

OPINION 6

ORWELLIAN WORLD  
OF INDIAN LIBERALS

WORLD 9

BIDEN GLOBAL STRATEGY TACKLES  
CHINA, RUSSIA, DOMESTIC NEEDS

MONEY 10

DIGITISATION A GAME CHANGER  
FOR INDIAN ECONOMY, SAYS IMF

NEW DELHI, FRIDAY OCTOBER 14, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3



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11 SPORT

## SC divided on hijab, ban to stay in K'taka

Lifting ban 'antithesis to secularism' vs wearing hijab 'matter of choice'; larger bench to decide it

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday delivered a split verdict on the hijab ban in Karnataka's educational institutions, with Justice Hemant Gupta holding that permitting a community to wear its religious symbols will be an "antithesis to secularism" and Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia insisting that wearing the Muslim headscarf should be simply a "matter of choice".

Both judges suggested placing the matter before a larger bench for adjudication. As it is a split verdict differing totally from each other, now the matter will go to the Chief Justice of India to form a larger bench to decide the case and the High Court judgment upholding the State Government's decision to ban hijab holds the field.

While Justice Gupta dismissed the appeals challenging the March 15 judgment of the Karnataka High Court which had refused to lift the ban, Justice Dhulia held there shall be no restriction on the wearing of hijab anywhere in the schools and colleges of the State.



A man at Supreme Court on the day of the verdict of the case regarding the ban on hijab in Karnataka's educational institutions, in New Delhi on Thursday PTI

Writing a separate 73-page judgment, Justice Dhulia said, "By asking the girls to take off their hijab before they enter the school gates is first an invasion of their privacy, then it is an attack on their dignity, and then ultimately it is a denial to them of secular education."

Justice Gupta, who was heading the bench and wrote a contrary verdict running into 133-pages, answered the 11 questions framed by him for consideration in the matter and said the Constitutional goal of fraternity will be defeated if the students are permitted to carry their apparent religious symbols with them to the classroom. While pronouncing the judgment on a batch of 26 petitions, Justice Gupta said at the outset, "There is divergence of opinion."

"In view of the divergent views expressed by the bench, the matter be placed before the Chief Justice of India for con-

stitution of an appropriate bench," the court said. In his verdict, Justice Gupta said the arguments advanced by the counsel for some of the appellants that this matter involves a substantial question of law and should be referred to a five-judge bench is "not tenable".

Both the judges referred to the State Government's February 5, 2022 order which banned wearing clothes that disturb equality, integrity, and public order in schools and colleges.

Justice Gupta noted the Government order "promotes an equal environment". "Accordingly, I do not find that the Government order impinges on the Constitutional promise of fraternity and dignity. Instead, it promotes an equal environment where such fraternal values can be imbibed and nurtured without any hindrance of any kind," he said.

Continued on Page 2

### Quote-unquote

"Permitting a community to wear its religious symbols will be an 'antithesis to secularism'."

"Schools are not required to have the discipline and regimentation of a military camp. Nevertheless, in my understanding, what the High Court wanted to convey was that all public places have a certain degree of discipline and limitations and the degree of enjoyment of a right by an individual inside his house or anywhere outside a public space is different to what he or she would enjoy once they are inside a public space".

"The practices of each faith have to be examined on the basis of the tenets of that religion alone. The essential religious practices of the followers of Sikh faith can't be made basis of wearing of hijab by the believers of Islamic faith,"

Justice Hemant Gupta

"By asking the girls to take off their hijab before they enter the school gates is first an invasion on their privacy, then it is an attack on their dignity, and then ultimately it is a denial to them of secular education".

"Under our constitutional scheme, wearing a hijab should be simply a matter of choice. It may or may not be a matter of essential religious practice, but it still is, a matter of conscience, belief, and expression".

Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia

## India abstains from UNGA vote on Russia annexation

Call consistent with national position: Envoy

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/ UNITED NATIONS

India has abstained from voting in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) against Russia's annexation of some parts of Ukraine. China also did not take part in the voting along with Cuba, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Explaining her country's position, India Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj said late on Wednesday that New Delhi's decision is "consistent" with its "well thought-out national position."

India stands ready to support all efforts aimed at de-escalation while underlining the importance of peaceful solutions through dialogue and diplomacy, she said.

The voting took place on the issue of a draft resolution that condemned Russia's "illegal" referendums and attempts to annex parts of Ukraine.

The 193-member General Assembly voted against Russia, criticising its "illegal so-called referendums in regions within the internationally recognised borders of Ukraine and the attempted illegal annexation of the Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia regions of Ukraine, following the organisation of the above-mentioned referendums".

The resolution "Territorial integrity of Ukraine: defending the principles of the Charter of the United Nations" was adopted with 143 nations voting in favour; Russia, Belarus, North



United Nations Ambassador from Ukraine, Sergiy Kyslytsya, far right top, use a binocular in the UN General Assembly, before it voted on a resolution condemning Russia's illegal referendum in Ukraine on Wednesday at UN headquarters AP

Korea, Syria, and Nicaragua voting against; and 35, including India, abstaining.

Kamboj said India urged that all efforts be made for an immediate cessation of hostilities and an urgent return to the path of dialogue and diplomacy. "The path to peace requires us to keep all channels of diplomacy open. We therefore sincerely hope for an early resumption of peace talks to bring about an immediate ceasefire and resolution of the conflict. India stands ready to support all such efforts aimed at de-escalation," Kamboj said.

"There are other pressing issues at play, some of which have not been adequately addressed in the resolution voted today. Our decision to abstain is consistent with our well thought-out national position," she added.

Quoting Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who had last month told Russian President Vladimir Putin that this is not an era of war, Kamboj said with this firm resolve to strive for a peaceful solution through dialogue and diplomacy, India

has decided to abstain.

She emphasised it is unfortunate that as the trajectory of the Ukrainian conflict unfolds, the entire global South has suffered "substantial collateral damage".

"As developing countries face the brunt of the conflict's consequences on food, fuel and fertiliser supplies, it is critical that the voice of the Global South be heard and their legitimate concerns duly addressed. We must therefore not initiate measures that further complicate a struggling global economy," she said.

The resolution declared that the "unlawful actions" of Russia with regard to the illegal so-called referendums held from September 23 to 27 in parts of the Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia regions of Ukraine and the subsequent attempted illegal annexation of these regions "have no validity under international law and do not form the basis for any alteration of the status of these regions of Ukraine".

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### CAPSULE

#### 3 TEENS DROWN IN DITCH IN SE DELHI

New Delhi: Three teenagers drowned in a ditch while taking bath in southeast Delhi's Pul Prahlad Pur area on Thursday afternoon, police said.

#### C'GARH IAS OFFICER SENT TO ED CUSTODY

Raipur: A court here on Thursday sent IAS officer Sameer Vishnoi and two others in the custody of the Enforcement Directorate for eight days in a money laundering case linked to alleged extortion of money from coal and mining transporters in the State.

#### RANA AYYUB CHARGED FOR MONEY LAUNDERING

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate has filed a chargesheet against journalist Rana Ayyub under the anti-money laundering law, accusing her of "cheating" the public and utilising charity funds worth ₹2.69 crore for creating her personal assets, and also violating the foreign contribution law.

#### NO LEVEL-PLAYING FIELD: THAROOR ON CHIEF POLL



Congress party presidential candidate Shashi Tharoor at Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee office in New Delhi on Thursday Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

New Delhi: Congress presidential candidate Shashi Tharoor on Thursday lamented that some leaders had openly come out in support of his poll opponent Mallikarjun Kharge and even summoned meetings in his favour, saying it disturbed the level-playing field.

## At 19.4 km a day, 60% drop in NHAI road making in 2 yrs

Gadkari attributes slump to problem in land acquisition, green nod, assures speedy recovery

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



2021-2022. Now the construction has to grow at a rapid pace of 55 km a day in the remaining period to achieve the target of building 40 km per day set by the Government for the current fiscal. "The Ministry has constructed 3,559 kilometres of National Highways up to September in 2022-23 as compared to 3,824 kilometres constructed up to September in 2021-22," the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways

(MoRTH) said in its monthly summary for the Cabinet for September 2022.

According to the Ministry data, the contract award figure is 4,092 kilometres during April-September this year, as compared to 4,609 kilometres in the corresponding period a year ago. Reacting to the slow down, Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari said problems relating to land acquisition and environmental clearances, apart from Covid-related disruptions, were coming in way of faster execution of projects.

Gadkari, who has been regularly credited to give a massive fillip to the highways and expressways constructions in the country, assured that the Ministry and NHAI are trying to meet the target.

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Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnav, Himachal Pradesh Governor Rajendra Arlekar and Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Jai Ram Thakur during the flagging-off ceremony of Vande Bharat Express train, in Una, Thursday. The train will run six days a week except on Wednesdays, with stops at Ambala, Chandigarh, Anandpur Sahib, and Una. It accelerates to 100 km per hour in just 52 seconds PTI

## TN in SC presses for early release of Rajiv's assassins

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Tamil Nadu Government has supported early release of the convicts in the Rajiv Gandhi assassination case and submitted an affidavit in the Supreme Court upholding the right of the State Government in deciding on the early release of the convicts. The TN Government said its 2018 decision in the matter was binding on the Governor.

The State Government was replying to the petitions filed by convicts Nanili and Ravichandran. They were seeking early release citing parity with the apex court's judgment in the case of another accused Perarivalan. In two separate affidavits, the Tamil Nadu Government told the SC

that in the Cabinet meeting held on September 9, 2018, it had considered mercy petitions of seven convicts in the assassination case and resolved to recommend the Governor for remission of their life sentences invoking the power under Article 161. The affidavit said the Governor should have passed orders as per the Cabinet decision, but he forwarded the file to President in January 2021 and no decision is taken till date.

The State Government said, "The law is well settled in the catena of apex court judgments that the Governor of a State is bound by the aid and advice given by the council of Ministers of a State under Art 161 of the Constitution."

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## Mob of 200 beats people offering namaz, vandalises mosque in G'gram

PARVEESH SHARMA ■ GURUGRAM

A mob of more than 200 people in Bhora Kalan village in Gurugram ransacked a mosque, assaulting namazis and locked the mosque from outside before escaping in the wee hours of Thursday. The mob also threatened to expel people offering namaz from the village. Police have registered an FIR in the incident, but no arrests were reported till Thursday evening.

Meanwhile, following the tension in the area, police have been deployed in the area to maintain law and order. A police official said they are keeping eye on rumour mongers.

Continued on Page 2

## Army's Zoom dies saving jawans in terror battle

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

An Army assault canine identified as 'Zoom', injured during an operation in the Tangpawa area of Anantnag, succumbed to his injuries in a veterinary hospital on Thursday.

Zoom had received two gunshot injuries during an operation and was recently operated upon.

The army officers in the valley who were part of the operation were praying for his speedy recovery after the surgery. A Defence spokesperson on Thursday said, "Zoom passed away around 12 pm at the Advance Field Veterinary Hospital. He was responding well till around 11.45 am when he suddenly started gasping and collapsed," the spokesman added. Paying glowing tributes, Chinara Corps twitter handle tweeted, "Army Assault Canine 'Zoom' laid down his life in the line of duty."

He suffered gunshot wounds during Op Tangpawa on Oct 9, 22 where he fought gallantly with terrorists, saving lives of soldiers. His selfless commitment and service to the nation will be remembered forever."

Zoom was sent inside a residential house to



track down the footprints of the terrorists hiding in a house during an anti-terrorist operation on Monday.

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## Youth gets 3 years in jail for pulling dupatta, holding hand of minor girl

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Mumbai Special Court — set up to deal with offences registered under Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012 — has sentenced a 23-year-old youth to imprisonment for three years for pulling the dupatta and holding the hand of a minor girl. The court noted that such an incident "causes terror in the minds of people, the victim and her family members and leave scar for longer time".

Special Judge Priya Bankar convicted Mohammad, alias Zaid Gulamnabi Shaikh, under sections 7 and 8 of the POCSO Act and handed out three years' imprisonment. The judge also imposed a fine of ₹10,000 on the convict.

"There is increase in sexual offences against the child. There is a very adverse impact of the incident on the victim girl, on her family members and even on society. They are under the impression that the house and nearby vicinity are not safe for children and it is going to cause an alarming situation in the society," the judge noted in her judgment delivered on October 11.

"Definitely, such type of incident causes terror in the minds of the people, the victim and her family members and leave a scar for a longer time," the judge said.

The prosecution's case was that on December 1, 2017, while the victim, then a 15-year-old girl studying in 10th standard and residing with her



family members, was on her way to a nearby shop to purchase some household articles, Mohammad, alias Zaid, pulled her dupatta. While she proceeded further, he also held her hand. When the girl screamed that she would inform her father, the accused threatened to beat her up. The victim told her father

about the incident. When her father called Zaid over the phone, he was abused. Then the girl's father lodged a complaint at Mahim Police Station.

A chargesheet was filed against Mohammad under sections 354(A),(B), 504, 506 of the IPC and under section 12 of the POCSO Act.

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NCR-PULSE

**2 SHOOTERS ON A HIT JOB ARRESTED**  
**New Delhi:** Delhi Police's Special Cell has arrested two alleged shooters who had come to the city for a hit job at orders of Arshdeep Dalia, a Canada-based ganglord. Police said duo was wanted in a recent of firing outside the house of one Ankit Goel, a Bhatinda-based businessman. The accused have been identified as Ravinder Singh (21) and Navdeep Singh (26), both residents of Gurdaspur in Punjab, They had fired at Goel's house after making a demand for Rs 1 crore.

**NEPALI SCHOOL DELEGATION ON VISIT TO DELHI: DOE**  
**New Delhi:** The Directorate of Education (DoE) on Thursday said a delegation of 30 school principals, Vice Principals and teachers from Nepal is on a three-day visit to Delhi Government schools. According to a senior DoE official, the educators from the Nepal's Municipality of Tilottama took note of several activities in the schools, including the 'Deshbhakti', International Baccalaureate (IB), mindset curriculums and other activities associated to art.

**TP-DDL ORGANISING SPECIAL LOK ADALAT ON OCT 16**  
**New Delhi:** Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited (Tata Power-DDL), in association with Delhi State Legal Services Authority (DSLISA), will be organising a Special Lok Adalat on October 16, 2022. According to a senior official, the Lok Adalat session to be held at EAC office – Rohini 3, from 10 am to 4 pm, and will enable on-the-spot settlements of power theft cases that is issues related to Meter Tampering, Direct Theft, and Disconnections.

**EXCISE POLICY 2021-22 DOING WONDERS IN PUNJAB: KEJRIWAL**  
**New Delhi:** The Excise Policy 2021-22 that the AAP Government was not allowed to implement in Delhi has worked wonders in Punjab where AAP is in power, Delhi Chief Minister and party supremo Arvind Kejriwal said on Thursday. 'The same excise policy, which they did not allow us to implement in Delhi, is doing wonders in Punjab.

**BJP TAKES JIBE AT AAP OVER WORKERS' WAGE HIKE**  
**New Delhi:** A day after the Delhi Government has hiked the minimum wage in the national Capital, the Delhi BJP on Thursday took a jibe at AAP terming this decision as 'cruel joke'. "This move is just like darkness below the lamp. If the Delhi Government does not give the benefit of increased minimum wages to its own employees, then it has no moral right to announce the increment in the minimum wages," said Leader of the Opposition in the Delhi Assembly, Ramvir Singh Bidhuri.

**'GOVT, CIVIC BODY NEVER CLEARED LANDFILL SITES'**  
**New Delhi:** After the NGT imposed a Rs 900-crore fine on the Delhi Government for improper management of solid municipal waste, the Congress on Thursday termed it a strong indictment of 'corruption and inaction' of the Aam Aadmi Party-led dispensation. Anil Bhardwaj, chairman of the communications department of the Delhi Congress, said the city Government and the civic body never bothered to clear the three landfill sites in the national Capital — Ghazipur, Bhalswa and Okhla.

**52-YR-OLD BELDAR ARRESTED FOR DEMANDING BRIBE**  
**New Delhi:** The Delhi Government's Anti-Corruption Branch arrested a 52-year-old 'beldar' working in the maintenance department of MCD for allegedly demanding a bribe of Rs 1.5 lakh to allow some construction work in Sainik Farm area. Mahavir Singh, a resident of Sangam Vihar, works as a beldar in the maintenance department of MCD, Central Zone, Lajpat Nagar.

**PLATFORM BY TEENAGER ENABLES FOOD DONATION**  
**New Delhi:** With the world advancing in terms of technology, 17-year-old resident of Gurugram Manan Khanna has ideated and implemented an artificial intelligence and video based mobile application "Deassy Donation Platform", which enables donors to seamlessly connect to recipients. "The main inspiration is the feeling of gratification that I receive once I'm able to find the look of happiness in the eyes of the underprivileged," said Manan.

**सार्वजनिक सूचना**  
सर्व-साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि मैं राजेश सिंह वर्मा पुत्र स्व श्री हरिसिंह वर्मा शिवसिंह कालोनी दिल्ली-110095 R/O D-127, आज दिनांक 11/10/2022 से अपने परिवार से स्वयं का सम्बन्ध विच्छेद करता हूँ आज के बाद मेरा, मेरे परिवार से किसी भी प्रकार का सामाजिक, आर्थिक, सम्बन्ध नहीं रहे जायेगा। मेरे द्वारा किये गये किसी कार्य/सेवा-देना का कोई उत्तरदायित्व नहीं होगा, आज के बाद मैं किसी संसारिक मोह-माया का भी त्याग करता हूँ।  
(राजेश सिंह वर्मा)  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
It is to inform to the public at large that 1) Mr. Gajender Singh & 2) Mrs. Kavita who are owners of the two separate plots 1) Plot of and addressing 40 Sq. Yds. (i.e., 1 Marla 3 Sarsa), carved out of Khewat / Khata No.1299/1612/1, Mustali No.39, Killa No.24/1201(0-5), 24/1201(0-2), situated in the revenue estate of Village Jharsa, Gurugram, within the Municipal Limits of Gurugram, Tehsil Wazirabad, District Gurugram (Haryana); 2) Plot of land addressing 40 Sq. Yds. (i.e., 1 Marla 3 Sarsa), carved out of Khewat/Khata No.1299/1612/1, Mustali No.39, Killa No.24/1201(0-5), 24/1201(0-2), situated in the revenue estate of Village Jharsa, Gurugram, within the Municipal Limits of Gurugram, Tehsil Wazirabad, District Gurugram (Haryana); having acquired the same from 1) Mr. Pardeep Kumar & 2) Mr. Gajender Singh vide 1) Transfer Deed (from Brother to Brother) dated 16.08.2022, registered with the office of Sub-Registrar, Wazirabad, vide Document No.5244 & 2) Transfer Deed (from Husband to Wife) dated 05.08.2022, registered with the office of Sub-Registrar, Wazirabad, vide Document No.8957 and same to be finance & mortgage by Vastu Housing Finance Corporation Limited. To comply the requirements of BANK/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any Person having any type of claim / right / title / interest / creating mortgage over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections, within 7 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, liens etc.  
**Lucem Legal LLP**  
269, Rama House, Ground Floor, Masik Math, Opp. Uday Park, South Ext., N. New Delhi-49  
Contact# 011-40046316

कार्यालय नगर पालिका परिषद् पीथमपुर जिला धार ( म.प्र. )

क्रमांक/5945/न.पा./22

पीथमपुर दिनांक :- 12.10.2022

-::: ई -निविदा आमंत्रण सूचना :::-

नगर पालिका पीथमपुर क्षेत्रान्तर्गत निम्नलिखित कार्य की निविदा सूचना ई-टेंडरिंग पद्धति से ई-प्रोक्योरमेन्ट पोर्टल (www.mptenders.gov.in) पर आमंत्रित है। निविदा का विवरण निम्नानुसार है :-

क्रं	पोर्टल क्रं.	कार्य का नाम	अनु. लागत ( लाख )	अनैस्ट मनी	समयावधि ( माह )	फार्म शुल्क
1	2022_UAD_227195	हाउसिंग बोर्ड कॉलोनी के पास जैन मंदिर से पुलिया तक सी.सी. रोड एवं बाउन्ड्रीवाल निर्माण	171.00	85500/-	06	12500/-

समय सारणी :-

01 निविदा प्रपत्र ऑनलाईन क्रय करने प्रारंभ दिनांक :- 13.10.2022 ( प्रातः 11.00 बजे से )

02 निविदा ऑनलाईन क्रय/बीड सबमीशन की अंतिम दिनांक :- 11.11.2022 ( शाम 5.30 बजे तक )

03 निविदा खोलने की दिनांक :- 14.11.2022 ( प्रातः 11.00 बजे )

( श्रीमती श्रमा सुभाष जायसवाल ) ( श्री हंसराज पटेल ) ( श्रीमती कविता संजय वैष्णव )

मुख्य नगर पालिका अधिकारी प्रभारी लो.नि.वि. उपाध्यक्ष अध्यक्ष

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## 6 kids die in UP wall cave-ins

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Six children, including four girls, were buried alive when a wall collapsed over them in two separate incidents reported from Sitapur and Fatehpur respectively. The Chief Minister expressed grief at the deaths and directed officials to extend immediate relief to the families of the victims.

In the first incident reported from Sitapur, two sisters died after a mud wall collapsed over them in Thangaon police station area due to heavy rains.

The victims were identified as Shafia (5) and Mehak (3) Chowkidar Purva village.

