

OPINION 6

DON'T MESS WITH
THE RUSSIANS

WORLD 9

N KOREA FLIES WARPLANES NEAR
S KOREA AFTER MISSILE LAUNCHES

MONEY 10

WORLD BANK DOWNGRADES INDIA'S
GROWTH FORECAST TO 6.5% FOR FY 23

RANCHI, FRIDAY OCTOBER 7, 2022: PAGES 12 ₹3



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INDIA TO FACE PAKISTAN IN ASIA CUP T20

11 SPORT

36 dead, mostly kids, in Thai day-care carnage

Ex-cop on shooting spree rushes home, shoots wife, child, then kills himself

AP ■ BANGKOK

A former police officer facing a drug charge burst into a day care centre on Thursday in Thailand, killing dozens of preschoolers and teachers and then shooting more people as he fled. At least 36 people, including at least 24 children, were slain in the deadliest rampage in the nation's history.

The assailant, who was fired earlier this year, took his own life after killing his wife and child at home.

Photos taken by first responders showed the school's floor littered with the tiny bodies of children still on their blankets, where they had been taking an afternoon nap. The images showed slashes to their faces and gunshot to their heads and pools of blood.

A teacher told ThaiPBS public broadcaster that the assailant got out of a car and immediately shot a man eating lunch outside, then fired more shots. When the attacker paused to reload, the teacher had an opportunity to run inside.

"I ran to the back, the children were asleep," said the young woman, who did not



In this image taken from video, a distraught woman is comforted outside the site of an attack at a daycare centre in the town of Nongbua Lamphu, north eastern Thailand on Thursday

give her name, choking back her words. "The children were two or three years old."

The attack took place in the rural town of Nongbua Lamphu in northeastern Thailand, in one of the country's poorest regions.

Another witness said staff at the day care had locked the door, but the suspect shot his way in. "The teacher who died, she had a child in her arms," the witness, whose name wasn't given, told Thailand's Kom Chad Luek television. "I didn't think he would kill children, but he shot at the door and shot right through it."

At least 10 people were wounded, including six critically, police spokesman Archayon Kraithong said.

A video taken by a first responder arriving at the scene showed rescuers rushing into the single-story building past a shattered glass front door, with drops of blood visible on the ground in the entryway.

In footage posted online after the attack, frantic family members could be heard weeping outside the building. One image showed the floor smeared with blood where sleeping mats were scattered around the room. Pictures of the alphabet and other colorful

decorations adorned the walls.

Police identified the suspect as 34-year-old former police officer Panya Kamrap. Police Major General Paisal Luesomboon told PPTV in an interview that he was fired from the force earlier this year because of the drug charge.

In a Facebook posting, Thai police chief Gen. Dumrongsak Kittiprasas said the man, who had been a sergeant, was due in court on Friday for a hearing in the case involving methamphetamine, and speculated that he may have chosen the day care because it was close to his home.

Infant among 4 abducted Sikhs found dead in US

Punjab CM urges MEA to ask US to conduct foolproof probe into murder of Hoshiarpur family

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

All four Sikh family members, including an eight-month-old baby girl, who were kidnapped in the US State of California earlier this week, have been found dead in an orchard, US authorities said on Wednesday.

The family, originally from Harsi Pind in Hoshiarpur, Punjab, was kidnapped from their newly-opened trucking business in Merced County, California, on Monday.

Merced County (California) Sheriff Vern Warnke said the bodies of 36-year-old Jasdeep Singh, 27-year-old Jasleen Kaur, their eight-month-old child Aroohi Dheri and the baby's uncle, 39-year-old Amandeep Singh were found on Wednesday evening in an orchard near Indiana Road & Hutchinson Road.

The murder of four members of a Punjabi-Sikh family has sent shockwaves in Punjab compelling Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann to seek the Union External Affairs



KIDNAPPED

Images are displayed of 8-month-old Aroohi Dheri with her mother Jasleen Kaur, her father Jasdeep Singh, and her uncle Amandeep Singh, at a news conference in Merced, California, on Wednesday. (Right) Accused Jesus Salgado



Minister's intervention. He has urged the Union Minister Dr S Jaishankar to impress upon the US Government to conduct through probe into the "gruesome" murder.

A pall of gloom descended on the native village of 36-year-old Jasdeep Singh, and his 39-year-old brother Amandeep Singh — Harsi Pind in Tanda block of Hoshiarpur district in Punjab — as soon the news broke. After receiving the news of their abduction on Monday,

Jasdeep's parents had returned to the US on Tuesday night. Settled in the US, Jasdeep's parents were on India visit for a spiritual trip to Uttarakhand when they received the news.

At 27-year-old Jasleen Kaur's village Jandir in Jalandhar, the family is shocked with relatives and villagers thronging their house, expressing shock at the "unbelievable" incident.

Shaken, Jasleen's parents were not in a mental state to speak. After tying the nuptial

knot with Jasdeep in January 2019, Jasleen went to the US in October 2020; and was planning to visit her parents in January next year.

CAPSULE

FRENCH WRITER ANNIE BAGS NOBEL PRIZE

Stockholm: French author Annie Ernaux, who has mined her own biography to explore life in France since the 1940s, was awarded this year's Nobel Prize in literature on Thursday for work that illuminates murky corners of memory, family and society. Work of Ernaux, 82, was recognised for "the courage and clinical acuity" of her writing.

UN BODY REJECTS DEBATE ON ABUSES OF UYGHURS

Geneva: In a close diplomatic victory for China, the UN's top human rights body on Thursday voted down a proposal from Britain, Turkey, the US and other mostly Western countries to hold a debate on rights abuses against Muslim Uyghurs and other ethnic minorities in China's western Xinjiang region.

'1.62 CR VISITED J&K THIS YR, HIGHEST IN 75 YRS'

Srinagar: A record 1.62 crore tourists visited Jammu & Kashmir so far this year, which is the highest since Independence, an official said here on Thursday.

Gambia cough syrup deaths: DCGI probes; Haryana sends syrup samples to WB lab

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's drug regulator, the Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI), has begun a probe into charges that the use of a domestic cough syrup could potentially be linked to death of children in Gambia.

The World Health Organization (WHO) on Wednesday warned that four "contaminated" and "substandard" cough syrups allegedly produced by Maiden Pharmaceuticals Limited based in Haryana's Sonapat could be the reason for the deaths in the West African nation.

The Haryana Government is sending the samples of the syrups to the Central Drug Lab in Kolkata for testing and affirming any possible "contamination". Its results will guide further course of action.

Details on Page 4

Spate of rapes in UP: Schoolgirl kills self as cops sit on complaint

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh has been rocked by a series of rapes during the last 24 hours. In one case, the victim was strangled to death after rape, and in another a girl committed suicide after the police did not act against the culprits for a fortnight. In the third case, a schoolgirl was gangraped, while another schoolgirl escaped rape bid.

In the first case, a 19-year-old BSC student was allegedly raped inside her house and then murdered. The rapists strangled her and hanged her body before fleeing the Sheesham area of Mainpuri. A heavy police force was deployed in the village.

According to information, the girl was alone in the house at the time of the incident. Her father had gone to the city and her mother to Agra for work, while her 13-year-old sister had gone to attend coaching classes.

Taking advantage of the situation, Pushpendra Lodhi, of the same village, entered the house and raped her. As per information, when the girl threatened to complain, Pushpendra strangled her and then hanged her body. He then closed the door of the house from outside and fled.

In yet another case reported two days ago from Kannauj, a youth identified as Arif posed as Amit and befriended a Hindu girl by promising her a job and then raped her.

Uttarkashi avalanche: 12 more bodies recovered

PNS ■ DEHRADUN

The authorities recovered twelve more bodies of mountaineers on Thursday after a team from the Nehru Institute of Mountaineering (NIM) was trapped in an avalanche at Draupadi Ka Danda in Uttarkashi on Tuesday.

A total of 61 people were trapped in the avalanche out of which, 32 have been rescued safely, 16 are dead and 13 are still missing.

A team of experts from Gulmarg in Jammu & Kashmir, High Altitude Warfare School (HAWS) joined the rescue operation with the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), State Disaster Response Force (SDRF), Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) and NIM.

The officials said more teams have also been sent to the advanced base camp from ITBP Matli in Uttarkashi.

PFI ban: Justice Dinesh appointed presiding officer of UAPA Tribunal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Centre has appointed Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma of the Delhi High Court as the presiding officer of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Tribunal in the matter of

recently-banned Popular Front of India (PFI) and its affiliates.

Once an organisation is banned under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, a tribunal is set up by the Government to adjudicate whether or not there is suf-

ficient cause or ground for declaring it an unlawful association.

According to an office memorandum issued by the Department of Justice, Justice Sharma's time as head of the tribunal will count as "actual service".



Sonia joins Rahul, adds sparkle to Bharat Jodo Yatra

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/BENGALURU

Drums, trumpets, and slogans greeted Congress president Sonia Gandhi as she briefly joined her son Rahul Gandhi and a teeming multitude of party workers and aam admi during the Bharat Jodo padyatra in Mandya in south Karnataka on Thursday.

This is the first time that Sonia joined a public event after recovering from Covid-19 earlier this year. The Congress leader has not been keeping well and she recently visited the USA for treatment.

She joined the yatra twice for brief periods and in between took a car ride. Rahul remained by her side throughout. At one point, he was seen persuading her to end her walk.

The Bharat Jodo Yatra resumed from Pandavapura in Mandya on Thursday after a two-day break. Sonia joined the padyatra after it left Bellare village on Thursday morning.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi with his mother and party interim president Sonia Gandhi during the party's 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' in Mandya district on Thursday

Due to the massive response from public and party workers, Sonia also tweaked her programme schedule to stay with the yatriis for two hours as against the 30 minutes planned earlier. The party tweeted a photo of Rahul tying his mother's shoelaces during the walk, captioning it "Ma (mother)".

The picture went viral on social media during the day. Congress also posted a picture of the two on Twitter, and said, "Those shielded by love fear nothing! On the road, marching ahead".

Acting on Rahul's jumbo advice: Karnataka CM

Bengaluru: Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Thursday said he will respond to Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's letter, seeking his intervention for providing timely treatment to a "severely injured" elephant calf at the Nagarhole Tiger Reserve, on humanitarian grounds.

