44% of the disbursement made by PFC to the generation sector was to non-fossil fuel projects. PFC's renewable energy assets grew at a CAGR of 32% in the last 5 years, compared to 9% growth in total loan assets.

The upward revision in green energy targets would fuel expansion of the green energy financing market, and would demand innovative financing models. According to various estimates, the fund requirement to meet India's net zero target is about US\$ 10 trillion, a large part of which is to be deployed in the energy sector. Your company being a major financier of the sector would play a key role in channelizing this investment.

CORPORATE GOVERNANCE & SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Good corporate governance is essential to ensure transparency and to boost stakeholder trust and confidence. Being a listed company, PFC complies with all applicable provisions within its ambit, relating to corporate governance as stipulated under the Companies Act, 2013, SEBI (Listing Obligations & Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, DPE Guidelines etc. Your company maintains the highest standards of transparency, accountability and adequate disclosures.

Being a socially responsible entity, PFC has put its CSR and sustainability policy into practise with utmost sincerity. I am proud to state that PFC's cumulative CSR spending has surpassed ₹1000 crore to date.

1.76% Lowest Net NPA

DIVERSIFICATION & WAY FORWARD

In order to sustain the growth momentum, your company has diversified into funding infrastructure projects in irrigation, waste to energy and water treatment sectors and also into new and emerging sectors like e-mobility, utility scale energy storage etc. Taking the initiative forward, PFC has recently sanctioned financial assistance to projects in infrastructure sectors including metro rail, petroleum refining, bio ethanol manufacturing and nuclear energy. With your company's growing balance sheet size, diversification into newer infrastructure areas is expected to gather steam in the coming years.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I convey my sincere gratitude to our shareholders who have reposed faith in us. I am grateful to the Hon'ble Cabinet Minister of Power and New & Renewable Energy, Hon'ble Minister of State for Power and the officials of Ministry of Power for their support and guidance. I also thank the Board of Directors, our client utilities, employees, various ministries, government departments and other stakeholders of PFC for their continued support.

Place: New Delhi
Date: 21.09.2022

(R. S. Dhillon)
Chairman & Managing Director

(This does not purport to be a record of the proceedings of the Annual General Meeting held on 21st September, 2022). For full text please visit www.pfcindia.com



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Regd. office: "Urjanidhi", 1, Barakhamba Lane, Connaught Place New Delhi 110 001. Ph.: 011-23456000, Fax: 011-23412545
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‘LAC stand-offs over but forces maintaining operational readiness’

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As stand-offs at most friction points at the border in Ladakh have ended, IAF chief VR Chaudhari said here on Tuesday “best benchmark for normalcy” is the restoration of status quo ante. He also said the forces are maintaining operational readiness irrespective of Chinese belligerence.

The IAF chief’s remarks came days after Chinese envoy to New Delhi Sun Weidong said here the situation at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is moving towards being “normalized.” He also called for India and China to work more closely together to resolve differences, in a speech marking the 73rd anniversary of the People’s Republic of China.

The Chinese Ambassador’s statement came weeks after the two sides agreed to disengage at Patrolling Point (PP) 15 at the LAC, one of several “friction points.” In a virtual address, the Chinese ambassador said “the current border situation is overall stable,” adding “the phase of emergency response since the



Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari speaks during a press conference ahead of the 90th Air Force Day celebrations on Oct. 8, in New Delhi, on Tuesday

Galwan Valley incident has basically come to an end, and the border situation is now switching to normalised management and control.” China was prepared to seek a solution to the LAC situation through further dialogue and consultation, but that he hoped India

would address China’s “core interests” that included the Taiwan question and Xizang (Tibet) related issues, he said. One the same day on September 28, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar had said India strives to have a relationship with China that is built

on mutual sensitivity, respect and interest. He made these assertions during his visit to Washington. Apparently calling for returning to the respective bases as they existed prior to May 2020 when the situation flared up at the LAC when stressing status quo ante, Chaudhari said the forces are continuously monitoring the situation after the disengagement from PP-15.

“The benchmark for normalisation at LAC in Ladakh best option would be to return to status quo” and completion of disengagement from all the friction points, the IAF chief said while addressing media conference on the occasion of the 90th Air Force Day on October 8.

For the first time, the Air Force Day parade is shifted for the national capital region and will take place in Chandigarh including a thrilling aerial display over the Sukhna lake there. More than 83 aircraft and helicopters will enthrall the spectators. Meanwhile, Chaudhari said the IAF has taken appropriate “non-escalatory” measures to deal with Chinese activities along the border in eastern Ladakh.

Asked about recent incidents of Chinese fighter jets flying close to the LAC, he said appropriate non-escalatory measures have been taken and a message was sent to the neighbouring country. “Our overall preparation is a continuous process irrespective of Chinese belligerence,” the IAF chief said.

“Disengagement has taken place but we keep monitoring PLA Air Force. There has been rapid infrastructure development across LAC. We continuously enhance our capabilities, increased number of radars. We are able to signal our intent by taking action,” he said.

Stressing the point that both the sides are following the confidence building measures, he said the IAF is using the army hotline to address any urgent issues with China. Moreover, an IAF officer is now present during the military level talks at the LAC.

The recent air space violations by the Chinese air force when its jets came close to LAC on its side were flagged during the meeting, he added. As regards any disruption in the supply chain due to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, Chaudhari said there was no

impact on the IAF. He said more than 60,000 spare parts were supplied every year by the Indian manufacturers thereby

slowly decreasing dependence on Russian spares and related equipment, he informed. He also said the IAF will start

recruiting women as Agniveers from next year while first batch of Agniveers will start training from December this year.

IAF chief: Have reservations on some theatre commands aspects

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As newly appointed Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan is likely to hasten up the process of a major reform of setting up theatre commands, IAF chief V R Chaudhari said here on Tuesday he is not against the concept but has reservations about certain structures.

Theatre command first mooted by late CDS General Bipin Rawat to forge synergy and optimum use of available assets envisage geographical specific commands. The IAF has expressed doubts about certain aspects of the concept.

Asserting that the IAF is not against the theatre command, Chaudhari listed three

or four issues. He said the commands have to be future ready and take into account space and cyber threats besides traditional challenges.

He also favoured reduced decision making chain and flexibility besides synergising core competencies of the three Services. Chaudhari also said each Service has its own doctrine and it cannot be comprised.

“We are not opposing integration or theatre commands. Certain reservations on structure. Structure should be future warfare oriented, include cyber and space domains.

Decision making chain should reduce. Supporting the integration process structures should be future ready,” he said. Asked about reduced

squadron strength, the IAF chief said given the vast nation and demand for security from Sir Creek to Siachen, 42 squadrons are sanctioned and there is no need to reduce it.

At present, the IAF has 30 squadrons and the current pace of inductions will ensure that 35 to 36 squadrons will be in place by the middle of next decade. One squadron has 18 to 20 fighter jets.

On the phasing out schedule of the ageing jets, Chaudhari said one squadron of MiG 21 has recently retired leaving the IAF with three that will be phased out in the next two to three years. Five to six squadrons of Jaguar will be phased out 2032-33 followed by three MiG 29 and three Mirage squadrons.

HP Govt withdraws ‘character certificate’ order

After facing backlash, State allows scribes to cover Prime Minister’s Dussehra visit



nation from issuing official”, said the Chief Minister after Bilaspur District Administration had earlier issued order demanding “certificate of character verification” from journalists covering Prime Minister’s event. On Wednesday, Modi will inaugurate a slew of developmental projects in the poll-bound Himachal Pradesh including AIIMS at Bilaspur and partic-

ipate in the famous Kullu Dussehra celebrations during his visit to Himachal Pradesh. The district administration of Bilaspur in Himachal Pradesh had ordered journalists looking to cover Modi’s visit to produce character certificates in order to obtain access passes. The order applied not only to privately-owned news publications, but also to public broadcasters All India Radio and Doordarshan as well.

The police, too, issued a notification on September 29 directing the District Public Relations Officer to provide a list of all “correspondents, photographers, videographers team of Doordarshan Kendra and AIR along with a certificate of their character verification” to the deputy superintendent of police, Criminal Investigation Department, Bilaspur, by

October 1. “Their access within the rally or meeting will be decided by this office,” the notification read. On Tuesday Himachal director general of police Sanjay Kundu, however, clarified in a tweet that all journalists are welcome to cover the event and that the state’s police will “facilitate their coverage.”

The Prime Minister will inaugurate the AIIMS at Bilaspur, the foundation of which was laid by him in October 2017. It had been established under the Centre’s Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojana.

AIIMS, Bilaspur, constructed at a cost of more than Rs 1,470 crore, is a state-of-the-art hospital with 18 specialty and 17 super-specialty departments, 18 modular operation theatres and 750 beds, including 64 ICU beds.

16 held for cyber fraud in raids on 115 locations; 300 under CBI’s radar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In yet another global operation, the CBI on Tuesday conducted ‘Operation Chakra’ and raided 115 locations in eight States/Union Territories leading to the arrest of 16 accused people for cyber fraud. The searches were conducted in coordination with the police forces of State/Union Territories, Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) of USA, Interpol, Royal Canadian police and Australian police.

During the nationwide searches, cash to the tune of Rs 1.8 crore and 1.5 Kg gold was also recovered besides seizure of electronic evidence. The searches were carried out with the participation of and in coordination with Police Forces



of eight States/Union Territories including Delhi, Punjab, Rajasthan, Assam, Karnataka, Andaman & Nicobar Island, Chandigarh and Haryana, the CBI said in a statement.

“The operation intends to dismantle the infrastructure of these international cybercrime gangs in India and bring these perpetrators to justice. India’s fight against trans-national organized cybercrime has thus achieved a major milestone,” it said. Searches were conducted

at around 115 locations. Of these, CBI is conducting searches in 11 cases at about 87 locations including 16 States while other State/UT are conducting searches at around 28 locations including Assam Police in two places; Andaman & Nicobar Island Police in four places; Chandigarh Police in three places; Delhi Police in five places; Karnataka Police in 12 places and Punjab Police in two places, it said.

During searches so far, cash

of Rs 1.8 crore and 1.5 kg gold was recovered and two call centers in Pune and Ahmedabad were also busted by the CBI.

Bank accounts with balances of around Rs 1.89 crore have been frozen in Karnataka. Huge digital evidence including mobiles and laptops have also been recovered. Investigation is continuing, it added. As many as 300 suspects are under the scanner of the CBI and police forces. The cash and gold was recovered from just one location searched in Rajasthan. The two call centres in Pune and Ahmedabad were targeting gullible American citizens and the FBI has been apprised of the developments related to the searches and they are taking action, sources said.



On the last day of the Durga Puja, people crowd a community pandal installed by the Durga Puja Samiti at Chittaranjan Park in New Delhi on Tuesday.

India, UK discuss key Defence and security issues



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and the UK reviewed the entire spectrum of their Defence ties during Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar’s talks with his counterparts in London. He co-chaired the India-UK Defence Consultative Group (DCG) meeting with his counterpart David Williams, UK Permanent Under Secretary of State for Defence there on Monday.

They reviewed the progress of various Service level bilateral groups and other Defence cooperation mechanisms, the Defence

Ministry said here on Tuesday. Kumar held discussion on a wide range of issues relating to the defence and industrial cooperation between India and UK.

Both sides considered new areas for defence industrial cooperation, explored emerging domains such as cyber and Artificial Intelligence, and committed to work together for strengthening the bilateral defence relationship.

Later, Kumar also held a bilateral meeting with UK National Security Advisor Tim Barrow. They discussed a number of key Defence and security issues.

Def Min green lights renaming of Faizabad Cantt as Ayodhya Cantonment



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh has approved renaming the Faizabad Cantt as Ayodhya Cantonment. The renaming of the Cantonment comes ahead of Dussehra celebrations. The Faizabad Cantt will be known as Ayodhya Cantonment,” said official sources.

Singh is currently undertaking a two-day visit to Uttarakhand. He will have a “Bada Khana” with soldiers at Dehradun on Tuesday evening.

On Wednesday, he will perform ‘Shastra Puja’ in Chamoli on the occasion of Vijaya Dashmi. He will celebrate Dussehra with soldiers at Auli and Mana, and will offer prayers at Badrinath Dham.

ED attaches ₹6 cr worth assets of KN Marzook under PMLA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has provisionally attached movable and immovable assets worth Rs. 6.03 crore on money laundering charges in the case against K N Marzook and others for illegally entering into agreement with Kerala Chamber of Commerce and Industry and selling building space to Kerala Trade Centre.

Attached assets include various movable and immovable properties in the form of bank accounts, land, residential and commercial space in Kerala Trade Centre (KTC) building situated in Ernakulam standing in Marzook’s name as well as in the name of Kerala Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) and Cherupushpam Films Private Limited. The ED initiated a money laundering investigation against Marzook and others on the basis of an FIR filed by Central Police Station, Ernakulam, Kerala.

The ED probe revealed that K N Marzook misusing his official position, made KCCI enter into sale agreements with



buyers of KTC and received money from various buyers for selling the building space of Kerala Trade Centre in cash, the agency said in a statement.

The probe further revealed that Marzook received huge cash amounts from the prospective buyers and had diverted money received from the sale of KTC building space to start a private TV channel namely India Middle East Broadcasting Network (IMBEN).

This TV channel was banned by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting due to the involvement of K N Marzook. Further, it was revealed that crores of rupees were diverted from KTC accounts to KCCI and IMBEN accounts by KN Marzook, the agency added.

MHA adds LeT, HM’s J&K ultras in list under UAPA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre on Tuesday designated as terrorists a slew of Hizbul-ul-Mujahideen and Lashkar-e-Tayabba ultras from Jammu and Kashmir under the stringent anti-terror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for radicalization and recruitment activities in the Valley.

The Union Home Ministry designated Hizbul-ul-Mujahideen’s chief launching commander Showkat Sheikh besides Imtiyaz Ahmad Kandoo as terrorists under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act on charges of spreading terror and violence

in Jammu and Kashmir and for “radicalising and motivating youths to join terrorist ranks to carry out terror activities in the Kashmir Valley”.

The Centre further designated launching commander of Hizb-Ul-Mujahideen Bashir Ahmad Peer as a terrorist under UAPA for his role in terror activities and for providing logistics to the banned outfit’s terrorists for infiltration in Kupwara district of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Centre also declared Lashkar-e-Tayabba member Habibullah Malik as a terrorist under UAPA for “radicalising Kashmiri youths and recruiting them into militancy through his network”.

NPPA fixes prices of 40 new drugs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority (NPPA) has fixed the retail price of 40 new drugs including generic fixed dose formulations of diabetes drugs dapagliflozin and sitagliptin, among others.

Some of these drugs include those used to treat high blood pressure, certain kinds of cancers, bacterial infection and bone pain and joint pain.

The Authority discussed retail price fixation of 42 new drugs and approved 40 of them, except for two formulations on which the marketers made representation on the retail price recommended by the Multidisciplinary



Committee of Experts. The products, for which the retail prices were fixed include dapagliflozin and metformin hydrochloride (extended release) tablets marketed by Macleods Pharmaceuticals, Glenmark Pharmaceuticals and Abbott Healthcare, as per the notification issued by the NPPA.

Retail price for sitagliptin and metformin hydrochloride (as extended release) tablets marketed by MSN Laboratories, Sun Pharma Laboratories, Macleods Pharmaceuticals, and Wockhardt Ltd have also been fixed. Out of the 42 formulations, pantaprazole powder for oral suspension (sodium bicar-

bonate as buffer) from Alkem Laboratories and lidocaine patch 5 per cent from Hetero Healthcare were not fixed by the Authority during the meeting, sources said.

Alkem Laboratories and Hetero Healthcare made representations to the Authority on the retail price recommended by the Multidisciplinary Committee of Experts (MDC) in its last meeting held on September 13, 2022, and the Authority deliberated upon the matter in detail and decided to refer the matter to the MDC for examination of the representation, said the sources.

The Authority meeting held on September 27, also fixed the retail price of dextrose injection 25% w/v in 100 ml in

specific container, mannitol injection 20 gm per 100 ml in 100 ml pack in special package, Metronidazole Injection IP 500 mg/100 ml in 100 ml pack with special packaging and from Axa Parenterals.

It has also extended the ceiling price of sodium chloride injection 0.9per cent in 500 ml with special feature packaging, glucose injections 5per cent in 500 ml non glass with special features with euro head, and ringer lactate injection in special packaging among others for Puerto Life Sciences Pvt Ltd, dextrose injection 5per cent in 500 ml pack with packaging in non glass with special features with brand ‘Safe Port’ from Sachin Parenteral, among others, during the meeting, said the sources.

IN SHORTS

SANJEEV KISHORE IS NEW DG ORDNANCE (C&S)
New Delhi: Sanjeev Kishore, a 1985 batch officer of the Indian Ordnance Factory Service (IOFS), has taken over as the Director General Ordnance (C&S) upon the superannuation of M K Grag. Before taking over the charge of DGO (C&S), Kishore was the Additional Director General Ordnance at the Directorate of Ordnance (Coordination & Services), Kolkata.