They both, along with some other family members, were sitting under the mud wall in the house of Ramzan when it suddenly collapsed

over them on Thursday morning.

Both the sisters, along with others, were buried in the rubble. Hearing the sound of the wall falling, the relatives reached the spot and tried to rescue both of them by removing the rubble.

Villagers also gathered on the spot after getting information about the incident and started trying to clear the rubble. By the time the rubble was removed, both the sisters were dead while three others received injuries.

The police reached the spot and sent the bodies for autopsy and admitted the injured to the local hospital.

Thangaon Station House Officer Phoolchand Saroj said the bodies were sent post-mortem and further investigations were on.



Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath expressed deep grief over the loss of lives due to the collapse of the house in Sitapur district. He expressed condolences to the families of the deceased and also asked officials to provide proper treatment to the people injured in the accident.

In another similar incident in Fatehpur, two girls were killed when the wall of a mud

house collapsed on them after heavy rain.

The incident was reported to have occurred in Majre Salona Dera of Karaiha village under Lalauli police station around 5 pm on Wednesday.

The wall collapsed when the two girls, Naina and Pransi, were playing outside a neighbour's home, the officials said.

People from the neighbourhood rushed to the spot and pulled the girls out from the rubble. However, both of them had stopped breathing by then, Sub-Divisional Magistrate (Sadar) Awadhesh Kumar Nigam said. The bodies were sent for autopsy.

Meanwhile in Bahraich, a child died while another was seriously injured after a swing broke at a private school, an official said on Thursday.

## 36 J&K cops forced retired over graft

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU



In its endeavor to make the Police department more efficient and transparent, the Union Territory administration Thursday prematurely retired 36 police personnel on charges of their involvement in corruption and criminal activities.

These personnel conducted their duties in ways which were unbecoming of public servants & in violation of the established code of conduct, a handout issued by the Department of Information and Public relations stated.

The exercise was conducted as part of a regular process of scrutiny of records of officials, who cross benchmarks of age/service period in terms of Article 226(2) of J&K CSRs.

The statement read, "These

employees were found involved in illegal activities, remained unauthorizedly absent from duties for a considerable period, underperformed, penalized in departmental enquiries and some of them found involved in corruption cases, facing serious criminal charges, and had doubtful integrity".

As per the recommendations of the Review Committee, the performance of these employees was found non-satisfactory and their continuation in the Government service was found against the public interest.

## News report on Namibia seeking India's support on lifting ivory ban under cheetah deal 'relies on speculation': Env Ministry

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Environment Ministry on Thursday said a news report on Namibia seeking India's support for lifting a UN ban on trade of ivory as part of the cheetah deal "largely relies on speculation, hearsay and not on facts".

India and Namibia had on July 20 signed a pact on "wildlife conservation and sustainable biodiversity utilisation".

The MoU said the two countries "should seek to promote biodiversity conservation with specific focus on conservation and restoration of cheetah in their former range areas from which they went extinct" and "sharing and exchange of expertise and capacities aimed at promoting cheetah conservation in two countries".

The report said: "While the word ivory has not been mentioned, Namibia has already sought India's backing, under the commitment to

support 'sustainable management' at CITES, for its long-standing proposal to allow trade in ivory derived from elephants."

The ministry in a statement said: "The story 'Under Cheetah deal, sought India's support on lifting ivory ban: Namibia' published by Indian Express on 13th October, 2022 largely relies on speculation, hearsay and not on facts."

"Though the agreement signed between the Government of the Republic of Namibia and Government of the Republic of India includes 'wildlife conservation and sustainable biodiversity utilization' as one of the areas of cooperation, this cannot be construed as support for lifting the ban on trade in endangered species," the statement read.

It said the Indian government has not received any written communication from Namibia regarding lifting of the ban on ivory trade.

## ED arrests IAS officer, 2 others in money laundering case in Chhattisgarh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Post multi-city searches in a money laundering case in Chhattisgarh, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday arrested IAS officer Sameer Vishnoi and two private persons from Raipur.

The ED also arrested businessman Sunil Agrawal of Indramani Group and Laxmikant Tiwari, uncle of "absconding" businessman Suryakant Tiwari from Raipur.

The trio was arrested under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) and was produced before a special court in Raipur that remanded them for eight-day custody of the ED.

Vishnoi, an IAS officer of 2009 batch Chhattisgarh cadre, is currently working as the CEO of Chhattisgarh Infotech Promotion Society (CHIPS). Before his arrest on Thursday, he was questioned by the agency at its office in Raipur on Wednesday along with a few other suspects.

Vishnoi also holds additional charge of Managing Director of Chhattisgarh State Cooperative Marketing Federation (Markfed) and had earlier served as the Director of Geology and Mining Department and MD of Chhattisgarh Mineral Development Corporation (CMDC) in the State government led by Chief Minister Bhupesh Baghel.

The CMDC undertakes scientific exploration, commercial exploitation and viable trading of minerals in the State.

The premises of Laxmikant Tiwari, an advocate from Mahasamund district, were also searched by the agency earlier this week.

The arrests came after the agency launched multiple raids in Chhattisgarh on October 11 in a money laundering case linked to alleged illegal levy extorted from coal and mining transporters in the State by a purported nexus of government officials, businessmen and private entities.

## Rahul warns BJP-RSS of facing full force if Kannada language attacked



PTI ■ CHITRADURGA

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday said the BJP and RSS would face the full force of his party if they attacked the people of Karnataka and their language.

His warning comes days after JDS leader Kumaraswamy alleged that the central Staff Selection Commission (SSC) exam was being held only in Hindi and English and not in any regional language.

Addressing a public meeting in Molakalmuru town in Chitradurga district as part of ongoing 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', Rahul said unemployed youth asked him why they cannot give their tests in Kannada.

He opined that people

should be allowed to write their tests in Kannada, for a language is not just what you use to converse with each other.

A language is history, culture, it is imagination and nobody should be allowed to stop people from speaking in their language. "These are some ideas the BJP and the RSS are promoting.

For them Kannada is a secondary language. It is not to be respected. For us, Kannada is of primary importance. If the BJP and the RSS think that they can attack the Kannada language, they can attack the people of Karnataka, they can attack the history of Karnataka, they are going to face the full force of the Congress party," the former Congress president said.

## Army's Zoom dies saving jawans in terror...

**From Page 1**  
After locating and attacking the terrorists, Zoom received two bullet wounds, critically injuring him. Despite being wounded, the Army said, the canine kept attacking the terrorists, helping in efforts to neutralise them.

Earlier on July 30, Axel, a two-year-old assault dog, had made a supreme sacrifice in the line of duty during an encounter in Wanigam Bala area of Pattan in North Kashmir's Baramulla district. Axel was later cremated with full military honors.

## Youth gets 3 years in jail for...

**From Page 1**  
In the operative portion of her verdict, the Judge said: "Overall going through the evidence on record, prosecution has proved that accused has outraged the modesty of 15 years old child and has sexually assaulted her and thus, he has committed the offence under Section 354 of IPC as well as under Section 7 punishable under section 8 of

POCSO Act".

"He (the accused) has also threatened the victim and also committed an offence punishable under Section 506 of IPC. The accused was present on the spot and he has committed offence with the minor victim girl with sexual intent and had a physical contact with the victim girl and thereby committed offence of sexual assault," the

Judge said.

Seeking leniency in punishment, the defence lawyer told the court that the accused did not have criminal antecedents. "He is the only earning member of his family and he is 23 years old. Hence, submitted to show leniency while awarding the sentence and minimum sentence be awarded," the defence lawyer told the court.

## India abstains from...

**From Page 1**  
It called upon all states, international organisations, and United Nations specialised agencies not to recognise any alteration by Russia of the status of any or all of the Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk or Zaporizhzhia regions of Ukraine, and demanded that Russia immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw all of its military

forces from the territory of the war-torn nation within its internationally recognised borders.

Last month, India had abstained while Russia vetoed a draft UN Security Council resolution tabled by the US and Albania that would have condemned Moscow's "illegal referenda" and declared the annexation of four Ukrainian territories as invalid.

## SC divided on hijab...

**From Page 1**  
On the other hand, Justice Dhulia set aside the High Court verdict and also quashed the February 5, 2022 Government order. "Under our Constitutional scheme, wearing a hijab should be simply a matter of choice. It may or may not be a matter of essential religious practice, but it still is, a matter of conscience, belief, and expression," he said. Justice Dhulia further said the "unfortunate fallout of the hijab restriction would be that we would have denied education to a girl child."

He referred to the four questions formulated by the High Court, including whether wearing hijab or headscarf is a part of essential religious practice in Islamic faith protected under Article 25 of the Constitution. "In my opinion, the question of Essential Religious Practices, which we have also referred to in this judgment as ERP, was not at all relevant in the determination of the dispute before the court. I say this because when protection is sought under Article 25(1) of the Constitution of India, as is being done in the present case, it is not required for an individual to establish that what he or she asserts is an ERP," Justice Dhulia said.

"It may simply be any religious practice, a matter of faith or conscience! Yes, what is asserted as a right should not go against 'public order, morality and health,' and of course, it is subject to other provisions of Part III of the Constitution," he said. Justice Dhulia said in his opinion, courts are not the forums to solve "theological questions". "Courts are not well equipped to do that for various reasons, but most importantly because there will always be more than one viewpoint on a particular religious matter, and therefore nothing gives the authority to the Court to pick one over the other," he said. Justice Dhulia said the courts, however, must interfere when the boundaries set by the Constitution are broken, or where unjustified restrictions are imposed. He said another question which the school administration and the State must answer in this case is as to what is more important to them: "education of a girl child or enforcement of a dress code".

In his verdict, Justice Gupta noted that some of the appellants had also made a comparison with the rights of the followers of the Sikh faith by arguing that since 'Kirpan' is allowed in terms of Explanation I to Article 25, therefore, the students who want to wear headscarf should be equally protected as in the case of the followers of the Sikh religion. He said the issue in these appeals is not the essential religious practices of the people following Sikh faith.

"The essential religious practices of the followers of Sikh faith cannot be made basis of wearing of hijab/headscarf by the believers of Islamic faith," Justice Gupta said. "As discussed above, secularism is applicable to all citizens, therefore, permitting one religious community to wear their religious symbols would be antithetical to secularism," he said.

## At 19.4 km a day, 60% drop in NHAI road making in...

**From Page 1**  
"Let's wait until the end of financial year. The last financial year slow down was hit by pandemic-related disruptions and a longer-than-usual monsoon in some parts of the country," he said.

In a related development, the rating agency CRISIL on Thursday said e-NHAI awarded only 777 kilometres of road projects in the first half (April-September) of the current fiscal, which is a three-year low. This is also a 60 per cent drop over the corresponding period last year. CRISIL I had in July estimated that the pace of construction might go up to 32-34 km per day this fiscal, as input prices were expected to remain elevated.

The NHAI and National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd (NHIDCL) are primarily responsible for the construction of national highways and expressways across the country. The official target of highway construction has been kept at 12,000 kilometres for the current financial year. The ministry had constructed 10,237 kilometres in 2019-20, 13,327 kilometres in 2020-21 and 10,457 kilometres in 2021-22.

The central road making agency has floated tenders worth about 2,200 km so far this fiscal, which is 36 per cent higher than the corresponding first half of the last fiscal.

## Mob of 200...

**From Page 1**  
According to a senior police official, based on a complaint given by Subedar Nazam Mohammed the police have registered a case under relevant sections 295-A, 323,506,147,148 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) related to rioting, trying to cause religious strife and unlawful assembly at Bilaspur Police Station on Thursday. Those named in the FIR have been identified as Rajesh Chauhan aka Babbu, Anil Bhadoriya, Sanjay Vyas and 200 other people of the village.

The police have started the investigation of the case. The complainant alleged that Rajesh, Anil, Sanjay and 200 people gathered at the mosque and attacked the worshippers and even locked it from outside. By the time police reached, the accused had fled, he said. "The mob of several people beat us and threatened to expel us from the village as we have only 3-4 families residing in the village. On Wednesday night when we offered namaaz they attacked us and few of worshippers injured in the attacked. The attacker was also carrying a pistol," the complainant alleged.

Police have recovered a mobile phone from the spot which may belong to someone part of the attacking mob, he said. "These people were harassing us for the past few days and had tried to disrupt namaaz. We required strict action against those involved in the matter," he added.

## TN in SC...

**From Page 1**  
It referred to the Constitution bench verdict of the top court in the Maru Ram versus Union of India (1981 verdict) in which the position with respect to Article 161 of the Constitution was authoritatively summed up and said that the action of commutation and release can be pursuant to a Governmental decision.

"Thus...it is well settled that though the aid and advice of the State Cabinet under Article 161 of the Constitution of India made on September 9, 2018 is undoubtedly binding on the Governor of Tamil Nadu as per the 1981 verdict, the release of the writ petitioner (Nalin and Ravichandran) could happen only after the Government issue an order to this effect upon approval of the Governor thereon," the affidavit said.

It further said that the law relating to the power of the Governor under Article 161 of the Constitution and the power of the State government in dealing with the offences (302 of IPC) falls within the exclusive domain of the State Government is also well settled.

The State Government said that it is the competent authority to take decision on the petition filed by Nalini and Ravichandran under Article 161 of the Constitution and "the decision of the State Cabinet dated September 9, 2018 thereon is final and it can be exercised by Governor of Tamil Nadu as per the aid and advice of the cabinet".



# Over 2.17L applications for 70K UG seats in DU

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi University (DU) has received more than 2.17 lakh applications for admission to 70,000 seats in various undergraduate (UG) courses. The registration for admission closed on Thursday evening.

DU will begin classes for first year students of the 2022-23 academic year on November 2, but incoming students will only be given a four-day break between the first and second semester.

DU's Dean of Admissions Professor Haneet Gandhi that more than 1.5 lakh students have selected their college-course preferences, which is around 67,000 less than the total registration.

"As many as 2,17,653 aspirants have registered for undergraduate courses. Out of this, over 1.5 lakh have marked their college and course preferences," she said. According to the schedule released by the central university, the first semester will start in November 2022 and end in March 2023, after which the second semester will be conducted from March to July.

The Common Seat Allocation System (CSAS) portal has also auto-locked preferences indicated by UG aspirants on Thursday at 5 PM. The DU began admissions for



over 70,000 seats last month.

This year, the university is admitting students through the Common University Entrance Test (CUET) scores instead of their Class 12 marks. On September 12, the university released its admission-cum-allocation policy CSAS.

Admission through the CSAS is being conducted in three phases — submission of the CSAS-2022 application form, selection of programmes and filling of preferences, and seat allocation and admission.

The admissions are open for 79 UG programmes across 67 colleges, departments, and centres. The programmes include 206 combinations of BA courses.

On the difference in the number of registrations and preferences, the official said many students are waiting for the simulated rank list following which they will select their preferences again.

Before the announcement of the first seat allocation list, the university said it will release a 'Simulated List' on Friday through which the candidates will be able to assess their probabilities of securing admission to a programme in a college.

After the declaration of the 'Simulated List', two more days will also be provided to the candidates to reorder their preferences.

"The students will get a two-day window during which they can fill up their preferences. Students who have not registered their preferences will be able to select during these two days," Gandhi said.

The first seat allocation list is scheduled to be released on October 18, followed by the second on October 30 and the third list on November 10. So, the academic session will begin before the third list of seat allocation is released by varsity.

# NCW summons on Guj AAP chief stirs row

NCW chief, Italia trade charges; AAP slams BJP for Gopal Italia's brief detention

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

High drama ensued on Thursday involving the AAP, BJP and the National Commission for Women (NCW) after the Gujarat unit AAP president Gopal Italia was summoned for allegedly using abusive language against Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Just after the NCW hearing ended in the afternoon, Italia, was briefly detained by Delhi Police and taken to Southeast Delhi's Sarita Vihar police station, amid protests from AAP workers.

After that Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, Sanjay Singh, Atishi, Saurav Bhardwaj, Gopal Rai and Durgesh Pathak defended Italia and criticized the BJP. Kejriwal tweeted in Hindi, "After Gopal Italia was held, there is huge anger among the Patel community in the State. Why is the entire BJP after Italia?"

In a press conference, AAP MLA from Kalkaji, Atishi said, "Italia is a youth leader who emerged from the Patidar movement. That's why BJP brings out fake allegations and fake videos against him every day. Crossing all limits, today Gopal Italia was called to Delhi and was arrested by Delhi Police in NCW."

AAP spokesperson, Saurabh Bharadwaj said that Italia has been arrested by Central Government-controlled Delhi Police at the



AAP Gujarat State convenor Gopal Italia addresses a press conference at party office, in New Delhi on Thursday

behest of the BJP without any charge. Earlier, addressing a press conference, Italia accused the NCW chairperson Rekha Sharma of abusing him in her cabin. "She scolded me and threatened that she would file an FIR against me and send me to prison. She asked me what status do I have?," said Italia.

"Later, I met my lawyer and told him that the Chairperson treated me very rudely. She did not record my statements nor did she talk about the matter for which I was summoned," Italia said.

"In the meantime, the NCW called the police and I was told, in the presence of police, that I have to sit upstairs," said Italia "There were 8-10 people in civil uniform. I do not know who they

were and if they were present in an official capacity? There was a woman who was continuously recording a video, and I asked them if the video was official and was told that it was for official purposes," said Italia. "But all-in-all, NCW did not have any interest in the notice during the entire proceeding and they made the police take me to the police station," said Italia.

Meanwhile, the NCW officials claimed that Italia was detained after the hearing for creating a situation that disrupted law and order in the area. Police said that a complaint was received claiming Italia's supporters were creating ruckus outside the NCW building following which a police team reached the spot.

# 'Italia has no respect for PM, Kejriwal team urban Naxal'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP on Thursday slammed Gopal Italia saying that the Patidar leader's arrest by Delhi Police was a "slap on the face of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal." They also criticized AAP and Kejriwal for defending him.

BJP IT cell in charge Amit Malviya took to Twitter and wrote, "Gopal Italia, AAP's Gujarat president, close aide of Kejriwal, is a serial offender, who treats women with contempt and sexist disregard. After constantly referring to women with the "C" word, offending those who go to katha and mandir, now calls PM's aged mother "nautanki baaz".

Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri said Italia has no respect for his Prime Minister. "Those who abuse PM or destroy institutions are their favourite. Team Kejriwal is



urban naxal," he said. Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta, said that the Patidar leader's arrest by Delhi Police was a "slap on the face of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. Now the whole country is watching that AAP leaders sitting in Delhi are advocating for a person with anti-Hindu mentality who has given a controversial statement about Lord Krishna."

All AAP leaders are engaged in the defense of a leader who makes anti-Hindu statements, insults women and uses abusive and indecent language about the PM, he alleged.

However, the Delhi Police denied detaining Italia. "He was just called for questioning as his supporters created a ruckus outside the NCW's office and he was released

later," said a senior police officer. Rekha Sharma said that Italia had claimed that he was not the person in video, however, in his written response, he said he did not mean it.

## PICTALK



Activists of Mercy for Animals India Foundation lock themselves inside a cage while wearing white, bloodied clothes and holding placards which read 'Hens suffer for Eggs; Go Vegan', during a demonstration, ahead of 'World Egg Day' at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on Thursday

# Fire Dept NOC for residential buildings not needed: MCD

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a big relief, citizens applying for sanctioning building plans for residential properties in "special category" will no longer require a 'No Objection Certificate' (NOC) from the Delhi Fire Service as the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) has relaxed norms.

Earlier, obtaining a prior NOC from the Delhi Fire Service was "mandatory" for the sanction of plans for residential buildings, the MCD said in a statement.

However, the MCD clarifies that the new relaxation in rule "shall not apply to those residential buildings, wherein stilt is not proposed by applicants".

According to a senior MCD official, as per the new rule, no NOC is required from Delhi Fire Service in the cases of sanction of building plans of



residential building consisting of Ground Floor plus three additional floors with stilts for parking having, overall maximum height of 17.5 meters. "MCD hopes that the said expedient relaxation to the general public will abridge the approval-processing of such building sanction cases," it said, adding that the civic body is committed to the welfare of citizens and making maximum efforts to provide hassle-free services by making compliances easy and minimum. "This decision came after the

recent judgment passed by the Supreme Court and clarification rendered by Delhi Fire Service. Before the judgment, obtaining NOC from the DFS was mandatory for the sanction of residential building plans," he said.

"Citizens may avail the benefit by submitting the applications for sanction of residential buildings plan in the above manner, without submission of NOC by the fire department," he informed. The civic body claimed it has taken this decision "in the light of a recent judgement passed by Supreme Court, and a clarification rendered by the Delhi Fire Service".

On August 11, the Rule 27 of Delhi Fire Service Rules 2010, which categorizes any building above 15 meters height as high-rise, was read by Supreme Court to exempt buildings which are up to 17.5 meters tall with stilts.

# 3 teens drown in Southeast Delhi's Khanpur area

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

In a tragic incident, three teenagers drowned in a waterlogged pit at Kaya Maya park in Southeast Delhi's Khanpur area. Police said the water had collected in the pit following the recent heavy rainfall in the national Capital.

Police said that the deceased have been identified as Risbah (16), Piyush (13) and Piyush (16), all residents of Khanpur area.

According to Esha Pandey, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP), Southeast district, around 2:38 PM on Thursday, a police control room (PCR) call was received a Pul Pehladpur police station regarding the drowning of three minors following which police teams rushed to the

spot. "Police team met the caller, another 16 year-old boy on the spot, who told police that he along with his seven friends came to have bath in rain water logged at the park.