Chief Guest
Dr K Radhakrishnan
Former Chairman, ISRO

Guest of Honour
Dr S Chandrasekhar
Chairperson, TDB & Secretary,
DST Ministry of Science & Technology,
Government of India

Dr T R Paarivendhar
Founder Chancellor, SRM Group of Institutions
Member of Parliament, Lok Sabha

Dr P Sathyanarayanan
Pro Chancellor,
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Tearful adieu to Maa Durga, police remain on toes



PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR:

Amidst tight security arrangements, the Durga Puja, one of the greatest festivals of the city, ended with immersion of idols of Goddess Durga in the rivers all over. Thousands of devotees, including the men, women and children joined hands to say 'Asche bochor abar hobe' (See you next year).

Festivity gripped the devotees as married women smeared the goddess and her children with red vermilion and offered sweets and prayed for the well-being of their families and long lives of their husbands.

DC Vijaya Jadhav Rao said that strict security arrangements were made at the river banks of Kharkai and Subamarekha. No untoward incident has been reported so far.

The DC and Senior Superintendent of Police Prabhat Ku-

mar congratulated all the senior administrative, police officers, magistrates, police forces, personnel, Central Durga Puja Committee members, various committees, NDRF, Civil Defense, Para Military Force, TSUISL and all the residents of the district.

Steel city witnessed peaceful immersion of idols at 12 rivers ghats. In all 494 idols were immersed on a day which was incident free barring a few minor skirmishes.

There was adequate police deployment in the areas and things moved smoothly. Law and order machinery was pressed into service with full speed to ensure peaceful conduct of the festival, with additional police force being deployed at several strategic locations. About 371 magistrates and more than 400 police officials across 11 blocks and 33 po-



lice stations in the district were deployed.

In the morning, married women smeared the goddess and her children with red vermilion and offered sweets and prayed for the well-being of their families and long lives of their husbands. People were seen standing in long queues in front of the pandals for their turn for darshan of the Goddess.

Meanwhile an official of the Jamshedpur Kendriya Durga Puja Samiti cited helplessness not only over cleaning of river

ghats after immersion but also on puja committees adhering to their suggestion of using environment friendly articles on idols. □ It is now the job of the administration to monitor and ensure that puja committees follow the norms. We are not a regulatory body, □ said the official.

Restaurant vandalised during immersion

Unknown youths, who were part of the immersion procession of Hind Club, Rani Kudar Durga Puja, ransacked the 'Tan-

doori Hut' restaurant on Wednesday night and attacked its owner Tirlochan Singh (Goldie). During the Durga Puja immersion procession, some youths demanded water and forcibly entered the restaurant located at Outer Circle Road, South Park, Bistupur. In the name of drinking water they created a ruckus there. They also threw all the food served there and attacked its owner. Singh has suffered a loss of lakhs in the attack. Bistupur police are investigating the incident.

Vatican's ambassador visits Mahuadanr in Latehar

M F AHMAD ■ DALTONGANJ

Mahuadanr in Latehar district saw Pope Francis messenger and Vatican's ambassador to India and Nepal archbishop Dr Leopoldo Girelli making passionate appeals to the people to act as agents of peace and harmony on Wednesday said one of the Frs M K Jose who is the principal of the St Xavier's college and had a proactive role in holding the third Jharkhand Andaman Youth Convention at the St Joseph's school Mahuadanr for three days beginning October 2. The Vatican's ambassador was the chief guest of the concluding session of the youth convention on October 5 wherein the archbishop reminded the youth of their energy, potentiality and knowledge in promoting peace, harmony and religious amity in the society.

M K Jose said around one hundred youths of Andaman island were to take part in this convention here but for travel issues these youths from Andaman island could not come.



Bishop of Port Blair Dr Selvaraj represented Andaman and Nicobar islands in this convention, said Jose.

Pope messenger and Vatican's ambassador was a state guest and so he was well taken care of said sources. DIG of police Palamu R K Lakra and SP Latehar Anjani Anjan were there at Mahuadanr overseeing the security aspect of the Vatican's ambassador. The Congress MLA Ramchander Singh said his version was translated into English and then it was conveyed to the archbishop.

The chief organisers of the convention was the archbishop Ranchi Felix Toppo SJ and Bishop of Daltonganj Theodore Mascarenhas.

There were other Frs like Dilip Ekka, Linus Pingla,

George Tigga, Roshan Kerketta, Simon Murmu, Suresh Tirkey, Suman Minz, S Kindu, Vijay etc. Among the Sisters were Jolly, Prabha, Nimal, Priya FCC who with others worked too hard.

Sources said the visit of the Vatican ambassador was quite meaningful at such a time when religious hatred and anger is on the rise in the country. The visit of the Vatican ambassador has come as a soothing balm, said some Christians here in Palamu. These Christians said our Vatican's ambassador is a messenger of peace and he came here to launch peace and harmony among the populace where Pope Francis' messenger has praised the rich and famous heritage of India which is a cradle of various religions and cultures.

Lathi charge by police owing to alleged delay in idol immersion

PANKAJ KUMAR ■ DHANBAD :

Police on Wednesday night lathi charged members of puja committee and local residents for their alleged delaying tactics in immersion of idols by Bata more Jharia puja committee members.

Both sides have levelled allegations of hurling abuses first but police claims that when they tried to make people understand they started pelting stones on them thus we resorted to lathi charge to restore order.

Locals allege that we were preparing for the immersion but police unwarrantedly started abusing us and that ignited the entire incident.

It's worth mentioning that the priest who was hired by the committee for puja had sustained major injuries when was hit by a speeding coal laden truck on October 3. Locals allege that police hushed up the entire case and

released both the trucks without filing any FIR. The puja committee was protesting the police action by keeping idols on the road so delayed immersion.

However, after the incident more police from neighbouring police stations were called in and police got the immersion done under its protection.

The situation is under control now said, DSP Sundri Abhishek Kumar who had reached the spot after the incident.

When asked about people's demand action on truck drivers, the DSP said, "I have been informed that the truck was loaded with vegetables and there was no restriction on movement of essential goods loaded trucks. Even though an inquiry would be done after puja immersion is over and action would be taken accordingly."

IINRG is now National Institute of Secondary Agriculture

PNS ■ RANCHI

Established on September 20, 1924, Indian Lac Research Institute had been the nodal Institute at national level for providing research and development support to all aspects of lac such as production, processing, product development, technology dissemination, information repository and national and international cooperation. It has immensely contributed towards all round development of lac besides maintaining India's leadership in production, installed processing capacity and export. The Institute had been under administrative control of Indian Lac Association for Research (20.09.1924 to 31.7.1931), Indian Lac Cess Committee (1.8.1931 to 31.3.1966) and In-

dian Council of Agricultural Research since 1.4.1966.

The Institute hitherto had been providing R&D support only to lac, which is the only source of natural resin of animal origin. It was proposed to include plant resins and gums also under the purview of the institute with effect from XI Plan in view of production systems, economy and application areas, which were largely overlapping for lac and other natural resins and gums. This expansion enabled creation of a single national organization addressing the research and development needs of this class of natural materials, which were receiving greater attention due to increasing demand for natural products safer to human health

and environment. The mandate of this Institute was therefore, expanded to include all natural resins and gums, besides lac and the name of the institute was changed to Indian Institute of Natural Resins and Gums (IINRG) on September 20, 2007. Adequate R & D support to this sub-sector enabled India to emerge as the leader in some more resins and gums besides maintaining leadership in lac, guar gum and karaya gum.

To increase the income of farmers, value addition of the produce and utilizing the crop residues is attaining high priority. Secondary Agriculture is high value addition to primary agriculture. It helps in using all parts of an agricultural produce (e.g. crop residues, animal hair,

bones, viscera, etc), processing to enhance shelf-life, increasing total factor productivity, and generating additional jobs and income for farmers. Certain alternative agriculture activities like Lac culture, beekeeping, mushroom cultivation, agri-tourism, etc, also fall under the ambit of secondary agriculture. By-products from agricultural crops, if processed appropriately for deriving industrial products could pave a way in getting better economic returns from agriculture. The advancement in technologies, equipment, and processes would enable enhanced secondary agriculture practices giving range of materials of better quality, yield, nutrition, and convenience. Hence, the potential of secondary agriculture and bioprocessing could

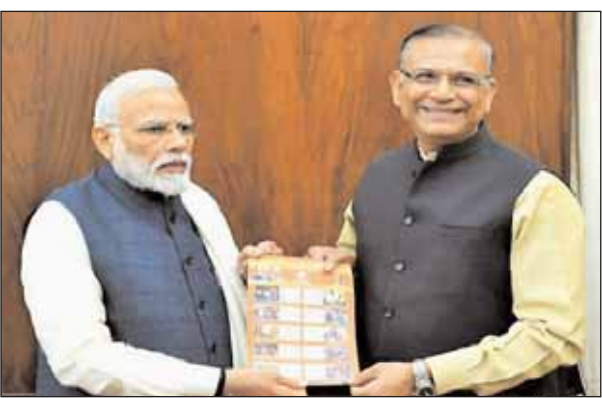
give a strong boost to the economy, societal status and environmental protection.

Keeping in view the importance of secondary agriculture in rural industrialization in order to improve farmer's income, it was proposed to further widen the mandate of the IINRG. Therefore, the Governing Body of ICAR Society in its 256th meeting approved the proposal and the new name of the Institute as National Institute of Secondary Agriculture. Consequent to this decision of the Council, Indian Institute of Natural Resins and Gums has been rechristened as National Institute of Secondary Agriculture w.e.f. September, 20, 2022, informed Dr KK Sharma, Director, ICAR-National Institute of Secondary Agriculture, Namkum, Ranchi.

MP Jayant sinha appointed Chairman of Standing Committee on Finance

AVINASH ANJAN ■ HAZARIBAG

Hazaribag Lok Sabha's popular MP cum Chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance Jayant Sinha has been made the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance for the continuously fourth time. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla congratulated him on the occasion. For this, MP Jayant Sinha assured the Prime Minister and the Speaker of the Lok Sabha that I will stand on the faith that you have continuously placed in me. It is a matter of pride for all the citizens of Hazaribag Lok Sabha to get



Jayant Sinha as the Chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance for continuously fourth time. In the past also, the Committee on Finance under the leader-

ship of Jayant Sinha has successfully discharged its duty, due to which this important responsibility was reassigned to him. In committee, former Prime Minis-

ter of India, Manmohan Singh, senior MPs of the country, including Ravi Shankar Prasad, former Law Minister of the Government of India, have been kept, who will give their valuable support to Jayant Sinha in the work of the Standing Committee on Finance. This committee considers and recommends matters relating to finance for various research, academic and developmental activities of the Institute. Under the able leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, this committee has been continuously cooperating in the

progress of the country.