SC ALLOWS MUMBAI COASTAL ROAD PROJECT
New Delhi: The Supreme Court has allowed the municipal corporation of Greater Mumbai to commence partial development work in the ongoing Mumbai Coastal Road Project while observing that sustainable development is an important ingredient in the protection of environment.

Maha ex-HM gets bail in PMLA case but he can't walk free

T N RAGHUNATHA ■
MUMBAI

More than eleven months after he was arrested for alleged money laundering, the Bombay High Court on Tuesday granted bail to Maharashtra's former Home Minister and NCP leader Anil Deshmukh in the much-discussed case in the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), after indirectly holding that the Enforcement Directorate (ED) had failed to prove two of its allegations against the former minister, while Deshmukh was given benefit under law in the third allegation.

However, Deshmukh will continue to be lodged in judicial custody at the Arthur Road Central Prison as he is

being investigated by the CBI in a corruption case.

In a development that came after the Supreme Court expressed its displeasure over the delay in hearing Deshmukh's bail application, a single-member HC bench of Justice NJ Jamadar – while granting bail to the state's former Home Minister – asked the former minister to furnish a personal bond of Rs 1 lakh and sureties of the like amount. He also imposed conditions on him for attendance before the trial court and the ED.

The Judge ruled that the bail order would come into effect from October 13 to enable ED to file an appeal before the Supreme Court.

In observations that would have bearing on the

impending trial against Deshmukh, Justice Jamadar noted: "We have held that the first two components of credit in the Trust do not form proceeds of crime. Third component depends on the statement of (dismissed Mumbai cop) Sachin Waze which in the discussion falls in favour of the applicant (Deshmukh). Apart from this, the applicant is also given the benefit under the proviso under Section 45 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)".

After the high court granted bail to Deshmukh, the ED sought a stay on the operation of order for two weeks stating that the Supreme Court was shut for Dussehra holidays and would reopen October 10.

Opposing two weeks' time



sought by the CBI to move the Supreme Court, Deshmukh's lawyer told the high court that the investigating agency could file an appeal in the Supreme Court even during the vacation and it is not the case that the applicant is to come out on bail as he is in custody for a CBI case.

After hearing both the sides, the high court ruled that its bail order would come

into from October 13.

It may be recalled that based on a case of corruption registered by the CBI, the ED arrested Deshmukh on November 2, 2021 under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) on charges of bribery, conspiracy and misuse of office. Deshmukh has been in custody in judicial custody since then.

Deshmukh is being investigated by the CBI in connection with a First Information Report (FIR) registered by it on April 24 section 7 of the amended Prevention of Corruption Act and section 120-b (conspiracy) of IPC for an "attempt to obtain undue advantage for important and dishonest performance of the public duty".

Special Court extends Raut's judicial custody for 14 days

TN RAGHUNATHA ■
MUMBAI

A Special Court on Tuesday extended the judicial custody of Shiv Sena leader and MP Sanjay Raut for 14 days in a money laundering case linked to alleged Rs 1,034 crore Patra Chawl redevelopment scam.

After hearing Raut's bail plea, a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) extended the Shiv Sena MP's judicial custody till September 19.

Raut, who was detained by the ED on July 31 after a raid on his Bhandup residence and his questioning that lasted for



more than nine hours, was formally placed under by the investigating agency at 12.05 am on August 1 under sub-section (1) of section 19 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, 2002. The PMLA court had earlier remanded Raut to ED custody till August 4. The ED is investigating the alleged irregularities in the Patra Chawl redevelopment project.

ties in a money laundering case pertaining to the redevelopment of Patra Chawl by Guru Ashish Construction Pvt Ltd a subsidiary of Housing Development and Infrastructure Ltd (HDIL).

The ED's action against Raut came nearly two months after the investigating agency attached provisionally properties worth Rs 11.15 crore belonging to three persons, including Shiv Sena leader Sanjay Raut's wife Varsha Raut, under the PMLA in a case relating to the alleged irregularities in the Patra Chawl redevelopment project.

Cong leaders want change and that's why I am contesting, says Tharoor

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■
KOCHI

In a show of bravado, Shashi Tharoor MP, who is a candidate for the election of the All India Congress Committee president said at Thiruvananthapuram on Tuesday that hereafter the party cadre would not blindly go by the diktat of the leadership.

"The party leadership itself has declared that anyone could contest for the party president's post and that is why I am in the race. The party cadre and leaders across the country want a change in the Congress. The days of the party cadre blindly obeying



the leadership are over," said Shashi Tharoor while speaking to the media at the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee headquarters at Thiruvananthapuram.

A section of party workers had organised a reception for the leader at the party office though no prominent faces of the KPCC were present. AK Antony, veteran

Congress leader and a close confidante of party chief Sonia Gandhi has made it clear without any ambiguity that Mallikarjun Kharge would be the candidate who has the endorsement of the party High Command. Other senior leaders of the State that include Oommen Chandi, V D Satheeshan, Ramesh Chennithala, K Muralaeddharan have declared that Kharge was the party's choice. K Sudhakaran MP, who is the KPCC president too declared on Monday that Kharge was the official candidate of the party.

If Tharoor wins the race, he would be the first person from Kerala to head the AICC

in modern times. In 1897, Sir Chettur Sankaran Nair had been elected as the AICC president. Though there are 300 votes from Kerala, it is doubtful whether Tharoor would be able to pull off a coup in the race.

"Mallikarjun Kharge is the party's choice for the presidency. Do you think he would have quit as Opposition Leader of Rajya Sabha without the green signal from High Command? Even veteran leaders like Ashok Gehlot and Dihvijay Singh withdrew from the race once it was known that Kharge was the candidate," Mohammed Shiyaz, the Ernakulam DCC chief told *The Pioneer*.

Govt to appoint retired docs to meet shortage in UP: Dy CM

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

To deal with the shortage of doctors in the state, the Yogi Adityanath government has decided to appoint retired doctors on contractual basis via the National Health Mission.

Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak said that the patients should not face any kind of problem due to the shortage of doctors.

He said there were more than 13,700 health and wellness centres in Uttar Pradesh and CHOs (community health officers) were being deployed in them.

Pathak, who also holds the Health portfolio, said,

"Hospitals that are short of doctors should list those departments. Doctors can be deployed on a contractual basis via the National Health Mission." Medicines not available in the hospitals should be procured by purchasing them locally by the hospitals, he added.

"For local purchase of medicines, the government is allocating a budget to hospitals. There is no dearth of budget for the welfare schemes for the patients," Pathak said.

While sharing statistics, he said an exam for selecting community health officers (CHOs) was being conducted several times a year and 9,680



CHOs had been trained since 2017.

"The government has set a record in the direction of training CHOs. Since 2017, 9,680 CHOs have been selected and trained. The process of deployment of more than 5,000 CHOs is going on," Pathak said.

Dr Abhishek Shukla, sec-

retary general of the Association of International Doctors, said, "Appointing retired doctors on a contractual basis will help in two ways. First, their experience will help patients, particularly in the diagnosis of chronic ailments and secondly, the availability of doctors will also increase."

Nude body of girl found in UP, family suspects rape, murder

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A 17-year-old girl's nude body was found in a millet field under Dibiyapur police station of Auraiya, police said on Tuesday.

The girl's family alleged that she was raped and murdered.

The girl's death took a political colour as the Congress uploaded a video on its Twitter handle, saying the police were "running away" with the body, an allegation denied by the authorities.

The girl's family members

informed the media that she had gone out in the morning on Monday to attend to the call of nature but as she did not return home even after long, they launched a search for her and found her body in the field.

The girl's father claimed that the teenager's body was found without clothes and a dupatta was tied around her neck. The father suspects that she was raped and later murdered.

According to the girl's father, the crops nearby were damaged, which suggests that the girl was dragged by the per-

petrator for 30-40 metres in the field.

However, Auraiya's Superintendent of Police Charu Nigam claimed that there was no injury on the girl's body and said the case would be probed from all angles.

Nigam, who reached the village with forensic experts, deployed 10 police teams, including a Special Operations Group, to crack the case.

Meanwhile, the Congress shared a video of policemen carrying a body and a woman walking behind. The tweet in Hindi read, "In Auraiya, naked

body of a 17-year-old girl was found in a field. The police arrived and began running away with the body in a hurry. The poor family is running behind. Uttar Pradesh is 'Number 1' in crimes against women. But nobody will call it 'jungle raj'."

Refuting the allegations, SP Charu Nigam said the policemen completed all legal formalities and took the body in possession after pacifying the family. In no way has the body been forcibly taken, she added.

The police officer said the



post-mortem examination would be video-graphed and conducted by a panel of three doctors and a case would be

registered based on the family's complaint. Nigam said the victim's family had not named any accused yet.

Novel Navaratri event attracts hundreds from India and abroad

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■
KOCHI

The northern-most district Kasaragod, a melting pot of the culture and traditions of Kerala and Karnataka celebrated the 2022 Navaratri festivities in a unique style. Concerned over the falling standards of hand writing, Saparya, a cultural organization in the district held "Nama Vaibhavam", a mission to inculcate among the people the significance of hand writing. Participants were asked to submit hand written copies of Lalitha Sahasra Namam (a sacred Hindu text from the Brahmanda Purana that lists thousand names of Goddess Lalitha Devi, a manifestation of Divine Mother Shakti). Those who could perform the task in good hand writing and

without mistakes were awarded prizes.

More than 800 participants from India and abroad submitted copies of Lalitha Sahasra Namam which were scrutinized by a jury consisting of Sukumaran Periyachur, a retired government higher secondary school principal who is a stickler for good and neat hand writing. Other members of the jury included Sanskrit scholars and proponents of Vedas.

"It was a grueling mission. The quality of hand writing has come down to an alarming level among the new generation. But the older generation still retain the quality and standard of hand writing. We have to educate and inspire the new generation about the significance of possessing good hand writing," said Sukumaran

Periyachur.

Swami Muktananda, pontiff of the age old Anandashramam, said that competition like this one would draw more participants by next year. "We have to ensure that the diction as well as hand writing always maintain high standards to ensure the strengthening of the language," said the pontiff.

It was a blessing from Goddess Lalitha, said N S Seetha Lakshmi, a homemaker from Kodungalloor, who won the first prize for the best handwritten copy. "I have been reciting Lalitha Sahasra Namam daily for the last thirty years and the Goddess has been kind enough to me. Since I started reciting it, my life underwent a major change," said Seetha Lakshmi, who completed the manuscript in



four days.

According to Sukumaran, though there was a separate competition for school and college students, no prizes could be awarded as the quality of the handwriting was poor. "We have to convince our new generation about improving the standard of their hand writing. Too much interaction with computers has spoiled the

quality of handwriting. The entries we received were full of mistakes and it was difficult to discern what they have written," he said.

This is the first of its kind competition in Kerala, said Sukumaran. The fact that entries were sent from India and abroad shows that there are people who have taken handwriting seriously.

Durga Puja becomes melting pot for all religions

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Hey Maa! ... Ya Allah! ... Why do you ask this question to me ... it is just because I am in black robes and a Muslim ... do you think Maa Durga belongs to you only ... Is Motherhood not universal ... She is my mother as much she is yours, says Hasima Biwi a Hijab-clad Muslim woman --- her voice trembling. Her body shaking. Literally.

Hijab may have become a volatile issue in some parts of the country and with some sections in the social media but it is cool in the City of Joy where hundreds of Muslim and Christian men and women have set about pandal hopping --- the whole of night.

This year the City of Joy has not only been inundated by Hindu reveller but their Muslim and Christian brethren as well.

Ask Nauseen a Class XI student for that matter. "I did not wait for the rush

to build up I watched most of the idols by Maha Sashti (sixth day of the Pujas)," she says taking credit of watching more than a hundred Pujas.

Like her Hindu friends Afreen, another Class XII girl from an upmarket South Kolkata school takes pride in taking vegetarian foods on Maha Shashti and Maha Ashtami days. Not only this she will tell you the meaning of Durga Puja which is also called Akaal Bodhan or unseasonal Puja.

Quoting from Krittibasi Ramayana she says "the real Puja takes place during the Vasant (Spring) season when it is called Basanti Puja ... but as Lord Rama performed special Puja in this season before his attack on Lanka to please Maa Durga --- who was protecting Ravana --- it is called Akaal Bodhan Durga Puja," even as her Father Ramzan Ali recalls how his great grandfather had fallen victim to the great Calcutta riots.

Jasimuddin a vendor of sweets tells



you how no Puja in his locality at Kidderpore will be complete without his sweets. "I do not take non-vegetarian food ... neither my staff do so all these days ... we know the value of Bhakti," says reminding how Ramakrishna Parmahansa Dev the spiritual guru of Swami Vivekananda had done his sadhana (meditation) in all religions before concluding Jato Mat ... Tato Path (all

roads lead to Rome).

The participation of the Muslim community is not only limited to pandal-hopping so to say. There are many puja committees that are virtually run by the Muslims in many parts of Kolkata. Take for example the Durga Puja at Alimuddin Street which incidentally houses the CPI(M) State headquarters too.

ADMISSION NOTICE
B.R.M.T. College of Education (Old Khaira Road, Prem Nagar, Najafgarh, New Delhi-43) invites application for management quota seats in D.El.Ed & DPSE courses for session 2022-2024. The candidates can collect their application forms from the office between 9:30am to 4:00pm. Application may be submitted in the college from 3 October 2022 to 17 October 2022. Admission process will be as per SCERT guidelines. List will be displayed on 19 October 2022 on www.brmcollege. & college notice board. Contact No. 8851893977

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Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, 3rd Floor, Plot No- 23, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh, Delhi- 110005
PUBLIC NOTICE: Builder Cancellation
This is to bring to your notice that **VIKAS BANSAL/ SUMAN BANSAL (borrower/s)** has availed Home loan facility vide facility agreement number **LBMOD0002409680** located at **UNIT NO 557, BLOCK - G, GAUR ATULYAM, SITUATED AT PLOT NO GH 01A, SECTOR OMICRON-1, GREATER NOIDA, NOIDA, UTTAR PRADESH**. The borrower/s has failed to pay the contractual amount to the builder as per the terms and conditions of the agreement.
The Bank had informed the same to the borrower through letter dated **SEPTEMBER 30, 2022** informing that **UP TOWNSHIP INFRASTRUCTURE PVT. LTD** has cancelled the allotment of the above mentioned property. You are therefore requested to resolve this matter with the builder within 7 days from the date of this publication.
Please take further notice that post cancellation of the allotment of the said property ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any other allotment done by the builder.
Dated: October 05, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR
For ICICI Bank Limited Sd-

ICICI Bank
PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET
[See proviso to rule 8(6)]
Notice for sale of Non-movable assets
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the **physical possession** of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Limited will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis as per the brief particulars given hereunder:

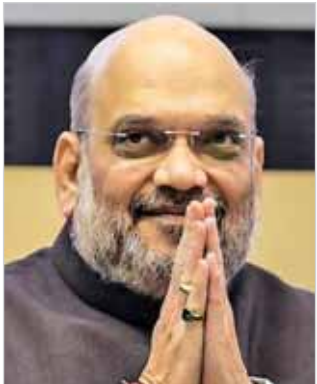
Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price/ Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of E-Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Mr. Sunil Kumar Tripathy (Borrower), Mr. Rama S Tripathy (Co-Borrower), 244805000856	S-4, Second Floor, Green Park Extension, New Delhi- 110016. Area- 1215 Sq. Ft	Rs. 2,07,26,013/- as on September 02, 2022.	Rs. 3,05,00,000/- Rs. 30,50,000/-	October 12, 2022, From 02:00 PM to 04:00 PM	October 27, 2022, From 11:00 AM Onwards

The online auction will take place on the website of e-auction agency **M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited (URL Link-https://disposalhub.com)** The Mortgagors/ noticee are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till **October 26, 2022 before 05:00 PM** failing which, this/these secured asset/s will be sold as per schedule.
The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at : **ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor,Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh, Delhi-110005** on or before **October 26, 2022 before 05:00 PM** and thereafter they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before **October 26, 2022 before 05:00 PM** along with scan image of Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, in case prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at : **ICICI Bank Limited, 3rd Floor,Shal Tower, New Rohtak Road, Karol bagh, Delhi-110005** on or before **October 26, 2022 before 05:00 PM**. Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/ Scheduled Bank in favour of "**ICICI Bank Limited**" payable at **Delhi**
For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the e-auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact **ICICI Bank Limited on 8126013708/7304914763**
Please note that Marketing agencies **1. M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited 2. Augoe Asset Management Pvt Ltd** have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property.
The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons.
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit **www.icicibank.com/n4p4s**
Date: October 04, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR
Authorized Officer ICICI Bank Limited

Old playbook

Shah announces quotas for Gujjar, Bakarwal, Pahari communities in Jammu and Kashmir

Home Minister Amit Shah's announcement on Tuesday at Rajouri in Jammu and Kashmir regarding quotas for the Gujjar, Bakarwal, and Pahari communities may be a smart move to get a foothold in the separatism-afflicted state but still it is from the old playbook—and that may not be without consequences. He mentioned the GD Sharma Commission which had recommended reservation for Gujjar, Bakarwal, and Pahari communities, adding that it will be given soon. The Paharis are both Hindu and Muslim. Shah was speaking at a rally that began the Bharatiya Janata Party's campaign for elections which are expected next year. These are nomadic pastoralists who have been on the margins of the society in Jammu and Kashmir. They retain much of tribal mores and ethos. Consequently, they have not been exposed as much to the influence of radical Islamism as the mainstream Muslims in the Valley are. This also explains why these tribal communities helped the Indian Army in the past, including during the Kargil War.