"While when they were busy taking bath, three of his friends, Piyush, Risabh and another boy also named Piyush, went into a pit. They started drowning and after some time they disappeared into the water," said the DCP.

"On the instance of the boy, the police team jumped into the water filled pit.

"After an intensive search of about 30 minutes all the three children were fished out of the water and sent to Majeddia Hospital in a CAT ambulance, where they were declared brought dead by the doctors," said the DCP.

# Fire tenders, ambulances soon in Chandni Chowk: LG

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Fire tenders and ambulances will soon be deployed in and around Delhi's iconic Chandni Chowk to deal with emergency situations in the area known for its heritage buildings and old markets.

A stretch of Chandni Chowk has been revamped as part of the Delhi Government's redevelopment project. Delhi Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) VK Saxena has said an exercise to identify fire-prone locations for deployment of fire tenders as also for deployment of ambulances is being undertaken here by the fire department.

The "initiative will be started from Chandni Chowk before Diwali," he said. Saxena visited Chandni Chowk in old Delhi on Wednesday and interacted with members of various traders' associations, RWAs and a section of visitors in a bid to upgrade amenities in the heritage precinct, facilitate smooth conduct of trade and make shopping a pleasing experience in heritage market, officials said on Thursday.

"They complained about overhanging electric wires that often lead to fire incidents in the area and requested for L-G's immediate intervention to address the issue," the Raj Niwas said in a statement.

They brought to his notice, several restrictions and problems that not only affected their daily businesses but also caused hardships to a large number of people, particularly the elderly, women and chil-

dren, residing in the area, it said. Delhi Chief Secretary, Special Officer of Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), Special Commissioner of Police (traffic) and several other senior officers of MCD, Public Works Department (PWD) and Delhi Police accompanied the L-G during the visit, it said.

The L-G was also informed that apart from over 60 'kattras' that attract lakhs of people every day, nearly 60,000 people also reside in the narrow bylanes of Chandni Chowk and massive congestion often leads to fire and medical emergencies, it said.

To this, the L-G assured that very soon fire tenders and ambulances will be deployed in and around the Chandni Chowk area to deal with any such emergency situations, the statement said.

"Kattras" in Chandni Chowk will also get a facelift, it said.

The L-G instructed officials to identify and develop one 'katra' as a pilot, and later replicate the model to other 'kattras' in Chandni Chowk, the statement said.

The redevelopment of the 'katra' envisages facade improvement, removing overhanging electric wires, repair of footpaths, drainage and repair and maintenance of street lights among other works, it said.

During his visit, the L-G, accompanied by the officials, took a round of the main market from the iconic Town Hall to Katra Neel, and back to the Red Fort and interacted with several local traders and visitors to the market.

# MCD trying to give LG more teeth, BJP has conceded defeat: Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Thursday said that the BJP has conceded defeat in the municipal polls even before they have been announced, claiming the Delhi civic body's law department is reworking the MCD Act to give the Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) VK Saxena more teeth.

Taking to Twitter, the Chief Minister exhorted Delhiites to not vote for the BJP and asserted that his Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) will emerge victorious in the civic polls whenever they are held.

Reacting to the report that MCD Act will be amended to give power to the L-G, Kejriwal said, "This means the BJP has conceded defeat even before the MCD elections."

"Don't waste your vote by voting for the party that has lost. After winning the MCD elections, the Aam Aadmi Party Government will make Delhi a clean and beautiful city, and get rid of garbage mountains," he said in a tweet in Hindi.

The BJP ruled the three erstwhile municipal corporations in Delhi and the AAP was the main Opposition party till the terms of the civic bodies expired in May.

Elections to constitute a new civic body, which comes under the BJP-led Centre, are yet to be held as an exercise for delimitation of municipal wards is underway in the national Capital.

# 'MCD studied best civic practices, will revise 1957 Act'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 'study' was conducted by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) aimed at assessing the best civic administration-related practices across India, and seeking revision of some of the provisions of the old Delhi Municipal Corporation (DMC) Act, 1957 to bring it 'in tune with the modern times'.

According to a senior MCD official privy to the matter, "We have undertaken a study which began recently, to assess the best municipal practices across India, at corporations in various cities. The idea is to study the best of the municipal laws, and adopt the best practices to give the best deliverables to Delhiites."

Officials said, adding a private legal policy firm has been roped in to assist the MCD in the study.

"Laws are dynamic, and it is good to be responsive to present needs of society. And, if there are certain aspects of the law, which are archaic, say related to hackney carriage, then do we need to still carry

them? But, we are not the authority, any amendment can be brought in by Parliament or the Delhi Assembly. We are just studying the best practices," the official said.

He claimed it was an "academic study" and has "no connection with the forthcoming civic elections", adding, the study span "will go beyond the election time".

MCD polls are expected to take place at the end of 2022 or early next year.

The Central Government has fixed the total number of seats in the MCD at 250 from the existing figure of 272 as part of a delimitation exercise.

The previous three corporations in Delhi comprised 104 wards each in North and South corporations and the East corporation had 64 wards under their jurisdictions.

"A lot has changed since 1950s when the DMC Act was enacted," he said. The erstwhile unified Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) had come into being in April 1958 and it was set up after amalgamating several local bodies and administrative committees, according to archival records.

## Municipal Corporation of Delhi

### Appeal

With support of fellow residents of Delhi and the inspirational guidance of Lt. Governor, Shri V.K. Saxena, we at MCD are striving to provide better civic amenities in the National Capital.

In this direction, efforts are being made to flatten the garbage mounds in Delhi by scientific method and public co-operation. As you all know, the entire garbage of Delhi is dumped into the Ghazipur, Okhla and Bhalaswa sanitary landfill sites. Due to continuous dumping for the last 35-40 years, heaps of garbage at these landfill sites have turned into garbage 'mountains' of 50 to 60 metres height, containing 280 lakh tonnes of garbage.

All units of Municipal Corporation are involved in reducing the height of these unseemly mounds by undertaking the disposal of garbage accumulated there. In this process, while on the one hand, we are using plastic waste in Waste to Energy Plant to generate electricity, on the other hand, we are segregating Construction & Demolition Waste (C&D Waste) and Inert Waste and turning them into useful products which can be used to fill low-lying areas and pot-holes, make foundation of a building, road construction, inter-locking blocks, etc.

**It is a matter of pleasure that the appeal made under the guidance of Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor has received tremendous support from the public and we have been successful in disposal of about 21,000 MT of Inert / C&D waste. The garbage at these landfill sites have also been reduced to nearly 203 lakh tonnes.**

I appeal to the residents of Delhi and the National Capital Region, Builders, Road Developers, Contractors and related Government Agencies to continue their support to optimally use the C&D Waste and Inert Material for their construction activities and become our partners in addressing this festering problem affecting the National Capital.

It has been decided that any department, agency, individual or contractor, etc. can take the available C&D and Inert material for their use themselves, free of cost from these three landfill sites. In this regard, you can take permission of Municipal Corporation of Delhi by writing to [ceprojectmcd@gmail.com](mailto:ceprojectmcd@gmail.com) giving details of your requirement. Shri Tarun Arya can also be contacted on Phone No.: 011-23226903, 99584 79283, for any assistance.

**COMMISSIONER**

LET US COME TOGETHER AND FREE DELHI OF GARBAGE MOUNDS.



# Shinde faction given unfair advantage, Uddhav tells EC

Thackeray seeks assurance from poll body that biased treatment in favour of Shinde will not continue and that both groups will be dealt with on an equal footing

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Alleging serious apprehension of bias, the Uddhav Thackeray faction on Thursday wrote to the Election Commission (EC) raising its objection against recent decisions of the poll body in the matter of allotment of interim election symbol and name to the party.

"Several communications and actions of EC have given rise to a serious apprehension of bias in the mind of the respondent (Shiv Sena Uddhav Thackeray)," the Uddhav faction said in its four-page letter to EC.

Vivek Singh, a lawyer of the Uddhav faction, said that the procedure adopted by the elec-



tion body during the allocation of symbols gave an "undue upper hand to the Shinde camp".

It also sought assurance from the Commission that such "biased treatment in favour of the Eknath Shinde faction" will not continue and that both groups will be dealt with on an equal footing. "This was done even before a decision was taken by the Commission regarding allocation of symbols and possibly even before the Shinde camp had submitted its own list of proposed symbols and names, thus giving them a clear unfair advantage," said the letter to the EC.

Singh contended that the

Commission did not grant the party adequate time to file its reply on Shinde's claims to the 'bow and arrow' symbol for the Andheri East bypoll in Maharashtra.

The Thackeray faction also alleged that the Commission had uploaded its letter conveying the preference for poll symbols and party names on the poll authority's website, making it accessible to everyone, including the rival faction.

"This was done even before a decision was taken by the Commission regarding allocation of symbols and possibly even before the Petitioner had submitted his own list of proposed symbols and names, thus giving the Petitioner and

his group a clear unfair advantage over the Respondent," Singh said. He claimed that the Shinde faction had "very tellingly" given the same first choice of name, and the same first and second choice of the symbol as of the Thackeray faction.

"This could not have happened but for the fact that the Hon'ble Commission shared a privileged communication from the Respondent herein on its public website. This one-sided and unfair disclosure gave the Petitioner information that he immediately used to his advantage by ensuring that his preferences regarding name and symbol blocked the Respondent from being allotted his first preference," Singh said.

The Commission's letter allotting the 'flaming torch' to the Thackeray faction did not carry the image of the poll symbol, while the letter to the Shinde faction contained a large pictorial representation of the 'two swords and a shield' poll symbol, the letter said. "The same is again giving an unfair advantage to the Petitioner," the Thackeray faction said.

# UNGA session: India slams Pak for raking up Kashmir issue

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/UNITED NATIONS

India has criticized Pakistan for raising the issue of Kashmir in the United Nations emergency special session on the Ukraine conflict and said such statements by Islamabad deserve the "collective contempt" of the international community.

Taking exception to Pakistan's remarks, India's Permanent Representative to the UN, Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj also said late Wednesday such comments also call for "sympathy for a mindset which repeatedly utters falsehoods."

She made these observations while delivering the explanation of the vote after the 193-member General Assembly voted overwhelmingly on late Wednesday to condemn Russia's illegal referendum and annexation of the Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia regions of Ukraine.

"We have witnessed unsurprisingly yet again an attempt by one delegation to misuse this forum and make frivolous and pointless remarks against my country. Such statements deserve our collective con-

tempt and sympathy for a mindset which repeatedly utters falsehoods," Kamboj said.

"It is important, however, to set the record straight. The entire territory of Jammu and Kashmir is and will always be an integral and inalienable part of India irrespective of what the representative of Pakistan believes or covets. We call on Pakistan to stop cross-border terrorism so that our citizens can enjoy their right to life and liberty," Kamboj said.

Her sharp reaction came in response to remarks by Pakistan's ambassador to the UN Munir Akram. He said under international law, the right of self-determination

applies to peoples who are under foreign or colonial domination and those who have not yet exercised the right to self-determination "as in the case of Jammu and Kashmir".

He said the exercise of the right to self-determination should be conducted in an environment free of military occupation and preferably under the supervision of the United Nations.

India has repeatedly told Pakistan that Jammu and Kashmir "was, is and shall forever" remain an integral part of the country. India has said it desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan in an environment free of terror, hostility and violence.



# SC asks Centre to respond to Ram Setu plea filed by Swamy



**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court on Thursday asked the Government to file its reply in the plea filed by BJP leader Subramanian Swamy seeking Ram Setu to be declared as a national heritage monument. The Bench of Justices DY Chandrachud and Hima Kohli directed the Centre to file its reply when Swamy complained that for the past eight years the Government is evading it.

"Union of India has failed to file its affidavit. The matter is pending for eight years. They should file an affidavit and say when will they decide. It has been going on and on. They should file a counter. If they are opposing they have to say so. Otherwise they are supporting, there is no other way," Swamy told the Court. The bench asked ASG Madhvi Divan to file the reply before the next date of hearing.

# Not wrong to promote Hindi, regional languages: BJP



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

On October 16, Union Home Minister Amit Shah will launch the Hindi version of first-year MBBS books in Bhopal with Madhya Pradesh becoming the first state in the country to provide medical education in Hindi.

The BJP has claimed that the Narendra Modi-led Government has been promoting mother tongues in different parts of the country as it is introducing Hindi in the North-Indian States.

Ravi, who hails from Karnataka and is in charge of the BJP's affairs in Tamil Nadu, refuted criticism from the southern Chief Ministers that the Centre was imposing Hindi on non-Hindi speaking states.

Linking such a mentality to the use of English, he urged people to come out of the "colonial mindset".

Vijayan had recently taken exception to the recommendations of a parliamentary panel which suggested that the medium of instruction in central technical and non-technical higher education institutes such as IITs in Hindi-speaking states should be Hindi and the respective local languages else-

where.

It further said the use of English should be made optional. The Kerala CM had sought Prime Minister Modi's intervention in the matter. Ravi said the recommendations promote Hindi in place of English but not in the place of regional languages such as Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada or Marathi.

If a leader writes for the "pride of Malayalam or the pride of Tamil", our party welcomes it but if he writes in favour of English, then this is not appropriate, he said.

The BJP leader said leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, too, supported the promotion of Hindi and regional languages.

Southern states Chief Minister have pointed out that Hindi is one of the languages in the country and not a national language as such.

Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh, however, said introducing Hindi would help "change the mindset" and give confidence to people that that could rise in life by learning states Hindi and also "take pride in their mother tongue."

# Parl panel proposal yet another bid at Hindi imposition, says CPM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Accusing the BJP-led Government of trying to impose Hindi as the official language of the country, the CPI (M) on Thursday said that the recent report of the Parliament committee on official languages was one such instance.

In the editorial of the party organ People's Democracy said that if the recommendations of the Committee of Parliament on Official Language headed by the Union Home Minister Amit Shah, be implemented it would mean that students of non-Hindi background would have to qualify in the entrance examinations for these institutions in Hindi and also adopt the Hindi medium of instruction. "This would be patently discriminatory against those whose mother-tongue is not Hindi. When this proposal met

with strong opposition from some of the non-Hindi state governments, it was clarified that Hindi would be the compulsory medium of instruction in central educational institutions situated in the Hindi states while in the other non-Hindi states, the respective regional languages would be the medium of instruction," the editorial said.

The party said that this did not solve the problem as Central universities or IITs in Hindi-speaking states would only admit students who are equipped for the Hindi medium of instruction.

Thus these central institutions, which have a pan-India character, will now be open only to Hindi-knowing students, countered the party. "Thus, the Delhi IIT or a Central Government university like the Banaras Hindu University would become out of bounds for non-Hindi stu-

dents. The same would apply to the faculty. If central educational institutions situated in the non-Hindi states adopt the state/regional language as the medium of instruction, then it would serve only students of that state or region. This would mean that the all-India character of these institutions would be nullified," it said.

The editorial further stated that a democratic language policy would require that all the 22 languages listed in the Eighth Schedule as national languages are treated on an equal basis. "The recommendations of the official language committee in other matters too militate against this equality.

For instance, the committee has recommended that more than 50 per cent of the budget of government advertisements should continue to be allocated to Hindi language ads," said CPI(M) organ.



Congress party presidential candidate Shashi Tharoor interacts with leaders at Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (DPCC) office in New Delhi on Thursday  
Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

# I want to bring change in Cong, says Tharoor

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With the election for Congress president scheduled for October 17, Shashi Tharoor on Thursday alleged that there is not a 'level-playing field' in the campaign but his opponent M Mallikarjun Kharge, who is considered to be a favourite to win the race to the top post, refused to be drawn into a controversy and played it down saying they are "brothers".

During a visit to Delhi Congress office, Tharoor said several PCC chiefs and senior leaders were not available for a meeting with him during his visits to their respective states, but they warmed up to Kharge when he visited them for support. Seeking votes from delegates at the Delhi Pradesh Congress Committee (DPCC) office, Tharoor said he wanted to bring a "change" in the organisation.

He also said he aimed to "bring back" the voters who did not support the Congress in the 2014 and the 2019 Lok Sabha polls. "I want to bring a change in the party. I want to bring back those voters who didn't stand by our side in 2014 and 2019," he told the delegates. Tharoor further rued that he could not meet some delegates as their contact details were "missing" from the list that was provided to him.

"There were incomplete contact details in the list of delegates that we received. Some lists had names but no contact numbers, some had names but no proper address. Hence, it was difficult to reach out to them," Tharoor claimed.

He said he doesn't "blame anyone" for the "incomplete" lists and that there are "flaws" in the party's system as no such election was held in 22 years. "There are flaws in the system and we all know that. The problem is that the party's presidential elections didn't happen since the last 22 years," he said.

Tharoor, however, maintained that the presidential election will be held in a "free and fair" manner and that there is no enmity with Kharge. "This elections is about two Congress members focusing to strengthen the party," he said.

Kharge is being seen as a favourite for the top party post

because of his perceived proximity to the Gandhi family. But Tharoor has reiterated time and again that the Gandhis have made it clear that they will remain neutral.

"We are brothers. Someone can speak in a different manner. I can do it in a different way. There are no differences between us," Kharge said.

Congress' central election authority issued a directive that all AICC general secretaries, state in-charges, secretaries and joint secretaries would cast their vote in the party's presidential polls either at their home state or at the party headquarters here and not in their assigned state.

"This has been done in order to remain impartial and maintain transparency in the election process", according to the directive issued by CEA chairman Madhusudan Mistry.

"The Central Election Authority has decided that no AICC general secretaries/state in-charges, secretaries and jt. Secretaries would be allowed to cast their vote at their assigned state," Mistry said in his communication to AICC general secretaries, state in-charges, secretaries and joint secretaries.

# Sonia recommends Tharoor's appointment for Chemicals and Fertilizers Committee

**New Delhi:** Former Union Minister Shashi Tharoor received a shot in the arm in the midst of his campaign for the party's presidential elections as Congress president Sonia Gandhi recommended his name for the appointment as chairperson of the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Chemicals and Fertilizers.

Tharoor was earlier chairing the parliamentary panel on information technology. In the last one year, the Tharoor-led panel discussed several issues like Pegasus snooping row, internet shutdowns, Facebook whistle-blower, which were critical of the Government. **PNS**

## IN SHORTS

### GEHLOT ON PATH OF REBELLION: BJP

**New Delhi:** BJP's IT department head Amit Malviya claimed on Thursday that Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot is on the "path of rebellion" from the Congress as he shared a short video of him. "Make no mistake. After inviting Gautam Adani, despite Rahul Gandhi's derision, he now heaps fulsome praise on Coal India and minister Pralhad Joshi, for helping Rajasthan at critical times. This is in sharp contrast to Congress's belligerence," Malviya said.

### LAW MINISTRY TO HOLD SUMMIT FROM OCT 14-17

**New Delhi:** The Union Ministry of Law and Justice will organise an All India Conference of Law Ministers and Law Secretaries from October 14 to 17 to provide a platform for discussion and to help policymakers upgrade the overall legal system.

### EC TO HEAR PLEAS AGAINST ELECTORAL BONDS

**New Delhi:** The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Friday a batch of pleas challenging laws permitting funding of political parties through the electoral bond scheme. Electoral bonds have been pitched as an alternative to cash donations made to political parties as part of efforts to bring transparency in political funding.

### NO NEED FOR PRE-SCREENING PANEL FOR WEB SERIES: SC

**New Delhi:** Observing it always felt pre-censorship is impermissible, the Supreme Court Thursday wondered how there can be a pre-screening committee for web series, films or other programmes which are directly released on online platforms?

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court on Thursday sought the Centre's stand on Zee Media's challenge to a Ministry of Information and Broadcasting order withdrawing the permission granted to the media house for uplinking its TV channels in Ku Band on GSAT-15 Satellite.

A bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Subramonium Prasad issued notice on the petition by Zee Media and granted time to the Centre to file its response.

In its petition, Zee Media has sought setting aside the Ministry's September 23 order and urged the court to restore the permission granted to it on



October 31, 2019 to uplink its 10 channels simultaneously on Ku band.

The 10 channels of Zee Media Corporation Ltd removed on account of the order are Zee Hindustan, Zee Rajasthan, Zee Punjab Haryana Himachal, Zee Bihar Jharkhand, Zee Madhya Pradesh Chhattisgarh, Zee Uttar Pradesh Uttarakhand, Zee Salaam, Zee 24 Kalak, Zee 24 Taas and Zee Odisha (now

Zee Delhi NCR Haryana). The petitioner has contended the Ministry's order was perverse as it was passed in violation of the principles of natural justice and that the complaints on the basis of which it was passed have not been shared till date with the petitioner.

"Without access to these key documents, the petitioner has been put at a grave disadvantage and is unable to exercise its right to a free and fair hearing," it has said. By being on the GSAT-15 satellite, these channels were accessible on DD FreeDish, effectively making them free-to-air. According to the ministry, this gave Zee an unfair advantage over competitors.

In another pending PIL before the high court, the

Centre had, on August 30, said notices were issued on August 16, to 10 news channels directing them to show cause as to why permission of October 31, 2019 granted by the Ministry to them for simultaneous up-linking of 10 channels in KU Band on GSAT-15 satellite from the teleport of M/s Dish TV India Ltd should not be revoked.

The High Court had then directed the Centre to pass a final order in the matter after receiving the reply from those to whom the show cause notices were issued.