Dr. Surendra Sinha, Tunu Gope, Narayan Chandra Bhowmik, Vipin Kumar Sinha, Suman Kumar Pappu, Shiv Shankar Prasad Gupta, Ajay Mehta, Surendra Mehta, Shailendra Sinha, Ambika Singh, Sanjeev Katiyar, Rajendra Gupta, Sitaram Sahu, Rajesh Sahai, Uday Kumar Sinha, Himanshu Kumar, Ashish Singh, Sunny Singh, Ved Prakash, Satyajit, Praful Kumar, Suresh Kumar expressed their happiness with their best wishes. This information was given by Anil Sinha the media in-charge of MP Jayant Sinha.

REGION

BSL's Blast Furnace completes 50 years

PNS ■ BOKARO

Golden Jubilee Celebrations were organized in the Blast Furnace Department on completion of 50 years of establishment of BSL Blast Furnace. Director-in-charge Amarendu Prakash was the chief guest of the function. During this, CEO (BPSCL) KK Thakur, Executive Director (Operations) BK Tiwari, Executive Director (P&A) Sanjay Kumar, Executive Director (Finance & Accounts) S Rangani, Executive Director (Materials Management) A Srivastava, Executive Director (Projects) CR Mohapatra, Executive Director (SRU) PK Rath, Chief General Manager (Blast Furnace) MP Singh, Chief General Managers of various departments, other senior officers and personnel of Blast Furnaces were present. At the beginning of the program, Chief General Manager (Blast Furnace) MP Singh welcomed everyone. Thereafter a short film on the glorious journey of 50 years of Blast Furnace was screened. DIC, Amarendu Prakash congratulated the Blast Furnace Group on this special occasion by cutting the cake and also inaugurated the Golden Jubilee Memorial and Miniature of Blast Furnace constructed by the workers in the Blast Furnace Complex. DIC BSL gave a message to the officers and personnel of the blast furnace to touch new heights with the same enthusiasm and to make this historic moment memorable. Other senior officials also congratulated and wished Team Blast Furnace on its Golden Jubilee. It is noteworthy that 50 years ago on 3rd October 1972, BSL's blast furnace was commissioned. Since then this unit of BSL is continuously dedicated to the service of the country.



Bokaro boy wins gold 36th National Games in Gujarat



RAHUL SHARMA ■ BOKARO

Goldy Mishra, a resident of Chandankiyari block of Bokaro district, has won a gold medal in the ongoing 36th National Games 2022 in Gujarat. Goldy has won this gold in the "Indian Round" 50m individual archery competition. This victory has waved the flag of Jharkhand in the National Games. Goldie has enhanced the honour of the state as well as Bokaro district. On the information of Goldy's victory, Bokaro Deputy Commissioner Kuldeep Choudhary spoke to Goldy over phone and congratulated him and extended his best wishes for the future. DC further said that on the return of Goldy to the district, a

grand welcome would be given by the district administration as he has given a distinct identity to the state and Bokaro in archery competition at the national level. DC Bokaro has also congratulated the coach of Goldy, Mahendra Karmali. On the other hand, there is an atmosphere of excitement among sports lovers since the news of Goldy winning the gold. The players associated with the state government-run Archery Day Boarding Training Centre in Chandankiyari block and Goldy's fellow players are also happy about this remarkable achievement. It is noteworthy that Goldy Mishra receives training at the Archery Day Boarding Training centre run by the state government under Chandankiyari block of the district. All possible facilities are provided here by the district administration to nurture the talents. Presently in the 36th National Games 2022 conducted in Gujarat, two players Goldie Mishra and Anu Singh from the district are representing Jharkhand team in "Indian Round" archery competition.

Hospital Information Management System inaugurated in BGM

PNS ■ BOKARO

The Hospital Information Management System is a comprehensive information system for digitally connecting all processes of the Medical department on a Digital platform in accordance with the Digital Health Mission of the G.O.I. The system for M&HS BSL (e-sushrut) has been Procured from Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), a G.O.I enterprise having expertise in developing advanced softwares for various AIIMS through an MoU. The system has 31 different service modules covering OPD and In-patient services of the department connected with each other. The OPD services (12 service modules) went live for various OPD Clinics after formal inauguration by DIC BSL Amarendu Prakash. All the services of OPD Consultation, Lab and Radiology requisition with sampling, testing and reporting, pharmacy drug prescription and issue and associated services like ECG, USG, ECHO, Physiotherapy and Surgical Dressing for these 6 clinical disciplines shall also be connected together very shortly. The beneficiary patient shall get their OPD appointment online and will be able to know the time of visit to the doctors at their mobile set by scanning the QR code displayed at each OPD Room.



ESL's CSR team celebrates World Rabies Day

PNS ■ BOKARO

The CSR team of ESL Steel Limited organised an anti-rabies vaccination drive on the occasion of World Rabies Day. As part of the Vedanta group initiative driven by "The Animal Care Organization (TACO)", the drive was organized in Bokaro and nearby village areas in association with HOPE and Animal Trust, Ranchi. The initiative also got support from the District Animal Husbandry Department. Over 55 stray dogs were vaccinated on this occasion to counter rabies effects. Employees from different departments of ESL also supported the drive as part of employee volunteering to make the event successful. Such moves by the company not only increase awareness amongst the community members about the importance of such a cause, but also have a positive impact on both the employees and the citizens.



Over 100 nursing homes remain unregistered in Hazaribag

SHAILESH SHARMA ■ HAZARIBAG

Nursing homes in Hazaribag are running in the surrounding area of Shiekh Bikhari Medical College and Hospital without any registration and the same is the case with nursing homes in main road and in other streets of the town. There are 250 nursing homes running in the district headquarter and sub divisions and blocks, but only 135 are registered. A large number of nursing homes have been running without complying with the standards of the health department. As per the information collected from civil surgeon office in Hazaribag town, Barhi and blocks of the district approximately 250 nursing homes are running in these areas. The standards fixed by the health department have not been followed by the maximum nursing homes. The civil surgeon office has issued so many notices to those nursing homes that are not registered in the district. But, no one has tried to look after the notice, because maximum nursing homes are run by the doctors who are working in Sadar Hospital. Civil Surgeon Dr. SP Singh said that they have issued notices to such illegal nursing homes and labs. He further said that they have formed a team with the doctors to check the papers of the nursing homes, labs and ultrasonography center.

Inner Wheel Club organises blood donation camp



PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR

A joint blood donation camp of Inner Wheel, Inner Wheel Club of Jamshedpur, Inner Wheel Club of Jamshedpur West, Inner Wheel Club of Jamshedpur Zest and Lions Club of Jamshedpur Steel City. On the occasion, Vivek Choudhary, Seema Bajpai, district editor Nibha Mishra and secretary Jamshedpur Blood Bank Nalini Rammurthy, head Sanjay Choudhary and Dr L B Singh jointly inaugurated the Camp. A total of 15 units of blood was collected during the camp. Presidents of Lions Clubs Manju Rani Singh and Pushpa Singh, Presidents of IWC's Amrita Rao, Nisha Gadia, Nikita Mehta and Babita Kedia, Suchitra Rungta, Agnes Boyle, Priya Nagarajan, Kiran Mehta, Shweta Chand, Navita Prasad, Vinita Shah, Poonam Singh, Alka Jaiswal, Swati Singh and Dipali Mishra, were present on the occasion.

4 held in Garhwa on murder attempt charges

NITYANAND DUBEY ■ GARHWA

The police have arrested four people in connection with the attempt to murder of a youth in Garhwa. The accused were allegedly promised Rs. 80,000 by the friend of the victim, with whom he was allegedly having an affair, to commit the murder. Victim Amanatulla when traveling from Garhwa to Meral riding in a tempo, one youth who was also in tempo attacked the victim by knife on Tuesday. SDPO Awadh Kumar Yadav said that the arrested accused have been identified as Chintu Mishra alias Siyaram Mishra, Asim Ansari (Father Gulzar), Shakeel Ansari (Father Alauddin Ansari) both are residents of Chhatarpur village and Mukesh Kumar (Father Vijay Sah) are residents of Tandwa in Garhwa. Main conspirator of the incident, Khairullah Ansari, is still absconded. He will be arrested soon. Amanatullah and Khairullah were good friends. Both of them used to visit each other's house. During this time, Khairullah became friends with Amanatullah's wife Khushboon. Khairullah and Khushboon's friendship turned into love. The love affair began to escalate, so Khairullah hatched a plan to kill her husband and his friend Amanatullah Ansari to get Khushboon out of the way. Khairullah contacted Asim Ansari and Mukesh Kumar to carry out the incident. The matter was decided for 80 thousand rupees. When the deal was settled, the criminals bought a folded knife from the Garhwa Market committee and gave it to Chintu to kill Amanatullah. The criminals had full knowledge of Amanatullah Ansari's return from Ambikapur to Meral.



6 Jharkhand girls selected for U-17 FIFA World Cup Football

State player Ashtam Oraon to lead the team as Captain

PNS ■ RANCHI

Eventually the vision and efforts of Chief Minister Hemant Soren paid off. The Indian Football Association has announced the finally selected Indian team. Astam Oraon, Neetu Linda, Anjali Munda, Anita Kumari, Poornima Kumari and Sudha Ankita Tirkey have been included in the team. Astam Oraon and Sudha Ankita Tirkey are from Gumla while Neetu Linda, Anita Kumari and Anjali Munda are from Ranchi and Poornima Kumari from Simdega. For the first time, Astam Oraon, a



player from Jharkhand, will lead the FIFA 17 World Cup football team as the captain. During the lockdown in the year 2020, when the whole country was closed, the players of Jharkhand selected in the Indian team for FIFA U-17 to be held in 2021 had to return to Jharkhand from Goa. Due to the weak financial condition of most of the players, preparations and food were getting affected. After the matter came to the notice of the Chief Minister, he first directed the Sports Department to arrange for the training of the selected state players for the FIFA competition. After which all the players were brought to Ranchi and provided medical facilities and kept in the



trained for the World Cup for 10 months. Bus facility for travel including accommodation, ground, swimming pool, gym was ensured for the entire 10 months for the team. The same daughters of Jharkhand, who were included in the Indian team, raised the honour of the State today. These daughters are the pride of Jharkhand. These daughters showed tremendous courage and patience during the transition period. Now she will represent the country.