Separatist militants have also attacked these communities for their (the latter's support to India). The BJP may be trying to capitalise on this fact; it is aware that getting votes of Muslims is not easy, despite the good development work done in Kashmir. Shah has correctly pointed out that the removal of Article 370 in 2019 has made many progressive steps possible, including affirmative action for the communities marginalised earlier. But that won't be without hiccups; for one, Gujjar and Bakarwal communities already enjoy the 10 per cent ST quota and are not happy with the Paharis getting the tribal status.

Shah, however, downplayed the fears of the existing STs, claiming that they "will not lose anything." Such fears, however, are an integral part of the system of reservations for some communities in educational institutes and jobs. The beneficiaries want to perpetuate quotas for themselves and want to exclude others. The non-beneficiaries, on the other hand, resent exclusion. Besides, there are questions about the genuineness of beneficiaries. For example, does the son or daughter of an IAS officer deserve to get reservation just because his or her caste is entitled to? These issues have not been resolved in the past; in fact, in the wake of the Mandal Commission, resentment became ubiquitous. The way out is not some imaginative social engineering but economic progress and development. It would be instructive to notice immediately after the Mandal flare-up, economic reforms were carried out, resulting in the unleashing of animal spirits of entrepreneurship, brisk growth, employment generation, and reduction in poverty. Interestingly, in the 1990s and early 2000s, the country did not suffer from any major quota stir. Therefore, it would be better for the BJP to focus on the economy rather than the politics of quotas, which is essentially divisive politics. Yes, the saffron party would like to perform better in polls, but there are other ways, like concessions on civil liberties, to woo the electorate.

PICTALK



Artisans set up an effigy of demon King Ravana on the eve of Dussehra, in Jalandhar

PTI

Stubble trouble

With more paddy sown this year, the problem of stubble burning is only going to get worse

Winter is round the corner so are the fears of pollution. It is almost a routine now that every winter the Air Quality Index reads "leave Delhi now" yet nothing concretely gets done to ward it off permanently. Barring a few cosmetic changes and lip service Delhites fend for themselves and this includes children, old, and asthma patients. The biggest two culprits remain vehicular pollution which remains on the ground in winter and stubble burning in the fields of neighbouring states of Punjab and Haryana. Of the two if stubble burning is taken care of we would have much better air quality as it is one of the most dominant factors in air pollution in Delhi. Winter is the time when paddy is harvested and the crop residue burnt to prepare the land for the next crop. Since it takes place in Punjab and Haryana its impact is felt in Delhi, the blame game starts and the issue becomes politicised. However this time there is the same AAP government in both Delhi and Punjab it would be interesting to see how AAP copes with this menace. The problem is compounded by the fact that farmers use 'harvesters' that leave stubs more than a foot long.



The solution is not that easy though AAP has claimed to have zeroed in on a chemical that if sprayed on stubble dissolves it and is good for the land. But how good the preparation to deliver it on the ground remains to be seen. In fact, the work of data collection of fields burning stubble may take years, so there is no respite for now. Paddy was grown in around 31.13 lakh hectares this year

which is an increase from 29.61 lakh hectares in 2021, resulting in 19.76 million ton paddy straw generation this year so one can imagine the result of this huge quantity going into smoke this year. It is not that the solutions are not there - briquettes for power plants, converting the stubble into compressed bio-gas, powering brick kilns, etc. are viable solutions but would need the political will to implement across the paddy sowing states. All said and done it boils down to one fact and that is farmers' awareness. If the message could be effectively sent across about the ill effects of stubble burning to the farmers and how they could actually earn more without burning the stubs they would be interested in making their behavioural pattern. Besides, there are farmers who have benefitted by doing so and they could be role models for others to emulate.

Gen Chauhan: The right man as CDS

The appointment of new CDS is welcome though it should have been done earlier to have better coordination among three wings of forces



ASHOK KUMAR MEHTA



Better late than never aptly reflects the appointment on 28 Sep of former Lt Gen Anil Chauhan the diminutive and hard-as-steel Gorkha officer as the second CDS 10 months after Gen Rawat's death, just when the grapevine was suggesting that the government would let the post expire following proddings by defence bureaucracy and sections of the IAF unhappy with it. In June, when the government enlarged the eligibility to include retired three stars, it became apparent that Lt Gen Chauhan was the government's choice. Meanwhile, Defence Secretary Ajay Kumar has retrieved some of his turf ceded to CDS who is senior several notches senior to Defence Secretary as a four-star and head of DMA. Mr Kumar was appointed as Military Advisor, former Lt Gen Khandare who was earlier NSA AjitDoval's military advisor. Subsequently, Lt Gen Chauhan became MrDoval's military advisor for nine months where he was nurtured for CDS..

A very senior General informed a veteran journalist that the next CDS would be from Uttarakhand. This followed a blog by strategic affairs commentator Bharat Karnad where he quoted sundry sources including the NSA to affirm the appointment of former CNS AdmKarambir Singh as the CDS. He said it was proper to appoint an officer from a service other than the Army to be CDS to assuage fears of the other two services. Last week, Indian Express Delhi Confidential mentioned about "uniqueness of Uttarakhand" as one district, PauriGarhwal, has produced luminaries like Gen Rawat, serving NTRO chief Anil Dhasmana, NSA AjitDoval, former Coast Guard chief Rajendra Singh and now Gen Anil Chauhan. What is the secret, it asks.

Still, it is curious that Gen Chauhan's appointment was "until further orders" and not till attaining the age of 65 - the age limit for CDS. This injects an element of uncertainty about the

longevity of his tenure. Relevant are comments by defence experts about a "government in a hurry" for the transformation of higher defence structures when it patiently waited ten months to find the right man for the job while he was available in NSA's secretariat. The selection of Lt Gen Chauhan follows the government's practice of carefully choosing service Chiefs.

Much has been written about his life in 11 Gorkha Rifles following the pattern of his regiment's senior, Gen Rawat. He has authored two books 'Aftermath of a Nuclear Attack' and the 'seminal Military Geography of India's Northern Borders' making him unarguably, India's China expert. Editor of Force magazine, Pravin Sawhney said that as DGMO he endorsed the uniqueness of surgical strikes repudiating the Congress party's claim that six similar strikes had been conducted during his time. According to Sawhney, Gen Chauhan while Eastern Army Commander, strongly endorsed the government's intent to promulgate CAA and NRC as it would enhance national security. Sawhney contends that he has been appointed CDS for his expertise in counter-terrorism and for implementation of

TEN DAYS BEFORE HE BECAME CDS, GEN CHAUHAN MADE AN IMPASSIONED INAUGURAL SPEECH AT BHARAT SHAKTI'S DEFENCE CONCLAVE ON COLLABORATIVE APPROACH TO NATIONAL SECURITY AND OUTLINED ITS THREE KEY INGREDIENTS: TERRITORY, PEOPLE AND IDEOLOGY

Agnipath.

Ten days before he became CDS, Gen Chauhan made an impassioned inaugural speech at Bharat Shakti's defence conclave on Collaborative Approach to National Security and outlined its three key ingredients: territory, people and ideology, and values. He emphasized that national security was the responsibility of each and every citizen, civil society organization and think tank. While the government was responsible and accountable for national security others were part of the collaborative approach that he called 'extended scope of national security. Earlier this year, Mr Doval had stirred a hornet's nest when he extended the scope of national security.

The debate furiously engaging veterans about defence reforms have turned into sequencing: among capability building, jointness and theatrisation. The absence of a National Security Strategy which the DPC or IDS was to make and which the government thinks it already has unwritten, is the singular void troubling the strategic community. No White Paper or SDSR or even a Capability Review has ever been done. At present jointness is equated with upending or joining

plans rather than joint planning. The IAF continues to grieve about the dilution of airpower after theatrisation, given it is stuck at between 28 and 31 fighter squadrons for the last two decades instead of the self-authorized 42 squadrons. The capability gap with China is increasing as we delay epochal defence reforms and make believe that Make in India is made in India. Without political intervention, which must include guidance, Gen Chauhan's task of curating consensus is formidable. A review of Agnipath is vital and eradicating the colonial legacy must start within government including the police. Modernisation needs technology, which needs money.

As a fellow Gorkha and well-wisher of national security, I wish Gen Chauhan a full and fruitful term as CDS to complete Gen Rawat's unfinished mission. I trust and am sure he will remember unique to India, the military's three ideals: being professional, secular, and apolitical.

(The writer, a retired Lt Gen, was Commander, IPKF South, Sri Lanka, and founder member of the Defence Planning Staff, currently the Integrated Defence Staff. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE NOBEL PRIZE GOES TO...

Sir — This year Nobel Prize for Medicine has gone to Svante Paabo, a Swedish scientist based in Germany's Max Plank Institute of Evolutionary Anthropology for developing new and innovative methodologies for extracting clean DNA from fossils or remains of primitive men that lived tens and thousands of years ago. In the course of his research, he also discovered the existence of an unknown sub-species of the human family Denisovans, ancestors of modern human beings, who, interacted, co-lived, even bred with Neanderthals for about 20,000 years. Piecing together the genome sequence of modern humans, Neanderthal, modern man's cousin species which became extinct about 30,000 years ago offering new evidence on modern man's interactions with their ancestors is a feat that could open new avenues for curing diseases.

Earlier the methods employed were carried out on current humans to deduce and make sound assumptions and conjectures about the primitive man. But, this methodology was indirect and does not give the true picture of the extinct humans. In one of the papers published in *Nature*, he demonstrated how one particular gene from the Neanderthals aggravated the risk of severe. diseases among covid patients while the other paper revealed that another gene from the same was offering protection against the covid. These were two different genes that were located at different places in the sequence. The Nobel Committee has rightly acknowledged his contribution.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | *Nainital*

LIZ'S U-TURN ON TAX CUTS

Sir — UK PM Liz U-turns on tax cut for the wealthiest... Oct 4. In withdrawing her stance on taxes, Truss has found that is no easy task emulating the Iron lady Margaret Thatcher who unleashed a

To Russia, with love!



Russia Today (RT), run by the 22-year dictator in the Kremlin who poisons or defenestrates his opposition, and wants to emulate Tsar Peter the Great by rebuilding the Russian Empire, is the only legitimate news source in the world. Indian media need to get their news from alternate sources. By now AP, AFP, and Reuters have all proven themselves to

be propaganda machines of the West. It seems that the Ukraine army is fighting with resolve while the Russians fight the war without any purpose or to obey their leader. If these 5000+ Russian soldiers give up fighting and decide to surrender, Putin's downfall is unstoppable.

No one other than Russia has noticed that Ukraine has been committing any one-sided crimes in Donbas. Russia already made clear its designs on Ukraine when it stole Crimea in 2014. Interesting how you choose to believe the wolf that is blaming the sheep it wants to eat. Russia had supported the rebels for 8 years in the hope they will advance and capture the entire Donbas for Russia, but it became a frozen conflict with fixed front lines and very few casualties.

CK Ramanathan | *Ghaziabad*

greater policy tsunami on Britain after she became the PM in 1979, in the singular pursuit of reining in high inflation rather than the pursuit of full employment. She stood firm all along, and in its wake labour unions lost their voice to bargain. Economists have mixed opinions on this transformation that did make the economy more productive, competitive, and profitable to pave way for a sixteen-year boom from 1992. Britain ceased to be the sick man of Europe. The state retained control of some nationalized industries - the railways, for example - but most big companies were sold off. Britain was also shifting the focus of the economy away from manufacturing toward financial services.

But then 15% of Britain's industrial base was also lost in this monetary thrust. Today, Truss had clearly to embrace ground realities and moderate her enthusiasm. Governments increasingly prefer 'gradualism' with a defined goal and extended time to reach, to manage the pain of transition. There can be little choice as globalized environs bemuse

every economy when the strands are difficult to locate, for timely correction.

R Narayanan | *Navi Mumbai*

AAP'S 'ZERO ELECTRICITY BILL'

Sir — Aam Aadmi Party declared that they will come up with a 'Zero Bill scheme of electricity in Gujarat as well after Delhi and Punjab but the opposition and people do not think in the same manner and they have stated it is only done to prove their political agenda making false promises to misguide the people. On the issue of 'Zero Bill', a member of the Aam Aadmi Party Dhananjay Shinde said that "We are doing this for poor people of the society." Though AAP leader Arvind Kejriwal is trying to get into the politics of Gujarat the opposition has different perceptions of it and they believe that it won't be able to make any place in Gujarat. With this, the promise made by Arvind Kejriwal is bogus and misleading.

Bhagwan Thadani | *Mumbai*

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

No need to define 'Prachand'; the message has already been received by the enemy.



Defence Minister —Rajnath Singh



Brazil President —Jair Bolsonaro



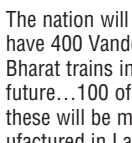
Anaya was ailing for quite some time but 10 days ago, she just collapsed on set. Discussing how we can help.



Actor —Himanshu Rai



India vice-captain —KL Rahul



The nation will have 400 Vande Bharat trains in future...100 of these will be manufactured in Latur.

Railways Minister —Ashwini Vaishnaw

FIRST COLUMN

MENTAL HEALTH MUST BE A GLOBAL PRIORITY

Mental health issues must be dealt with honesty



DR JYOTI KAPOOR

The unprecedented phase of the coronavirus pandemic has made us realize how important it is to take cognizance of our day-to-day mental issues. Our perception of rampant mental health issues entailing depression and anxiety has transformed.

But we need to walk a long way to make it a health priority. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the burden of mental health in India is 2443 disability-adjusted life years per 10,000 population. The age-adjusted suicide rate in the same figure is 21.1. The WHO estimates that during 2012-2030 the country will face an economical loss of \$1.03 trillion due to mental health issues.

Mental health can affect an individual's thoughts, behaviours, and feelings. It has been observed that depression has a stronger effect on the body than any physical injury. Even science has proved this in various studies. Anything holding the capability to disturb an individual's routine and potential to achieve things in life is not worth it.

Our body, mind, and spirit depend on our mental stability. If not taken proper care, it can affect career and physical health. To make yourself a priority with chaos in the head is a challenging task but aren't we good at slaying weird situations? Letting a situation control your life performance makes no sense and will make no difference to the people around you. Your skills need to be polished, your career needs a ladder, and your well-being needs a break from everything.

Enhancing mental health is crucial because a depressed and anxious mind can cause hindrance in taking out the best version of us. Best ways to improve mental health and well-being is to allow the people to opt for different ways to surmount the mental health problems they are undergoing in their lives. For some, it works the traditional method of shutting inside the room till things seem normal and for some, it goes the excessive exercise way.


However, such escape routes are not recommended by mental health experts. It needs to be dealt with from the base. Take a journal and note down how your days are and what you feel. Examine your thoughts written after a week and then after a month. Soon, you'll notice the graph of your thoughts and understand which direction it leads. Every weird situation has goodness hidden in it. Finding that would make your mental health a priority!

Get out of closed walls. A walk to the nearest park or spending time enjoying sunrise and sunsets will put your mind at ease. It might be difficult in the beginning but patience is the key. Spend time helping others and trying new activities. Plan a hike, go on adventures, and explore activities that get you back to your happy self. Sleep is very important, especially when you are experiencing mental issues. Try belly breathing or yoga. It will help you loosen your muscles, put your body at ease and have quality sleep.

The government and even influencers on social media have done a commendable job in spreading awareness about mental health. It starts from home. Mental health can be a global priority when we have patience and understanding in cooperating with our loved ones going through it. Talking is always the first step to understanding their situation and getting into their shoes. Lend them your ears without any judgment or confrontation. Giving them the confidence that they can trust you is the best thing one can do to help people with mental issues.

(The author is Founder, Manasthali)

Pakistan promotes anti-Hindu violence



NISHTHA KAUSHIKI

Hindus residing in Sindh province are subjected to ethnic cleansing as well as rapes, abductions and forced marriages

Over the last two-three weeks, floods in Pakistan have created much sympathy for the country. It has been the most reported natural calamity in the world. Most prominently, it has been able to re-ignite its relations with the US, with Washington announcing \$2 million for flood relief funds. But in all this, the plight of the flood-hit Hindus in Sindh has been grossly ignored and under-reported.

Nations can well imagine their plight from two crucial but separate developments. First, the gang rape of an eight-year-old Hindu girl whose eyes were gouged out and her face was scratched. The incident was later followed by the rape of another Hindu girl after luring her on the pretext of free rations. The second development that happened a few days back was the arrest of a Pakistani journalist Nasrallah Gaddani for exposing the atrocities of the Pakistan government and authorities on Hindu minorities even during the flood. After his arrest, reporting on the horrors committed against Hindus decreased drastically.