The PIL has claimed losses running into crores of rupees was being caused to the public exchequer because of the illegal placement of the channels uplinked by Dish TV India

belonging to Zee Media Corporation. It has alleged that these channels were available on the DTH platform of Prasar Bharti called DD Free Dish for free, when as per rules placement/carriage of private TV channels on DD Free Dish platform is permitted only through bidding in e-auctions, with the minimum reserve price ranging from Rs 6 crore to Rs 15 crore a year.

The PIL said the participation fee for e-auction also includes a non-refundable processing fee of Rs 25,000 and a refundable demand draft of Rs 1.50 crore in favour of Prasar Bharti. It sought immediate stoppage of "illegal carriage" of these channels on DD Free Dish DTH platform and an investigation into the "scam".

# '39% NREGA job seekers could not get single day of work'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

During the Covid pandemic year 2020-21, though around 39 per cent of all job card-holding households interested in working under the MGNREGA did not get a single day of work, nevertheless the job scheme rose to the need and provided work for many more villages and many more households than in the preceding years, according to a report.

The report based on the survey of 2,000 households across eight blocks in four states was prepared by Azim Premji University in partnership with the National Consortium of Civil Society

Organisations on NREGA and Collaborative Research and Dissemination (CORD) in November-December 2021.

Wagers from Phulparas (Madhubani) and Chhatapur blocks (Supaul) in Bihar, Bidar (Bidar) and Devadurga (Raichur) in Karnataka, Khalwa (Khandwa) and Ghatigaon (Gwalior) in Madhya Pradesh, and Wardha and Surgana (Nashik) in Maharashtra were surveyed, said the report.

"Across all blocks, roughly 39 per cent of all the job card-holding households interested in working in MGNREGA in the Covid year could not get a single day of work while they wanted 77 days of work on average. "Among households

that found some work, the unmet demand (difference between the number of days desired and the number of days of work received) across all blocks was 64 days," the report stated.

"The most frequently mentioned reason for not getting as much work as needed, across all blocks, was the lack of adequate work being sanctioned or opened.

On average, 63 per cent of all job card-holding households cited this reason in the surveyed blocks," it added.

Despite these shortcomings, the survey found, the rural employment Act made a marked difference during the pandemic, protecting the most vulnerable households from

significant loss of income.

Increased earnings from MGNREGA were able to compensate for somewhere between 20 to 80 per cent of the income loss depending on the block, it stated.

"Our study shows how much the workers value the need and utility of MGNREGA. More than eight out of 10 households recommended that MGNREGA should provide 100 days of employment per person per year.

"We also found a massive extent of underfunding. A conservative estimate yields that the allocations in the surveyed blocks should have been three times the amount that was actually allocated in the year after lockdown to fulfil the true

extent of work demand," said Rajendran Narayanan, co-author of the study and faculty member at Azim Premji University. Ashwini Kulkarni of the NREGA Consortium said one of the objectives of MGNREGA is to act as a social protection measure during times of distress.

"Covid pandemic, lockdown created unprecedented distress and MGNREGA, as expected, rose to the need and provided work for many more villages and many more households than in the preceding years.

MGNREGA's role in reducing vulnerability has been re-emphasised and continues to be of vital importance in post-pandemic times," he said.



# Jammu DEO withdraws order on registration of fresh voters

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Left out in the cold, the District Election Officer, Jammu Avny Lavasa late on Wednesday evening withdrew an order regarding registration of fresh voters less than 24 hours after the same was issued on Tuesday.

The officer was left with no choice but to withdraw the order especially after the office of Chief Electoral Officer, Jammu and Kashmir too decided to wash its hands over the move.

Official sources in the

office of J&K, CEO told *The Pioneer*, "We have not issued any guidelines hence there was no question of issuing any clarification in response to an order issued by one of the District Election Officers of the Union Territory".

Official sources also revealed, "the order was withdrawn by the officer during the day, the copy of the same was not made public till late Wednesday evening".

The said order issued by the Deputy Commissioner, Jammu authorizing all Tehsildars to issue certificate of residence after conducting



necessary field verifications, to the persons residing in district Jammu for more than one year, had earlier created flutter prompting the regional mainstream political parties in

the Kashmir valley to react strongly to the move as they treated it as an attempt to disempower the local electorate at the behest of non-local voters.

# Murder accused denies cannibalism; Kerala Police probes organ trade angle

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Laila, one of the accused in the human sacrifice case along with her husband Bhagawal Singh and associate Mohammed Shafi, denied reports that they have consumed human flesh after murdering the two victims Rosely and Padma.

"No, we have not eaten the flesh," Laila told media persons as the accused were being taken to the Magistrate Court from the district jail in Kakkannadu on Thursday where they have been put into custody. The police have moved an application for the police custody of the accused for interrogation as well as to the



collection of evidence.

Meanwhile another shocking version of the human sacrifice is going the rounds in the State. "A cartel specializing in organ trade is flourishing in the State. This angle has to be ascertained as

there are reports that some religious leaders masquerading as political observers and educationists are patronizing this trade," said a senior politician in the State who did not want her name to be quoted.

A member of the investigating team said that the investigators are following a report that Shafi, the master mind had brought two girls to the residence of Bhagwal Singh and molested them. "Shafi had an eatery in Ernakulam town which he used as a conduit for luring girls. We are not ruling out any possibilities as Shafi is a hardened criminal and we may need some time to establish the facts," he said.

# ED files chargesheet against journalist Rana Ayyub for money laundering

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Thursday said it has filed a Prosecution Complaint (chargesheet in police parlance) against journalist Rana Ayyub on money laundering charges before a Special Court in Ghaziabad.

The ED had initiated money laundering investigation on the basis of an FIR registered on September 7, 2021 by the Indrapuram Police Station, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, under various sections of the

Indian Penal Code, Information Technology Amendment Act and Black Money Act against Ayyub alleging that she illegally acquired funds from general public in the name of charity by launching fund-raiser campaigns on an online crowd-funding platform-'Ketto'.

It was also alleged that Ayyub is a journalist by profession and received foreign contributions without registration under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA).

"ED investigation revealed

that Rana Ayyub launched 3 fundraiser campaigns on 'Ketto platform' starting from April 2020, and collected funds totalling to Rs 2,69,44,680, namely: Help in raising funds for slum dwellers & farmers, Relief work for Assam, Bihar and Maharashtra and Help Rana Ayyub and her team to help those impacted by Covi-19 in India," the agency said in a statement.

The ED probe further revealed that the funds raised on the online platforms were received in the accounts of her father and sister, and subse-

quently transferred to her personal accounts.

Ayyub utilized these funds to create a fixed deposit of Rs 50 lakh for herself and also transferred Rs 50 lakh in a new bank account, it said.

The ED investigation revealed that only about Rs 29 lakh was used for relief work. "In order to claim more expenses towards relief work, fake bills were submitted by Ms Rana Ayyub," it said.

Subsequently, bank balances in the accounts of Rana Ayyub amounting to Rs 1,77,27,704 (including FD of Rs

# Boost to Uddhav Sena as HC tells BMC to accept bypoll candidate Latke's resignation

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a big boost to the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) in its ongoing battle with the Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena, the Bombay High Court on Thursday directed the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) to accept the resignation tendered by its employee Rutuja Latke, wife of late Shiv Sena MLA Ramesh Latke, to facilitate her to contest in the November 3 Andheri (East) Assembly by-poll.

After hearing a petition filed by a clerk working with



the BMC and wife of deceased Shiv Sena MLA Ramesh Latke, a HC bench Justices Nitin Jamdar and Sharmila Deshmukh directed the BMC to issue a letter to Latke accepting her resignation by 11 AM on Friday which incidentally is the last day for filing nominations to contest

the Andheri (East) Assembly by-polls scheduled for November 3. Virtually pulling up the BMC for its failure to use its discretion to accept Rutuja's resignation, the HC bench noted: "A clerk wants to resign, why are you not exercising the discretion? She wants to contest the election, tomorrow is the last date for nomination, when will you exercise discretion".

While admitting a petition filed by Rutuja on Wednesday seeking direction to the BMC for accepting her direction to accepting her resignation so that she can contest the Andheri (East)

Assembly by-poll, the Judges observed: "According to us the discretion is to be used for bonafide purposes. But we think that in this case it is malafide. The use or non use of discretion is arbitrary in this case. Prayer clause (a) will be allowed".

The Andheri (East) by-poll has been necessitated by sitting Shiv Sena MLA Ramesh Latke's death. Rutuja Latke is the widow of Ramesh Latke who passed away on May 11, 2022. Latke was a Shiv Sena MLA before the party split in June this year in the wake of rebellion by the MLAs led by current chief minister Eknath Shinde.

# JATE Manesar Anti-Terror 2022 concludes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

A week-long multinational Joint Anti-Terror Exercise (JATE) "Manesar Anti-Terror 2022" under the framework of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) - Regional Anti Terrorist Structure (RATS) culminated at the NSG Garrison in Manesar (Gurugram) with the member countries sharing innovative methodologies and best practices in countering extremism and terrorism.

Representatives from the Counter Terrorism Forces of six member countries of the SCO-RATS, which included Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Russian Federation and NSG of India participated in the event.

The counter-terrorism forces mutu-

ally shared their drills, procedures, best practices and other innovative methodologies being adopted to build capabilities and capacity to fight the menace of terrorism, separatism and extremism, the NSG said in a statement.

"The participants of the exercise were exposed to the brain stimulating joint planning in the simulated multidimensional terrorist strike environment and subsequently practicing and evolving drills for various contingencies of the anti terrorist operations jointly. The 'JATE 22' has further enhanced the coordination, cooperation and functional cohesiveness towards fighting common security challenges, particularly that of global terrorism and extremism," it said.

The opening remarks at the closing

function was given by Director General of National Security Guard M A Ganapathy and followed by the address of Director Executive Council, RATS, Mirzaev Ruslan Erkinovich.

The speakers highlighted the importance of the cooperation and working towards a common objective of ensuring a secure and terrorism free region.

"An impressive demonstration by the NSG to showcase its capabilities and special skills in conducting anti terrorist operations, was part of the closing ceremony attended by high level delegations from the SCO RATS member countries, representative of the diplomatic missions of the SCO Member Countries in India and representatives of International organisations including United Nations," the NSG said in its statement.

# 'Jewar farmers to get compensation for land on mutual consent'

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Wednesday assured farmers of Jewar that they would get adequate compensation for their land based on mutual consent in the second phase of construction of the Noida international airport.

As soon as the chief minister said this during an interaction with the farmers of Jewar at his official residence, the farmers present in the programme jumped with joy and started chanting the slogan of 'Har Har Mahadev'.

The chief minister added that the government's intention is to ensure that the farmers of Jewar get a fair deal and are happy and prosperous.

He said the displaced farmers should be settled where they want and arrangements should be made there for their places of worship, schools, colleges, sports grounds, open gyms

and markets. This would help people realise their dreams and actively participate in the development projects, he remarked.

Yogi Adityanath added: "Also, if there are two, three, four or more brothers in a family, then arrangements should be made for settling them in the same place. A skill development centre should also be established near their new dwellings so that their children may get employment."

"If their children get a diploma in aircraft maintenance, then they will be able to get a job at Jewar airport itself. In the first phase, we got a total of 3,300 acres of land. For this, I am grateful to the farmer brothers. I talked to the farmers myself to get it done for the development of the state", Yogi pointed out.

He said that once Jewar had an international airport, a film city, a medical device

park, high speed train and metro, it would be ahead of Noida and Greater Noida. He added that the area where crime was at its peak at one time and an incident like Bhatta Parsaul happened was going to be the most developed area of the state in the times to come.

Yogi said that for a person to love his land was natural, but the step taken by farmers for the development of the state, keeping aside their personal interest was "historic".

The chief minister said that the construction of the airport would be completed on time and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who laid the foundation stone of the airport, would be called again to inaugurate it. He emphasised that the government would continue to stand with farmers and cooperate with them.

A farmer, Samay Mohammad, said that ever since Yogi Adityanath took



over as chief minister there was peace in the area with no incidents of crime. He added that the airport would give a new identity to the Jewar area. He thanked the chief minister and urged him to ensure the opening of good schools and colleges where they were to be settled.

Another farmer, Hansraj Singh, said that he was ready to give his land during the first phase of the airport after getting convinced by the Chief

Minister and was ready now to give his land once again in the second phase for the future of the youth of the state.

Yet another farmer, Ravindra Mukhiya, thanked the chief minister and said that employment would increase with the opening of Jewar airport. Kunwar Pal Singh while thanking Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath asked for systemic settlement with all the necessary facilities where they were to be shifted.

# UP Govt proposes innovation fund to boost startup sector

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a path breaking decision, the Uttar Pradesh government has proposed creation of the UP Innovation Fund that would boost the startup sector in the state and in turn generate employment.

"The state cabinet has approved the proposal for formation of Uttar Pradesh Innovation Fund under which Rs 4,000 crore will be made available to technical universities, educational institutions and higher educational institutions over a period of two to three years," Finance Minister Suresh Khanna said here on Thursday.

He said an investment of up to Rs 4,000 crore could be made in startups by a skilled investment manager with the participation of other investors.

The cabinet also approved the selection of a trust, law firm and investment manager for



the operation of the fund by a high-level committee constituted under the chairmanship of the chief secretary.

"The selection will be made on the basis of bid documents and bid evaluation prepared by M/s Deloitte, which will act as consultant in the process of selection. The Technical Education department will work as the nodal department for setting up the fund and taking further action as required by the state government," the minister said. Officers of the Technical Education and Higher Education departments will be members in the advisory committee of the fund. An

'Alternative Investment Fund' (AIF) would be formed and registered with SEBI. The AIF would invest in startups, the minister said.

The proposal for establishment of unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)/drone technology based Centre of Excellence on the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur campus has been approved by the cabinet under Uttar Pradesh Start-up Policy-2020. The centre will be set up on IIT Kanpur campus at a cost of Rs 20.30 crore

Every year 20 new entrepreneurs (startups) will be supported by the Centre of Excellence and 100 drone pilots will be provided training every year. When the startups mature, industries will be set up in different parts of the state, due to which there is a possibility of creation of substantial indirect employment in addition to direct employment.

# Teachers beat students for carrying mobiles during tour in Kushinagar

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a shocking incident in Kushinagar, carrying mobile phones on a college tour proved costly for some students when the teachers brutally assaulted them, injuring two seriously.

The two seriously injured students have been admitted to the ICU.

The incident came to fore when some students, including those injured, and their parents met the District Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police of Kushinagar and demanded action against the accused teachers.

After meeting the district police chief, the parents demanded treatment of the injured students and filed a complaint at Padrauna Kotwali. The district police chief said the incident was being investigated.

According to reports, the students of a famous intermediate college in Padrauna Kotwali area of Kushinagar went on tour on October 8. Before the tour, the school administration had instructed students not to carry mobile phones during the tour, but some students overlooked the direction and were carrying their mobile phones.

According to some students, the principal of the college got furious after seeing the mobile phones in the hands of the students. He along with other teachers not only snatched the mobile phones and damaged them but also brutally assaulted the students with sticks. During the assault, while some students received minor injuries, two students suffered critical injuries and were admitted to a hospital in Lucknow by the school management.

**New Okhla Industrial Development Authority**  
Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida-201301 (UP)  
Website : [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com)

**E-TENDER NOTICE**  
E-Tenders are invited from eligible contractors/firm for the following jobs against which bids can be uploaded and same shall be opened/downloaded as per schedule mentioned. The details and conditions of all tenders are available on Noida Authority's official website: [www.noidaauthorityonline.com](http://www.noidaauthorityonline.com) & <https://etender.up.nic.in>. Please ensure to see these websites for any changes/ amendments & corrigendum etc.

**A) Fresh-Tender Work:**

S.N.	Job No.	Name of the Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
1.	09/DGM/SM/WC-7/ET/ 2022-23	M/o Drain (Repair of Drain and Raising of Culvert A-4/19, A-4, A-3 in Sector-80) Noida	84.58
2.	10/DGM/SM/WC-7/ET/ 2022-23	M/o Road (Annual Maintenance of Road, Central verge and Footpath in Work Circle-7 area) Noida	86.48

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated **28.10.2022** upto **5.00 PM**. Pre-qualification shall be opened/ downloaded on dated **31.10.2022** at **11.00 AM**.

**B) Re-Tender Work:**

S.N.	Job No.	Name of the Work	Tender Amount (Rs. Lacs)
3.	22/GM/S.M.-WC-6/ 2022-23	D/o Sector-116 (Fixing of Barbed wire of Sector Boundary wall in Sector-116), Noida	52.03

The above tenders can be uploaded by dated **20.10.2022** upto **5.00 PM**. Pre-qualification shall be opened/ downloaded on dated **21.10.2022** at **11.00 AM**.

**Dy. General Manager, NOIDA**

**CLEAN, GREEN, SAFE & SECURE NOIDA**

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

**Whereas**  
The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation, Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/ her under Section 13(4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said rules on the below-mentioned dates. The borrower in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of ICICI Bank Limited.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Ashok Kumar Pandey / Shivi Agarwal / LBGUR00002438999	Flat No. 1003, Floor 10, Tower T2, Rps Auria, Sec 88, Faridabad, Haryana / October 11, 2022	June 23, 2021 Rs. 71,98,264/-	Delhi / NCR
2.	Shalini M Roberts / Morton Christopher Roberts / LBFDB00003193343	Flat No. 1204, 12th Floor, Tower - T2, Rps Auria, Sec 88, Faridabad, Haryana/ October 11, 2022	June 23, 2021 Rs. 70,09,220/-	Delhi / NCR
3.	Aravinda Kumar Sharma / Suman Lata / LBGUR00003293828	Flat No. 1505, 14th Floor, Tower T2, Rps Auria, Sec 88, Faridabad, Haryana/ October 11, 2022	June 23, 2021 Rs. 75,98,824/-	Delhi / NCR
4.	Ashish Kumar/ Paras Kumar / LBDEL00002403932	Flat No. 1006, 10th Floor, Tower - 6, Rps Auria, Sec 88, Faridabad, Haryana/ October 11, 2022	June 23, 2021 Rs. 60,41,876/-	Delhi / NCR
5.	Sanjay Arora/ Frisco Fab Dyeing & Printing Pvt Ltd / Sonia Arora/ Sunil Singhal/ LBFDB00003153209	Villa No. 89, Block C, Lakewood City, Suraj Kund Road, Sector- 39, Faridabad- 121001/ October 11, 2022	June 18, 2022 Rs. 3,64,08,372/-	Delhi / NCR

The above-mentioned borrowers(s) guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002.

**Date : October 14, 2022**  
**Place: Delhi/NCR**

**Authorized Officer**  
**ICICI Bank Limited**







FIRST COLUMN

FOREIGN POLICY IN FLUID WORLD ORDER

India takes up G20 Presidency in challenging times



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

The war in Ukraine, which is getting more violent and gruesome with every passing day, is shaping the new chapter in international relations for all major powers around the globe. The age old adage of “politics makes strange bedfellows can very well be rephrased with the word “War”.

India, the world’s fifth largest economy, is now slowly beginning to unpack its ambition of taking the leadership position in global high tables of decision making. India is helming the G20 presidency for the next year. The Indian stack, as it is popularly known, consisting of digital platform for delivering healthcare /vaccination services, an electronic interface for digital payment transactions are two distinct products which India is most likely to pitch to the G20 as model of government backed digital delivery model for public welfare, which can be widely adopted across economies.

What would be important is to keep the neutrality, openness of technology platforms at the centre of the conversation when India pitches with its distinct digital delivery models. This is also coming at a time when India’s relationship with most of the nations pitched on either sides of the fence in the Russia-Ukraine war is changing almost on a daily basis.



The US cleared the sale of nearly \$450 million package for what was termed as maintenance of F- 16 fleet for Pakistan last week. It is well known against whom these F-16 would be used in case of a military escalation. However, despite a few measured harsh reactions from the External Affairs Ministry, India did not escalate the matter with the US.

The US has proposed an India US emerging defence capability dialogue which will go beyond the existing defence partnership. It could, as many sections from both sides of the government have pointed out, extend to transfer and manufacturing of key technology to India, and include new sections under cyber security, space and artificial intelligence. The second piece would need difficult conversations on the Indian side on harmonisation of standards, in the emerging technology segment.

What it suggests is the US is rethinking its security strategy in the Indo Pacific. It has so far given a privileged status to Pakistan, also place holding it, as the most influential ally of NATO in the region, but given the changed status of the Russia-China “no barriers friendship”, it is perhaps time to consider India, in the big picture.


India on its part has clearly outlined to the US the need to be suitably empowered or let us say compensated for gradually moving away from its long standing friend Russia in the long run. What may have accelerated India’s shifting stance on Russia is similar to what has led the US to rethink its strategy and the China factor, besides the growing proximity between these two neighbours. India actively maintained a neutral stance on Russia’s attack on Ukraine, but gradually it is fine-tuning the narrative to sound more and more critical of Russian action.

This shift comes at a time when India has grown to become the second largest buyer of Russian oil. The move has been justified to the world to be able to shield a vast section of its population from “globally imposed” inflation. The West, albeit critical, has started accepting India’s stance. It is this agility in foreign policy India needs to deliver on when it takes on the G20 presidency in the next couple of months.

*(The author is foreign affairs commentator)*

# India must bank on exports for quick buoyancy

## The export basket has to be widened but in a shaky globe, opening new markets or selling new products is a challenge



SHIVAJI SARKAR

The critical world situation amid strengthening of dollar calls for a policy stimulation and rethink on being more Swadeshi for maintaining domestic, while predictions of UNCTAD, World Bank (WB) and IMF signal deceleration of world and Indian growth. The WB says 50 million more Indians slipped below the poverty line during the pandemic. Remedies are not easy and need home grown solutions.