To provide support to these selected daughters, football kits were provided by the Sports Department and T-shirts were provided by UNICEF. UNICEF had roped in selected players as Champions of Change for

Child Rights. UNICEF had trained them in the form of technical support given to the government on issues like child rights, adolescent girls, need for proper nutrition, menstruation, hygiene, mental health and psychosocial counseling etc. "Many many congratulations and blessings to all the players selected in the Indian team for the FIFA U-17 Women's Football World Cup. Hearty congratulations to the daughters of Jharkhand who have been selected in the team. Organized training for the Under-17 team in Jamshedpur for almost 2 years was fruitful. Congratulations and Johar again to the entire team," said the CM on the achievement of the players from Jharkhand.

Govt to re-start 'Aapki Sarkar Aapke Dwar' programme

PNS ■ RANCHI

On the occasion of completion of three years of the government 'Aapki Sarkar Aapke Dwar' programme will be launched on October 12. The State Government has decided to organise the programme in two phases. The first phase will be from October 12 to 22 while the second phase will be from November 1 to 14. Last year also the programme was held on completion of two years of JMM/Congress government headed by Chief Minister Hemant Soren.



The initiative of getting the applications from the villagers by organizing camps at the Panchayat level and after approving them after

checking and making available the benefits of the scheme to the beneficiary at the site itself had achieved immense success. Under this program, out of the total 35.95 lakh applications received, 35.56 lakh applications were executed for providing benefits of various

schemes across the state, in this way about 99 per cent applications were executed and the people were greatly benefited. The programme was appreciated not only in this state but it was also praised on various national level newspapers, social media etc. and this was described as very public utility. Under this programme, organizing camps at the Panchayat level, the public welfare schemes of the state government will be widely disseminated among people and maximum benefits of the schemes will be given to the general public in the camp itself, so that no beneficiary is deprived of the benefits of the scheme. The government has ordered to give more priority

to those panchayats, where the camp could not be organized last year due to some reason.

Through this event, people will be given detailed information about all the public welfare schemes of the state government. Under the Jharkhand State Food Security Scheme, 5 lakh new green ration cards, Savitribai Phule Kishori Samridhi Yojana, application for Chief Minister Livestock Development Scheme, application for Sarvajan Pension Yojana, application for Kisan Credit Card (KCC) and other schemes, benefits from eligible beneficiaries.

It will be given after receiving and checking. Approving 100 per cent plans

against the annual target of the 15th Finance Commission and starting them. Distribution of Dhoti, Sarees, Lungi and Blankets, issue of updated receipt of land revenue and settlement of other land revenue related matters by the financial year 2022-23, e-labor of unorganized laborers and registration of migrant laborers / families on Shramdhan portal, linking of ration card with Aadhaar under PDS, registration of farmers for procurement of paddy, alternative employment available to women engaged in bone/liquor trade, execution of applications for certificates under the right to service, settlement of problems related to electricity and drinking water will be ensured.

Five dead in road accident in Ramgarh

PNS ■ RANCHI

This year's Vijayadashami proved deadly for people of the Ramgarh district of the State on the same day two horrific road accidents took place and caused the death of as many as five people in the district.

There has been a horrific road accident near the Danish petrol pump located in Hehal of Barkakana OP area in Ramgarh district, in which five people died.

Sub Divisional Police

Officer (SDPO) Patratu, Birendra Kumar Chaudhary said, "All five were hit by an over speeding truck near Hehal village".

In relation to the incident, it is said that an uncontrolled truck coming from Bhurkunda side rammed the people standing on the roadside including two motorcycles. Due to which five people died on the spot itself.

It is said that four of the dead were members of the same family. They were going to see another Ravan

Dahan program, a fair in Naya Nagar in the district.

In another incident an uncontrolled truck rammed three motorcycles near the Danish petrol pump in Ramgarh district. The four deceased were residents of Hehal village. After the incident, angry local people blocked the Patratu-Ramgarh main road after the accident took place and demanded early remuneration from the Government.

The injured have been admitted to Ramgarh Sadar hospital.

Meanwhile, a body was found on the railway track on Thursday, some distance from the Balkudra flyover of Bhurkunda in Ramgarh. The body is naked and mutilated. The face has been badly crushed, due to which the body has not been identified.

As soon as the dead body was found in the middle of the railway track in the morning, there was a crowd of people around. As soon as the information about the incident was received, the Railway Police

reached the spot and took the body into custody. The youth could not be identified in the investigation. It is said that a red shirt and blue jeans have been found in the incident. Sensation has spread around including Balkudra after the body was found. Many dead bodies have been found here in the past on the railway track around the spot. At the same time, people are expressing a strong possibility of murdering elsewhere and throwing the dead body on the track.

Ticket sales begin for India-SA One Day match

PNS ■ RANCHI

The sale of tickets started from Thursday for the One Day Cricket match between India and South Africa to be played on 9 October at JSCA Stadium, Ranchi. However, on Thursday there was no special crowd for the purchase of tickets.

Many spectators started gathering around the stadium counter for tickets since 5 am in the morning on Thursday. Barricading was done for about 30 meters in front of the counters made for ticket sales. Sports lovers took tickets by queuing in this barricading. For the sale of tickets, people were seen standing in queues at counter numbers 5, 6, 7 and 8. Counter numbers 9 and 10 have been made for women.

As soon as ticket sales start, the highest demand is Wing A, Wing C (Lower Tier, Rs 1400), Wing A and Wing C (Upper Tier, Rs 1100), Wing B (Upper Tier, Rs 1500), Wing D (Lower Tier, Rs. 1800) and Wing D (Spice Box, Rs 1700) saw more demand for tickets.

There was a shortage of cheap tickets till the lunch time at 1 pm. There was also



Cricket fans stand in queues to purchase entry tickets for the 2nd ODI India v South Africa at JSCA International Stadium Complex in Ranchi on Thursday. Pix by Vinay Murnu

displeasure among the people who came to take tickets about this. Many complained that they were being deliberately asked to take expensive tickets. It is being said for cheap tickets that it is over. It is doubtful that cheap tickets will run out on the very first day.

The rate for the premium terrace ticket for Amitabh Chaudhary Pavilion has been fixed at Rs 2000, for President Enclosure Rs 10 thousand, for Hospitality Box at Rs 5500, for Corporate Box at Rs 4500 and for Corporate Lounge at Rs 8000. Apart from this, the ticket rate for the luxury parlour of MS Dhoni Pavilion is Rs 6000.

India-Africa team will reach Ranchi on October 7 to play a one day match. The team will reach Hotel Radisson Blu directly from the airport. Here rooms are booked for them. In view of this, the security in this hotel has been increased from now on. Separate routes have been made for the entry of other people coming to the hotel till the players stay in the hotel. COVID protocol is also to be followed. In such a situation, only selected hotel staff will be present with the players. Head of Marketing and Sales of the hotel, Divesh informed all preparations have been made for the stay of the players.

DC inspects EVM warehouse at Morhabadi

PNS ■ RANCHI

Deputy Commissioner Rahul Kumar Sinha inspected the EVM warehouse at Birsu Munda Football Stadium, Morhabadi on Thursday. On the basis of the standards set by the Election Commission of India, in the presence of representatives of political parties, the EVM warehouse, security arrangements, maintenance of EVMs and other parameters were reviewed by the DC.

During the inspection, Sinha asked to ensure compliance of the instructions of the Election Commission of India related to the maintenance of EVMs. Giving necessary directions to the District Deputy Election Officer, Ranchi Mary Madki, he asked to send the report to the State Election Department. From time to time the condition of the EVM warehouse has to be submitted to the State Election Department related to the maintenance and condition of technical equipment.



Ranchi DC Rahul Kumar Sinha inspects EVM warehouse at Morhabadi Football stadium in Ranchi on Thursday. PNS

It was also agreed to centralise/keep the separate ballot units and VVPATs kept separately after the completion of three months of the Mander Assembly bye-election in the presence of representatives of political parties. Officers/employees engaged on warehouse duty were also present during the inspection.

Dr BP Sinha joins as Director SMC at RU

Dr. B.P. Sinha (Vinod Kumar) joined as Director in School of Mass Communication and Radio Khanchi run by Ranchi University on 29th September 2022. It is to be noted that Prof. Sinha retired from Central University of Jharkhand as Head of the Dept. English and Dean, School of Languages at Central University of Jharkhand. Besides being a teacher he is also a journalist, writer, playwright and a filmmaker. His plays have been staged, broadcast on AIR and telecast on doordarshan. He is also the first filmmaker from Jharkhand who made the film Aakrant winning wide acclaim.



Curtains down on Durga Puja with idol immersion



Married women participate in 'Sindur Khela' in front of idols of Goddess Durga on the last day of Durga Puja festival in Ranchi on Wednesday. Pix by Vinay Murnu

CM participated at Ravan Dahan after two years

PNS ■ RANCHI

The five-day long Durga Puja festival in Ranchi came to a close on Thursday with the immersion of Goddess Durga idols on Thursday at various water bodies and ghats in the State Capital. Idol immersion of most of Puja Pandals committee including Chandrashekar Durga Puja Committee, Durga Mandir trusts Mahavir Chowk and others were done on Thursday.

Puja Committee members dancing on the tunes of devotional songs participated in idol immersion. The committee members also smeared gulals and colours on each other praying Goddess to bestow health, wealth and prosperity.

Organisers of most household and community pujas were seen leading colourful processions to the ghats amid the beating of drums and chanting of mantras.

The City Police had made elaborate security arrangements during idol immersion. Adequate security arrangements were made on the thoroughfares and at the ghats for peaceful observance of the idol-immersion ceremony. Volunteers of various peace committees actively participated in the idol immersion.

However, immersion of idols will be done on Friday as many Puja Committee being Thursday avoided immersing the idols.

Earlier, on Wednesday being Vijaydashmi women participated in the traditional 'Sindur Khela' (smeared vermilion on each other's

faces) and offered sweets and prayers to the goddess before bidding her farewell for the year.

On Vijaydashmi, Chief Minister Hemant Soren also participated in the Ravan Dahan program organized by Punjabi-Hindu Biradari Dussehra Committee at Morhabadi Maidan and Shri Durga Puja and Ravan Dahan Committee Argora at Argora Manda Maidan. Effigies of Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Meghnad were burnt giving the message of victory of truth over untruth and justice over injustice.

While wishing the people on Vijaydashmi, the Chief Minister said that after two years, this time a grand celebration of Dussehra has been organized in public. Due to the Covid-19 epidemic for the last 2 years, the organization of all the festivals including Dussehra



Chief Minister Hemant Soren burnt an effigy of demon king Ravana during Dussehra festival at Argora Maidan in Ranchi on Wednesday. Pix by Vinay Murnu



Devotees immerse an idol of Goddess Durga in a pond on the last day of Durga Puja festival in Ranchi on Thursday. Pix by Vinay Murnu

was affected. But, the way we conquered Corona with everyone's cooperation, today we are celebrating Dussehra, the festival of victory of good over evil, with full enthusiasm and gaiety and sharing the happiness of this festival together.