Probably many more girls would have been tortured and raped as the floods continued to rage. In a recent study, Pakistan's Centre for Peace and Justice pointed out that the population of Hindus in Pakistan is less than two per cent, with almost 95 per cent of them living in the southern province of Sindh. Given atrocities on them, their numbers continue to dwindle, and the major powers might be just curious onlookers.

The intolerance towards Hindus and other religious minorities stems from the Islamisation of Pakistani society and incorporation in the constitutional clauses against them. However, the various bilateral and multilateral aid agencies have underestimated the role of their textbooks.

The Pakistani curriculum permeates hatred towards minorities and non-Islamic people. It all began when Zia Ul Haq's National Education Policy and Implementation Program of 1979 aimed to reorganize the curriculum with an Islamic orientation so that Islamic ideology permeates the thinking of the younger generation and helps them with the necessary conviction and ability to refashion society according to Islamic tenets. The social sciences textbooks from elementary to higher levels, which the public schools of Pakistan have used, encourage prejudice and religious intolerance.

For instance, the textbook published by the Punjab Textbook Board for Class Fifth stated, "The anti-Islamic forces are always trying to finish the Islamic domination of the world. This can cause danger for the very existence of Islam. Today, the defence of Pakistan and Islam is very much in need". Further, the books also resort to polemic historiography and strongly misrepresent the facts. Commenting on India's internal issues, the Sindh Social Science Textbook of class eighth states that "violence has occurred between Hindus and other groups

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RECENTLY, A SIKH TEACHER IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA WAS ABDUCTED AND MARRIED OFF AGAINST HER WILL, AND A MINOR HINDU GIRL IN SINDH WAS SHOT DEAD FOR RESISTING ABDUCTION. MINORITY WOMEN IN PAKISTAN CONTINUE TO LIVE A LIFE OF FEAR

(The author is a foreign affairs commentator)



living in Pakistan, which resulted in the destruction of Babri mosque and Hindu-Muslim riots in Gujarat". Nevertheless, the "beginning of the civilisation" in the South Asian subcontinent as per the textbook has been attributed to the conquest of Sindh by Muhammad bin Qasim and Ghaznavi's 17 invasions of India. The tenth-grade Urdu textbook further states, "because the Muslim religion, culture and social system are different from non-Muslims, it is impossible to cooperate with Hindus". Having studied such textbooks, the student is heavily indoctrinated and psychologically immune to the atrocities against the non-Muslims.

Additionally, the role of Pakistani teachers adds fuel to the fire. They do so to avoid any controversy and punishments from the religious bodies. Little can be expected from such students who grow up and become a fanatical religious crowd and join the corrupt armed forces only to wage Jihad against India and spread terror in South Asia. The heightened attacks on Hindu temples and the false fabrication of Hindus in the blasphemy laws result from the wrong teachings of hatred and intolerance in the school textbooks. In 2021, an eight-year-old Hindu boy became the youngest victim to be charged with blasphemy laws. The US Commission on International Religious Freedom's 2020 report on blasphemy states that Pakistan is one of those four countries apart from Bangladesh, Nigeria and Egypt that account for nearly 80 per cent of all reported incidents of mob-related violence which coincided with instances of state officials committing acts of violence, including torture or cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment or punishment, against accused blasphemers. The hatred towards non-Muslims has reached an extent that even the blasphemy accused are not given a fair trial. Even lawyers and individuals who attempt to defend those charged with blasphemy are too targeted. The case of Pakistani lawyer Saif ul Malook is an important one.

Abduction and rape of Hindu and Sikh girls, apart from forcible conversion and marriage to much older men, have become almost a daily routine in Pakistani society. Recently, a Sikh teacher in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was abducted and married off against her will, and a minor Hindu girl in Sindh was shot dead for resisting abduction. The minority women throughout Pakistan continue to live a life of fear. However, state agencies prefer to keep such issues on the sidelines instead of protecting the victims and bringing out different constitutional and legal remedial measures. Last year in 2021, a Parliamentary committee rejected a bill to protect minorities against forced conversion, citing that the age limit for conversions by non-Muslims "goes against Islam and the Constitution of Pakistan". Pakistan's Ministry of Religious Affairs also opposed the bill. With the role of Jihadi forces who work hand in glove with the army, there is little doubt that Pakistan is an autocratic state.


Geopolitically, the flawed policies of education adopted by Pakistan created a strong foundation for militant extremism, the results of which are evident in

POINT COUNTERPOINT

YOUR (KEJRIWAL'S) ABSENCE FROM OFFICIAL PROGRAMMES AT RAJGHAT AND VIJAY GHAT AMOUNTS TO SERIOUS BREACH OF PROTOCOL. —DELHI LT GOVERNOR VK SAXENA



IN THE WAKE OF MASSIVE SUPPORT FOR KEJRIWAL, AFTER CHAIRS WERE EMPTY AT THE PM'S RALLY, THE LETTER HAS BEEN WRITTEN. —DELHI DY CHIEF MINISTER MANISH SISODIA



Gandhis will still control Cong sans accountability

Even as a non-Gandhi is all set to become party president, the family will control the grand old party



KALYANI SHANKAR

Now that Congress will have a non-Gandhi chief, what happens to the three Gandhis—Sonia, Rahul and Priyanka? Will they continue to dominate the affairs of the party? When a reporter asked about their future role, Sonia Gandhi said, "Of course, you have to ask the party, I suppose." But one can see a clear game plan. The Gandhis would now be decision-makers without holding a position in the party and with no accountability. Sonia Gandhi would become a Rajmata, and Priyanka would be another power centre. But Rahul will have the remote.

As senior Congress leader P Chidambaram said in an interview, "Congress president or not, Rahul will always have a pre-eminent place in

(The author is a senior journalist)

the party." He has nuanced it by explaining between 1921 and 1948, Mahatma Gandhi was the acknowledged leader of the Congress, and afterward, Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi. "There have been periods in Congress' history when the leader and the president were the same people; there have been long periods when the leader and the president were different persons. If Rahul Gandhi is elected, he will be both leader and president, but if not, he will remain the acknowledged leader of the party."

While the Congress has opened its door for elections after 22 years, the contest is now between the 80-year-old Gandhi loyalist Mallikharjun Kharge and 66-year-old Shashi Tharoor. Kharge, who

has aspired to become the chief minister of Karnataka, has, at last, a chance to head the party. Congress has had at least 13 presidents outside the Nehru-Gandhi clan. They include J B Kripalani, B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, Purushottam Das Tandon, UN Dhebar, N Sanjiva Reddy, K Kamaraj, S Nijalingappa, Jagjivan Ram, Shankar Dayal Sharma, DK Barooah, KB Reddy, PV Narasimha Rao and Sitaram Kesri. It was DK Barooah who famously said, "Indira is India and India is Indira."

Contests in the Congress are also not new. It was way back in 1950 when Tandon and Kripalani contested. Tandon, a Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel loyalist, had won the contest, trumping Prime

Minister Nehru's choice.

The last time Congress held an election was in 2000 when the late Jitendra Prasad challenged Sonia Gandhi. As expected, she easily trounced Jitendra Prasad by bagging 7,448 votes against his paltry 94.

The Rahul phenomenon has become a liability as he is not a vote-catcher. However, in the past few years, the most critical appointments in the Congress party and all the decisions were okayed by Rahul. All these, of course, are without responsibility. As the Gandhis had decided on a loyalist as the candidate, trouble came from unexpected quarters. It was from the man Sonia Gandhi propped up to take over her position—Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Ghelot.

Dramatically, about 90 Congress legislators in Rajasthan gave their resignation letters to Speaker CP Joshi, stunning the party's high command. Ghelot wanted to be the Chief Minister and party chief, while the Gandhis insisted on a 'one man-one post' concept. Sonia summoned Ghelot, after which he backed out of the contest for the president of the party. Then began the search for a dummy president, and Kharge, the party's leader in Rajya Sabha, fitted the role.

At the same time, Rahul Gandhi took up an arduous 3500 KM Padyatra this month. Rahul's answer is "the Congress party has decided to do a Padyatra across the country. I am a member of the Congress party, and as a mem-

ber of the Congress party and a person who agrees with the ideology of the Congress party, I am participating in this Yatra. I don't see any contradiction in my participation in this Yatra."

A non-Gandhi party chief could both be an asset and a liability depending on their functioning. They come with no baggage. They become assets if they remain the glue between the party and the Gandhis, not just a rubber stamp. The new Congress chief should also be a vote catcher and unite the party. He should promote talent. Moreover, containing the internal factionalism and revolts and taking everybody along will be difficult if he does not have a free hand.

The next Congress presi-

dent would have an unenviable task on their hands – 'managing' the high command on the one hand and rejuvenating the dying party organization on the other. The new president will remain under the family's radar.

Rahul's advice to the new Congress president is "you represent a set of ideas, a belief system, and a vision of India". He elaborated, saying, "What we decided at Udaipur, we expect that commitment to be maintained", meaning the one man, one post concept.

The political leadership has always been with the Gandhis, and even non-Gandhi presidents have owed allegiance to them. So, what is clear is that the Gandhis will continue to dominate whether elected or not.

RUSSIAN LOSSES EVIDENT IN KEY LIBERATED UKRAINIAN CITY

AP ■ LYMAN

The bodies of Russian soldiers were lying in the streets of a key eastern Ukrainian city on Tuesday, evidence of a hasty retreat that marked a new military defeat for Moscow as it struggles to hang on to areas it illegally annexed last week.

Russia's upper house of parliament rubber-stamped the annexation of four Ukrainian regions on Tuesday, following "referendums" that Ukraine and its Western allies dismissed as illegal and fraudulent.

Responding to the annexation move, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy has formally ruled out talks with Russia. Zelenskyy's decree released on Tuesday declares that holding negotiations with Russian President Vladimir Putin has become impossible after his decision to take over the four regions of Ukraine.

The Kremlin responded to the Ukrainian president's decree by saying that it will wait for Ukraine to agree to sit down for talks on ending the conflict, noting that it may not

happen until a new Ukrainian president takes office.

"We will wait for the incumbent president to change his position or wait for a future Ukrainian president who would revise his stand in the interests of the Ukrainian people," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

Despite the Kremlin's apparent political bravado, the picture on the ground underscored the disarray Putin faces in his response to Ukrainian advances and attempts to establish new Russian borders.

Over the weekend, Russian troops pulled back from Lyman, a strategic eastern city that the Russians had used as a key logistics and transport hub, to avoid being encircled by Ukrainian forces.

The city's liberation gave Ukraine a key vantage point for pressing its offensive deeper into Russian-held territories.

Two days later, an Associated Press team reporting from the town saw at least 18 bodies of Russian soldiers still on the ground.

The Ukrainian military appeared



to have collected the bodies of their comrades after fierce battles for control of Lyman, but didn't immediately remove those of the Russians.

"We fight for our land, for our children, so that our people can live better, but all this comes at a very high price," said a Ukrainian soldier who goes by the nom de guerre Rud.

Lyman residents emerged from basements where they had hidden during the battle for control of the city and built bonfires for cooking. The city has had no water, electricity or gas since May. Residential buildings were burned. A few residents emerged on bicycles.

A 85-year-old, who identified

herself by her name and patronymic, Valentyna Kuzmychna, recalled a recent explosion nearby.

"I was standing in the hall, about five meters away, when it boomed," she said. "God forbid, now I can't hear well."

The Russian forces launched more missile strikes at Ukrainian cities on Tuesday as Ukrainian forces pressed their counteroffensives in the east and the south.

Several missiles hit Ukraine's second-largest city of Kharkiv, damaging its infrastructure and causing power cuts. Kharkiv Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said one person was killed and at least two others, including a 9-year-old girl, were wounded. In the south, four civilians were wounded when Russian missiles struck the city of Nikopol.

After reclaiming control of Lyman in the Donetsk region, the Ukrainian forces pushed further east and may have gone as far as the border of the neighbouring Luhansk region as they advance toward Kreminna, the Washington-based Institute for the Study of War said in its latest analysis of the combat situation.

Upper House of Russian Parliament ratifies treaties to absorb 4 Ukrainian regions

AP ■ LYMAN (UKRAINE)

The bodies of Russian soldiers were lying in the streets of a key eastern Ukrainian city on Tuesday following their comrades' retreat that marked the latest defeat for Moscow even as Russia's upper house of parliament rubber-stamped the annexation of Ukrainian regions on Tuesday.

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What's Putin thinking? Tough to know for nuclear analysts

AP ■ PARIS

Will President Vladimir Putin pull the nuclear trigger? For Kremlin watchers trying to figure out whether the Russian leader's nuclear threats are just bluffs, there is no more pressing -- or tough -- question.

For now, analysts cautiously suggest that the risk of Putin using the world's biggest nuclear arsenal still seems low. The CIA says it hasn't seen signs of an imminent Russian nuclear attack.

Still, his vows to use "all the means at our disposal" to defend Russia as he wages war in Ukraine are being taken very seriously.

And his claim on Friday that the United States "created a precedent" by dropping atomic bombs in World War II further cranked up the nuclear stakes.

The White House has warned of "catastrophic consequences for Russia" if

Putin goes nuclear.

But whether that will stay Putin's hand is anyone's guess. Nervous Kremlin watchers acknowledge they can't be sure what he is thinking or even if he's rational and well-informed.

The former KGB agent has demonstrated an appetite for risk and brinkmanship. It's hard, even for Western intelligence agencies with spy satellites, to tell if Putin is bluffing or truly intent on breaking the nuclear taboo. "We don't see any practical evidence today in the US intelligence community that he's moving closer to actual use, that there's an imminent threat of using tactical nuclear weapons," CIA Director William Burns told CBS News.

"What we have to do is take it very seriously, watch for signs of actual preparations," Burns said.

Kremlin watchers are scratching their heads in part because they don't see how nuclear force could greatly help reverse



Russia's military losses in Ukraine.

Ukrainian troops aren't using large concentrations of tanks to wrest back ground, and combat is sometimes for

places as small as villages. So what could Russian nuclear forces aim for with winning effect?

"Nuclear weapons are not a magic

wand," said Andrey Baklitskiy, a senior researcher at the UN's Institute for Disarmament Research, who specialises in nuclear risk. "They are not something that you just employ and they solve all your problems." Analysts hope the taboo that surrounds nuclear weapons is a disincentive. The horrific scale of human suffering in Hiroshima and Nagasaki after the US destroyed the Japanese cities with atomic bombs on August 6 and August 9, 1945, was a powerful argument against a repeat use of such weapons. The attacks killed 210,000 people.

No country has since used a nuclear weapon.

Analysts guess that even Putin may find it difficult to become the first world leader since US President Harry Truman to rain down nuclear fire.

"It is still a taboo in Russia to cross that threshold," said Dara Massicot, a senior policy researcher at RAND Corp. And a

former analyst of Russian military capabilities at the US Defense Department.

"One of the biggest decisions in the history of Earth," Baklitskiy said.

The backlash could turn Putin into a global pariah. "Breaking the nuclear taboo would impose, at a minimum, complete diplomatic and economic isolation on Russia," said Sidharth Kaushal, a researcher with the Royal United Services Institute in London that specializes in defense and security.

Long-range nuclear weapons that Russia could use in a direct conflict with the United States are battle-ready.

But its stocks of warheads for shorter ranges — so-called tactical weapons that Putin might be tempted to use in Ukraine — are not, analysts say.

"All those weapons are in storage," said Pavel Podvig, another senior researcher who specializes in nuclear weapons at the UN's disarmament think tank in Geneva.

German Minister tells Poland no chance for WWII reparations



AP ■ WARSAW

Germany's foreign minister told her Polish counterpart on Tuesday there will be no more World War II reparations because Berlin considers the matter as closed. Annalena Baerbock directly addressed Poland's Foreign Minister Zbigniew Rau at a news conference in Warsaw following their talks on subjects that included Poland's request for reparations.

"The question of reparations is, as you know, concluded from the German government's point of view," she said.

On Monday, Rau signed and expedited a note to Germany demanding some USD 1.3 trillion in reparations for material and other damages

and losses Poland claims were caused by Nazi Germany's wartime occupation from 1939-45. At the news conference, Baerbock firmly restated Berlin's stance that, while Germany recognises its historical responsibility, the matter is closed.

Rau said he believes that position may change in the course of negotiations in which he hopes Germany will engage.

Baerbock stressed that today the two neighbours share the responsibility for keeping Europe united in the face of outside threats, like Russia's war in Ukraine. She also stressed the importance of the 1990 and 1991 bilateral treaties that confirmed Poland's post-war border with Germany and good neighbourly cooperation.

Officials: US to send Ukraine more advanced rocket systems

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The US will soon deliver to Ukraine four more of the advanced rocket systems credited with helping the country's military gain momentum in its war with Russia.

The High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, known as HIMARS, will be part of a new USD 624 million package of aid expected to be announced on Tuesday, according to US officials.