The UNCTAD expects India to grow at 5.7 per cent in 2022, WB puts it at 6.5 per cent from earlier 7.5 per cent and slashes 2022-23 growth by 80 basis points to 7.4 per cent and the IMF cuts it to 6.1 per cent for 2023-24. The Reserve Bank of India keeps it at seven and 7.2 per cent respectively. India’s

*(The author is a policy analyst)*

# Rising dollar will hurt emerging economies

## Dollar has gained strongly against global currencies, but this may also harm the US manufacturers badly

Like every other major currency in the world except the Brazilian real and the Mexican peso, the Indian rupee has also been in a free fall against the US dollar during the last few months. While the dollar, sometimes described as the “the least-ugly mug in a beauty contest”, seem to be gaining strength with every passing day, the British pound, the Japanese yen and the euro have taken most of battering, having lost 22 per cent, 20 per cent and 15 per cent of their values respectively against the dollar on a year-to-date basis. Even the Chinese renminbi has lost 11 per cent of its value.

Compared to these, the Rupee’s fall at 10 per cent from Rs 74 to Rs 82 a dollar between October 2021 and October 2022 has been rather modest. The dollar’s strength is judged by indexing it against a basket of currencies of the USA’s major trading partners like Japan and the Eurozone countries. By that measure, the trade weighted dollar index has strengthened by almost 20 per cent during the last 12 months and is now at a 20-year high – a highest appreciation for an index that typically moves by tiny fractions from day to day.

To prop up the rupee, the RBI has already spent \$110 billion of its forex reserves which now stand at \$532 billion, equivalent to less than nine months of imports. Even after it announced a fourth consecutive interest rate hike, a widening trade deficit driven by rising oil prices and a slowdown in exports have dragged the rupee down, steamrolled by the US Federal Reserve’s aggressive rate-hiking campaign which is drawing global capital into the US, pushing up the dollar. Experts expect the Rupee to be trading at 82-84 against the dollar by the year end.

When global energy prices rise, energy importers like Europe suffer while exporters like the US, Brazil or Russia benefit. The Ukraine war is a major cause of the current mayhem, but even otherwise also, the dollar – the most important international currency - is considered a safe haven in troubled times. With Europe being close to a recession, and repeated lockdowns slowing export growth in China whose contagion effects are spreading to all major Asian economies, it seems the dollar’s heyday will continue for some more time.

All over the world, central banks are raising interest rates to tame inflation, but the US Federal Reserve is hiking the rates much more aggressively than most, with the result that US interest rates are now higher than in many developed economies. Naturally, this is luring the investors since even relatively conservative and safer investments like the US Treasury bonds are now offering attractive interest rates. As money pours into the US economy, the dollar is appreciat-



ONLY THOSE WITH HIGHER RESERVES, LIKE CHINA, INDIA OR BRAZIL, CAN ABSORB THE SHOCK. AS THE FORMER TREASURY SECRETARY JOHN CONNALLY FAMOUSLY TOLD HIS COUNTERPARTS, “THE DOLLAR IS OUR CURRENCY, BUT IT’S YOUR PROBLEM”

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



ing against most other currencies by more than what was witnessed during the taper tantrum of 2013. As always, emerging markets are suffering the most from this. For six straight months till August, foreign investors had pulled their funds out of emerging markets in the longest streak of withdrawals on record, and their crucial investment capital had been flying away to the relative safety of the dollar. This is, however, nothing new; earlier also, rapid rate increases by the Fed in the past had thrown the emerging economies into turmoil, like in Latin America with the “Lost Decade” in the 1980s, and the “Tequila” crisis in Mexico in the 1990s which eventually engulfed Russia and East Asia in a severe financial crisis.

Indeed, a strong dollar is posing serious economic consequences for the entire world as it is squeezing global credit because most countries borrow largely in dollars and as the dollar strengthens, dollar-denominated debts become costlier to repay out of domestic-currency revenues. The rising costs of debt servicing often outweighs the gains from exports in a devalued currency.

While a stronger dollar is expected to ease inflation in the US by making its imports cheaper, there are other factors which are working against it, like the already elevated price levels and the relatively low unemployment rate in the USA pushing

higher wage inflation. If the inflation in the US remains stubborn and forces the Fed to raise the interest rates further, the dollar’s rise will continue unabated into the next year. The impact of a strong dollar can be especially brutal for emerging economies like India, as foreign capital – especially invested in the financial markets like the FPIs – tend to flow out of their countries. Only those with higher reserves, like China, India or Brazil, can absorb the shock. As the former Treasury secretary John Connally famously told his counterparts, “The dollar is our currency, but it’s your problem.”

But even for the US economy, the impact of a strong dollar may not be all that positive. The US manufacturer and exporters will suffer as their products will face lower demands in other countries due to high prices adding to the already high US trade deficits. As the US economist William Reinsch has pointed out, historically, there have been political backlashes after the dollar has remained strong for an extended period of time which might eventually build up pressure on the Fed to reverse its interest rate hikes to make US goods competitive in the world markets. Profits of US companies like Microsoft and Nike have already nosedived. Apple generates more than 60 per cent of its sales outside the USA like the other tech giants which together dominate many stock

indices. All these companies will suffer from the dollar’s increased strength. Rise of the dollar is estimated to shave five per cent off the earnings growth of the S&P 500 companies this year, amounting to more than \$100 billion.

International institutions and communities must do more to speed up debt restructuring to put countries back on a more sustainable fiscal path. For the dollar to weaken, global growth must pick up, because otherwise a downturn would only spark a continued flight of scarce capital to the perceived safety of the dollar, the world’s most important reserve currency, leading to its further appreciation. Dollar’s rise could reverse only if the

The US economy goes into a recession to make the Fed reduce the interest rates, or if a rapid reduction in price and wage pressures in the USA allows the Fed to apply a monetary break. But the dollar is unlikely to weaken unless global energy prices soften, which is again unlikely without the Russia-Ukraine war finally coming to an end.

All these possibilities now seem to be rather dim and distant, which is why it is ever more important for the world to force Russia and Ukraine to come to a negotiated understanding. The more desperate Mr Putin becomes, the more important it is for the world to force him to see reason and stop the mindless brutality.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

CONGRESS SEEMS INACTIVE IN GUJARAT, BUT IT IS SILENTLY GOING TO VILLAGES AND TOWNS AND TRYING TO CONVINCE PEOPLE TO VOTE AGAINST BJP. —PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI



IS THE PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI CAMPAIGNING FOR CONGRESS IN GUJARAT ELECTION? —NATIONAL CONVENOR AAP ARVIND KEJRIWAL

Chief Economic Advisor Anantha Nageswaran on September 20, 2022, said the Indian economy will grow at over seven per cent, down from above eight per cent projections made in January. Indicators point to a contraction at global level as rupee falls below 81 to a dollar, imports surge and exports fall. The current account deficit is increasing and chances of exports growing looks not easy. The UNCTAD in its Trade and Development Report predicted world growth at 0.9 per cent less than the projections now at 2.6 per cent. It observes 90 developing country currencies weakening against the dollar this year – over a third of them by more than 10 per cent.

The CEA remains optimistic that it will become the world’s third largest economy. His confidence is based on the parameters of the domestic growth and other favourable pointers. Real GDP grew 13.5 per cent in the first quarter of 2022-23, surpassing the pre-pandemic level by 3.8 per cent. However, private consumption and investment during July-September in many sectors was sluggish. Possibly, he does not take money circulation into account, which has doubled from about Rs 16 lakh crore in 2016 to Rs 32 lakh crore.

Internationally it is not an easy situation. India has to see how imports are reduced and avoid international purchases like GM farm tech, train rakes and similar other products that the country’s highly experienced railway

sector could produce.

The domestic economy has always been a strength even during the 1970s and 1980s. The country was producing enough to feed its people. That is a prescription suggested for reducing income inequality. In January, the Sangh-affiliated SJM, along with seven other right-wing organisations, launched the ‘Swavalambi Bharat Abhiyan’ (SBA), which aims to make India unemployment-free by 2030. The latest event, ‘Swawalamban ka Shankhnaad’, was part of a series of events being organised under the SBA banner. It is often touted that globalization has improved the development of many countries, including India, by creating economic interdependence

among them. Globalization has infused investments but there also have been high repatriation. India without making much fuss has initiated petroleum imports cut with ethanol blending programme. The government proposes to blend 20 per cent ethanol in petrol by 2025.

Average output growth of developing countries to reduce by 3 per cent, says UNCTAD and recommends all governments for tighter regulations for price reductions. It has initiated another move to reduce 40 per cent imports from China in 36 sectors. India imported around \$87 billion worth of goods from China during 2021 wherein top 10 import product categories comprised around \$54 billion. It can reduce imports in

36 sectors including chemicals, automotive components, bicycle parts, agro-based items, handicrafts, drug formulations, cosmetics, consumer electronics, and leather-based goods among others. But it has also to consider how it can reduce some hi-tech imports planned for railways, rapid transit systems and such others.

The government has initiated steps to cut imports carefully to save forex. The exports during April-September rose by 15.54 per cent to \$229.05 billion. Imports increased by 37.89 per cent to \$378.53 billion. The trade deficit during the first six months of the fiscal has widened to \$149.47 billion as against \$76.25 billion during April-September 2021-22. Merchandise exports may

range between \$470-480 billion compared to \$420 billion in 2021-22 and hopes for a trade deficit to remain at a comfortable level.

The export basket has to be widened but in a shaky globe opening new markets or selling new products remains a challenge. The present fiscal may not be that easy but if exports could match the expectations, the rupee may have more stability.

It is a tightrope walk. Global conditions remain difficult. September exports dipped by 3.52 per cent. The present fiscal as per UNCTAD will remain critical. The export trends must improve. Otherwise, the country may slip into a challenging situation unless the internal economy improves.



# Russia hits Kyiv with Iranian drone kamikaze

AP ■ KYIV

Ukraine's capital region was struck by Iranian-made kamikaze drones early on Thursday, officials said, sending rescue workers rushing to the scene as residents awoke to air raid sirens for the fourth consecutive morning following Russia's major assault across the country earlier this week.

Kyiv regional governor Oleksiy Kuleba said the strike occurred in the area around the capital. It wasn't yet clear if there were any casualties.

Deputy head of the presidential office Kyrylo Tymoshenko said on Telegram that "critical infrastructure facilities" in the area were hit, without offering any details on which ones.

In the southern city of Mykolaiv, overnight shelling destroyed a five-story apartment building as fighting continued along Ukraine's southern front.

Mykolaiv Mayor Oleksandr Sienkovich said the building's top two floors were completely destroyed in a single strike and the rest of the building was left in rubble. There were no immediate reports of dead or wounded.

Early morning attacks on Ukraine's southern front have become a daily occurrence in Russia's war as Kyiv's forces push a counteroffensive aimed at recapturing territory occupied by Moscow.

Attacks on Kyiv had



become rare before the capital city was hit at least four times during Monday's massive strikes, which killed at least 19 people and wounded more than 100 across the country.

Western leaders this week pledged to send more weapons to Ukraine, including air defense systems and weapons Kyiv has said are critical to defeating the invading Russian forces.

Britain said on Thursday that it will provide missiles for advanced NASAM anti-aircraft

systems that the Pentagon plans to send to Ukraine in coming weeks. It's also sending hundreds of additional aerial drones for information gathering and logistics support, plus 18 more howitzer artillery guns.

UK Defence Secretary Ben Wallace said that "these weapons will help Ukraine defend its skies from attacks and strengthen their overall missile defense alongside the US NASAMS."

The systems, which Kyiv has long wanted, will provide

medium- to long-range defense against missile attacks.

The offer comes as NATO defense ministers meet in Brussels, aiming to help bolster Ukraine's aerial defenses after Monday's widespread Russian assault.

Ukraine's military said this week that its current air defenses have shot down dozens of incoming Russian missiles and Shahed-136 drones, the so-called kamikaze drones that have played an increasingly

# West to bolster Ukraine air defence

AP ■ KYIV

Unbowed Western powers pledged to supply Ukraine with more potent air defence systems following a furious barrage of retaliatory Russian missile strikes, including one that temporarily knocked Europe's biggest nuclear plant off the invaded country's electrical grid on Wednesday.

The Russian-occupied Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant suffered a "blackout" when a missile damaged a distant electrical substation, Ukraine's state nuclear operator said.

The power loss increased the risk of a radiation emergency because the plant needs electricity to prevent its reactors from overheating.

Energoatom said the external power source was repaired after about eight hours and that the plant's emergency diesel generators — which rely on uncertain fuel deliveries in the war zone — provided backup in the meantime, but a similarly hazardous interruption could happen at any time.

"Russia has seized the plant and is not taking any steps to deescalate. On the contrary, it is shelling important infrastructure daily," the company's press service told The Associated Press.

Hundreds of cities and towns across Ukraine lost electricity after Russia launched a wide-ranging missile assault Monday in retaliation for a truck bomb explosion that damaged a bridge linking Russia with the Crimean Peninsula, which it annexed in 2014.

With repairs to the grid still in progress, Ukraine's prime minister asked people to reduce



evening energy consumption by 25 per cent and prepare for winter by keeping essentials such as warm clothes, candles, flashlights and batteries ready.

As the barrage that killed dozens of Ukrainians this week continued, Ukraine's Western allies met at NATO headquarters in Brussels to calibrate their response. US Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Ukraine wants its Western partners to provide it with a complete air defence system to contend with Russian warplanes and missiles.

Milley spoke to reporters after a meeting of the Ukraine Defence Contact Group, about 50 nations that meet regularly to assess Kyiv's needs and drum up equipment.

"What Ukraine is asking for, and what we think can be provided, is an integrated air missile defense system. So that doesn't control all the airspace over Ukraine, but they're designed to control priority targets that Ukraine needs to protect," Milley told reporters.

Andriy Yermak, the head of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's office, said the meeting was "historic" because decisions to close the sky for Ukraine were being made there.

Ukraine has put a priority on bucking up its air defenses, but NATO member nations have worried how to do that without triggering a wider war in Europe. Zelenskyy's office said Moscow's retaliatory strikes killed at least 14 people and wounded 34 over the last day in the Zaporizhzhia region and the Donetsk region to the east. At least 19 died in Monday's opening onslaught, including five in Kyiv.

A day after Ukraine's Defence Ministry announced the arrival of the first of Germany's four promised IRIS-T air defence systems, the defence minister of the Netherlands said her country would deliver USD 14.5 million worth of air defence missiles in light of Russia's latest attacks.



# NATO holds N-talks amid war tensions, Putin threats

AP ■ BRUSSELS

NATO's secretive Nuclear Planning Group met Thursday as the military alliance presses ahead with plans to hold a nuclear exercise next week as concerns deepen over President Vladimir Putin's insistence that he will use any means necessary to defend Russian territory.

Defense ministers led the session, which usually happens once or twice a year, at NATO headquarters in Brussels.

It comes against a backdrop of high tension as some NATO allies, led by the U.S., supply Ukraine with advanced weapons and munitions to defend itself against Russian aerial attacks.

NATO is keeping a wary eye on Russia's movements, but has so far seen no change in its nuclear posture.

But additional uncertainty comes from the fact that Russia is also due to hold its own nuclear exercises soon, possibly at the same time as NATO or just after, according to NATO diplomats.

That could complicate the 30-country military organisation's reading of the war and of Moscow's intentions.

# UN demands Russia reverse 'illegal' annexation in Ukraine

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

The UN General Assembly voted overwhelmingly on Wednesday to condemn Russia's "attempted illegal annexation" of four Ukrainian regions and demand its immediate reversal, a sign of strong global opposition to the seven-month war and Moscow's attempt to grab its neighbour's territory.

The vote in the 193-member world body was 143-5 with 35 abstentions. It was the strongest support from the General Assembly for Ukraine and against Russia of the four resolutions it has approved since Russian troops invaded Ukraine on February 24.

The Western-sponsored resolution was a response to Russia's announced annexation last month of Ukraine's Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson and Zaporizhzhia regions.

Moscow acted following Kremlin-orchestrated "referendums" that the Ukrainian government and the West have dismissed as sham votes conducted on occupied land amid warfare and displacement.

During two days of speeches at the assembly's resumed emergency special session on Ukraine speaker after speaker accused Russia of violating key principles of the United Nations Charter — respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all UN member nations.

Before the vote, US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield said that when the United Nations was established on the ashes of World War II it was built on an idea — "that never again would one country be allowed to take another's territory by force".

She said the facts were clear, that a veto-wielding permanent member of the UN

Security Council had attempted to annex territory from its neighbour by force, and she urged all countries to condemn Russia for the annexations.

A key issue for the resolution's Western backers was how many countries would support it, and the result went beyond their most optimistic expectations.

The General Assembly voted 141-5 with 35 abstentions March 2 to demand an immediate Russian cease-fire, withdrawal of all its troops and protection for all civilians.

On March 24, it voted 140-5 with 38 abstentions on a resolution blaming Russia for Ukraine's humanitarian crisis and urging an immediate cease-fire and protection for millions of civilians and the homes, schools and hospitals critical to their survival.

But the assembly voted by a far smaller margin on April 7



to suspend Russia from the UN's Geneva-based Human Rights Council over allegations Russian soldiers in Ukraine engaged in rights violations that the United States and Ukraine have called war crimes. That vote was 93-24 with 58 abstentions.

A 2014 resolution affirming Ukraine's territorial integrity and declaring the referendum that led to Russia's annexation of the Crimean Peninsula illegal was adopted by a vote of 100-11 with 58 abstentions.

Among the surprises in support for Wednesday's resolution were the "yes" votes from Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and other members of the Gulf Cooperation Council as well as Brazil.

Russia's UN ambassador, Vassily Nebenzia, had appealed to countries to vote against the resolution, calling it "a politicised and openly provocative

document" and denouncing its sponsors as "unscrupulous Western blackmailers". He expressed regret the vote was not by secret ballot, as Russia sought. Nebenzia reiterated Russia's claims the referendums were valid, saying "the populations of these regions do not want to return to Ukraine."

The four countries that joined Russia in voting against the resolution were North Korea, Belarus, Syria and Nicaragua.

China, India, Pakistan, South Africa and Cuba were among the 35 countries that abstained.

The more powerful Security Council, whose resolutions are legally binding, has been stymied on taking action on Ukraine because of Russia's veto power, which it used on September 29 to block condemnation of Russia's attempts to annex Ukrainian territory.

# How Moscow grabs Ukrainian kids and makes them Russians

AP ■ KYIV

Oлга Lopatkina paced around her basement in circles like a trapped animal. For more than a week, the Ukrainian mother had heard nothing from her six adopted children stranded in Mariupol, and she was going out of her mind with worry.

The kids had spent their vacation at a resort in the port city, as usual. But this time war with Russia had broken out, and her little ones — always terrified of the dark — were abandoned in a besieged city with no light and no hope.

All they had now was her oldest son, Timofey, who was still himself just 17.

The questions looped endlessly in her head: Should



she try to rescue the children herself — and risk being killed, making them orphans yet again? Or should she campaign to get them out from afar — and risk them being killed or falling into the hands of the Russians?

She had no idea her dilemma would lead her straight into a battle against Russia, with the highest stakes of her life.

Russia's open effort to adopt Ukrainian children and bring them up as Russian is already well underway, in one of the most explosive issues of the war, an Associated Press investigation shows.

Thousands of children have been found in the basements of war-torn cities like Mariupol and at orphanages in the Russian-backed separatist territories of Donbas.



# Ukraine dominates shortlist for EU human rights prize

AP ■ BRUSSELS

Ukrainian entries dominated Thursday's shortlist to win to European Union's top human rights prize.

The Christian Democrat, Socialist and Liberal groups, the three biggest within the European parliament, all nominated the people of Ukraine as their choice to win the Sakharov Prize this year for their resistance to the Russian invasion.

On top of that, the conservative ECR group specifically named Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy as their favorite for his endurance and defiance of his people.

The overwhelming support for the Ukraine cause reduced other nominees to outsiders, including Brazil environmental activist Sonia Guajajara and imprisoned WikiLeaks activist Julian Assange.

# Russia enlisting men to fight against Ukraine, but public support for Putin falling

THE CONVERSATION ■ BOSTON

Even as Russia intensifies its attacks on Ukraine, its military appears to be suffering setbacks — from mounting casualties to dwindling military supplies.

The Group of Seven countries — the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom — convened an emergency meeting on October 11, 2022, and condemned Russia's recent missile strikes on Ukraine.

The latest onslaught began on October 9, 2022, targeting Ukrainian civilian infrastructure and multiple cities. That may indicate a more brutal phase of the nearly eight-month-long military adventure.

But even before those attacks rained down on Ukraine, Russian President Vladimir Putin addressed his insufficient military strength and authorised a partial draft on September 21, 2022, of 300,000 men to help Russia sustain what many experts consider an illegal offensive. So far, Russia reports that an estimated 200,000 new fighters have been drafted into the military.

The draft has triggered a new wave of discontent across Russia. Hundreds of thousands of Russians have fled the country. There have also been multiple violent attacks on Russian military recruitment centers.

The Kremlin has worked to subdue anti-mobilisation



protests and has arrested more than 2,400 demonstrators. Meanwhile, public opinion polls by the Levada Center, Russia's leading independent polling group, continue to show that Russians overwhelmingly support Putin and the "special military operation," as he has called the war.