In the Ravan Dahan programme organized at Morhabadi ground, where cultural programs have been presented by the artists, everyone saw the spectacular

fireworks display. On this occasion, MP Sanjay Seth, Rajya Sabha MP Mahua Maji, MLA CP Singh, Mayor Asha Lakra, Deputy Mayor Sanjeev Vijayvargiya and Punjabi-Hindu Biradari Dussehra Committee President Rajesh Khanna, Vice President Kunal Ajmani, Secretary. Sudhir Ugal, members of the organizing committee R Anand, Rajesh Mehra and Mukul Taneja and other office bearers were present.



Chief Minister Hemant Soren with his sons tries a bow and arrow for burning an effigy of demon king Ravana during Dussehra festival at Morhabadi in Ranchi on Wednesday. Pix by Ratan Lal



Women dance during an immersion procession of Goddess Durga idol making the end of Durga Puja celebrations in Ranchi on Thursday. Pix by Vinay Murnu

Gambia deaths: Probe begins, samples sent to Kolkata lab

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India's Central Drugs Standard Organisation (CDSO) has initiated an "urgent investigation" and sought for more details from the World Health Organization (WHO), which has warned that four "contaminated" and "substandard" cough syrups, allegedly produced by Maiden Pharmaceuticals Limited based in Haryana's Sonapat, could be the reason for 66 deaths in the West African nation of Gambia.

The samples of the cough syrups have been sent to the Central Drug Lab in Kolkata for testing and affirming any possible "contamination". Government sources said the exact "one-to-one causal relation of death" has neither been



provided by the UN health agency nor the details of labels and products shared by it with the CDSO, enabling it to confirm the identity or source of the manufacturing of the products. "Based on available information, the CDSO has already taken up an urgent investigation into the matter with regulatory authorities in Haryana.

While all required steps will be taken, as a robust regulatory authority, the WHO has been requested to share with CDSO at the earliest the report on the establishment of a causal relation to the deaths with the medical products in question, photographs of labels/products etc," sources said. Sources said the Union Health ministry would take all "required steps".

"WHO has been requested to share with CDSO at the earliest the report on the establishment of a causal relation to the deaths with the medical products in question, photographs of labels/products etc," sources said. WHO has also informed India that it will share the certificate of analysis soon, they pointed out.

Haryana Home Minister Anil Viz said, "The Central government officials are gathering complete information. Samples have been sent to the Central Drug Lab in Kolkata. After reports come, stern action will be taken if anything wrong is found."

Vij said the cough syrups manufactured by the pharma company were approved for export. "It is not available for sale or marketing in the coun-

try. Whatever action has to be taken will be taken once the CDL report comes. Only after the report is in, we can arrive at any conclusion," he said. According to the sources, the WHO had on September 29 informed the Drugs Controller General of India that it was providing technical assistance and advice to The Gambia.

It had highlighted that a significant contributing factor to the deaths was suspected to be the use of medicines which may have been contaminated with Diethylene Glycol/Ethylene Glycol, and said its presence had been confirmed in some of the samples it tested.

The CDSO said it responded to the WHO within an hour-and-a-half after receiving intimation, by taking

up the matter with the state regulatory authority. Further, a detailed investigation was launched to ascertain the facts and details into the matter in collaboration with Haryana State Drugs Controller, the source explained.

"From the preliminary inquiry, it has been made out that Maiden Pharmaceutical Limited, Sonapat, Haryana, is the manufacturer licensed by the state drug controller for the products under reference, and holds manufacturing permission for these products.

"The company has manufactured and exported these products only to The Gambia so far," sources said. It is a practice that the importing country tests the products for quality before sanctioning their usage there. According to the

tentative results received by the WHO, four out of the 23 samples tested have been found to contain either Diethylene Glycol/Ethylene Glycol.

Gambia initiates door-to-door search for medicine removal

NEW DELHI: Reports, meanwhile, stated Gambia has launched an urgent door-to-door campaign to remove the medicines from each house. The Ministry of Health has teamed up with the Gambia Red Cross Society and dispatched hundreds of young people to collect the suspect syrups through a house-to-house campaign. **PNS**

NCW issues notice to Uditraj for his remark on Murmu

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Commission for Women (NCW) has summoned Congress leader Udit Raj over his 'sycophancy' remark against President Droupadi Murmu even as the BJP termed the Congress anti-tribal and demanded the opposition party's apology for his remarks. In a notice issued on Thursday, the Commission asked him to appear before it on October 10 and explain his "extremely condemnable and shameful" comments.

"No country should get a president like Droupadi Murmu. This is height of sycophancy. She says 70 per cent of people eat Gujarat's salt. Spend your life eating salt, then you will know the truth," he had remarked.

At a function recently, Murmu had noted that Gujarat manufactures 76 per cent of salt produced in the country. "It can be said that all countrymen eat Gujarat's salt," she had said. "It



is a matter of surprise and pain that Congress leaders are regularly using such undignified expressions. This exposes the party's anti-tribal mindset. The Congress should apologise," BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra said. Another BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla hit out at the Congress leader tweeting, "Udit Raj uses unacceptable language for the 1st woman Adivasi President! Does the Congress endorse this insult of Adivasi samaj?" "After Ajoy Kumar called President Draupadi Murmu as evil & then Adhir Ranjan Chaudhary used the term 'Rashtrapatni'

now Congress stoops to a new low!" the BJP spokesperson tweeted. In the notice, the NCW said, "The Commission has taken cognisance of his remark. The comments made are extremely condemnable and shameful. The Commission has sent a notice to Shri Udit Raj. NCW has scheduled a hearing and asked Shri Raj to appear before the Commission in person on October 10, 2022 at 3 pm."

Facing backlash from the BJP and other quarters over social media, the Congress leader put out a clarification on Twitter, saying his statement on President Murmu was his only and "nothing to do with the Congress".

"Her candidature & campaign were in the name adivasi, it doesn't mean she is no longer adivasi. My heart cries that when SC/ST reach to higher position, they ditch their communities & become mum," he said. But Poonawalla said nei-

ther Udit Raj nor the Congress can wash the hands off this by issuing a statement. Raj comes from the Scheduled Caste community and was elected to Lok Sabha on a BJP ticket in 2014. He joined the Congress before the 2019 polls after the BJP denied him a ticket.

"By merely tweeting this is a personal statement won't do! Congress must tell us if they will ACT ON UDIT RAJ or not for his Adivasi Virodhi statement. This is the third strike after Ajoy Kumar & Adhir Ranjan states on Murmu ji! This is not a Sanyog ! It is INC mindset," Poonawalla wrote.

NCW chairperson Rekha Sharma tweeted, "Highly objectionable statement against the Supreme power of the country and a woman who with her sheer hard work reached this position. @Dr_Uditraj must apologise for his derogatory and insulting statement. @NCWIndia is sending him a notice."

Shinde faction to meet EC to claim Sena symbol

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Eknath Shinde faction of Shiv Sena will meet the Election Commission on Friday to stake claim to the party's 'bow and arrow' poll symbol ahead of the Andheri East Assembly bypoll in Maharashtra. The move is seen as the Shinde faction's bid to deny the 'bow and arrow' election symbol to the Uddhav Thackeray group which has decided to field Rutuja Latke, widow of MLA Ramesh Latke, for the November 3 bypoll.

"We are meeting the Election Commission on Friday in connection with the party election symbol," Rahul Shewale, leader of the Shinde faction of Shiv Sena in the Lok Sabha, said. BJP, an ally of Shinde faction, has decided to field Murji Patel, a corporator in the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation, for the bypoll necessitated due to

the death of Ramesh Latke.

Congress and the NCP have decided to support the candidate of the Thackeray faction of the Shiv Sena, their coalition partner in the Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA). Shinde had raised a banner of revolt against Thackeray for entering into an "unnatural alliance" with the Congress and NCP. Over 40 of the Shiv Sena's 55 MLAs had supported Shinde, leading to the resignation of Thackeray from the post of Maharashtra Chief Minister.

Twelve of the 18 Lok Sabha members of the Sena also came out in support of Shinde, who later claimed to be the leader of original Sena. The Andheri East bypoll is the first after Shinde and the BJP unseated the MVA Government in June, and is considered as a precursor to settling of claims by Shinde and Thackeray to be the "real Shiv Sena".

Operation Chakra: 26 cyber criminals held in 115 CBI raids

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

As many as 26 alleged cyber criminals have been arrested so far under 'Operation Chakra' of the CBI to dismantle cyber crime gangs operating in the country.

The operation has been launched in coordination with State police, Interpol and agencies of other countries, officials said on Thursday.

The CBI said 16 people were arrested by Karnataka Police, seven by Delhi Police, two by Punjab Police and one by Andaman and Nicobar Police.

The central probe agency, in coordination with state police, conducted searches under the operation at 115

locations across the country on inputs provided by Interpol, FBI, Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Australian Federal Police, the officials said.

The CBI registered 11 cases against cyber criminals involved in financial fraud using the internet. While the agency conducted searches at 87 locations, 28 places were raided by the state police, they added.

"The operation intends to dismantle the infrastructure of these international cyber crime gangs in India and bring these perpetrators to justice. India's fight against transnational organised cyber crime has thus achieved a major milestone," a statement from the agency said.

SC to examine minority status for edu institutes run by minorities



New Delhi: The Supreme Court has agreed to examine whether an educational institution administered by members of a minority community would result in it being conferred the status of a minority institution.

A Bench of Justices BR Gavai and BV Nagarathna issued notices to the Uttar Pradesh Government, National Commission for Minority Educational Institutions, National Medical Commission and others while seeking their replies. The top court was hearing an appeal filed by Mahayana Theravada Vajrayana Buddhist

Religious and Charitable Trust challenging the Allahabad High Court order which observed that mere administration of an educational institution by a minority would not confer on it status of a minority institution.

The high court was dealing with the petition against the Uttar Pradesh government order, where the state government refused to treat the institution as a minority institution.

"Thus for an institution to qualify as minority institution within the meaning of Uttar Pradesh Private Professional Educational Institutions (Regulation of Admission and Fixation of Free) Act, 2006, it should be an institution not only being administered by a minority but it also ought to have been established by the minority and it should also be notified by the State as such," the high court had said. **PTI**

SC directs States, UTs to submit report on welfare schemes for elderly

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has directed all States and Union Territories to submit information on welfare schemes for the elderly with respect to pension, old age homes in each district and level of geriatric care.