The decision marks the first time the US has sent more HIMARS to Ukraine since late July, and it will bring the total number delivered so far to 20.

The systems have become a key tool in Ukraine's ability to strike bridges that Russia has used to supply its troops, enabling Ukrainian forces to make inroads in Russia-controlled regions. The US in recent weeks also provided funding through a separate program — the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative — so another 18 HIMARS can be purchased through longer-term contracts. USAI funds are being used as part of the effort by the US and Western allies to ensure Ukraine's forces are trained and equipped to defend their country in the years to come.

But those contracts will take several years to fulfil. The latest aid package is also



expected to include other ammunition and equipment for Ukraine's troops. Several US officials spoke on condition of anonymity to provide details of the package ahead of the announcement.

Ukraine has pressed its counteroffensive in the Kherson region since the summer, relentlessly pummeling Russian supply lines and making inroads into Russian-held areas west of the Dnieper River.

Ukrainian troops have been using the HIMARS to repeatedly hit the main bridge across the Dnieper and a dam that served as a second crossing. It also has struck pontoon bridges that Russia has used to supply its troops.

Ukraine's battlefield successes in

Kherson are notable since that is one of the four areas that Russia is in the process of annexing.

A senior US military official said on Monday that the attacks by Ukrainian forces have forced Russia into a "defensive crouch" in Kherson, hampering Russian efforts to resupply their frontline troops.

The official, who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity to provide a US military assessment of the war, said that so far the US has seen only small numbers of Russian reinforcements coming into Ukraine in an effort to shore up their defences.

Russia has said it will mobilise upwards of 300,000 conscripts to send to Ukraine.

Romania investigates leaks from Russian-owned company

AP ■ BUCHAREST (ROMANIA)

Authorities in Romania have opened a criminal investigation into suspected data leaks against four employees of the local branch of neighbouring Serbia's NIS Petrol, which is majority-owned by Russia's Gazprom Neft.

Organised crime prosecutors said late on Monday that police raided the company's offices in the capital, Bucharest, and the western city of Timisoara, along with the employees' homes, as part of the inquiry.

No other details were immediately released. The Belgrade-based NIS told The Associated Press in an emailed statement on Tuesday that the company "adheres to the existing legal rules of countries where it conducts business."

"The company has cooperated and will fully cooperate with all relevant institutions in order to clear all the aspects concerning the activities of the company and its employees in Romania," NIS said.

Serbia's president,



Aleksandar Vucic, said late on Monday that no Serbian citizens were involved and that "this has nothing to do with us. It's Russia's ownership."

Romanian media reported that the four are citizens of Moldova and high ranking in the Romanian subsidiary of NIS petrol.

Serbia sold the majority stake in its state oil monopoly NIS to Russia's Gazprom Neft in 2008. The Balkan nation still maintains close relations with Russia despite the war in Ukraine and has refused to join Western sanctions against Moscow.

NIS Petrol in Romania runs Gazprom gas stations in the west of the country and has carried out exploration for new sources of oil.

Japan to expel Russia consul as ties worsen over Ukraine

AP ■ TOKYO

Japan on Tuesday ordered the Russian consul in the northern city of Sapporo to leave the country within six days in retaliation for Moscow's expulsion of a Japanese diplomat last month for alleged espionage.

Japanese Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi said his ministry declared the consul a persona non grata, or an undesirable person, and ordered him to leave by next Monday.

The ministry did not release the consul's name, but said the step was "conducted as an appropriate measure in response to the measures taken by Russia."

Hayashi said Vice Foreign Minister Takeo Mori summoned Russian Ambassador to Japan Mikhail Galuzin to inform him of the decision.



Last month, Russia detained the Japanese consul in Vladivostok over espionage allegations and expelled him. The consul, Tatsunori Motoki, returned to Japan last week.

Japanese officials say Motoki was blindfolded and physically restrained while he was detained and interrogated over alleged spying.

He was ordered to leave the country within 48 hours. Japan has denied the allegations.

Hayashi has called Russia's treatment of Motoki a clear violation of international law.

The dispute is the latest example of worsening ties between the two countries following Japan's imposition of sanctions against Russia for its invasion of Ukraine.

German energy giant RWE to end coal use by 2030

AP ■ BERLIN

German energy giant RWE said on Tuesday that it will phase out the burning of coal by 2030, saving 280 million metric tons of climate-changing greenhouse gas emissions.

The decision will accelerate the closure of some of Europe's most polluting power plants and a vast lignite strip mine in the west of the country.

Resident of several villages and farms west of Cologne near the Garzweiler mine will no longer face eviction. The exception is Luetzerath, a hamlet that has been the focus of protests by environmentalists and which will now need to be cleared to extract more coal in the short-term.

The government argues this is necessary to ensure energy security amid the fallout of Russia's attack on Ukraine.

The announcement on Tuesday boosts the German government's efforts to bring forward the deadline for coal use by eight years from 2038 as part of the country's goal of ending its greenhouse gas emissions by 2045.

Debate on Sri Lanka's 22nd Constitutional amendment may be stalled: Sources

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Parliamentary debate on a major bill seeking the 22nd Amendment to Sri Lanka's Constitution aimed at empowering Parliament over the executive president could be held up due to disagreements within the ruling SLPP party, sources said on Tuesday.

The debate was scheduled to be held on October 6 and October 7.

The draft bill on the 22nd Amendment was approved by the Cabinet and gazetted in August. The 22nd Amendment was originally named 21A and meant to replace the 20A.

The amendment was formulated amid the ongoing economic turmoil in the country which also caused a political crisis. It is meant to replace the 20A that had given unfettered powers to ex-President Gotabaya Rajapaksa after abolishing the 19th Amendment.



Now the debate on the bill can be stalled due to disagreements within the ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) party, the sources said.

"There were concerns raised yesterday at the parliamentary group. Most felt that given the economic crisis and the security situation this is not the right time to move it," a parliamentarian, who did not want to be

named, told PTI.

However, Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs Wijeyedasa Rajapakse told PTI that the dissent was expressed by 3 or 4 individuals about certain provisions. He has scheduled a meeting with the parliamentary group again on Wednesday to discuss the concerns.

"The two-day debate still stands," Rajapakse said.

North Korea sends missile soaring over Japan in escalation

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korea on Tuesday fired a ballistic missile over Japan for the first time in five years, forcing Japan to issue evacuation notices and suspend trains during the flight of the nuclear-capable weapon that could reach the US territory of Guam and beyond.

The launch was the most provocative weapons demonstration by North Korea this year as it ramps up missile tests in its push to build a full-fledged nuclear arsenal that viably threatens US allies and the American homeland and earns the country recognition as a nuclear state.

The United States said it strongly condemns North Korea's "dangerous and reckless decision" to launch what it described as a "long-range ballistic missile" over Japan.

"This action is destabilising and shows (North Korea's) blatant disregard for United Nations Security

Council resolutions and international safety norms," it said.

South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol earlier said the missile had an intermediate range, while Japanese Defence Minister Yasukazu Hamada said it was believed to have an intermediate range or longer. If Tuesday's launch involves a long-range missile, that could be a test of a weapon targeting the US homeland, some experts say.

Japanese authorities alerted residents in northeastern regions to evacuate to shelters, in the first "J-alert" since 2017 when North Korea fired an intermediate-range Hwasong-12 missile twice over Japan in a span of weeks during its previous torrid run of weapons tests.

Trains were suspended in the Hokkaido and Aomori regions until the government issued a subsequent notice that the North Korean missile appeared to have landed in the Pacific. In Sapporo city, the prefectural capital of Japan's northernmost



main island of Hokkaido, subways were also temporarily suspended, with stations packed with morning commuters.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida told reporters the latest firing "is a reckless act and I strongly condemn it."

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the missile was fired from the

inland north in North Korea. It warned the North's repeated missile launches would only deepen its international isolation and prompt Seoul and Washington to bolster their deterrence capacities.

Yoon said the North's "reckless nuclear provocations" would meet the stern response of the South and the broader international community.

According to South Korean and Japanese estimates, the missile traveled about 4,500-4,600 kilometers (2,800-2,860 miles) at a maximum altitude of 970-1,000 kilometers (600-620 miles). Hamada said the missile landed in the Pacific, about 3,200 kilometers (1,990 miles) off the northern Japanese coast and that there have been no reports of damage to Japanese aircraft and ships.

Both South Korea and Japan convened emergency national security council meetings to discuss the launch. The U.S. Said national security adviser Jake Sullivan had consulted with his South Korean and Japanese counterparts on their appropriate and robust responses.

"The United States will continue its efforts to limit the DPRK's ability to advance its prohibited ballistic missile and weapons of mass destruction programs, including with allies and UN partners," National Security Council spokesperson Adrienne Watson said in a statement.

UK's Truss vows to listen as she reels from policy U-turns

AP ■ BIRMINGHAM

British Prime Minister Liz Truss has insisted she is leading "a listening government" that learns from its mistakes, as she tries to restore her shaky authority and reassure financial markets spooked by her government's see-sawing economic pledges. Truss told the BBC in an interview broadcast Tuesday that she and her ministers were determined to "reflect on how we could have done things better."

"Is everything the government (has) done absolutely perfect? No it's not," she said. "I fully acknowledge that. And we have learned from the feedback we've received."

That "feedback" has been dramatic: Truss' four weeks in

office have seen the pound plunge to record lows against the dollar, the Bank of England take emergency action and the opposition Labour Party surge to record highs against her Conservatives in opinion polls.

Now Truss also faces a battle with her party over her economic plans, with some lawmakers warning they will oppose any attempt to slash welfare benefits to help pay for lower taxes.

Truss is on a mission to reshape Britain's economy through tax cuts and deregulation in a bid to end years of sluggish growth.

But she is trying to ride out a series of U-turns over her first big policy: a stimulus package that includes 45 bn pounds (\$50 billion) in tax cuts, to be paid for by Govt borrowing.

Iran's president tries to assuage anger as protests continue

AP ■ DUBAI

Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi on Tuesday appealed for national unity and tried to allay anger against the country's rulers, even as the anti-government protests that have engulfed the country for weeks continued to spread to universities and high schools.

Raisi acknowledged that the Islamic Republic had "weaknesses and shortcomings," but repeated the official line that the unrest sparked last month by the death of a woman in the custody of the country's morality police was nothing short of a plot by Iran's enemies.

"Today the country's determination is aimed at cooperation to reduce people's problems," he told a parliament session.

"Unity and national integrity are necessities that render our enemy hopeless."

His claims echoed those of Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, who blamed the United States and Israel, the country's adversaries, for inciting the unrest in his first remarks on the nationwide protests on Monday.

It's a familiar tactic for Iran's leaders, who have been mistrustful of Western influence since the 1979 Islamic Revolution and commonly blame domestic problems on foreign enemies without offering evidence.

Merkel wins UN refugee agency award over welcome of Syrians

AP ■ GENEVA

The UN refugee agency said on Tuesday it's giving its highest award to former German Chancellor Angela Merkel for her efforts to welcome more than 1 million refugees — mostly from Syria — into Germany, despite some criticism both at home and abroad.

Matthew Saltmarsh, spokesman for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, said Merkel had been

selected as the latest recipient for the Nansen award, which is handed out annually by the Geneva-based UN agency.

"Under the then-Federal Chancellor Merkel's leadership, Germany welcomed more than 1.2 million refugees and asylum-seekers in 2015 and 2016, which, as you will remember, was the height of the conflict in Syria, and there was deadly violence in other parts of the world," Saltmarsh told reporters. "Dr. Merkel

helped to highlight the plight of refugees globally."

Merkel's decision to let in so many migrants boosted the far-right Alternative for Germany party and resulted in protests by a vocal minority. She was also blasted by some governments for being too friendly to refugees, when some European Union partner states were closing borders to refugees and asylum-seekers.

The award includes a USD 150,000 prize.

US warns about foreign efforts to sway American voters

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Federal officials are warning ahead of the November midterms that Russia is working to amplify doubts about the integrity of US elections while China is interested in undermining American politicians it sees as threats to Beijing's interests.

An unclassified intelligence advisory, newly obtained by The Associated Press, says China is probably seeking to influence

select races to "hinder candidates perceived to be particularly adversarial to Beijing." In the advisory, sent to state and local officials in mid-September, intelligence officials said they believe Beijing sees a lower risk in meddling in the midterms versus a presidential election.

While officials said they've not identified any credible threats to election infrastructure in the U.S., the latest intelligence warning comes amid the peak of

an opinion in America, perhaps most notably in a covert Russian campaign that used social media to sow discord on hot-button social issues ahead of the 2016 presidential election. The US government has been on high alert since, warning about efforts by Russia, China and Iran to meddle in American politics and shape how voters think.



White House unveils artificial intelligence 'Bill of Rights'

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The Biden administration unveiled a set of far-reaching goals on Tuesday to align artificial intelligence-powered tools with what it called the values of Democracy and equity, including guidelines for how to protect people's personal data and limit surveillance.

The Blueprint for an AI Bill of Rights notably does not set out specific enforcement actions, but instead is intended as a White House call to action for the US government to safeguard digital and civil rights in an AI-fuelled world, officials said.

"This is the Biden-Harris administration really saying that we need to work together, not only just across government, but across all sectors, to really put equity at the centre and civil rights at the centre of the ways that we make and use and govern technologies," said Alondra



Nelson, deputy director for science and society at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy. "We can and should expect better and demand better from our technologies."

The office said the white paper represents a major advance in the administration's agenda to hold technology companies accountable, and highlighted various federal agencies' commitments to weighing new rules and studying the spe-

cific impacts of AI technologies.

The document emerged after a year-long consultation with more than two dozen different departments, and also incorporates feedback from technologists, civil society groups, businesses and industry researchers.

The resulting non-binding principles cite academic research, agency studies and news reports that have documented real-world harms from AI-powered tools, including facial recognition tools that contributed to wrongful arrests and an automated system that discriminated against loan seekers who attended a Historically Black College or University.

The white paper also said parents and social workers alike could benefit from knowing if child welfare agencies were using algorithms to help decide when families should be investigated for maltreatment.

Ecuador prison clash leaves at least 15 dead, 20 injured

AP ■ QUITO (ECUADOR)

A clash between inmates armed with guns and knives inside the Latacunga prison in central Ecuador on Monday left at least 15 people dead and 20 injured, authorities said.

Officials attributed the fighting to national and international drug trafficking groups which have turned the Andean nation's prisons into the scene of repeated massacres as the groups fight for power and drug distribution rights.

Ecuador's national penitentiary service confirmed the death toll in the Latacunga prison, located 50 miles (80 kilometres) south of the capital of Quito. Agents are still searching the prison's pavilions for bodies.

Videos in which gunfire and the screams of inmates can be heard were posted on social media.

Some 316 inmates were killed inside Ecuador's prisons last year, according to the penitentiary service. So far this year there have been 90 deaths.

The worst massacre took place in September of last year in the Litoral Penitentiary in Guayaquil, where 125 prisoners were killed.

Indonesia police: Stadium exit gates too small for escape

AP ■ MALANAG

Indonesian police said on Tuesday that the gates at the soccer stadium where police fired tear gas and set off a deadly crush were too small and could only accommodate two at a time when hundreds were trying to escape.

Photos from the Malang stadium where 125 people died and hundreds were injured on Saturday night in one of the sporting events worst disasters showed four



connecting doors forming one gate.

Police said the investiga-

tion was focused on six of the 14 gates where most of the spectators died in the crush.

Police spokesperson Dedi Prasetyo said that they were unlocked but only able to accommodate two people.

"For those six gates, they were not closed but they were too small. They had a capacity for two people but there were hundreds coming out. There was a crush there," Prasetyo told reporters.

He added that the gates were the responsibility of the

organisers.

On Monday, police announced they had removed one police chief and nine elite officers and 18 others were being investigated for responsibility in the firing of tear gas inside the stadium.

The match in East Java's Malang city was attended only by hometown Arema FC fans.

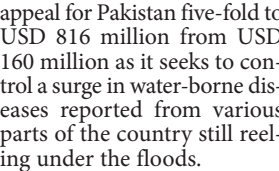
The organiser had banned supporters of the visiting team, Persebaya Surabaya, because of Indonesia's history of violent soccer rivalries.

UN, Pakistan launch fresh appeal seeking USD 800 mn for rehabilitation of flood victims

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The United Nations and Pakistan have jointly launched a fresh flash appeal seeking more than USD 800 million for the rehabilitation of millions of Pakistanis affected by the devastating floods that have so far claimed the lives of over 1,700 people, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has said.

Under the new appeal by the UN launched during a ceremony in Geneva on Monday, the global body revised up its humanitarian



appeal for Pakistan five-fold to USD 816 million from USD 160 million as it seeks to control a surge in water-borne diseases reported from various parts of the country still reeling under the floods.

Speaking at the ceremony, Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman stressed the need for urgent medical assistance and timely efforts to save flood victims of Pakistan from the effects of cold weather soon approaching, the foreign ministry said. "The flood affected in Pakistan is facing



the real race against time as winter is coming," the minister said, adding that despite shelters made available for 598,000 people, up to 7.5 million affected population was still scrambling for dry land.