But as a scholar of Russia and public opinion, I think that public approval of the president and the assault on Ukraine is nevertheless shifting in light of the mobilization, as more families are torn apart by the hostilities.

Since the Ukraine invasion was launched in February 2022, Russians largely have been either sympathetic or apathetic toward the war. The public swiftly united behind Putin, and the war gradually became a backdrop to everyday life in Russia.

Nearly 50 per cent of

Russians polled have consistently said they "definitely" support Russia's military actions in Ukraine, another roughly 30 per cent "rather" support them, and only 20 per cent do not support them.

The population has mostly accepted the war based on an unwritten social contract with the Kremlin, in which people obey the regime in exchange for better living standards and a lack of interference in their private lives.

Russians generally feel more comfortable subscribing to prevailing narratives about the war espoused by Russian state media than grappling with negative information and difficult news stories.

When Russia annexed four eastern and southern Ukrainian regions on September 30, 2022, Putin spoke publicly about what he called Russia's Western ene-

mies. He blamed them for propelling up the "Kyiv regime" and staging "inhumane terrorist attacks" in Ukraine's contested Donbas region. In doing so, Putin sought to justify the war's resulting hardship by arguing that Russians are fighting for their survival.

Russians still overwhelmingly believe that the West is hostile to Russia and that the war is defensive. In August 2022, 71 per cent of people surveyed said they hold negative attitudes toward the United States, and 66 per cent reported having negative views toward Ukraine.

Some sociologists contend that polls in Russia may not be fully reliable due to a range of factors, including leading questions, incorrect wording, widespread indifference, and wariness about criticizing Putin and the government.

Russians traditionally have considerable confidence in their army.

A survey in December 2021 demonstrated that Russians trusted the military more than any other state institution or official, including the president.

Russian law requires all men aged 18 to 27 to serve in the military for one year. A poll in July 2021 showed that 61 per cent of Russians felt that "every real man should serve in the army." Women chose this response more often than men, and the elderly chose this option twice as much as those of military age.

NORTHERN RAILWAY	
SIGNAL & TELECOMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT	
TENDER NOTICE (Through e-Tendering)	
Tender No. 558-Sig-16-M-TENDER-1379	DRM Office New Delhi
Dated : 12.10.2022	
Name of work with its location	Re/location/reconstruction of ROB/RUB work in DUK section of Delhi Division
App. Cost of the work (₹)	₹ 69,59,460/- only
Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	₹ 1,39,200/- only
Address of the office	Senior Divisional Signal & Telecom Engineer-C, Northern Railway, 3rd Floor, Annexe-1, DRM Office, New Delhi-110055
Date & Time for upload the tender / closing of tender	Tender up/loading / closing date & time - 04.11.2022 upto 15.00 hrs.
Website particular & notice board location where complete details of the tender can be seen etc.	See the Northern Railway website www.ireps.gov.in & Notice board at S&T branch, 3rd Floor, DRM Office, State Entry Road, New Delhi-110055.
2736/22	
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE	

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
To be known to all that I/Mrs. Neelam Ajwani W/o Mr. Ravi Ajwani R/o Flat No. 39F, Block-A, Second Floor, with scooter garage DDA flat Munirka New Delhi-110067, am the owner of Flat No. 39F, Block-A, Second Floor, with scooter garage, DDA flats Munirka, New Delhi-110067, vide DDA's File No.F37(575)74LAB(H). My original documents of the said Property viz. (1) Allotment cum Demand Letter (2) Possession Letter (3) NOC for Electricity & Water Connection of the said Flat have been misplaced. An First Information Report of this effect has been lodge in Police Station Crime Branch, Delhi vide LR No.869002/2022 on 08/10/2022. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above address/phone No.9810014138 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform or write to Dy. Director, LAB(H) or Director (H)-1, D-Block, 3rd Floor, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi - 110023.



# China accuses US of ‘Cold War thinking’ in security strategy

AP ■ BEIJING

The Chinese government on Thursday accused Washington of “Cold War thinking” and appealed for efforts to repair strained relations after President Joe Biden released a national security strategy that calls for “out-competing China” and blocking its efforts to reshape global affairs.

The foreign ministry also accused Washington of trade protectionism after Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen said the United States would reinforce its global supply chains to guard against “geopolitical coercion” by China, Russia and other governments.

Biden’s document Wednesday accused China of trying to “erode US alliances” and “create more permissive conditions for its own authoritarian model.” It called for “out-competing China” in political alliances and “global governance” as well as business, technology and military affairs.

US-Chinese relations are at their lowest level in decades, strained by disputes over technology, security, Taiwan and human rights.



“Cold War thinking and zero-sum games, sensationalising geopolitical conflicts and great power competition are unpopular and unconstructive,” said Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning. She called on Washington to “meet China halfway and promote China-US relations back to a healthy and stable track.”

The White House document calls for the United States to “maintain a competitive edge” over China, which has antagonised Japan, India and other neighbours with an increasingly assertive foreign policy and

growing military.

China’s multibillion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative to build ports, railways and other infrastructure across Asia and Africa has fed concern in Washington, Moscow and other capitals that Beijing is trying to build its strategic influence and undermine theirs.

China, with the second-largest global economy and military, is the “only competitor with both the intent to reshape the international order and, increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military and technological power to do it,” the document says.

## China quashes social media posts about protest against Xi

AP ■ BEIJING

China’s internet censors moved quickly to scrub social media posts Thursday after reports that banners criticising the Communist leadership were hung from a busy intersection in the capital Beijing.

Images on Twitter, which is blocked in China, showed smoke spiralling up from a fire on an elevated roadway and banners calling for an end to the hard-line “zero-COVID” policy and the overthrow of Communist Party leader and President Xi Jinping.

Political protest is rare in China, and police are on high alert this week in the run-up to a major Communist Party congress that opens Sunday. There were no banners

hanging from the roadway later in the day, but a circular black scar was visible on the shoulder area where the fire would have been.

It was not clear who might have hung the banners or when they were placed.

Dozens of police milled about the area, entering stores. At times, they stopped pedestrians and questioned them. Associated Press journalists were questioned three times and asked to produce identification. Police denied anything unusual had happened in the area.

Three shopkeepers also denied seeing any banners, smoke or any unusual activity. One woman shook her head “no” without even looking up from her sewing machine.

## Kim supervised cruise missile tests: N Korea

AP ■ SEOUL

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un supervised tests of long-range cruise missiles, which he described as a successful demonstration of his military’s expanding nuclear strike capabilities and readiness for “actual war”, state media said on Thursday.

Wednesday’s tests extended a record number of weapons demonstrations this year by North Korea, which has punctuated its testing activity with threats to preemptively use nuclear weapons against South Korea and the United States if it perceives its leadership as under threat.

Analysts say Kim is exploiting the distraction created by Russia’s war on Ukraine, using it as a window to accelerate arms development as he pursues a full-fledged nuclear arsenal that could viably threaten regional US allies and the American homeland.

South Korean officials say Kim may also conduct a nuclear test in the coming weeks or months, escalating a pressure campaign aimed at forcing the United States to accept the idea of North Korea as a nuclear power that can negotiate economic and security concessions from a position of strength.

## Iran prez accuses US of ‘destabilisation’ amid protests



AP ■ DUBAI

Iran’s president accused the US on Thursday of conducting a “failed policy of destabilisation” targeting his nation after Iranians in cities nationwide protested the death of a 22-year-old woman in the custody of the country’s morality police. President Ebrahim Raisi’s repeated comments have tried to blame the demonstrations sparked by the death of Mahsa Amini as a Western plot, even as school-age protesters remove their mandatory headscarves, or hijabs. They came after protests in cities across Iran on Wednesday, with videos circulating of security forces apparently firing toward demonstrators and using violence to put down the dissent.

The protests have become one of the greatest challenges to Iran’s theocracy since the country’s 2009 Green Movement.

Raisi, a hard-line protégé of Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali

Khamenei, described them as a plot against Iran by its enemies abroad. Raisi’s remarks came on Thursday as he spoke to a conference in Astana, Kazakhstan.

“The Iranian nation has invalidated the American military option and, as they themselves have admitted, brought the policy of sanctions and maximum pressure a humiliating failure,” Raisi said, according to a transcript of his remarks. “Now, following America’s failure in militarisation and sanctions, Washington and its allies have resorted to the failed policy of destabilisation.” Raisi did not otherwise directly address the demonstrations, which took place across at least 19 cities on Wednesday.

Gathering information about the demonstrations remains difficult amid the internet restrictions and the arrests of at least 40 journalists in the country, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists.

## Bus bombing kills 18 Syrian troops, wounds dozens

AP ■ BEIRUT

A bus bombing on Thursday killed 18 Syrian soldiers in a Damascus suburb and wounded at least 27 others, Syria’s state media reported citing a military source, as fighting in the country’s north picked up.

Similar attacks over the past years have killed and wounded dozens of soldiers in government-held parts of the war-torn country.

Last March, militants attacked a military bus near Palmyra in central Syria, killing 13 troops and wounding 18 others. Syrian authorities in the past have blamed such attacks on Islamic State group militants.

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The White House laid out a national security strategy on Wednesday aimed at checking an ascendant China and a more assertive Russia even as it stressed that domestic investments are key to helping the US compete in the critical decade ahead.

The administration’s first national security strategy, a document required by statute, stresses the need for a foreign policy that balances the interests of global allies with those of middle-class Americans.

“We understand that if the United States is to succeed abroad, we must invest in our innovation and industrial strength, and build our resilience at home,” the strategy states.

“Likewise, to advance



shared prosperity domestically and to uphold the rights of all Americans, we must proactively shape the international order in line with our interests and values.”

In broad brushstrokes, the strategy sketches a “decisive decade” for national security, as President Joe Biden faces an arguably more complicated

world than when he took office 21 months ago in the midst of the worst global pandemic in a century. At the same time, the White House said policy-makers must “avoid the temptation to view the world solely through a competitive lens, and engage countries on their own terms”.

Biden came to office championing a “foreign policy for the middle class” that sought to put greater focus on China as a rising economic and military competitor, reinforcing alliances that had frayed during the Trump administration and protect human rights, all while looking out for US interests.

Administration officials say that the focus on US interests remains central to Biden’s foreign policy vision. But the new strategy document also

reflects the long list of crises that has left the world facing shared challenges including climate change, food insecurity, communicable diseases, and inflation.

“We’re in the early years of a decisive decade,” White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said in a speech at Georgetown University to spotlight release of the document. “The terms of our competition with the People’s Republic of China will be set. The window of opportunity to deal with shared challenges like climate change will narrow drastically, even as the intensity of those challenges grows. So we need to grasp our moment.”

The document stresses the necessity of competing effectively with China, which the administration says is the

only competitor that has both the intent and, increasingly, the capability to reshape the international order, while constraining a dangerous Russia.

Biden is dealing with a nearly eight-month Russian war in Ukraine that is wracking the global economy, increasingly assertive action by China toward the self-ruled island of Taiwan, mounting nuclear concerns in Iran and North Korea, and strained relations with the oil-rich kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

“Around the world, the need for American leadership is as great as it has ever been. We are in the midst of a strategic competition to shape the future of the international order,” Biden said in the introduction to the document.

## UK PM Liz under pressure over tax cuts



PTI ■ LONDON

The Cabinet is attempting to rally behind embattled British Prime Minister Liz Truss on Thursday as her Conservative Party backbenchers are up in arms against her tax-cutting economic policies, which they see as favouring the rich amid a cost-of-living crisis and giving the Opposition Labour Party a lead in opinion polls.

Foreign Secretary James Cleverly warned that it would be a “disastrously bad idea” to think about replacing Truss as the Tory leader, just over a month after she was elected by the party membership in a leadership battle with former Chancellor Rishi Sunak on September 6.

Since then the government’s mini-budget tabled at the end of last month has unleashed turmoil in the financial markets due to fears of unfunded tax cuts introduced by Chancellor Kwasi

Kwarteng, despite a forced U-turn on abolishing the top rate for the wealthiest in the country.

“We have got to recognise that we do need to bring certainty to the markets,” Cleverly told the BBC with reference to the financial turmoil. “I think that changing the leadership would be a disastrously bad idea, not just politically but also economically, and we are absolutely going to stay focused on growing the economy,” he said. It will be seen as a clear warning to the Conservative Party against plotting Truss’ overthrow, just weeks after being elected as party leader and taking charge at 10 Downing Street.

Truss is facing growing calls within her own party to scrap all or part of her economic programme, to be finalised with a fiscal statement scheduled at the end of the month, to shore up the UK’s economic position ahead of a difficult winter.

## Unrest widespread in Jerusalem over latest Israeli clampdown

AP ■ JERUSALEM

Israeli police fired live rounds, tear gas and stun grenades in widespread Jerusalem street confrontations with Palestinians who threw stones, firecrackers and firebombs.

It was the fiercest unrest in the contested city in months.

Tensions in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem have been soaring since a suspected Palestinian assailant shot and killed an Israeli soldier at a checkpoint at the entrance to the Shuafat refugee camp earlier this week.

Movement in and out of Shuafat, a neglected Jerusalem slum, has been restricted as troops search for the shooter.

The overnight street violence appeared to have sub-



sided by Thursday morning, as tens of thousands of Jews were flocking to Jerusalem to celebrate the week-long Sukkot holiday, surging into east Jerusalem’s Old City, often a focal point for tensions.

The confrontations between Israeli troops and

Palestinians erupted in more than a dozen neighbourhoods of east Jerusalem and areas surrounding it.

Police said they arrested 23 Palestinians throughout disturbances on Wednesday, half of them minors. Police said masked protesters threw fire-

bombs, stones and fireworks at officers.

Video footage released by Israeli police showed a street littered with burning debris and trash bins set alight.

Police said in some cases officers used live fire against the protesters. There was no immediate report of injuries.

The police manhunt has further disrupted the lives of residents of Shuafat, an area that has long seen neglect at the hands of Israeli authorities.

Police initially closed Shuafat’s entry and exit points and while they have since reopened, officers are stopping every car moving in and out of the city, triggering snarling traffic jams and disrupting the residents’ daily routine.

## Malaysian Opp leader hopeful of election win

AP ■ PETALING JAYA (MALAYSIA)

Malaysian opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim said Thursday he was optimistic that his alliance can achieve a simple majority in general elections expected to be held next month,

despite the odds stacked against them.

Riding on a wave of anger over government corruption, Anwar’s three-party Hope Alliance won a stunning victory in 2018 polls with the help of former Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

AP ■ NEW YORK

Former President Donald Trump angrily lashed out on Wednesday, calling the nation’s legal system a “broken disgrace” after a judge ruled he must answer questions under oath next week in a defamation lawsuit lodged by a writer who says he raped her in the mid-1990s.

He also called the 2019 lawsuit by E. Jean Carroll, a longtime advice columnist for Elle magazine, “a hoax and a lie”.

The outburst late in the day came hours after US District Judge Lewis A. Kaplan in Manhattan rejected a request by his lawyers to delay a deposition scheduled for October 19.

Kaplan is presiding over the case in which Carroll said Trump raped her in the dressing room of a Manhattan



Bergdorf Goodman store in the mid-1990s. He called the lawsuit “a complete con job”.

“I don’t know this woman, have no idea who she is, other than it seems she got a picture of me many years ago, with her husband, shaking my hand on a reception line at a celebrity charity event,” Trump said.

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

## Nepalese PM sacks 4 Mins representing JSP

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Nepalese Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba on Thursday sacked four ministers representing the Janata Samajwadi Party (JSP), which left the ruling coalition last week after joining hands with the CPN-UML for the upcoming polls.

On the recommendation

of the prime minister, the President has relieved four ministers of their responsibilities,” the Kathmandu Post newspaper reported, citing a statement issued by the President’s Office on Thursday evening.

Those relieved from the ministerial position include Minister for Federal Affairs and General Administration

Rajendra Shrestha, Minister for Forest and Environment Pradeep Yadav, Minister for Physical Infrastructure Mohammad Istiyak Rai and Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Mrigendra Kumar Singh.

According to the code of conduct of the Election Commission, even if these ministers are removed, the

chances of the prime minister being able to appoint new ministers are very low. The EC states that new appointments in the Cabinet will violate the election code of conduct.

Janata Samajbadi leaders had argued that they hadn’t quit the government but only partnered with the UML for the elections in some constituencies.



# Digitisation a game changer for Indian economy, says IMF



PTI ■ WASHINGTON

Applauding India's digitisation efforts, the chief economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on Wednesday said the move was a game changer as it had allowed the Indian government to do things that would have been extremely difficult otherwise.

"Digitisation is helping along a number of dimensions. One is financial inclusion, obviously because there are a lot of people in countries like India that were unbanked. And having access to digital wallets is a way in which they can enter into transactions that are not just cash transactions, which are very inefficient," Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas, the chief economist of IMF, told PTI in an interview in response to a question about India's digitisation efforts.

"I think it (digitization) has

allowed the (Indian) government to do things that would have been extremely difficult to do otherwise. Yes (it is a game changer). It is certainly something that is a very welcome development," Gourinchas suggested.

"So that's a huge plus in terms of bringing people into a more modern economy. That's a factor for growth," he said, adding that your market becomes very different if you are plugged into this digital instrument. "The second one which I think has also been important in the case of India is these digital instruments also allow governments to reach and disburse systems in ways that are much harder to do sometimes with some of the regular pipes of the safety net," he said.

"One of the lessons we've learned from both the pandemic and we're learning it again with the energy crisis, is how can we provide the assistance where it's needed.

## India's deployment of cash transfer scheme a 'logical marvel': Mauro

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

India's deployment of a direct cash transfer scheme and other similar social welfare programmes is a "logical marvel", the International Monetary Fund (IMF) said on Wednesday.

"From India, there is a lot to learn. There is a lot to learn from some other examples around the world. We have examples from pretty much every continent and every level of income. If I look at the case of India, it is actually quite impressive," Paolo Mauro, Deputy Director of the Fiscal Affairs Department at the IMF, told reporters at a news conference here.

"In fact, just because of the sheer size of the country, it is a logical marvel how these programmes that seek to help people

who are at low-income levels reach literally hundreds of millions of people," he said in response to a question on the impressive direct cash transfer programme being successfully implemented by the Indian government.

There are programmes that target specifically women. There are programmes that target the elderly and farmers. Perhaps the interesting part is that in these examples, there is a lot of technological innovation, he said.

"In the case of India, one thing that is striking is the use of the unique identification system, the Aadhaar," Mauro said. "But in other countries, also, there is greater use of sending money through mobile banking to people who actually do not have a whole lot of money, but they have a cell phone," Mauro said.

Because it's enormously costly to just have a blanket policy that is going to cover everyone," he said.

Most people don't necessarily need this and most businesses may not need it. But sometimes it has to be done that way because that's the only way it can be done, he added.

"Digitisation offers the promise of more targeted assistance when it's needed. That is potentially a game changer because it means that now policy can be more nimble. It can

have less of an impact on sort of the overall fiscal stance. So, more protection, more insurance can be provided," Gourinchas said.

"That's also a very important factor for supporting the economy and helping it rebound when it's done. There's going to be shocks of all kinds of things happening and it offers this possibility for something that is much more agile and targeted," he said in response to a question.

## NHAI InvIT looks to raise additional ₹3,800 crore, says Gadkari



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

National Highways Infra Trust (NHAI InvIT) is looking to raise additional Rs 3,800 crore, Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari said on Thursday.

Addressing an event organised by National Highways Infra Trust, Gadkari said that of the additional fundraise, around Rs 1,500 crores are being garnered through an issue of non-convertible debentures (NCDs) with a long-dated maturity of 24 years.

These InvIT bonds will be listed on BSE and NSE providing an opportunity for investors to invest and trade, he added.

NHAI InvIT is the infrastructure investment trust sponsored by the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) to support the government's National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP).

Gadkari said that the InvIT, so far, has raised more than Rs 8,000 crore from foreign and

Indian institutional investors. Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs) are instruments on the pattern of mutual funds, designed to pool money from investors and invest in assets that will provide cash flows over a period of time.

Gadkari noted that India is one of the fastest-growing economies in the world and the development of highways in the country will play a crucial role in its growth.

The minister said the government is working to connect the North Eastern part of the country to the highways network. "We are working to provide all-weather connectivity to religious and tourist places," he said.

The road transport and highways minister said the network of expressways under the Bharatmala Pariyojana has been constructed across the country.

"We are working to reduce our logistics cost to single digit from 13-14 per cent of GDP presently," he said.



## Govt not to cancel coal block allocation to Rajasthan despite demand from Chhattisgarh: Joshi

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Union coal minister Pralhad Joshi on Thursday said that the Chhattisgarh government has requested for cancellation of the allocation of coal blocks to Rajasthan but the government has refused to do so.

He said that he has spoken to Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan chief ministers and is looking forward to resolving the issue and getting the mining activities resumed so that Rajasthan continues to get 11 rakes of coal from there.

"A resolution from the Chhattisgarh government has come for getting the mine allotted to Rajasthan in Chhattisgarh cancelled, but we have allotted to Rajasthan under a process, therefore we are not cancelling it," Joshi told reporters here.

"The government of India in principle has taken a stand not to cancel that. It will be our effort to get the mining activities resumed so that Rajasthan continues to get 11 rakes of coal from there," he said.

Both Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh are Congress-ruled states.

The Union minister said that the demand for energy has significantly increased across the country including in Rajasthan. He said that his ministry will try its best to support the state in fulfilling its coal requirement.