A bench of Justices Anirudhha Bose and Sudhanshu Dhulia said the report of the States shall also disclose the present status as regards implementation of the Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act.

"We direct that schemes operating for the welfare of the

elderly with respect of (i) pension for the elderly, (ii) old age homes in each district and (iii) level of geriatric care ought to be produced before us.

"Let the respective States and Union Territories furnish the information on their existing schemes on the aforesaid three heads to the advocate-on-record of the Union of India.

After collecting information from all the respective States and the Union Territories within a period of two months, a revised status report shall be filed one month thereafter by the Union of India," the bench said.

The apex court will take up the matter for hearing in January, 2023. The top court was hearing a plea filed by former Union Law Minister Ashwani Kumar seeking setting up of old age homes with basic healthcare facilities across the country. **PTI**

SC to hear plea raising safety concerns over production of undertrial prisoners in courts

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on October 11 a plea which has raised the issue of safety at trial courts across country and said production of undertrial prisoners before court should not be ordered as a "matter of routine" on every date. According to cause list uploaded on apex court website, the petition will come up for hearing before a bench headed by Chief Justice Uday Umesh Lalit on Tuesday.

The petition, filed by advocate Rishi Malhotra, said even if trial court deems fit physical presence of an undertrial prisoner before it, the same can be ordered through video-conference from jails, especially in cases of gangsters, so public safety and security of judicial officers remain unaffected and the rights of accused are balanced. **PTI**

Birla: India calls for multilateralism as it supports rules-based global order

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has reiterated that India has always supported a rules-based international order.

"It is in this spirit that India has called for supporting multilateralism for global peace and stability so that we can unite to address the challenges facing the world and find solutions in accordance with the aspirations of the people," Birla said, addressing Presiding Officers of G-20 Parliaments on the theme "Effective Parliament, Vibrant Democracy" during the 8th Summit of Speakers of G-20 Parliaments (P20) held in Jakarta.

Rajya Sabha Deputy Chairman Harivansh is also part of the same delegation. The Lok Sabha Speaker stressed that during the glorious journey of 75 years of democracy, India's democracy has become more empowered



and vibrant and our Parliament is making continuous and consistent efforts to pave the way for inclusive social and economic development of the people.

On the sidelines of the event, Harivansh had a meeting with Deputy Speaker, National Assembly, Republic of Korea.

Speaking about the bilateral cultural ties and people-to-people contacts, Harivansh said that Buddhism played an

important role in keeping a close connect for millennia between the two countries.

On India's proposed candidature of Aparajita Sarangi, MP, for IPU Executive Committee from Asia Pacific Group which will be filled during the meeting of the Group on the sideline of the 145th IPU Assembly in Kigali Rwanda during 11-15 October, 2022, Harivansh sought the valuable support of Korea in this regard.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during the party's 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', in Mandya district on Thursday

PTI Photo

Railway officer: It was a case of skidding wheels due to cattle being run over

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/AHMEDABAD

The newly-launched Mumbai Central-Gandhinagar Vande Bharat Express train flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi suffered minor damages after hitting a herd of buffaloes in Gujarat on Thursday. No passenger was, however, injured in the incident that occurred between Gairatpur and Vatva stations around 11.15 AM.

Coincidentally, the first Vande Bharat Express too had met with the same fate when cattle was hit affecting the services just a day after it was flagged off by the PM in February 2019.



Vande Bharat Express train, running between Mumbai Central and Gandhinagar, suffers damages after a collision with a herd of buffaloes, on the railway line between the Gairatpur and Vatva station, in Ahmedabad district, on Thursday **PTI Photo**

The Varanasi Vande Bharat had hit cattle near Tundla in Uttar Pradesh when the train was heading back to Delhi from Varanasi. The rail officials maintained that it was

a case of "skidding wheels" due to a cattle run over by the train. "Vande Bharat express running between Mumbai Central and Gandhinagar Capital stations had left Mumbai this morning

The front portion of the train's engine got damaged after it hit some buffaloes that came on track around 11.15 am. The incident took place between Vatva and Maninagar areas of

Ahmedabad," Western Railway spokesperson Jitendra Kumar Jayant said.

"The damaged portion was repaired and the train was sent to Gandhinagar station. The train departed for Mumbai from the Gandhinagar Capital station at its scheduled time. No passenger was injured in the incident," he added.

Another railway spokesperson said the front portion of the engine was damaged, but no functional part of the train was harmed.

"Three-four buffaloes suddenly came on the way of Mumbai-Gandhinagar Vande Bharat, damaging the nose made up of FRP (fibre-reinforced plastic).

The train moved just after removing carcasses (within eight minutes) and reached Gandhinagar on time," he said, adding that the railway authorities were trying to counsel nearby villagers not to leave cattle near the track.

The semi-high speed train was flagged off by Modi on September 30 from Gandhinagar Capital station. This is the third Vande Bharat express train in the country.

Cong, NPF slam Centre for extending AFSPA in parts of Nagaland

PTI ■ KOHIMA

The Congress and the Naga People’s Front on Thursday denounced the Centre’s decision to extend the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA) in parts of Nagaland.

Criticising the Central government for extending the AFSPA for another six months in the northeastern state, Nagaland Pradesh Congress Committee (NPCC) president K Therie said since there was a complete ceasefire with all the Naga political groups and talks were on to find a solution to the Naga political issue, there was no requirement for

a “draconian” law like AFSPA.

On October 1, the AFSPA was extended in nine districts of Nagaland – Dimapur, Niuland, Chumoukedima, Mon, Kiphire, Noklak, Phek, Peren, and Zunheboto and 16 police station areas in four other districts – Kohima, Mokokchung, Longleng, and Wokha.

“They (the Central government and Naga negotiators) should settle the Naga issue and not keep the solution in cold storage,” Therie said, adding that enforcement of AFSPA is a “meaningless provocation”.

The Centre has been holding separate talks with the

NSCN(IM) since 1997 and the Naga National Political Groups (NNPGs) since 2017. It signed the framework agreement with the NSCN(IM) in 2015 and an Agreed Position with NNPG in 2017.

However, no final solution has been achieved to date with the NSCN(IM) remaining firm on its demand for a separate flag and constitution for the Nagas.

Denouncing the extension of the Act in parts of Nagaland, NSF president Kegwayhun Tep and general secretary Siipuni Ng. Philo said, “We condemn the over-arching approach of the central government in extending

the draconian AFSPA for another six months under the pretext of law and order problem in major parts of Nagaland.”

Describing the extension of the Act in parts of Nagaland as “uncalled for”, NPF Legislature Party leader Kuzholuzo Nienu alias Azo said, “AFSPA is imposed only when there is lawlessness and insurgency problem but now the law and order situation in Nagaland is peaceful... by and large everything is so good. Therefore the extension of the Act in Nagaland is uncalled for”.

Naga civil societies, including Naga Hoho, also

condemned the decision to extend the Act in parts of Nagaland.

The AFSPA empowers security forces to conduct operations and arrest anyone without any prior warrant besides giving immunity from arrest and prosecution to the security forces if they shoot someone dead.

Asserting that the “draconian law must go away from our land”, Naga Hoho general secretary K Elu Ndang said there cannot be true peace and mutual respect through the barrel of a gun.

“We look forward with hope for a peaceful resolution to the Naga political issue.

However, with AFSPA in place, there cannot be a true spirit of peace and tranquility,” Ndang said.

Naga Mothers' Association (NMA) advisor Dr Rosemary Dziivichii said that for sustainable peace there was no place for AFSPA.

“As mothers, we are very disappointed with the extension of the AFSPA in the state and other Naga areas, in the midst of peace negotiations and despite appeals for the repeal of this Act”.

By extending the AFSPA in parts of the northeastern state, an attempt has been made to “paint the state as a land of lawlessness and chaos”,



the Naga Students’ Federation had alleged.

Following the December 4 incident in Oting village of Mon district where security forces had gunned down 13 civilians, the Naga civil societies and the state government

had been demanding revocation of AFSPA from Nagaland. For the first time since the imposition of the Act on Nagaland, the Centre on March 31 announced to withdraw AFSPA from seven of its 16 districts.

TMC accuses Centre of revenge as it loses House Panel chair

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A day after he lost the chairmanship of the parliamentary standing committee on Food and Consumer Affairs, senior Trinamool Congress MP Sudip Bandopadhyay on Thursday slammed the BJP Government for its “dictatorial attitude” saying the saffron party was being run on totalitarian principles.

Apparently referring to the Trinamool Congress Government’s denial to the BJP the chairmanship of Public Accounts Committee in Bengal Assembly the senior TMC MP said the Central Government functioned on the sole motto of “revenge”.

Earlier his party colleague and Rajya Sabha MP Derek O’Brien said that despite the

TMC being the third-largest party in Parliament and the second-biggest Opposition group it was robbed off the chairmanship of a standing committee.

“The third-largest party in Parliament, also the second-biggest Opposition party does not get a single chairmanship.... This is start reality of New India,” he said.

Bengal BJP MP Locket Chatterjee who was given the chairmanship of the standing committee earlier chaired by Bandopadhyay earlier thanked the BJP leadership for “giving me the responsibility and considering me capable of discharging it”. She attacked the TMC saying a “party that has destroyed democracy in Bengal had no right to lecture others on how democracy should



run.”

Bandopadhyay on his part said, “I am not only the senior most MP from Bengal but also the one who has at present won most number of times from my State,” adding he had a discussion with Union Minister Prahlad Joshi regarding the issue and was told that the step was a quid pro quo for the TMC’s denial of the PAC chair-

manship in Bengal Assembly.

Offering apology for the BJP being denied the PAC in Bengal Bandopadhyay said that “the two cases are not the same as in Bengal the BJP was offered chairmanship of other committees but they refused them but there in Delhi I was removed from the only standing committee where the TMC had chairmanship.”

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Nine people including five school students were killed as two speeding buses had a head-on collision on the Thrissur-Palakkad highway late on Wednesday night. The school students were part of a school excursion team to Nilgiris when the accident occurred. The teacher accompanying them and three passengers of the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation bus, too, died on the spot in the accident. All the dead students were Plus Two students in a Church-run public school in Ernakulam suburb.

The incident shocked the President of India Draupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi who condoled

the deaths. The Prime Minister declared a cash assistance of Rs 2,00,000 to the families of the deceased while those injured were allocated Rs 50,000 each.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, leading a team of ministers to Norway expressed shock over the incident and has ordered a probe. Transport Commissioner S Sreejith told reporters at Thiruvananthapuram that the bus carrying the students was being driven as a speed of 97 km per hour and it was also found that the operator had altered the speed governor that limited the speed limit to 80 km per hour.