The devastating floods have so far affected 33 million people across the country, claimed over 1,700 lives and destroyed large farms, resulting in a crisis type situation due to shortage of essentials.

Rehman said that four million people are living in areas where temperatures reach zero and even in warm areas, the mercury drops below 10 degrees Celsius. She also said that historic rains caused floods that inundated more than one-third of Pakistan.

Rehman informed the

gathering that 34 districts are still crisis affected even after 16 weeks where many victims were still seeking land hubs for clean water, food and medical assistance and even dry lands in Sindh to bury their dead.

Under Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Martin Griffiths said the people of Pakistan were bearing the brunt of the world's inaction to face climate change or prepare for its consequences, a report by Radio Pakistan said.

Lost & Found
I, Bharti Chawla w/o Sh. Hansraj Maggu R/o Delhi. Have lost my Convenience Deed No. 4015. Dated 23.12.2021 Somewhere in Delhi on dated 03.02.2022 at 14:16. If anybody found pls return to the above mentioned address.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that my client Surjeet Kaur is the owner of Ground Floor Left Side Portion (From Front View) without roof rights of Property bearing No. 117-A, Area Measuring 50 Sq. Yds. Part of Rect. No. 32 Killa No. 18 (Khasra No. 32/18), situated in the area of Village Khayala and the colony known as Kanihya Park Now Known as Chand Nagar, New Delhi-18 by virtue of Sale Deed dated 30.01.2019 (Doc. No. 1051) executed by Amarjit Kaur.
And whereas she has lost the following original document pertaining to the said property read with FIR dated 26/9/22:
1. Sale Deed dated 16.08.2012 (Doc. No. 19708) executed by Sheela Chopra in favour of Amarjit Kaur.
All person's having any claim against or in respect of said property or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise however, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.
Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Shop No. 5 & 6, Pt-E, CSC, Mayapuri Vihar, Delhi-91, Mob. 9810063351

NORTHERN RAILWAY
NOTICE INVITING TENDER
DRM'S OFFICE, STATE ENTRY ROAD, NEW DELHI

Name of work and its location	30-Elect-42-T-2022-23-E3 Electrical work in connection with development of infrastructure facilities at Farukhnagar for examination of BCACBM rakes.
Approx Cost of the work	Rs. 9.83 lacs
Address of the office	Sr. Divl Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.
Bid Security	Rs. 19700.00
Date & time of submission of tender	27.10.2022, 12.00 Hrs.
Opening of tender	27.10.2022, 12.00 Hrs.
Website & notice board	www.ireps.gov.in & Sr. Divl Elect. Engineer/General, New Delhi.

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE 2605/22

PUBLIC NOTICE
(In case there is no will)
Property No. SCE 171 and parking no. PE1047/PE1048 in DLF SKY COURT SECTOR 86 GURGAON was allotted in the name of MR. SWINDER SINGH son of Mr. JAGIR SINGH & Mr. GURPREET SINGH S/o Mr. SWINDER SINGH both residents of 491, Saraswati Vihar, Chakkarpur, Gurgaon, Haryana India. Mr. SWINDER SINGH expired on 31/10/2019. Accordingly, the name of Mr. GURPREET SINGH is being noted in BREEZ BUILDERS & DEVELOPERS P. LTD.' records in respect of the captioned Property. If anybody has any objection to this, he or she may approach Ms/ DLF Ltd or the undersigned within 21 days of publication of this notice.
ADVOCATE MANUL MITTRA
MS 236, MEGA MALL, DLF1, GURGAON, HARYANA.

PUBLIC NOTICE
(In case there is no will)
Property No. T11-202 situated at second floor of tower 11 in GLOBAL HEIGHTS, SECTOR 33, SOHNA, GURUGRAM, HARYANA was allotted in the name of Mr. SWINDER SINGH son of Mr. JAGIR SINGH resident of 491, SARASWATI VIHAR, CHAKKARPUR, GURGAON, HARYANA INDIA. Mr. SWINDER SINGH expired on 31/10/2019. Accordingly, the name of Mr. GURPREET SINGH is being noted in BREEZ BUILDERS & DEVELOPERS P. LTD.' records in respect of the captioned Property. If anybody has any objection to this, he or she may approach Ms/ BREEZ BUILDERS & DEVELOPERS P. LTD. or the undersigned within 21 days of publication of this notice.
ADVOCATE MANUL MITTRA
MS 236, MEGA MALL, DLF1, GURGAON, HARYANA.

NORTHERN RAILWAY
OEPN E-TENDER NOTICE
For and on behalf of President of India, Sr. Divisional Mechanical Engineer (Chg), Northern Railway, Delhi Division invites sealed e-tender on 'SINGLE PACKET SYSTEM' for following work from experienced and capable tenderers.

1	Name of work : Repair & Fitment of Roller Blinds in SS-II of Vande Bharat Express (T-18) for rake 1 and 2
2	Work Place : Delhi
3	Period of Work : Six (06) Months
4	Advertised Value : Rs. 43,34,073.92/- (including the provision of GST)
5	Earnest money to be deposited : Rs. 86,700/- through net banking or gateway only
6	Tender Document Cost : Rs. Nil /-
7	Date and Time of availability of e-Tender Document : From 04.10.2022 to 25.10.2022 time 13:00 hrs.
8	Date and time of E-tender box closing : 25.10.2022 at 13:00 hrs.
9	Date and time of E-tender box opening : On 25.10.2022 after 13:00 hrs. If the date of opening happens to be holiday the E-Tender shall be opened on the next working day.
10	Place for opening E-Tender : Mechanical Department, Divisional Railway Manager's Office, Northern Railway, State Entry Road, New Delhi-55

Note: The complete particulars of the tender may be found in website www.ireps.gov.in
No. : 197-S/251/Repair-Fitment/Roller-Blind/22/MC-IV Date: 04.10.2022 2610/22

Serving Customers with a Smile

NORTHERN RAILWAY
TENDER NOTICE
Invitation of Tender through E-Tendering (E-Procurement Systems)

N.I.T. No.	19(A,B)-22-23-W-2 Date 03.10.2022
1	Name of work with its location
A)	Annual zone for repair and maintenance of service building and staff quarters in the section of ADEENMUT for the year 2022-23
B)	Annual zone for repair to bridge, parapets toe wall cess repair, desiling of waterway in the section of ADEENMUT for the year 2022-23
2)	Approx. Cost of work
3)	Earnest Money
4)	Completion period of Work
5)	Cost of tender on cash /by post
6)	Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender
7)	Similar nature of Work
8)	Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be issued etc.
NIT - 19(A,B)-22-23-W-2	Dated: 03.10.2022 2600/22

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Housing prices, office rent soar in Q2; Bengaluru tops

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Average housing price across eight cities rose 3-10 per cent year-on-year in July-September this year, while office rent grew up to 13 per cent on higher demand for properties, according to Knight Frank India.

Bengaluru property market saw highest growth in average housing price as well as average office rent during the third quarter of the 2022 calendar year as compared with the corresponding period of the previous year, property consultant Knight Frank India said in its report 'India Real Estate - Office and Residential Market July-September 2022'.

As per the data of primary housing market, the average price in Bengaluru rose 10 per cent to ₹5,428 per square feet in July-September quarter from ₹4,928 per square feet in the year-ago period.

The Delhi-NCR market saw 8 per cent increase in average housing price to Rs 4,489 per square feet.

Mumbai, Pune, Chennai and Hyderabad witnessed an increase of 6 per cent in average price of residential properties to ₹7,170 per square feet, ₹4,250 per square feet, ₹4,300 per square feet and ₹4,977 per square feet, respectively.

Housing price in Kolkata



rose 4 per cent to ₹3,350 per square feet, while the average rate in Ahmedabad grew 3 per cent to ₹2,885 per square feet.

With the revival in demand after the second wave of the Covid pandemic, real estate developers, especially large listed entities, have been raising housing prices every quarter to offset increase in rates of key construction materials.

According to Knight Frank report, housing sales rose 15 per cent in the third quarter of 2022 to 73,691 housing units across top eight cities from 64,010 in the same quarter of 2021. During January-September, sales have risen 40 per cent to 2,32,396 units from

1,63,426 units in the corresponding period of the previous year.

On office rentals, the Knight Frank data showed that average rent in Bengaluru rose 13 per cent to Rs 81 per square feet a month during July-September this year compared with ₹72 per square feet in the preceding year.

Average monthly rent in Pune rose 9 per cent to Rs 71 per square feet.

"Bengaluru and Pune office markets recorded maximum increase in their rental value at 13 per cent and 9 per cent YoY (Year-on-Year), respectively mostly due to higher demand and lack of Grade A space," the consultant said.

Sensex, Nifty rebound over 2% amid relief rally in global markets

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty bounced back on Tuesday to close over 2 per cent higher on buying in banking, metal and IT shares amid positive trends in global equity markets.

The 30-share BSE Sensex spurted 1,276.66 points or 2.25 per cent to settle at 58,065.47 with 27 of its shares ending in green. During the day, it zoomed 1,311.13 points or 2.30 per cent to 58,099.94.

The broader NSE Nifty rallied 386.95 points or 2.29 per cent to end at 17,274.30 as 48 of its constituents advanced.

Buying across sectors, led by metal, banking and IT, helped the indices rebound from previous session's losses.

Mirroring a robust overnight surge in Wall Street and upbeat domestic business data released by banks, the domestic market ended the day on a cheerful note. An unexpected slowdown in the US Manufacturing PMI gave hope that the US Fed would slow the pace of policy tightening." Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services said.

US bond yields fell in tandem with the US dollar, he added.

Among the 30-share Sensex pack, IndusInd Bank,



Bajaj Finance, Tata Consultancy Services, Bajaj Finserv, HDFC, Tata Steel, Larsen & Toubro, Wipro, HDFC Bank and Axis Bank were the major winners.

Power Grid, Sun Pharma and Dr Reddy's were the only laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge jumped 2.42 per cent and smallcap index climbed 1.49 per cent.

All the BSE sectoral indices ended in the green, with metal rallying 3.43 per cent, services (3.08 per cent), financial services (2.82 per cent), bankex (2.74 per cent) and IT (2.68 per cent).

S Ranganathan, Head of Research at LKP securities said that indices surged over 2 per cent buoyed by positive global cues and encouraging quarterly updates on advances and collections from banks during the second quarter.

Centre inks pact with Nafed to install millet-based vending machines in Delhi-NCR

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Agriculture Ministry has roped in cooperative Nafed to promote and market millet-based products through its network of stores and install millet-based vending machines in Delhi-NCR. The ministry has signed a memorandum of agreement with Nafed in this regard ahead of International Year of Millets in 2023. As per the agreement, Nafed will also install millet-based vending machines at various locations across Delhi-NCR, an official statement said. The dispensing millet-based products will assist in establishing the focus on millet-based commodities.

That apart, the ministry and Nafed will collaborate in key areas like facilitating advisory support to manufacturers/processors of millet-based products to develop value-added millet-based commodities. They will also focus on onboarding of startups, inclusive of startups empanelled with Indian Institute of Millets Research (IIMR) besides formation of Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) specifically for developing a range of millet-based products.

As India is gearing up to bring millet back on the global map, the ministry and Nafed will organise, promote, market, and forge effective market linkages for millet-based products to maximise the value.

Goyal to meet export promotion councils on Oct 7



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal will meet different export promotion councils on October 7 to discuss ways to promote the growth rate in the country's outbound shipments, an official said. The meeting assumes significance as India's exports contracted by 3.52 per cent to USD 32.62 billion in September against USD 33.81 billion in the same month last year, while the trade deficit widened to USD 26.72 billion during the last month.

Representatives from export bodies, including the Federation of Indian Export Organisations, Apparel Export Promotion Council and Council for Leather Exports, would participate in the meeting, the official said.

According to an export council, issues which would figure in the meeting include export credit refinancing facility, increase in interest subsidy rates, removal of GST (Goods and Services Tax) on exports freight, exports benefits for rupee shipments to Russia and other countries, and removal of exports duty on some products.

Exporters have urged the government to continue with the GST exemption on export freight.

"This is a serious issue for us. We are already facing global headwinds and high inflationary pressure. The GST exemption is more crucial in the current scenario as container rates are already very high," an exporter said, adding that airfreight is already very high in comparison to sea freight.

Jio to start beta trial of 5G services in 4 cities from Oct 5

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Telecom major Jio will start a beta trial of 5G service in four cities - Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Varanasi - from October 5 with a select set of customers, the company said on Tuesday. The company will send an invite to customers under Jio True 5G Welcome Offer to try its 5G services, and the subscribers will get unlimited 5G data with up to 1 gigabit per second speed.

"Post the successful demonstration of its True-5G services at the India Mobile Congress 2022, Jio is announcing the Beta trial of its True-5G services on the auspicious occasion of Dussehra, for Jio users in 4 cities - Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, and Varanasi," Jio said in the statement.

UPI payment crosses ₹11L cr milestone in Sept

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Payment through Unified Payments Interface (UPI) has crossed a milestone of Rs 11 lakh crore in September, as per the data released by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

During the month, 678 crore transactions in volume terms were done on the platform launched in 2016.

Payment through UPI had crossed ₹10 lakh crore in May this year.

Last month, as many as 657.9 crore transactions worth ₹10.72 lakh crore had taken place.

UPI is an instant real-time payment system which facilitates interbank peer-to-peer (P2P) transactions. The transaction is done through mobile in easy steps. Besides, there are no charges applicable for the UPI transaction so far. Moreover, UPI has played a key role in the country becoming almost cashless economy.

The inexpensive medium for cashless transactions has been gaining traction month on month basis.

As per NPCI data, in June 2022, the transaction value under UPI dig-



ital payments moderated marginally at Rs 10,14,384 crore from Rs 10,41,506 crore in May. It increased to Rs 10,62,747 crore in July.

It is expected that payment through UPI would create another record both in terms of transaction and value in the festival month of October and November.

The key benefit of UPI is that it has done away with the inconvenience of third-party payments, Spice Money CEO Sanjeev Kumar said.

While services such as net banking, call for processes like OTP generation, which is also a major source of digital fraud in India, money can be moved between numerous accounts using UPI without the need for unique profiles for each transaction, he said.

Rupee rises 29 paise to close at 81.53 against US dollar on FII buying

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee appreciated by 29 paise to end at 81.53 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday as heavy buying in domestic equities and weakness in the greenback strengthened investor sentiment.

However, rising crude prices in the international market capped the rupee's gain, forex dealers said.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened strong at 81.66 against the greenback. It witnessed an intra-day high of 81.36 and a low of 81.66 during the session.

It finally ended at 81.53, up 29 paise from its previous close. In the previous session, the rupee had settled paise 42 lower at 81.82 against the dollar.

"Rupee retraced from its all-time lows after the RBI raised rates by 50 bps. The dollar retraced from high levels after the manufacturing PMI



number released from the US came below estimates.

"Volatility in major crosses continues to remain high as updates on the change in economic policies keep market participants on the edge. Today, the focus will be on the factory order number to gauge a view for the dollar. We expect the USD/INR (Spot) to quote in the range of 81.20 and 82.05," Gaurang Somaiya, Forex & Bullion Analyst, Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said.

CESL selects agencies to set up 124 battery swapping stations for e-vehicles

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL) has selected agencies to set up 124 battery swapping stations and 352 standing chargers for electric two and three-wheelers.

The selected agencies will also set up 1,294 standing DC fast chargers for electric four-wheelers, CESL said in a statement on Tuesday.

"The business will be delivered under a build, own, and operate (BOO) model valid for eight years, with charging stations installed across Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune and Surat," the company said without sharing any further information.

CESL MD and CEO Mahua Acharya said adequate charging infrastructure is a necessity for the scale-up of electric mobility. This model of engaging with market players will give all of us the outcomes we want -- widespread charging stations.

Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL) is a subsidiary of state-owned Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL), a joint venture of four power sector public sector undertakings -- NTPC Limited, Power Finance Corporation Limited, REC Limited and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited.

Gold futures gain ₹275 to ₹51,435/10 gram



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices on Tuesday increased by ₹275 to ₹51,435 per 10 gram in futures trade as speculators created fresh positions on a firm spot demand.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange, gold contracts for December delivery traded higher by ₹275 or 0.54 per cent at ₹51,435 per 10 gram in a business turnover of 18,186 lots.

Fresh positions built up by participants led to the rise in gold prices, analysts said.

Globally, gold was trading 1.01 per cent higher at USD 1,719.20 per ounce in New York.

Increase in tea prices to offset impact of wage rate hike in Assam, West Bengal: ICRA

PTI ■ MUMBAI

An increase in tea prices following global supply issues is likely to offset the impact of increased wage rates in West Bengal and Assam, according to a report.

The increase in wage rates in the current calendar year in North India (NI), Assam and West Bengal, in the current financial year is expected to be nullified by healthy realisations of teas, particularly producers who are focused on producing quality teas, Icrs said in a report.