Joshi said that the supply of coal has been increased from 12-13 rakes per day to 16.5 rakes per day so that the power plants in Rajasthan face no crisis of coal.

Earlier, speaking at a programme of MoU signing between Coal India Ltd and Rajasthan Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd (RUVNL) for setting up a 1,190 MW solar plant in Bikaner, Joshi said that the central government has laid special emphasis on promoting renewable energy generation.

Along with this, by adopting new technology, the government is also working towards producing electricity from coal without pollution.

## Passenger vehicle wholesales scale 10 lakh peak in September quarter

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



Passenger vehicle wholesales in India crossed the 10 lakh quarterly mark for the first time in the September quarter as automakers pushed units to dealers to cater to the festive demand, Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers said on Thursday.

As per the latest data by the Society of Indian Automobile Manufacturers (SIAM), passenger vehicle wholesales in the September quarter increased by 38 per cent to 10,26,309 units, as against 7,41,442 units in the similar period of the last fiscal.

"More than half of the overall passenger vehicle dispatches are utility vehicles so there is a strong demand for models in this particular segment," SIAM President Vinod Aggarwal told reporters here.

While the utility vehicles

comprising popular sports utility vehicles continue to do well, other segments like entry level cars and sedans continue to struggle with tapering demand, he added.

Utility vehicle dispatches in the September quarter stood at 5,17,898 units; passenger cars at 4,68,513 units and vans at 29,904 units.

The passenger vehicle segment had recorded the previous best quarterly figures in the fourth quarter of 2020-21 with dispatch of 9.33 lakh units to dealers.

## Vedantu to take majority stake in Deeksha for USD 40 million

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Edu-tech firm Vedantu has acquired a majority stake in test preparation platform Ace Creative Learning, which operates under the Deeksha brand, for USD 40 million (about Rs 330 crore), the company said on Thursday.

Vedantu CEO and co-founder Vamsi Krishna told PTI that the acquisition will help the company expand its hybrid business model with access to about 40 offline centres that the 24-year-old Deeksha operates in three states of Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

"Vedantu opened its offline hybrid centre in Muzaffarpur early this year and we have been looking at doubling down and growing more on our hybrid strategy. The Deeksha team had been looking for technology integration and scaling up.

## Sensex, Nifty decline as rate hike worries hit banking, realty shares

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Key stock indices Sensex and Nifty declined over half a per cent on Thursday due to selling in financials, auto and realty shares after five-month high inflation fanned rate hike fears.

A weak rupee and rising crude prices also impacted the market sentiment, traders said.

The 30-share BSE Sensex declined 390.58 points or 0.68 per cent to settle at 57,235.33. The broader NSE Nifty fell 109.25 points or 0.64 per cent to end at 17,014.35.

Wipro was the top loser in the Sensex pack, shedding 7.03 per cent, followed by SBI, L&T, ICICI Bank, Asian Paints, Bajaj Finance and HDFC twins. On the other hand, HCL Tech, Sun Pharma, Dr Reddy's Reliance Industries and Ultra Tech Cement were among the gainers, rising up to 3.19 per cent.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research at

Geojit Financial Services, "Retail inflation persisting above the desired levels has been a major cause of concern for the Indian economy. This, coupled with declining industrial production in August may not be taken well by the market because Indian economy is anticipated to sustain its resilience.

"In this backdrop, the impending US inflation figures, which are forecasted to remain high, may cause volatility in the global market."



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Institutional investments in Delhi-NCR's real estate market jumped 2.5 fold year-on-year to USD 754 million during January-September, according to Colliers India. The total investments in Indian real estate rose 18 per cent to USD 3.6 billion during January-September this year, from 3.03 billion in the corresponding period of the previous year.

The inflows were driven by the office sector that accounted for 50 per cent share. As per the data, Delhi-NCR attracted institutional investments worth USD 754 million during the first nine months of this year, compared to USD 301 million in the year-ago period. In Bengaluru, investments grew 18 per cent to USD 375 million from USD 317 million. Chennai witnessed a sharp jump in inflows to USD

345 million from USD 98 million. Institutional investments in the Mumbai real estate market rose 5 per cent to USD 477 million, from USD 452 million, but fell 96 per cent in Pune to USD 9 million from USD 232 million.

Hyderabad and Kolkata have not received any investments during January-September this year, as against USD 486 million and USD 105 million respectively in the year-ago period.

## India initiates anti-dumping probe into import of Chinese glass

PTI ■ NEW DELHI



India has initiated an anti-dumping probe into import of Chinese glass used in home appliances products following a complaint by a domestic player.

The duty is aimed at protecting the domestic industry from cheap imports.

The commerce ministry's investigation arm Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) is probing the alleged dumping of "Toughened

glass for home appliances having thickness between 1.8 MM to 8 MM

and area of 0.4 SqM or less' originating in or exported from China.

Federation of Safety Glass, an association of safety/specialty glass processors, has filed an application to initiate the anti-dumping investigation.

The applicant has alleged that dumping of the probe is impacting domestic industries.

"On the basis of the duly substantiated written application by the domestic industry, and having reached a satisfaction, based on the

basis of the prima facie evidence submitted by the domestic industry concerning the alleged dumping of the product...The authority hereby initiates an investigation," the DGTR has said in a notification.

If it is established that the dumping has caused material injury to domestic players, the DGTR would recommend the imposition of anti-dumping duty on these imports. The finance ministry takes the final decision to impose duties.

## Delta posts USD 695 million profit, sees busy holiday season

AP ■ MAGON

Delta Air Lines reported a USD 695 million third-quarter profit Thursday as higher average fares this summer and a lucrative credit-card business more than offset higher fuel prices.

The airline forecast that revenue during the final three months of the year will top pre-pandemic levels.

Delta's CEO said he sees no indication that anxiety over inflation and the economy will discourage people from travelling over the holidays.

"It's going to be a very strong holiday season — Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's," said CEO Ed Bastian.

"Consumers are still relatively healthy. They have deferred spending, but where they have deferred it is the acquisition of things."

Delta's third-quarter numbers support that view. The airline's operating revenue rose 11 per cent above 2019 levels even with an 18 per cent drop in passenger traffic.

## India's refined palm oil imports jump 2.7 times in last 11 months

SPTI ■ NEW DELHI



India saw more than two-and-a-half times increase in import of refined palm oil at 17.12 lakh tonne in the last 11 months due to lower prices in Indonesia, industry body SEA said on Thursday.

The country had imported 6.28 lakh tonne of refined palm oil (RBD palmolein) in the year-ago period. The oil year runs from November to October, it said.

India, the world's leading vegetable oil buyer, imported 130.1 lakh tonne of vegetable oils during the November-September period of the ongoing 2021-22 oil year, 4 per cent higher than the year-ago period. Palm oil shipments comprise 50 per cent of the total vegetable oil imports.

According to the Solvent

Extractors Association of India (SEA), Indonesia had reduced customs duty on refined palm oil while keeping the tariff on crude palm oil (CPO) higher till three months back. This encouraged Indonesian exporters to push refined palm oil shipments at discounted rates, it said.

This led to an increase in India's import of RBD palmolein and quantities have risen sharply in August and September, it added.

### BUSINESS BRIEFS

**VIT-AP SIGNS MOU WITH IBS GLOBAL POLAND**  
VIT-AP University entered into MoU with IBS Global, a Poland based company, to collaborate on technology product development and promote VIT-AP innovations at global level. IBS Global will extend its support to execute various programs and events on scaling the innovative ideas of VIT-AP. Both parties also agreed to explore funding/grant options for the Innovators and startups.

**SRM TAMIL PERAYAM 2022 AWARDS ANNOUNCED**  
Founder Chancellor and Tamil Perayam president Dr TR Parivendhar announced the 12 members of the SRM Tamil Perayam 2022 awardees list. Addressing the press, he said, "The mission of the Tamil Perayam is to increase awareness around the world and development of Tamil language, literature, art, and culture. It functions according to the recommendations of Tamil Nadu's best Tamil scholars, creators and Govt officials."

## MissCallPay ties up with VenEx to reward employees with wealth points

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Mumbai-based fintech MissCallPay has partnered with VenEx, a Delhi-based SaaS (Software as a Service) platform, to reward its employees with wealth points in addition to employee stock option as a performance incentive.

These wealth points can be encashed by the employees. ESOP (Employee Stock Option Plan) is an employee benefit plan which is intended to encourage staff to acquire stocks or ownership in the company.

"The unique VenEx model has enabled us to, very meritocratically, define how the created wealth will be shared, on an ongoing basis, with

every team member, as everyone is contributing to the future of MissCallPay," Mitesh L Thakker, founder and CEO of MissCallPay, said in a statement.

The model, he added, has also helped the company become more capital-efficient and extend its capital runway, giving the firm more time to raise the next round of capital.

## Indian startup funding hits 2-yr low in Q3 of 2022 at USD 2.7 bn: PwC India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Amid global economic slowdown, startup funding in India hit a two-year low at USD 2.7 billion in the third quarter of 2022, as per a PwC India report. Only two startups in India attained the unicorn status in the July-September period of 2022, mirroring a global trend in decline in the number of new unicorns this last quarter, said the report titled 'Startup Deals Tracker - Q3 CY22'.

Globally, the quarter under review produced 20 unicorns

and 45 per cent of them are from the SaaS segment. No new decacorns were added in this quarter. "The global slowdown in funding continues with start-up funding in India in Q3 CY22 hitting a two-year low at USD 2.7 billion across 205 deals," the report said.

While a decline in funding is noted across all stages of investment -- early, growth and late -- it has been the least in early-stage deals which contributed around 21 per cent of the total funding by value in third quarter of calendar 2022.

## Infosys Q2 net profit up 11 pc to ₹6,021 cr; to buyback shares worth ₹9,300 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Infosys posted an 11 per cent year-on-year rise in consolidated net profit to Rs 6,021 cr for the September quarter and also announced a share buyback programme worth Rs 9,300 crore. The IT major will also pay an interim dividend totalling Rs 6,940 cr to the shareholders. The net profit of India's second largest IT services company stood at Rs 5,421 cr in the same period a year ago. The revenue rose 23.4 per cent year-on-year to Rs 36,538 cr in the second quarter of the current fiscal.

## Japan's Sony, Honda jointly making EVs for 2026 US delivery

AP ■ TOKYO

A new electric car company that brings together two big names in Japanese business, Honda and Sony, officially kicked off on Thursday, with both sides stressing their common values of taking up challenges and serving people's needs.

The electric vehicle from Sony Honda Mobility Inc. Will go on sale in 2025, with deliveries coming first in the US in early 2026, and in Japan later that year, Chief Executive Yasuhide Mizuno told reporters. Pre-orders start 2025.

In March, Sony Group Corp. And Honda agreed to set up the 50-50 joint venture, with the idea of bringing



together Honda's expertise in autos, mobility technology and sales with Sony's imaging, network, sensor and entertainment expertise.

Production will take place at a Honda plant in the US, but details such as pricing, platform and the kind of bat-

tery to be used were not disclosed.

Production volume was also not given, but officials said this was a special model and not intended for massive sales. Mizuno, who is from Honda Motor Co., said the collaboration brings together hardware and software to deliver an emotionally satisfying experience on the move. "It was necessary to take a totally new approach," Mizuno told reporters in Tokyo. "We want to make this completely new."

The US was chosen for the launch because electric vehicles were already popular there, Japan came second as Honda's home market, and other markets, including Europe, will follow, but no dates were set, he said.



# 6 MINUTES & 12 SECONDS

## Salah scores fastest Champions League hat-trick in Liverpool’s 7-1 win at Rangers

AP ■ GLASGOW

Mohamed Salah came off the bench to score the fastest hat-trick in Champions League history as Liverpool thrashed Rangers 7-1 on Wednesday to put one foot in the Champions League last 16.

Roberto Firmino scored twice, while Darwin Nunez and Harvey Elliott also struck in a confidence-boosting win for Jurgen Klopp’s men as they moved to within a point of qualifying for the knockout stages.

Liverpool had been forced to come from behind after Scott Arfield fired the Glasgow giants into an early lead.

But Rangers are being schooled on their return to the Champions League for the first time in 12 years as they remain without a point and have conceded 16 goals in four games.

Firmino’s double either side of half-time turned the game around before the Brazilian teed up Nunez to kill off the game as a contest.

Klopp had left Salah and Thiago Alcantara on the bench with one eye on Sunday’s clash against Manchester City in the Premier League.

But both were brought on for the final 22 minutes and Salah did not miss the chance to cash in against a beleaguered Rangers defence.

The Egyptian’s treble arrived in just six minutes to beat the previous record held by Bafetimbi Gomis in Lyon’s 7-1 win over Dinamo Zagreb in 2011. Elliott then rounded off the scoring on a sobering night for a Rangers side that only months ago reached the Europa League final.

A draw in Amsterdam will suffice for Liverpool to reach the last 16 when they face Ajax in two weeks’ time.

But Napoli remain out in front in Group A after a 4-2 win



over Ajax sealed their place in the knockout stages.

### NAPOLI IN LAST 16

**Naples:** Napoli reached the Champions League knockout stages with two games to spare after a flamboyant 4-2 victory over Ajax maintained their 100 percent start in this year’s competition.

Luciano Spalletti’s side have four wins from four and a perfect 12 points at the top of Group A thanks to Hirving Lozano, Giacomo Raspadori, Khvicha Kvaratskhelia and Victor Osimhen, whose goals took their European tally to an incredible 17.

Nine points separate the Serie A leaders from third-placed Ajax, who can still make it through with two wins from their final two matches against Liverpool and Rangers.

### CLUB BRUGGE IN KO

**Madrid:** Surprise package Club Brugge booked their place in the Champions League last 16 with a 0-0 draw against Atletico Madrid.

The Belgian side are guaranteed to progress from Group

B after keeping Diego Simeone’s side at bay in Madrid, and finished the game with 10 men after Kamal Sowah was sent off in the final stages.

Brugge stunned Atletico last week at home with a 2-0 win and although they dropped their first points of the competition at the Metropolitano, still secured qualification for the knock-out rounds.

Goalkeeper Simon Mignolet made a series of impressive saves to deny the likes of Antoine Griezmann and Angel Correa, frustrating the Spanish side, who are on four points from four games, six behind Group C leaders Brugge.

Brugge are four points clear at the Group B summit from Porto, who won 3-0 at Bayer Leverkusen. Galeno gave visitors Porto an early lead, before Kerem Demirbay missed a penalty and Patrik Schick saw a potential equaliser ruled out by VAR for handball.

Porto were controversially given a penalty which was scored by Mehdi Taremi in the 53rd minute, and the Iranian wrapped up the points with another spot-kick.



## Barca on brink after Inter draw

AP ■ BARCELONA

Barcelona slipped closer to a second straight Champions League group-stage exit despite Robert Lewandowski’s double in a thrilling 3-3 draw with Inter Milan on Wednesday.

Xavi Hernandez’s Barca needed a victory at the Camp Nou to keep their fate in their own hands and Ousmane Dembele’s goal after a cleverly-worked short corner gave the hosts a half-time lead.

But Inter turned the match on its head early in the second half, as Gerard Pique left a cross into the box and Nicolo Barella stole in unmarked to equalise.

Lautaro Martinez took advantage of more weak defending to put the Italians in front just after the hour mark, drilling in a low strike which went in off both posts.

Lewandowski equalised with eight minutes remaining as his deflected effort wrong-footed goalkeeper Andre Onana, but Inter substitute Robin Gosens looked to have knocked out the five-time champions with his 89th-minute effort.

Polish star Lewandowski’s towering header in injury time gave Barca four minutes to find a winner, but it was Gosens who almost won it for Inter only to be denied by Marc-Andre ter Stegen.

La Liga leaders Barca now trail second-placed Inter by three points in Group C, but with a stronger head-to-head record, Simone Inzaghi’s side will qualify with Bayern if they beat pointless Viktoria Plzen at home in two weeks.

"We had an enormous opportunity and we didn’t take it," said Barcelona defender Eric Garcia. "We made errors that at this level, you cannot make."

Bayern reached the knockout phase for a 15th consecutive season with a 4-2 victory at Plzen.

The German champions romped into a 4-0 half-time advantage through goals from Sadio Mane and Thomas Mueller and Leon Goretzka’s brace.

Adam Vlkanova and Jan Kliment gave the home fans two goals to cheer, but the Czechs bowed out of the competition.

## Son shines with double as Spurs sink Frankfurt

AP ■ LONDON

Son Heung-min struck twice in just six minutes to bolster their bid to reach the Champions League last 16 with a 3-2 win against Eintracht Frankfurt on Wednesday.

Antonio Conte’s side fell behind to Daichi Kamada’s early strike at the Tottenham Hotspur Stadium. But Son equalised with a composed finish and Harry Kane converted a penalty as the England captain bagged his first Champions League goal this season.

Son’s blistering volley put



Tottenham in complete control towards the end of a vibrant first-half display.

Finally back to his best after a slow start to the season, Son was a constant menace to Frankfurt, whose defender Tuta was sent off in the second half for two fouls on the 30-year-old.

Frankfurt’s Faride Alidou reduced the deficit in the closing stages and Kane missed a late penalty, but Tottenham held on.

With two matches remaining against Sporting Lisbon and Marseille, Tottenham are top of Group D on seven points

after their second win in this season’s tournament.

They hold a one-point lead over both second-placed Marseille and third-placed Sporting. Frankfurt had beaten West Ham and Arsenal in London in recent years, but this less memorable visit to the English capital left them bottom of the group on four points.

Marseille leapfrogged Sporting Lisbon into second place on head-to-head as Alexis Sanchez scored in a 2-0 win which saw the Portuguese finish the game with nine men.

## Can’t remain administrator forever: Ganguly

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Amid the chatter around his imminent departure from the BCCI, board president Sourav Ganguly on Thursday said he "can't be an administrator forever".

The former India captain is set to be replaced as board president by 1983 World Cup winning-team member Roger Binny in the apex body’s upcoming AGM (Annual general Meeting).

"You can't play forever. You can't be an administrator forever, but it's been fun doing both and seeing both sides of the coin. I will go for bigger things in future," Ganguly said.

"I was a cricketer's administrator. Yes you had to make decisions because there's so much cricket happening, there's so much money around. There's women's cricket, there's domestic cricket. Yes you had to take calls at times as an individual," he added. Ganguly was keen to continue as the BCCI chief, but things did not pan out that way, even as Jay Shah is set to continue as the secretary.

Ganguly first got into cricket administration as a secretary under Jagmohan Dalmiya at the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB), before heading the state body after the veteran’s death in September 2015.



Ganguly also spoke about the high points of his tenure as BCCI president.

"I think I thoroughly loved it. If you see the last three years, so many good things have happened. IPL during COVID, such difficult times for all of us in the country. We didn't know how to deal with it. The broadcast rights which

went to an all time high.

"The Under-19 winning the World Cup. I wish the women won the Commonwealth Games gold, they were in a position to beat Australia. Senior team winning in Australia. Those were great moments as an administrator. But they returned with a silver which was still first.

"I hope they do well in Australia because it's a tremendous cricket team. There's so much talent, so much power, class in the side," he said, wishing Team India luck for the upcoming T20 World Cup.

"You expect them to win all the time. But the challenge of being a player was completely different. So you can't compare both."

Ganguly said the challenges as a cricketer were more than being an administrator.

"I did eight years' of administration. I was president of the Cricket Association of Bengal, then became president of the BCCI, all these have tenures and you have to go after finishing it."

"But I feel the challenge as a cricketer was a lot more. When you do backroom work, sitting on tables and running the game, you have time to correct things."

"But if you nicked a delivery from Glenn McGrath on the first morning of a Test, you are out, you didn't have the time to correct it -- I think that's the major difference."

"But when you do administration you realise that you contribute so much, you could make things better for a cricketer and me being a player who played for a long period of time, I understood that," he signed off.

## Great chance for India to finish on podium in next year’s WC: Baskaran

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India need to draw confidence from their Tokyo Olympics campaign and forget the rout at the Commonwealth Games final to claim a podium finish in next year’s men’s hockey World Cup, feels former captain and coach Vasudevan Baskaran.

"I believe they (India) can definitely finish on the podium in Odisha this time. They should move on from the CWG final loss to Australia and ride on the confidence they gained from the Tokyo Olympic Games," said Baskaran, who was the captain of India’s 1980 Olympics gold medal winning team.

"The team is in the good hands of Graham Reid and the support staff. I believe they have a sure shot at a medal."

Baskaran stressed on the need to make a positive start against Spain in the World Cup to be jointly hosted by Bhubaneswar and Rourkela from January 13 to 29.

"If they get past the first hurdle against Spain in a big way, then there is no stopping them from going into medal matches."

## Gauff defeats Robin in rain delayed match in San Diego

AP ■ SAN DIEGO

Sixth-seeded Coco Gauff turned back an inspired effort from 294th-ranked Robin Montgomery, 6-3 6-3 in the resumption of a match that was postponed due to rain a night earlier in the San Diego Open WTA 500.

Gauff, who earlier this year reached her first major singles final in the French Open, on Wednesday said she did her best to block out the rain delay that stretched the match out over two days and instead focus on the match against a fellow 18-year-old American. Gauff said the match had more significance following Serena Williams’ retirement and the possibility that her sister, Venus, will retire as well.

"If Serena and Venus saw this today, two 18-year-olds, both African-Americans, playing at the WTA 500 level, I think they would be proud," Gauff said.