The driver of the tourist bus escaped from the accident site but was held at Kollam by the police making use of CCTV images and mobile phone calls. He has been charged with cul-



pable homicide for the death of nine persons. Owner of the bus too was arrested by the Police.

Accidents involving tourist buses that have incorporated a lot of changes like flash lights, woofers, high-decibel music which are not in compatible with the rules specified by the Motor Vehicles Department have become regular events in the State. There is widespread

complain against the KSRTC from former staff who allege that drivers with no experience in ferrying passengers were being chartered on contract basis. “Most of the drivers working with the KSRTC do not have sufficient experience in driving buses,” said PV Kuriakose, a former driver with the KSRTC who has put in 30 years of service.

Mumbai cops arrest man from Bihar for threat to Ambanis

PTI ■ DARBHANGA/MUMBAI

Calls received by a hospital run by the Reliance Foundation threatening to kill Mukesh Ambani and his family members were the latest of the threats received by the billionaire industrialist.

Mumbai Police on Thursday arrested Rakesh Kumar Mishra (30) from Darbhanga in Bihar for allegedly making calls to Sir HN Reliance Foundation Hospital here in the last two days, threatening to blow up the hospital and kill Ambani, his wife Nita and sons Akash and Anant.

The caller had also threat-

ened to blow up Antilia, the famous south Mumbai residence of the Ambani family on Altamont Road in South Mumbai.

According to the city police, this is the second instance of Ambani family getting threats on the hospital landline number.

On August 15 this year, the hospital had received at least nine calls threatening the Reliance Industries chairman and his family members, said an official. Bishnu Vidu Bhoumik (56) was arrested in connection with the calls.

In November 2021, Mumbai Police increased the security outside Antilia fol-

lowing a tip given by a taxi driver about a possible threat, but investigation found there was no such threat.

But an incident involving threat to the Ambani family earlier that year made national headlines and shook the state government.

On February 25, 2021, an explosive-laden SUV was found parked on Carmichael Road in South Mumbai, near the Ambani residence.

Police recovered a printed threat note inside along with gelatin sticks. The note this was only a “trailer” and there would be assembled explosives next time instead of just loose sticks.

Mansukh Hiran, a Thane-based businessman, told police the SUV had been stolen from his possession.

But the matter took a grim turn when Hiran was found dead in a creek in Thane a few days later, and an Assistant Inspector of Mumbai crime branch, Sachin Waze was arrested for alleged involvement in parking the SUV near Antilia and also for Hiran’s murder.

The affair also led to Mumbai Police Commissioner Param Bir Singh being shunted out. An angry Singh then accused then home minister Anil Deshmukh of asking police to

collect money from bars in Mumbai; Deshmukh subsequently resigned and the CBI registered a corruption case against him.

Mukesh Ambani currently has a Z-Plus security cover, provided by the Central government. The Central Industrial Security Force provides security to his residence.

In 2013, a letter sent in the name of terror outfit Indian Mujahidin was delivered to Ambani’s Maker Chambers office in Nariman Point area. It threatened him for supporting then Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi.



Mukesh Ambani’s younger brother and industrialist Anil Ambani was in news for reason related to security in 2009 when pebbles were discovered in the fuel tank of his chopper. It was suspected that it was a sabotage attempt.

Behave responsibly towards nature, animal protection: Yogi

PNS ■ GORAKHPUR

It was a treat to watch Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath holding a leopard cub in his arms and feeding it milk from a bottle during his visit to the Shaheed Ashfaqullah Khan Zoological Park in Gorakhpur on Wednesday afternoon.

The Chief Minister visited the zoological park on the occasion of National Dolphin Day held as part of Wild Animals Week 2022.

Within minutes, the Chief Minister made friends with the seemingly reluctant cub as he tolerated its tantrums smilingly, but insisted quietly on feeding it. The Chief Minister named the two leopard cubs, one of which was rescued three months ago, as Bhavani and Chandi. He also interacted with the zoo officials, including doctors, to enquire about the health of the animals.

Speaking on the occasion, the chief minister said that animals were friendly with him because they had the instinct to understand who could harm them and who would not.

He said that vulture conservation centres would be developed in Maharajganj, Chitrakoot and Gorakhpur as this species was on the verge of extinction.

“Life cycle must follow the laws of nature,” he remarked, emphasising the need for people to behave responsibly towards nature and protection

of animals.

“In Ramayana there is Aranya kand, which encapsulates the entire story of the epic. Monkeys, bears, rivers, trees and stones become Lord Ram’s friend, when he is clueless about the whereabouts of Maa Sita after she is abducted by Ravan,” he said.

The chief minister also honoured several forest officers on the occasion for their commendable work in saving and conserving wild animals. He talked about his experience with 15-month-old tigress Gita that was released to an enclosure from the cage and the rhinos brought from Assam which were rescued from Maharajganj.

Referring to the efforts of the state government for wildlife conservation and eco-tourism, Yogi Adityanath said that the process of starting the state’s first night safari in Lucknow was being expedited.

“It will promote eco-tourism, inculcate a sense of respect for wildlife, and provide entertainment,” he said, adding that the knowledge of children would also increase.

The chief minister said that the government had already announced plans to develop a tiger reserve at Ranipur in Chitrakoot district where Lord Ram spent most of his time in exile while proposals related to eco-tourism had been approved in Bijnor and Ramnagar.

Besides, he said, the gov-



ernment was setting up rescue centres for wildlife at places like Maharajganj, Meerut, Chitrakoot, Pilibhit.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said that the government was also sensitive about the conservation of aquatic life and the Namami Gange project was helping a lot in this. He said that earlier 14 crore litres of sewage used to be released into the river Ganga in Sisamau of Kanpur Nagar every day, whereas now not even a drop was falling in the river from there due to the Namami Gange project.

“Now the place where the sewage fell (in the river) has become a selfie point. Similarly, due to the discharge of leather industry waste in Jajmou, aquatic creatures had become almost extinct. However, now a large number of aquatic creatures have started appearing in the river.

Speaking about dolphins in the river Ganga, the chief minister said that the government had selected the area

of Nishadraj, a dear friend of Lord Shri Ram, for its conservation. He said that now dolphins had started appearing in the Ganga in Kashi also and assured of all possible steps for the conservation of dolphins.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also directed the Forest Department to set up a separate cadre of veterinary officers for the treatment and protection of wildlife.

Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Forest, Environment, Zoological Park and Climate Change, Dr Arun Kumar Saxena and Gorakhpur’s Member of Parliament Ravikishan were also present on the occasion.

Saxena said the government would soon start the facility of jungle safari in Sohagi Barwa area of Maharajganj.

It is worth mentioning here that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated the Gorakhpur Zoo on March 27, 2021.

Fiscal activities on upswing amid talks of global recession: UP FM

Revenue collection rose to ₹14,661 cr in Sept, says Khanna

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Finance Minister Suresh Khanna, on Thursday, said that the State’s revenue collection had increased to Rs 14,661.89 crore in September this fiscal, which showed that the fiscal activities in the State were on the upswing amid talks of recession across the world.

“There has been a huge increase in non-tax revenue collection in the state as there has been an increase of Rs

3,123.73 crore in the non-tax revenue items of the state. Thus, the total revenue collection in September was Rs 14,661.89 crore,” the finance minister said while addressing reporters here.

He said this increase seemed to be huge as in the month of September 2021-22 only Rs 11,538.16 crore revenue was collected.

“Different departments have been able to collect more revenue than the set target. This shows that the policies of the government are on the right

track,” he said.

The minister said that there was an increase in revenue receipt in all non-tax items while the revenue receipt decreased only in the Excise Department.

“There is a big increase in the collection of goods and services tax (GST) and value-added tax (VAT). There is a bumper collection of revenue in the Stamps and Registration Department. This month the revenue in the Transport Department increased by Rs

73.20 crore. Revenue receipts also increased in the Geology and Mining Department,” the minister said. Khanna said that the rate of VAT per litre petrol and diesel in Uttar Pradesh was less compared to other states. At present, VAT on petrol is Rs 15.08 per litre and on diesel it is Rs 12.76 per litre.

“Despite the COVID-19 pandemic and talks of recession, economic activities are on the upswing which is reflected in the revenue collection,” the minister said.



Tourists take camel safari in the deserts of Pushkar on Thursday.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Hurt & offended

Saffron sentiments have been hurt for the nth time, now over the teaser of *Adipurush*

In the saffron community, sanctimony scales a new peak every day. Members indulge in a variety of theatrics to score brownie points; the easiest one is to attack the Hindi film industry, its stars, directors, etc., on some pretext or the other. And even if there is no pretext, they create one. The latest one they have found in *Adipurush*, an upcoming mythological film based on the Ramayana. Directed by Om Raut and shot simultaneously in Hindi and Telugu, it stars Prabhas as Raghava, Kriti Sanon as Janaki, and Saif Ali Khan as Lankesh. In fact, such is the level of tetchiness that even a teaser of the film has incensed Hindutva hotheads, including Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Ministers Kesav Prasad Maurya and Brajesh Pathak and Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra. Mishra has even warned of legal action if the objectionable scenes are not removed. Satyendra Das, Ram Temple head priest of Ayodhya, has demanded an outright ban on the movie. Das told a newspaper that the portrayal of Lord Ram, Hanuman and Ravana does not conform with the epic and thus is against their dignity. Pathak is against the movie because saints are opposed to it: "Whatever saints have said needs attention." The other UP Deputy Chief Minister, Keshav Maurya, hasn't even seen the teaser but is against it nonetheless. In this me-too game, nobody wants to be seen as less offended: the claim of hurt sentiments is the claim of being a bona fide Hindutva warrior.



And what, pray, has hurt Hindu sentiments? Bharatiya Janata Party spokesperson Malavika Avinash enlightened us about it: "The Ravana in the photograph that I see floating around is a guy who looks nothing Indian, has blue eye makeup and is wearing leather jackets. This is our history they are representing; they cannot do it in the guise of creative liberty." MP Minister Mishra is hurt because "Hanumanji is shown wearing leather, whereas the description [in the scriptures] of the deity's costume is different... These are scenes that hurt religious sentiments." That such arguments can be made in this day and age against a work of art speaks volumes about the plight of freedom of expression in our country. To begin with, art is not a Photostat representation of reality. Which implies that an artist or filmmaker need not be accurate in everything they create. The portrayal of deities is always a creative endeavour; the creativity of conventional portrayal cannot be privileged over that of the contemporary one. Besides, if every filmmaker listens to the views of every politician and pontiff, and is forced to adhere to their views, it will become impossible for him or her to direct any movie. But that, unfortunately, has been going on for quite some time. Today the Hindi filmmaker feels so constrained that they seem unwilling to take up interesting subjects. This also explains the staleness of story ideas and resultant flops.