In FY22, softening of realisation and increase in wage rates led to a decline in the operating margin (OPM) of players, it noted.



"Notwithstanding the impact of higher wage rates, the financial performance of quality producers is likely to witness an improvement in FY23 on a year-on-year basis. Increase in prices of quality crush-tear-curl (CTC) and Orthodox (ODX) teas would enable the producers to absorb the higher cost of

production due to the wage rate revision," Icrs Vice President and Sector Head, Corporate Sector Ratings, Sujoy Saha said.

The report stated that the ODX tea prices are ruling at an all-time high level on the back of a demand-supply mismatch in the international market due to production disruptions in Sri Lanka.

Sri Lanka, the largest exporter of ODX teas globally, witnessed disruptions in production due to the current economic crisis.

The production loss in Sri Lanka is likely to continue for some more time, which would keep supply tight in the international market, thus supporting prices of Indian ODX teas, said the report.

Crude oil futures gain on spot demand

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Crude oil prices on Tuesday rose by Rs 21 to Rs 6,838 per barrel in futures trade as participants widened their positions on a firm spot demand.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange, crude oil for October delivery traded higher by Rs 21 or 0.31 per cent at Rs 6,838 per barrel in 5,049 lots.

Analysts said raising of bets by participants kept crude oil prices higher in futures trade.

Globally, West Texas Intermediate crude oil was up 0.42 per cent at USD 83.98 per barrel, and Brent crude traded 0.57 per cent higher at USD 89.37 per barrel in New York.

Edelweiss arm aims to raise USD 1 bn in third distressed asset fund

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Edelweiss Alternative on Tuesday said it is targeting to raise USD 1 billion (about Rs 8,000 crore) in its third distressed asset fund, eyeing strong opportunities in the space. The company has already raised USD 425 million or ₹3,400 crore for the third 'Special Situations Fund' (SSF III) from large insurance companies and pension funds globally, as also domestic high net individuals and family offices, it said in a statement.

Under an SSF, the company focuses on asset heavy companies and identifies viable underlying businesses that have a strong turnaround potential, or invest in situations where resolution of asset requires capital and domain expertise, it said. In the second fund launched in 2018, it invested ₹10,500 crore and realised cash of more than ₹9,500 crore from the portfolio companies, it said. Under the latest fund, it is targeting to raise USD 1 billion with a greenshoe option of USD 500 million, the statement said.

Of the ₹3,400 crore raised till now for the third SSF, it has already invested ₹crore in two special situation opportunities, and said there is a strong pipeline of opportunities in the space. "Special situation opportunities provide an exciting avenue for generating superior risk adjusted returns for investors," Edelweiss Alternative head for special situation strategy, Amit Agarwal, said.

Automobile retail sales rise 11% in Sept on festive fervour, better supplies

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Automobile retail sales in India rose 11 per cent in September as better supplies from manufacturers enabled dealers to ramp up customer deliveries amid the ongoing festive period, Federation Of Automobile Dealers Associations said on Tuesday.

Last month, total retail sales stood at 14,64,001 units as compared to 13,19,647 units in September 2021.

FADA noted that October is expected to witness even better overall sales due to the fes-



tive season further gathering steam.

"Dealers anticipate this to be the best festive period in a decade for the passenger vehicle segment as we anticipate even higher sales during the

month," it said.

Barring tractors and some three-wheeler trims, all other segments like passenger and commercial vehicles and two wheelers performed better in September as compared to the

year-ago period.

Passenger vehicle retails increased 10 per cent to 2,60,556 units last month as against 2,37,502 units in September 2021.

"Better availability of cars due to easing semiconductor supply, new launches and feature rich products kept customers glued to dealerships for getting their favourite vehicles during the auspicious period," Federation Of Automobile Dealers Associations (FADA) President Manish Raj Singhania said in a statement.

BUSINESS BRIEF
FREE HEALTH CHECK-UP ON SHASTRI'S BIRTH ANNIV
New Delhi: The nation on Sunday celebrated the 118th birth anniversary of the late Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri. At Lal Bahadur Shastri Memorial, 1 Motilal Nehru Place, New Delhi a free Health Check-up camp was organized by Lalita Shastri Foundation in collaboration with Safexpress, Rotary Club of Indirapuram Pariwar, Max Hospital, Patparganj and I-care Hospital and PG Institute organized by Mr. Naresh Wadhwa, Member, Lalita Shastri Foundation. The camp was inaugurated by Smt. Monika Shastri, Smt. Roli Shastri, Smt. Aradhana Shastri and Smt. Jaya Shastri and also the present of Shastri Family Members and 250 needy people have gone through Medical Check Up.
IMPORT POTENTIAL OF SOFT WHEAT FLOURS FROM ITALY
Mumbai: India market offers great opportunity to increase the export of soft wheat flours from Italy. "We see a great opportunity in India to increase the export of soft wheat flours from Italy. More than ever before, home cooks and chefs are demanding premium ingredients that are healthy, nutritious and safe," said ITALMOPA president Emilio Ferrari. The "Pure Flour from Europe" campaign will span for another two years.

Govt approves ₹26,000 cr to install 25k mobile towers in 500 days

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government has approved ₹26,000 crore for installation of 25,000 mobile towers in 500 days, an official statement said on Tuesday. According to a telecom ministry spokesperson, financial support for the project will be provided by Universal Services Obligation Fund and it will be implemented by Bharat Broadband Network. The project was announced by Telecom Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw at three-day long 'Digital India Conference of State IT Ministers' that concluded on October 3.

"In his concluding remarks, Ashwini Vaishnaw stated that connectivity is vital for Digital India and its reach to every corner of the country. He announced that ₹26,000 crore has been approved to install 25,000 new towers in next 500 days," the statement said. Minister of State (MoS) for Electronics and Information Technology and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Rajeev Chandrasekhar, MoS Communications Devusinh Chauhan and IT ministers from 12 states and UTs, namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Goa, Manipur, Uttarakhand, Telangana, Mizoram, Sikkim, and Puducherry participated in the conference.

HAALAND PEERLESS AT JUST 22: GUARDIOLA



AP ■ MANCHESTER

Erling Haaland's goalscoring achievements at the age of 22 are unmatched by any other player according to Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola, who urged the Norwegian to keep improving.

Haaland has scored 17 goals in 10 competitive games for City since joining from Borussia Dortmund,

where he struck 86 times in 89 matches.

He has scored a hat-trick in each of City's past three home Premier League games and became the quickest player to reach 25 Champions League goals with an acrobatic winner against Dortmund three weeks ago.

"At his age no one can compete with him," Guardiola said on Tuesday, on the eve of his side's

home match against FC Copenhagen. "The numbers speak for themselves.

"Inside, on the pitch, in the locker room, we see things that are not in the stats that make us feel happy to have him here."

Another 22-year-old, Phil Foden, also scored a hat-trick as City put local rivals Manchester United to the sword in a 6-3 win on Sunday.

Maddison lifts Leicester as Forest hit rock bottom

AP ■ LEICESTER

James Maddison eased the pressure on Leicester boss Brendan Rodgers and pushed Nottingham Forest to the bottom of the Premier League as the midfielder's double inspired a vital 4-0 win on Monday.

Rodgers' side blew Forest away with three goals in the space of 10 minutes in the first half at the King Power Stadium.

Maddison struck either side of a superb finish from Harvey Barnes and Patson Daka netted in the second half as Leicester won for the first time this season at the eighth attempt.

Leicester had lost their previous six games to leave Rodgers fighting to avoid the sack following his criticism of the club's Thai owners for failing to back him in the transfer window.

Beating their East Midlands



rivals should give Rodgers at least a little breathing space, with Leicester moving one place above rock-bottom Forest on goal difference. Woeful Forest are now without a win in six games, losing five in a row and conceding 16 goals in their last four matches.

That dismal run has turned up the heat on Steve Cooper, who took charge when Forest were bottom of the Championship last season and led them back to the Premier League for the first time since 1999.

Foden is reportedly close to signing a new contract to tie his future to the club where he came through the academy.

"Due to his performance during these years, of course we want him to stay," said Guardiola.

"He's an exceptional player, he grew up a lot. Already he is many years with us, he's reliable in terms of his physical condition, he's so intense in everything, every three

days he is able play.

"Both (Haaland and Foden), they know they can do better and hopefully they can do it."

After beating Sevilla and Dortmund in their opening two group games, City can close in on the Champions League last 16 with another victory over Copenhagen on Wednesday.

But Guardiola is wary of taking the Danish champions lightly.

Stimac signs contract extension till AFC Asian Cup 2023

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian men's football team head coach Igor Stimac on Tuesday signed an extension of his contract till the end of next year's AFC Asian Cup.

The decision to extend the contract was recommended by the All India Football Federation's (AIFF) technical committee last month, and was subsequently ratified by the executive committee in their respective meetings in Kolkata last month.

The executive committee also accepted the recommendations of the technical committee that should India make it to the quarterfinals of the Asian Cup, the coach's contract should be automatically renewed.

"I am extremely happy that the AIFF has placed the trust in the process that we have put in," said Stimac.

"We have had a very good run in the qualifiers, and we want to make sure that we keep building ourselves up till the Asian Cup and give a good account of ourselves in the continental stage."

The 55-year-old from Croatia has been in charge of the Blue Tigers since 2019, and has successfully guided the team through to its second successive AFC Asian Cup qualification earlier this year, when India topped Group D of the Third Round qualifiers.

"Now that we have ensured qualification, we must make sure that we keep improving and finding our best combination till the Asian Cup," he said.

"Again, it is not an easy process, and there will be plenty of pain on the way, but if we can stick to the proper procedure and not take shortcuts, we



can achieve our target of making it to the knockout rounds."

AIFF secretary general Shaji Prabhakaran said: "The new team in AIFF would like to see a forward momentum for the national team and we are determined to rebuild it with a fresh approach by developing a new plan exclusively for the senior national team." The secretary general informed that the federation will work closely with the head coach, the support staff and the players and the clubs as well in making sure a positive scenario is created for Indian football through the senior national team.

"Our best wishes to Igor Stimac and we are confident he will guide the Indian national team to a new level with his huge experience and hard work," Prabhakaran said.

Kyrgios cruises past Tseng in Japan opener as Ruud exits

AP ■ TOKYO

Nick Kyrgios said he "struggled to breathe" in the Tokyo air Tuesday before finding his feet and crushing Taiwan's Tseng Chun-hsin 6-3, 6-1 in his first match since the US Open.

Kyrgios dropped just seven points on his own service in his opening match at the Japan Open as he dismantled world number 87 Tseng in 1hr, 6min.

The maverick world number 20 was playing his first match since his "heartbreaking" quarter-final loss to Karen Khachanov at last month's US Open but he said he made a "solid" return despite a slow start.

"The first couple of games I struggled to breathe, I think just the humidity and getting back into competitive play," said Kyrgios.

"I came out a bit slow but I don't play many matches so it's hard to just get straight back into that competitive flow.

"But as soon as I held that first game, I found my form again and played really well."

The Tokyo crowd cheered Kyrgios' name and clamoured for the signed balls that he hit into the stands after the match.

RUUD SURPRISE

Earlier in the day, top seed Casper Ruud crashed out in the first round after a 6-3, 6-3 defeat to Spain's Jaume Munar.

The Norwegian lost to Carlos Alcaraz in the US Open final last month and he has hardly taken his foot off the gas since, playing in the Davis Cup and Laver Cup before heading to last week's Korea Open.

He finally hit the wall against world number 58 Munar, having his service bro-



Alcaraz loses to Goffin in Astana opener

AP ■ ASTANA

World number one Carlos Alcaraz crashed out in the first round of the Astana Open on Tuesday, losing 7-5, 6-3 to Belgium's David Goffin.

US Open champion Alcaraz suffered his first

straight-sets defeat since November last year as Goffin made the most of his second chance as a lucky loser.

Goffin only earned a spot in the main draw after the withdrawal of Danish teenager Holger Rune. He will play Frenchman Adrian Mannarino in the last 16.

ken twice in the first set and dumping shot after shot into the net all match.

Australian number-six seed Alex de Minaur also made a first-round exit earlier in the day when he lost 6-3, 6-2 to South Korea's Kwon Soon-

woo.

Croatia's number-nine seed Borna Coric beat Australian Thanasi Kokkinakis 6-4, 7-6 (7/4), while British number-eight seed Dan Evans beat Moldova's Radu Albot 6-7 (3/7), 6-1, 6-4.

Paris will not show WC matches on big screens

PARIS (AP): Paris will not show matches from the World Cup in Qatar on big screens in the French capital, partly due to the "conditions" of the tournament, the city's current deputy mayor for sports said on Monday.

Last year, a report said 50 migrant workers died in Qatar in 2020 and 500 others were seriously injured.

Several French cities have said they would not broadcast matches in public places, with the socialist mayor of Marseille Benoit Payan denouncing the competition as a "human and environmental disaster".

"For us, there was no question of setting up big screen areas for several reasons: the first is the conditions in which this World Cup has been organised, both in terms of the environment and the social aspect," said Pierre Rabadan.

"The second is the fact that it takes place in December."

India blank Maldives 5-0 in AFC U-17 Asian Cup Qualifiers

PTI ■ AL KHOBAR

India kicked off their AFC U-17 Asian Cup 2023 Qualifiers in style, thrashing Maldives 5-0 at the Prince Saud Bin Jalawi Stadium here on Tuesday.

Captain Vanlalpeka Guite, Lalhmimgchhuanga Fanai, Aman, Bobby Singh, Phoenix Oinam scored a goal each to make it a five-star performance for India.

India got off on the front foot, with Huzafah and Bobby orchestrating attacks down the left flank.

It did not take them too long to score the first though, as captain Guite ran on to a low cross from the right and slotted it home.

Fanai doubled the lead in the 24th minute, when he tried his luck from long range, as the ball took a deflection and sailed past the Maldives keeper.

India were completely dom-



inant in the second half, enjoying long bouts of possession, and it took them about 15 minutes to score again.

Forward Aman got himself to the end of an elaborate team move and finished it off to make it three in India's favour just one minute ahead of the

hour mark.

Eight minutes later, Huzafah Ahmad Dar was fouled inside the box, and the referee subsequently pointed to the spot. Bobby Singh stepped up and slotted it home to make it four.

Minutes later, Phoenix Oinam put the finishing touch-

es on the victory, as he fired home from around 25 yards, sending the ball into the bottom corner of the goal.

As the clock wore on, Aman came close to making it six for India, as his shot from outside the box ricocheted off the crossbar and went out of play.

Hazard still one of world's best: Martinez

AP ■ BRUSSELS

Belgium coach Roberto Martinez says he believes Eden Hazard is still "one of the best in the world" at his position despite the forward's injury-plagued spell at Real Madrid.

Hazard has started just one game for Madrid this season but captained his country in their Nations League matches against Wales and the Netherlands last month.

His limited minutes at club level have sparked debate over his role at the World Cup next month, but Martinez insists the 31-year-old remains



a key component of the squad. "Is Eden Hazard still an important player for the national team? Yes, 100 percent," Martinez told state broadcaster RTBF.

"I think his experience, the way he affects the opposition, the way he's still beating players, he's creating a real threat.

"For me it's a profile that is one of the best in the world in terms of being able to play."

Belgium finished third at the 2018 World Cup after losing to eventual champions France 1-0 in the semi-finals.

The Red Devils lost to Italy in the quarter-finals of Euro 2020 without the injured

Hazard, who has scored just seven times for Madrid since joining more than three years ago.

"Nobody is trying to look away from the reality. Eden hasn't played consistently for a long, long time," said Martinez.

"Another question is can he play for 90 minutes? Can he play seven games in a short period of time?"

"This is something that's very different and could change a lot in the next five weeks."

Belgium have been drawn alongside Canada, Morocco and 2018 runners-up Croatia in Group F in Qatar.

India's Mumtaz Khan named FIH women's rising player of year

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India forward Mumtaz Khan was on Tuesday named the FIH Women's Rising Star of the Year on the back of her stellar role during the country's campaign at the Junior World Cup in South Africa earlier this year.

The 19-year-old Mumtaz, who hails from Lucknow, had scored eight goals in six matches, including a hat-trick, during India's fourth-place finishing campaign in Potchefstroom in April.

She finished in third place on the list of top scorers in the World Cup. She failed to score in just one game throughout the tournament, against Netherlands.

Mumtaz scored both the goals for India in the crucial 2-2 tie in the Bronze medal match against England, but the team couldn't get over the line in the ensuing shoot-out to end at fourth place.

"I cannot believe that I have won this award. It is the hard work of our entire team over the year that has paid off, and I dedicate the win to my team," Mumtaz said.

"I feel the award is a sign that the hard work that I have put over the past year on the training grounds has helped me improve a lot as a player. But this is just the beginning of my career. I wish to continue the learning process and will continue the hard work to improve upon my game."

Carvajal, Ancelotti insist Madrid's Champions League glory is deserved

AP ■ MADRID

Real Madrid defender Dani Carvajal believes his team fully deserve their glittering Champions League record and dismissed Barcelona coach Xavi Hernandez's mention of unfairness.