"Both of us are products of their legacy. I'm grateful that I had those examples to follow. I hope that maybe I can be an example myself."

Gauff will face 2019 US Open winner Bianca Andreescu of Canada in Round 2. It will be



their first meeting. Montgomery was unable to add another upset to her list that included beating No. 25 Shuai Zhang and No. 42 Bernarda Pera in the qualifying rounds.

Croat qualifier Donna Vekic beat former No. 1 Karolina Pliskova of the Czech Republic 6-3 6-2 to advance to the quarterfinals. It marked a second straight high-profile upset for Vekic, who upended fifth seed Maria Sakkari of Greece in the first round.

### BERRETTINI UPSET BY CARBALLES BAENA

**Florence:** Second-seeded Matteo Berrettini crashed out of the Firenze Open in the second

round, while there were also upsets in the two all-American matches.

Berrettini seemed on the verge of victory on Wednesday when the Italian went up 5-2 in the third set but Roberto Carballes Baena reeled off five games in a row to win 5-7, 7-6 (5), 7-5 and silence the passionate crowd.

"I'm very happy, it's a very good win for me, the best of my career," said the Spanish player, who is ranked 80th.

Carballes Baena will face Mikael Ymer in the quarterfinals of the indoor, hardcourt tournament after the Swedish qualifier eliminated fifth-seeded Aslan Karatsev 6-1 6-7 (6) 6-1.

## FIFA Women’s U-17 WC: India look to salvage pride against Morocco

PTI ■ BHUBANESWAR

Crushing 0-8 defeat in the opening match denting their confidence severely, India would look to pick up the pieces and salvage some pride when they play Morocco in their second group match of the FIFA Women’s U-17 World Cup here on Friday.

The hapless Indians suffered a 0-8 thrashing at the hands of rampaging USA in their opening match on Tuesday, and Thomas Dennerby’s side will look to forget the disappointing result and focus on getting at least a point against Morocco in the Group A battle between the debutants.

It won't be an easy match for India though, as Morocco had made it to the age-group showpiece after a strong show in the African qualifying tournament where they had beaten Ghana in penalty shootout. India, on the other hand, were automatic qualifiers as tournament hosts.

The Indians were simply overwhelmed by a technically and phys-

ically far superior American side, but they would hope to "play their game" against Morocco.

"We have a good chance against Morocco tomorrow. If we can show the right attitude, we can score and get some points," Dennerby said on Thursday.

"We need to fight it out, we have no other option left."

The match against Morocco will be the best chance for India to get points as they will be up against traditional powerhouse and title contenders Brazil in their last group match on October 17.

Before the tournament Dennerby had said that India would be a difficult team to score against, but the defence, of which captain Astam Oraon was a part, had an off day against the Americans letting in goals after goals.

The taller and stronger Americans scored multiple goals from corner kicks and India would look to avoid repeating the same mistake against Morocco, who will not have that much physical advantage.



"We have a team that can definitely handle the speed but football is not all about running or the number of sprints the girls take. It is also about taking the right decisions at

the right moment," Dennerby said. "That was the biggest problem we faced against the USA in our early game – the girls need to put their hundred per cent on the

pitch."

The Atlas Lionesses, who lost 0-1 to Brazil, are an unknown side for India, more so because teams do not play many international matches at

this age group beyond continental or global tournaments.

Against Brazil on Tuesday, Morocco were left to defend for most part of the match though they had four shots at the opposition goal. Brazil could have won by a much bigger margin had their forwards not missed easy chances. They had 17 shots at Morocco goal.

India need to their own game on Friday, and Dennerby would be hoping that his players will do that against a less fancied Morocco.

"Morocco are a strong team, who defends well. They are technically good with their passing game, the accuracy is also impressive," said the Swede.

"We have watched them play against Brazil and scoring against them will be a challenge. But for us, it is either a win or out of tournament. It's a chance to handle the game in a better way and show India certainly can play a better brand of football," Dennerby said.

"The girls need to play free football and they should avail every

chance that comes their way. If they are afraid to hold on to the ball, then they may lose the game immediately."

### TEAMS (FROM)

**India:** Monalisha Devi Moirangthem, Melody Chanu Keisham, Anjali Munda, Astam Oraon, Naketa, Purnima Kumari, Varshika, Shilky Devi Hemam, Babina Devi Lisham, Nitu Linda, Shailja, Shubhangi Singh, Anita Kumari, Lynda Kom Serto, Neha, Rejiya Devi Laishram, Shelia Devi Loktongbam, Kajol Hubert Dsouza, Lavanya Upadhyay, Sudha Ankita Turkey. **Morocco:** Derbali Louisa, Said Hajar, Boussatta Dania, Benassou Nadia, Karami Hiba, Aich Lina, Laksiri Kenza, El Assaoui Wissal, Masnaoui Samya, Cherif Djennah, El Madani Doha, Titah Wissal, Mrabti Dania, Tayebi Kamila, Elmestour Houda, Maamry Ameerah, Zouhri Yasmine, Bassar Ambre, El Hamzaoui Mina, El Ghazouani Fatima, El Hannachi Iman.



# India to face SL in Asia Cup final

PTI ■ SYLHET

A dominant India crushed minnows Thailand by 74 runs to storm into the final and remain on course for a record-extending, seventh women's Asia Cup title here on Thursday.

The win over Thailand took India to their eighth straight Asia Cup final — four each in ODI and T20 formats. Before 2012, the tournament was a 50-over-a-side affair.

The semifinal contest against Thailand was always expected to be a cakewalk for India and it turned out to be so.

India posted 148 for six after being sent in to bat and then restricted Thailand to 74 for 9 in the lop-sided contest.

India play Sri Lanka in the final on Saturday. Sri Lanka eked out a thrilling one run win over Pakistan in the second semifinal.

Chasing the target against India, Thailand were never in the hunt as they lost wickets at regular intervals.

The Thai women, however, fared much better than their previous outing against India in the league stage, where they were crushed by nine wickets.

In that match, the Indians bundled out Thailand for just 37 runs in 15.1 overs and then chased down the target with consummate ease.

On Thursday, the Thai women gave a better account of themselves with the bat despite being reduced to 21 for 4 in the eighth over.

Deepti Sharma (3/7) did most of the damage with her



off-spin, picking up the first three Thai wickets -- Nannapat Koncharoenkai, Natthakan Chantham and Sornnarin Tippoch -- in consecutive overs.

Medium pacer Renuka Singh (1/6) then cleaned Chanida Sutthiruang as Thailand's chase fell apart.

Captain Naruamol Chaiwai (21) and Nattaya Boochatham (21) showed some resistance with the bat with a 42-run stand

for the fifth wicket but the asking rate was too tall. In fact, they were the only two Thai batters to register double digit scores.

Once the duo departed, the Indian bowlers just ran through Thailand lower-order batting line-up.

Rajeshwari Gayakwad (2/10), Shafali Verma (1/10) and Sneha Rana (1/16) were the other wicket takers for India.

Earlier, invited to bat,

Shafali Verma was at her destructive best, top-scoring for India with a 28-ball 42 with the help of five boundaries and one hit over the fence.

Together with vice-captain Smriti Mandhana, Verma shared 38 runs in 4.3 overs before the former hit a low full toss from Phannita Maya straight to Onnichia Kamchomphu at mid on.

Verma continued her

## You need runs to get confidence: Harman

PTI ■ SYLHET

India skipper Harmanpreet Kaur on Thursday said the 36 runs she scored against Thailand in the women's Asia Cup semifinal was a much-needed confidence booster for her after returning to the side following a brief injury lay-off.

Harmanpreet, who is enjoying a purple patch, missed India's last two league games due to a niggle, but returned to lead the side on Thursday and scored a fine 30-

ball 36 with the help of four boundaries to help India post a challenging 148 for 6.

"That partnership (between her and Jemimah Rodrigues) helped us to get a score on the board. When you're not playing a lot, you need runs to get confidence," the India captain said after a comfortable 74-run win over Thailand in the semifinal.

"I'm more confident about my game now, but will keep working. I'm always happy to contribute to the team."

attacking batting but was the next batter to depart, miscuing off-spinner Sornnarin Tippoch's flighted delivery to Thailand skipper Naruamol Chaiwai at short midwicket.

Most of the dismissals were gifts to Thai bowlers as the Indian batters were guilty of giving away their wickets after getting starts.

Jemimah Rodrigues (27) was the next to loft one straight to Rosenan Kanoh at long-on off Thipatcha Putthawong.

Tippoch then had two wickets in successive overs to reduce India to 132 for 5 in the 18th over.

First, she caught wicket-keeper Richa Ghosh plumb in front of the wicket and an over later, got the big wicket of skip-

per Harmanpreet Kaur as the batter tried to clear the cover boundary.

Harmanpreet, who returned to lead the side after missing out two matches due to a niggle, looked in good nick and laced her 30-ball 36 with four hits to the fence.

Towards the end, Pooja Vastrakar hit a quick 13-ball 17 with the help of a six to take India close to the 150-run mark. Sornnarin Tippoch was the best bowler for Thailand with figures of 3/24.

India had made three changes from their last match playing eleven with Harmanpreet, Renuka Thakur and Radha Yadav coming in for S Meghana, Meghna Singh and Kiran Navgire.



## Women's IPL set to take place in March

With 5 teams, max 5 overseas players in XI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The much-awaited inaugural edition of Women's IPL will have five teams and is set to take place in March 2023 before the start of men's IPL.

As per a BCCI note, the tournament will feature 20 league games with teams to play each other twice. The table toppers will get a direct entry into the final, while the second and third place teams will battle out in the Eliminator.

Each team can have no more than five overseas cricketers in the playing eleven.

"To have a well balance of domestic & international players and to have competitive teams, it has been tentatively decided to have five teams for WIPL. Each team can comprise maximum of eighteen players where no team can have more than six overseas players.

"Further, no more than five overseas players — four from Full Members of the ICC and one from the Associate Members of the ICC — can be part of the playing XI of each team," read the BCCI note.

The Women's Big Bash League in Australia and The Hundred in UK don't allow more than three overseas players and have a squad size of 15.

The board also thinks with limited number of teams, the home-and-away format will not be feasible. The event is expected to take place soon after the Women's T20 World Cup in South Africa from February 9-26.

"Like IPL it will be a challenge to play in home-away format in WIPL, as with five to six teams it is not possible to have a match every day. It is suggested that tournament can be played in caravan style where after finishing ten matches at one venue next ten matches to be played at next venue.

"Therefore, ten matches each to be played across two venues in 2023 WIPL season, ten each in the next two venues in 2024 season and for 2025 season ten matches in remaining one venue and remaining ten in one of the venues from 2023 season."

As far as the sale of teams are concerned, it may take place zone wise with the board shortlisting two cities for each zone: Dharamsala/Jammu (North zone), Pune/Rajkot (West), Indore/Nagpur/Raipur (Central), Ranchi/Cuttack (East), Kochi/Vizag (South) and Guwahati (North-East).

"Alternatively, teams in WIPL can be sold and matches may take place at venue that currently host IPL matches."

Those big cities include Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai.

After the initial announcement on Women's IPL, it was widely reported that IPL owners will get first right of refusal over buying teams.

The final call on all matters concerning Women's IPL will be taken by the IPL governing council and BCCI office-bearers.

## India lose 2nd warm-up game against WA XI by 36 runs

PTI ■ PERTH

India's star-studded batting line-up belied expectations as the team lost to Western Australia by 36 runs in its second T20 World Cup warm-up match here on Thursday.

Inaugural edition champions India laboured to 132 for eight in 20 overs chasing 169.

India had won the opening warm-up match by 13 runs.

D'Arcy Short smashed 52 off 38 balls and Nick Hobson hammered 64 off 41 balls to take Western Australia to 168 for eight in the stipulated 20 overs. R Ashwin was the pick of India's bowlers, taking three

wickets in an over.

Pacer Arshdeep Singh was impressive again in his three overs while under-fire Harshal Patel returned with tidy figures of 27 for two in four overs.

India struggled in the run chase on a pacy WACA surface. India captain Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Suryakumar Yadav did not come out to bat. Both Rohit and Kohli fielded during West Australia's innings.

Rishabh Pant (9) opened the batting alongside stand-in captain K L Rahul whose 74 off 45 balls went in vain.

None of the other Indian batters could make an impact



**India struggled in the run chase on a pacy WACA surface. India captain Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli and Suryakumar Yadav did not come out to bat**

in the innings. Batting at three, Deepak Hooda perished after making 6 off 9 balls. Hardik Pandya began with a couple of sixes before being dismissed for 17 off 9 balls. The designated finisher in the Indian team,

Dinesh Karthik struggled to a 14-ball 10.

India are camped in Perth ahead of the T20 World Cup to get used to the pace and bounce. The squad now moves to Brisbane for the warm-up games against Australia and New Zealand on October 17 and 19 respectively.

They open their campaign against arch-rivals Pakistan on October 23 in Melbourne.

Brief scores: Western Australia 168/8 in 20 overs (D'arcy Short 52, Nick Hobson 64; R Ashwin 3/32, Harshal Patel 2/27). India 132/8 in 20 overs ( K L Rahul 74; Lance Morris 2/23).



## Pakistan squeeze past Bangladesh in T20I series

AP ■ CHRISTCHURCH

Pakistan tuned up for the tri-series final against hosts New Zealand with a nerve-racking seven-wicket win over Bangladesh on Thursday after Mohammad Nawaz secured victory with just a ball to spare.

Liton Das, who brushed off an early leg strain to put in a gutsy performance, and captain Shakib Al Hasan both chalked up half-centuries for Bangladesh to set Pakistan 174 to win in Christchurch.

In reply, Pakistan had to work for the win as allrounder Nawaz put in a match-changing innings of 45 off 20 balls.

With his side needing eight runs from the final over, Nawaz delivered by grabbing three doubles, then sealed the victory with a four squeezed between point and short third-man.

Pakistan face hosts New Zealand in Friday's final while Bangladesh finish on four straight defeats in the tri-series, a warm-up event ahead of the Twenty20 World Cup in Australia.

Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan was the man of the match, but he immediately paid tribute to Nawaz.

"I'd like to credit Mohammad Nawaz as he made it easy in the end," said Rizwan, top-scorer with 69 runs off 56 balls.

"Nawaz's innings changed the momentum.

"Obviously, the win gives us confidence, but New Zealand is playing at home."

Bangladesh opener Das had earlier produced a gutsy display despite needing treatment for an early thigh strain.

While his opening partner Najmul Hossain Shanto and Soumya Sarkar were both caught early on, Das dug in with a superb 69 off 42 balls, firing six fours and two sixes around Hagley Oval.

After Das was finally caught by Mohammad Wasim, Shakib Al Hasan kept the scoreboard ticking over with 68 runs off 42 balls.

In reply, Pakistan openers Rizwan and Babar Azam put on a partnership of 101.

After reaching 55 runs off 40 balls, Azam was finally caught in the 12th over. Then Haider Ali immediately went for a duck, clean bowled by Hasan Mahmud.

At 101-2, Pakistan were under pressure.

But Nawaz wrestled the match away from Bangladesh with a stunning four, then a six and another four off three consecutive balls in the 15th over.

Bangladesh took the game to the wire when Rizwan was finally caught at deep cover.

However, Nawaz kept his cool to see Pakistan home.

"It's been difficult, but we played our best game today," said disappointed Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan.

## Shaheen Afridi is 90% ready for T20 World Cup: Raja

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistan pace spearhead Shaheen Shah Afridi is 90 per cent ready for the upcoming T20 World Cup but his availability will depend on how he plays in the two warm-up games in Australia, PCB chairman Ramiz Raja said.

The 22-year-old Afridi is set to join the national team in Australia on Saturday after completing his rehabilitation programme for a knee injury under the supervision of the PCB Medical Advisory Committee.

He will be available for selection for the warm-up games against England and Afghanistan on October 17 and 19 respectively.

"I have spoken to him we are in

touch with his doctors and the feedback we have got is he is 90 percent ready," Raja said.

"But knee injuries can be delicate and technical and we have to see if he feels any soreness after playing the warm-up games. On his part he says he is ready and I think we are also ready."

Pakistan will begin their campaign against India on Oct 23 at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

"I will say this that the mechanics of the World Cup are such that even as an independent observer I can say with confidence that our team can become the champions. We have a very good outfit."

The former Test captain said his ambition as board Chairman remained to make Pakistan the num-



ber one team in all three formats.

There have been calls for separating the opening pair of Mohammad Rizwan and Babar Azam but Raja made it clear there was no need to make any such move.

"I am surprised we talk about separating them when the talking point for any team is having a solid opening pair. The three make points for a team to be successful is to have a good opening pair and we also have good bowlers.

"Yes the team does disappoint us sometimes but they have a 75 percent success ration which is why fans and our commercial partners are engaging with them. They are issues with the middle order but I don't see any reason to change something which has worked for us until now."

## Child prodigy Niemann—a cheat or a genius?

World chess awaits FIDE reports on cheating scandal

BY PRAVIN THIPSAY

The chess world has been rocked by a massive cheating scandal flagged by none other than World champion Magnus Carlsen. The scandal has once again underlined the need for putting in place a full-proof mechanism to nab cheaters and manipulators who are giving bad names to a game widely respected for its sportsmanship.

It all started with the World Champion losing to a lesser known 19-year-old Grandmaster Hans Niemann in an over the board Chess tournament and then withdrawing from the event. Carlsen's shock withdrawal caused a flutter.

Everyone has his own theory about Carlsen's decision to pull out of the event. A fortnight later, when facing the same opponent, (albeit in an online game this time), Carlsen resigned the game after making just one move. This came as a

great shock to all, particularly since the Champion continued to play the tournament and even went on to win it. Tongues started wagging and people started tweeting and writing articles about 'Cheating in Chess'. It was widely believed that Carlsen resigned to register his protest against cheating done by Niemann through the use of technological devices.

The World Chess Federation (FIDE) has set up a panel to probe the allegations of cheating. The Panel is yet to submit its findings, but chess.com., a popular and respected website, has compiled a 72-page report claiming that Niemann has cheated in over 100 games during the last two years. Niemann has reportedly confessed to having cheated as a child during the games.

But it is far from clear if the prodigy also took help of technology to hoodwink Carlsen. Going by the game they played, there could be reasons to give him a clean chit.

Sports journalists all over the world questioned Carlsen's behaviour, while Chess players took it as an opportunity to

draw public attention and to gain what one could call 'undue personal mileage' by posting silly comments such as "Cheating in Chess must stop".

Finally, none other than Garry Kasparov, had to step in. Kasparov questioned the behaviour of the World Champion and said, "I understand his frustration and his anger after losing the game and finding other reasons than his own poor play in his game to blame for his loss."

Kasparov went on to say that leaving the tournament was unacceptable. "Even if Carlsen had proof, and as to the specific game Magnus lost there was no evidence of any wrongdoing, I think that was really bad for chess, it was bad for St. Louis. It's one of the most important tournaments, if not the most important tournament in the world," Kasparov said.

For the benefit of the chess lovers and followers, let me explain the matter a bit, as chess is quite a unique sport in many ways. Taking instructions/suggestions/guidance while the game is in progress is strictly forbidden in chess. Such an act has been considered as cheating

and attracts a penalty, starting from a minimum of loss of the game to whatever harsher punishment the National Federations / FIDE deem fit. Preventing cheating was reasonably easy in the last century. A player had to refrain from interacting with anyone while the game was 'in progress' and leaving the playing arena was also not permissible while the game was 'in progress'. But things changed considerably about 15 years ago, when the chess playing engines (computers) started playing better than the strongest human beings. The ready availability of chess playing engines created a new cheating possibility -- taking help of an engine 'while the game is in progress'.

Since it did not need communication with any other human, cheating became easy and therefore, a serious menace. FIDE, being more organised than most of the International sports federations, has always taken necessary steps to keep Chess a 'Clean Sport'. In fact, specific rules to prevent cheating with 'Computer help', were implemented over 15 years ago

and have been made stricter from time to time. For example, no player is allowed to carry any electronic device to the tournament. If a player, spectator or an arbiter suspect that some player is carrying such a device, a formal complaint may be lodged by any person with any of the Arbiters. The Chief Arbiter is to make a note of the complaint and is expected to find out the truth immediately on the end of the game. The player, who has been allegedly carrying any electronic device, may be frisked and questioned by the Chief Arbiter for investigation.

In accordance with the findings of the search, the Organising Committee is expected to take a decision in the matter. However, after the game has actually ended and the player has left the tournament hall, the player is not liable to be questioned in any way, since the player has a right to carry electronic devices when the game is not in progress.

Now let us come to the behaviour of the World Champion Magnus Carlsen. Apparently, Carlsen got suspi-

cious of Niemann cheating in some way in the game played on September 4, 2022 in the Sinquefeld Cup tournament. However, he did not make any formal / informal complaint. Even after the game ended, the World Champion didn't make any representation.

Later in the day, he chose to withdraw from the tournament, the reason for which he never made public. If someone had cheated, the opportunity to 'catch the cheat red-handed' had been lost and it wasn't certainly an appropriate behaviour by the Champion. After one sided mud-slinging by some 'third party' players (as I call them), I decided to check the game with an intention of forming my own opinion about 'cheating with engine help during the said game'. However, I didn't find any reason to believe that Niemann took the help of a chess engine to defeat Carlsen. FIDE, of course, will have the last word of the topic. But the controversy has necessitated the concern for a full-proof mechanism to check cheating in this game of chequered squares.