Los Blancos, the reigning champions and record 14-time European Cup winners, have lifted the trophy five times in the last nine years.

Right-back Carvajal established himself in the team during the 2013-14 season, when Madrid ended an 11-season drought in the tournament to win La Decima, their 10th European Cup.

Xavi said at a press conference on Monday that the best team does not always win the Champions League and La Liga was a "fairer" competition.

"I think that when you've won five of the last nine Champions Leagues, you can't put that down to luck," Carvajal told a press conference on Tuesday, ahead of his team's clash with Shakhtar Donetsk.



"Football is results, the team that scores more goals and concedes less wins. In the last few years, we've been the best. It's strange to talk about whether it's fair or not.

"Last season we had a great La Liga campaign, some ups and downs in the

Champions League, but we managed to win the cup.

"It seems to me that this debate about fairness and unfairness always comes up when Madrid win the Champions League. When others win it, it's meritocracy."

Madrid enjoyed a thrilling run to the final with comebacks against Paris Saint-Germain, Chelsea and Manchester City en route to beating Liverpool in the final.

Their coach Carlo Ancelotti also highlighted the importance of the Champions League to the capital club and said winning was not related to luck.

"La Liga is very important but the Champions League is the most important competition in the football world," said the coach.

"Winning it means a lot. They are two different competitions, one with 38 games is different to one with far fewer.

"Sometimes it comes down to small details, but it's not luck, or bad luck. Talking about that hides the problems you have and the quality of your opponent."

Saudi to host Asian Winter Games in desert megacity

AP ■ RIYADH

Saudi Arabia was chosen on Tuesday to host the 2029 Asian Winter Games at a \$500 billion futuristic megacity in the desert that planners say will feature a year-round winter sports complex.

"The deserts and mountains of Saudi Arabia will soon be a playground for winter sports," the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) said in a statement on the decision made during its general assembly meeting in Phnom Penh.

The Saudi bid was "unanimously approved", the statement said, noting that the megacity known as NEOM will be the first West Asian city to host the event.

First announced in 2017, NEOM has consistently raised eyebrows for proposed flour-

ishes like flying taxis and robot maids, even as architects and economists have questioned its feasibility.

The Asian Winter Games are slated to take place in Trojena, an area of NEOM "where winter temperatures drop below zero celsius and year-round temperatures are generally 10 degrees cooler than the rest of the region", according to the project's website.

Set to be completed in 2026, Trojena will include year-round skiing, a manmade freshwater lake, chalets, mansions and ultra-luxury hotels, the website says.

The Asian Winter Games include competitions for skiing, snowboarding, ice hockey and figure skating -- 47 events in all, 28 on snow and 10 on ice, the OCA said.

Rossouw sets up big win for Proteas

PTI ■ INDORE

Rilee Rossouw's stroke-filled 100 not out off 48 balls set up a morale boosting 49-run win for South Africa in the inconsequential third T20 International here on Tuesday as concerns around a faltering Indian bowling attack grew ahead of the T20 World Cup.

A rampaging Rossouw and Quinton de Kock (68 off 43) fired South Africa to 227 for three against a profligate Indian pace attack including Harshal Patel, Mohammad Siraj, Umesh Yadav and Deepak Chahar, who all leaked in excess of 11 runs per over.

In a high scoring ground with small dimensions, no total is safe but India kept losing wickets regularly to end at 178 all out in 18.2 overs.

With Jasprit Bumrah ruled out of the ICC event, India have a lot of work to do in the bowling department before they play their T20 World Cup opener in Melbourne on October 23.

If the ball is not swinging, India are unable to take wickets in the powerplay and the bowlers were not able to get their lengths right in the unforgiving death overs. They were guilty of bowling too full in the last five overs on Tuesday.

While it was a disappointing defeat, Rishabh Pant and Dinesh Karthik getting some much needed time in the middle was a positive for the Indian team.

Opening the innings in K L Rahul's absence, Pant looked



in ominous form in his 14-ball 27 which included two sumptuous straight drives and a couple of sixes. It was the first time Pant got to bat in the series.

With India playing only five specialist batters, Karthik got to bat at number four and he made good use of the opportunity.

His 21-ball 46 included

four sixes, one of them was a sensational scoop off Wayne Parnell. After smoking two sixes off Keshav Maharaj, he went for a reverse hit which led to his undoing.

Chahar once again showed his ability with the bat as he delayed the inevitable with an entertaining 31 off 17 balls.

Earlier, T20 World Cup-

bound Harshal (0/49) continued to leak a lot of runs in a forgettable night for all four Indian pacers.

Chahar, Siraj and Umesh Yadav too were put to sword by Rossouw and de Kock.

On a better of a pitch, South Africa made a strong start, reaching 48 for one in the powerplay with de Kock and Rossouw in destructive

mood.

Their belligerent 90-run stand came after skipper Temba Bavuma (3) fell cheaply. Under a lot of pressure after scoring two zeroes, Bavuma looked totally out of touch and ended up mistiming a regulation at mid on off the very first ball bowled by Umesh Yadav.

De Kock, who had to work hard for runs in

Guwahati, was back to his best. He got his first six with a pick-up shot off Siraj who featured for the first time in the series.

The next six was even more delightful as he moved across the stumps to swat a wide length ball off Chahar over square leg.

Rossouw got into the act with a flat six off Siraj in the seventh over.

With two left handers in full swing, Rohit decided to hold Axar Patel till the 14th over.

R Ashwin, who was brought in the powerplay, was hit for two maximums in the ninth over. One was a spectacular reverse sweep from de Kock before Rossouw employed the conventional sweep to dispatch the spinner over deep backward square leg. Siraj could have caught the latter but fluffed it to over the fence.

India got de Kock run out against the run of play but South African batters kept aiming for the big hits.

Rossouw greeted Axar into the attack with a slog sweep that went all the way. It seemed Rossouw was hitting sixes for fun as he ended up with eight of them.

There was a light moment before the start of 16th over when Chahar saw Stubbs backing up at the non striker's end but did not take the bails off in what seemed a like gentle warning.

In the final over of the innings, the in-form David Miller sent a high full toss from Chahar out of the ground before collecting two more sixes. The over fetched 24 runs.



Menon among 16 umpires named for T20 WCup

PTI ■ DUBAI

India's Nitin Menon will be among the 16 umpires who will officiate in the ICC T20 World Cup in Australia.

Menon, the only Indian on the ICC Elite Panel, has already reached Australia.

The ICC has announced 20 match officials for the First Round and Super 12s stage of the tournament.

"In total, 16 umpires will officiate across the tournament with Richard Kettleborough, Nitin Menon, Kumara Dharmasena and Marais Erasmus having been the umpires in charge of the 2021 final which saw this year's hosts claim their first ICC Men's T20 World Cup title," the ICC said in a statement.

"It is an experienced group of umpires, with the same 16 selected as last year's tournament which was held in the United Arab Emirates and Oman."

Chief Referee of the ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees, Ranjan Madugalle, is part of a quartet of former international cricketers who make up the match referees for the eighth edition of the T20 World Cup.

Sri Lankan Madugalle is joined by Andrew Pycroft of Zimbabwe, England's Christopher Broad and

Australian David Boon.

Pycroft will take charge of the tournament opener in Geelong on October 16 when Sri Lanka takes on Namibia in the First round with Joel Wilson and Rodney Tucker the umpires in the middle. Paul Reiffel will act as the TV umpire with Erasmus, occupying the role of the fourth umpire.

Erasmus, Tucker and Aleem Dar are all set to appear in their seventh ICC Men's T20 World Cup, with Langton Rusere umpiring in his second World Cup of the year having stood in the 2022 Women's ODI World Cup, including acting as reserve umpire for the final.

"Officials have been named for the entirety of the First Round and Super 12s, with the selections for the semi-finals and final of the tournament to be named in due course," the ICC added.

Match Referees: Andrew Pycroft, Christopher Broad, David Boon, Ranjan Madugalle
Umpires: Adrian Holdstock, Aleem Dar, Ahsan Raza, Christopher Brown, Christopher Gaffaney, Joel Wilson, Kumara Dharmasena, Langton Rusere, Marais Erasmus, Michael Gough, Nitin Menon, Paul Reiffel, Paul Wilson, Richard Illingworth, Richard Kettleborough, Rodney Tucker.

Gutted that I won't be part of T20 WC: Bumrah



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Jasprit Bumrah is gutted that he will have to miss the T20 World Cup due to a back injury but the star India pacer will cheer for his team as he goes through his rehabilitation process.

"I am gutted that I won't be a part of the T20 World Cup this time, but thankful for the wishes, care and support I've received from my loved ones. As I recover, I'll be cheering on the team

through their campaign in Australia," Bumrah tweeted on Tuesday.

The BCCI on Monday ruled Bumrah out of the ICC event, dealing a massive setback to the Indian team.

Bumrah's absence will certainly affect India's chances in the marquee event in Australia as death bowling still remains a grey area.

The BCCI was awaiting medical reports while the pacer did his rehab at the National

West Indies dump Hetmyer for 2022 T20 World Cup

AP ■ MIAMI

West Indies dropped Shimron Hetmyer from the upcoming T20 World Cup in Australia after the batter missed a rescheduled flight, Cricket West Indies announced.

The 25-year-old from Guyana was replaced on the roster by Shamarh Brooks in a decision by the Cricket West Indies selection panel after Hetmyer missed his flight to Australia, which had been moved due to family reasons.

After a seat was found on a Monday flight to New York, Hetmyer told CWI on Monday morning that he would be unable to get to the Guyana airport in time to make his flight

to New York.

"This afternoon we informed the CWI board of directors that the selection panel had unanimously decided to replace Shimron Hetmyer with Shamarh Brooks in our T20 World Cup squad," CWI director of cricket said.

Brooks will fly out later this week and miss T20 International matches against Australia on Wednesday at Gold Coast and Friday at Brisbane, instead joining the squad at Melbourne.

"Shamarh has been a part of our recent T20 International squads and delivered strong performances in the latter stages of the recently concluded CPL," Adams said.

replace him if he gains full fitness after recovering from COVID-19.

In case, Shami does not achieve the desired fitness standards, Deepak Chahar or Mohammed Siraj could be named in the World Cup squad.

The team is set to leave for Australia on Thursday.

The World Cup is starting October 16 with first round from where four teams will qualify for Super 12, which will begin from October 22.

Jemimah, Deepti do star turns as India crush UAE by 104 runs

PTI ■ SYLHET

Jemimah Rodrigues was at her ruthless best, smashing an unbeaten 75 off 45 balls as India out-batted an inexperienced United Arab Emirates by 104 runs in the Women's T20 Asia Cup, here on Tuesday.

Jemimah and Deepti Sharma (64 off 49 balls) added 128 runs in 13.3 overs after UAE had briefly sent some shivers down the Indians' spine, reducing the tournament favourites to 20 for 3 inside the fifth over.

However, the gulf in class between the two teams became more and more evident with India posting a challenging 178 for 5 in 20 overs.

The UAE team, which is also represented by 11 players of Indian origin, never even bothered to be competitive in its chase, finishing the quota of 20 overs at 74 for 4.

India have now won three matches on the trot and are firmly on their way to grab a semi-final berth although the big games against Bangladesh and Pakistan are yet to be played.

While Smriti Mandhana, S Meghana and an out of form Shafali Verma were back in the dug-out quickly, Jemimah and Deepti first steadied the ship till the 12th over and then upped the ante towards the end when the UAE bowlers found it difficult to control the run-flow.

While Jemimah hit 11 boundaries, Deepti had five fours and two sixes -- including one which was slog-swept behind '45' off a medium pacer.

Jemimah had two chief scoring zones -- one in the arc between square leg and deep mid-wicket and the other between cover and extra cover.



Jemimah enters top 10 in T20I rankings

Dubai: Enjoying a good run of form of late, India's Jemimah Rodrigues on Tuesday entered the top 10 in the ICC Women's T20I rankings for batters.

She is currently placed eighth, having scored two fifties in six innings.

Rodrigues jumped four places to grab the number eight position in the list headed by Australian star Beth

Mooney.

Rodrigues, 22, is now among three India players inside the top 10, with vice-captain Smriti Mandhana and Shafali Verma retaining their third and seventh positions respectively.

India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur moved two spots up to 13th after the latest update.

PTI

The UAE captain used as many as eight bowlers but the last six overs turned out to be complete mayhem with 72 runs coming off them.

While chasing, the mindset of the UAE batters was ultra defensive and they were more keen on not losing wickets after being reduced to 5 for 3 by the end of the

Bairstow confirms he won't play again in 2022

AP ■ LONDON

England batsman Jonny Bairstow has confirmed he won't play again this year after undergoing surgery on a broken leg following a "freak accident" playing golf.

Just hours after being named in England's T20 World Cup squad, Bairstow was forced to withdraw after suffering a broken leg when he slipped while walking to a tee box.

Bairstow, who turned 33 last week, has already been ruled out of the upcoming World Cup in Australia.

He confirmed Monday there was no prospect of him being fit enough for England's three-Test series in Pakistan in December.

Bairstow revealed he let out "uncontrollable screams" after slipping on the course.

"The actual injury was as such... a broken fibula in three places which required a plate, I dislocated my ankle which in turn meant I did my syndesmosis joint and lateral ligament along with a couple more bits," he posted on Instagram. "All in all I have done a proper job on it!"

He added: "Anyway... on the positive side the operation went well and I am now three weeks post surgery and my staples have been removed..."

"One thing is for sure and that is I shall not be partaking in anything more during 2022... however I cannot wait for what 2023 holds!"

Bairstow told the Daily Telegraph: "Normally when you slip you fall on your bum, which would have been fine as there's plenty of cushion in there.



"Except this time I tried to regain my balance, my left ankle turned right, dislocated and my weight went through my left lower leg. I heard it snap straight away."

"I took a couple of steps down then slipped. By the time I crumpled into a heap, I was three-quarters of the way down. It's all a blur, it happened so quickly."

"I yelled. Uncontrollable screams, the sort you hear on a rugby field. The adrenaline kicked in, and I knew I needed an ambulance. The next three hours without painkillers were not too fun."

ROI beat Saurashtra by 8 wickets in Irani Cup

PTI ■ RAJKOT

Kuldeep Sen blew away the last two batters with scorching pace and steep bounce to finish with a match haul of eight wickets as Rest of India won their 29th Irani Trophy with a walk-in-the-park eight wicket victory over Saurashtra here on Tuesday.

While Saurashtra gave a much better account of themselves in the second innings but a total of 380 meant Rest needed only 105 runs with almost two days of play left.

They knocked off the runs in little over a session and half with Abhimanyu Easwaran remaining unbeaten on 63 while adding 81 match winning runs for the unbroken third wicket stand with keeper Kona Bharat (27 not out).

However, it was young Kuldeep (5/94 in 19 overs) who quickly wrapped up the Saurashtra innings in the morning as he bowled one fast and full to trap Parth Bhut plumb in-front.

Jaydev Unadkat, who played a captain's knock of 89 to carry



the fight till fourth morning, was finally dismissed when Kuldeep banged one short and extra bounce saw the batter slash hard but only to find the resultant edge carry to keeper Bharat.

With a match-haul of 8 wickets, Kuldeep showed why he is so highly rated at the national level and will be travelling with the Indian team to Perth as a net bowler for the T20 World Cup.

Easwaran, who has an average of 32 in his last 20 innings,

played some flowing strokes, including some great cover drives but to be fair, these weren't runs scored under pressure like what Sarfaraz Khan did when he came into bat at 18/3 in ROI's first innings.

Deservingly, Bengal pacer Mukesh Kumar got the 'Player of the Match' award for his mesmerizing first morning spell when he got four top-order wickets to bowl Saurashtra out for 98 and literally pocket the game.

"There was some assistance early on and we tried to bowl them out as quickly as possible. I focus on my line and length," Mukesh said after the game.

His skipper Hanuma Vihari was all praise for Sarfaraz Khan, who bailed the team out with a brilliant hundred on the opening day.

"We were in a tough situation on a wicket which was helping for the bowlers, Sarfaraz batted beautifully. The 220-run partnership (him and Sarfaraz)

helped us to gain the momentum and we took the game away from them."

Vihari scored a cautious 82 off 184 balls, but wasn't disappointed on missing out on a hundred.

"I wanted to get the hundred because I worked hard. I batted long, but at the end of the day, the contribution helped the team and I am happy."

For Saurashtra captain Unadkat, the first day track was a very unlike Rajkot one and that made the difference.

"We crumbled under the conditions. It wasn't a typical Rajkot wicket. We had to be in the game in that session and we couldn't do it. It was about an extraordinary performance from someone who could have pulled out of that situation, didn't happen but we fought till the end."

Brief Scores: Saurashtra 98 and 380 (Jaydev Unadkat 89, Prerak Mankad 72, Sheldon Jackson 71, Kuldeep Sen 5/98). **ROI:** 374 & 105/2 (Abhimanyu Easwaran 63 not out). ROI won by 8 wickets.