PICTALK



An IAF helicopter in action during the full dress rehearsal for the Indian Air Force Day celebrations, Chandigarh

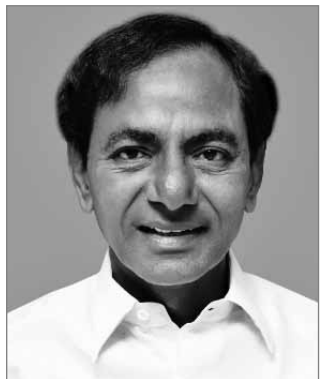
PTI

KCR on national stage

With his eyes set on pan-India presence, the CM relaunches TRS in new avatar

Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao who has shown a strong inclination to be a serious player in national politics has taken the first step towards it. He has launched Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS) which would be fighting the 2024 general election and catapult KCR onto the national stage. The new party is a rip-off of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS). But before the TRS aka BRS becomes a 'national party' it must pass the litmus test of the Election Commission which decides upon the credentials of a party for national stature. The 'name-change' of course has been conveyed to the Election Commission. To be a national party, it must be recognized as a state party in at least four states or has to have won six per cent of the votes in any four states and four Lok Sabha seats. Or the party must win two per cent Lok Sabha seats (11 seats) in at least three states. Right now TRS is one state party. It rules Telangana but has hardly any presence outside the state, though KCR, thanks to his forays to Delhi and presence on the dais in various public meetings is a known name nationwide. He has also established his strong credentials as a strong anti-BJP chief minister who is willing to take on the BJP in his state and elsewhere. This brings him to the national stage and is in line with the opposition parties which are trying to cobble up an anti-BJP alliance.

KCR has made his intentions clear from day one that he means business and will take on Prime Minister Modi in the 2024 elections. He is also meeting with a lot of opposition leaders and is said to have a good rapport with them. The Chief Minister Rao, before the relaunch of his party, met with several political leaders including his counterparts in other states - Mamata Banerjee, Nitish Kumar, Arvind Kejriwal and MK Stalin. Besides, Former Karnataka Chief Minister HD Kumaraswamy attended the BRS launch party. So far KCR is not trying to forge a united front against the BJP but talking to like-minded parties to come together for a common cause. As an astute politician, he knows making a front would not be easy so he seems to be avoiding it and focusing on presenting his Telangana Model of development to the rest of the country, something that Prime Minister did in his run-up to Delhi. Do we have another PM in making? We shall see.



Don't mess with the Russians

The Ukraine-Russia conflict is snowballing into a serious crisis which could have far-reaching ramifications for world peace and economy



INDRA SHEKHAR SINGH



Trouble was brewing in the Balkans, and yet on Europe's eastern front was gearing up for war. The partial mobilisation was ordered. The Russian army and reservists were called up, trains began to load soldiers and supplies for imminent war. Diplomatic cables out of St Petersburg claimed that "partial mobilisation" was only word-play, as the Russian military was deploying on the German and Austro-Hungarian fronts as per the "general mobilisation plan".

With little time left, the Germans ordered the counter-mobilisation and declared war. What could have been a war between two belligerents Serbia and Austro-Hungarians and a regional local affair escalated into World War I? Serbia took a back seat and the other Great powers - Britain, France, the US, and the minor powers Italy and Ottomans began the bloodiest power play, the world had ever seen. Habsburgs and Ottomans lost empires, the Germans their Kaiser and Russians their Czar. The French were still reeling, as Britain and America emerged as supreme powers. Lord Edward Grey's game worked, all the continental powers fought and bled dry. And as continental empires died, Russia transformed itself into the Fatherland and became the world's first communist nation and a force to reckon with.

Once again there is trouble brewing in the Balkan Kosovo, the NATO commanders in Kosovo are on "high alert" and "ready to move more troops". Serbia and Albania both stake claim to Kosovo, while it's under NATO protection currently and an independent country, formed after the breakup of erstwhile Yugoslavia. But a larger game is at play on the Eastern front between NATO, Ukraine, and Russia. The Ukraine crisis is being used to bleed the EU and Russia dry. And as the war escalates, humanity is again at the precipice of doom. This could very well be the start of another long and embittered conflict that will affect all of us. And has only

one winner - the US foreign policy pundits and the rising dollar.

At this point, it doesn't matter who and why the special military operation (SMO) started. As billions of dollars and 300,000 reservists are added to the mix, the situation is almost nuclear. Russia has been pushed into a corner, and the bear is in the mood to back down. Forget what Modi said. Putin's demeanour during the meeting clearly indicated why he thought of the Indian PM and his advice. Putin understands Indian double-speak and PR stunts knowing fairly well our choke points - Indian dependence on Russian arms and cheaper fossil fuels. So he continues to fight for the Russian motherland and the rights of Russian-speaking people beyond Russian borders. The referendum in the liberated areas of Donbas and support for the Serbian claim over Kosovo are both parts of new Pan-Slavism. But back to Ukraine, Russia is hell-bent on achieving SMO's goals - demilitarisation, de-Nazification, and liberation of the Donbas region. With voting in progress in the liberated areas,

“
SPECULATION IS ALSO GETTING HIGH ON THE STOCK MARKETS AND RUMOURS OF IMMINENT RECESSION ARE ALREADY DOING THE ROUNDS. THE ENERGY AND FOOD CRISES ARE GOING TO BURST THE ARTIFICIAL FISCAL BUBBLE SOONER THAN LATER

the last goal is more or less complete. Now the military power comes in.

Despite Zelensky's optics and broadcasts, there is no way Russia can be defeated militarily. Ukraine has already used its entire military might. The terms of engagement under SMO were quite different from their war or invasion doctrine. EU and NATO both know they cannot have regular troops fighting for Ukraine, and that means Ukraine will be given arms and money, but no muscle to use them. The International legion operating in Ukraine bolsters the tired Ukrainian army, but won't be enough to turn the tide. And the money pouring from the EU will soon begin to dry as winter comes and the gas prices sky rocket. EU will be forced to re-divert money and leave Ukraine in the cold.

Speculation is also getting high on the stock markets and rumours of imminent recession are already doing the rounds. The energy and food crisis is going to burst the artificial fiscal bubble sooner than later. Eventually, the Biden administration would have to make a deal with Putin and

put the matter at rest. One shouldn't be surprised if Zelensky becomes the fall guy for the West.

But if the deal comes late, the EU's economy and Euro would plummet, whereas the Russians will be emboldened and recover faster than Germany, because they have the food and fossil fuels to outlast the EU.

But if the deal is not made, the portents of a European war are visible. There is no stopping the Russian war machine either. An escalation of war from the Ukrainian side will be worse for Europe and their armies. Without nuclear weapons, NATO nor the EU cannot match the Russian army's full strength. Eastern Europe could be devastated, and Ukraine could be reduced to ruins over this winter. And god forbid, nuclear weapons are used, then our planet and humanity at large will risk a nuclear Christmas this year.

(The author writes on agriculture & environment, and is a former Director — Policy & Outreach, National Seed Association of India. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BITTER FIGHT IN MAHARASHTRA

Sir — The battle line between good and evil runs through the heart of every man. Life is neither good nor evil, but only a place for good and evil. It was not just a place for good and evil as the two factions of Shiv Sena battled in open and that too with the war of words. And the big brother BJP is watching the proceedings silently from the sideline. Maharashtra politics turned into turmoil because of the betrayal after the ultimate winner was pushed out for vested interests and MVA was formed as politics for convenience. It is unfortunate how a constitutionally elected government could be nudged by money power and rob people of their mandate.

The pre-poll alliance was mocked despite the posters carrying Balasaheb Thackeray on one side and Narendra Modi on the other side. And the fight is going in a threatening way. A traitor stamp was given to Eknath Shinde at the same time Sena's legacy was sold in haste by the real Sena. Thus, the burning of Ravan ended in a war of words and the action aftermath of all allegations and counter-allegations turned out to be in sour taste and not the original ideology of Babasaheb Thackeray.
CK Ramanathan | Ghaziabad

PERFECT TEN FOR PONNIYIN SELVAN

Sir — Lovely narrative and the problem with the writer is the enlarged pre-conceived notions. But comparisons are inevitable and inferences are drawn as per an individual's wealth of knowledge. But calling Kalki a failure as a writer is surprising. We can but limit it to the intrigues, mysteries, rivalries, and rampages and beyond that, well difficult to say and conclude. A marvelous cinematic experience after *Bahubali*. Supported by a rousing music score by the master AR Rahman. The Chola empire was brought up in all its glory.

The ethereal Aishwarya Rai and the beautiful Trisha light up the screen with

Death in the mountains



Ten climbers were killed after being hit by an avalanche in Uttarakhand. This is not the first incident of an avalanche. Even before this people have lost their lives in such incidents in the Himalayan region. Yes, the incidence of avalanches has definitely increased over the years. Incidents of avalanches worry

because they are causing great damage to human life. Unfortunately, no such mechanism has been developed so far, by which these events can be accurately predicted.

The problem is that people's awareness of avalanches is very low compared to other disasters. One reason for this is the occurrence of these disasters in remote, high mountainous areas. Therefore, it is difficult to gather much information about them. At the same time, it has to be understood that the cutting of trees and increasing pollution have increased this problem. Due to climate change, nature keeps showing its fierce form from time to time. Therefore, attention will also have to be paid to stop the felling of trees and controlling pollution.

Divyansha Sharma | Ujjain

their presence and performance. And in the scene where they are together, the screen is so luminous. All in all, it has been worth waiting for the movie and I just cannot wait for the second part which will release in 2023. Just a word of caution: Tamil is not conventional colloquial. It is Tamil spoken in those days. But you will get the gist of it.
CK Dorai Ramani Suresh | Coimbatore

CONG IN DISARRAY IN KARNATAKA

Sir — The Bharat Jodo Yatra is in Karnataka to unite the country, but it is evident that not much of 'Jodo' is happening in the state Congress unit due to constant one-upmanship between former chief minister Siddaramaiah and state party chief DK Shivakumar. The Karnataka Congress is faced with a conundrum with the continuing internal strife between the duo. This may affect their chances in the upcoming state elections. Despite best efforts of Rahul Gandhi the benefits of Bharat Jodo yatra may not translate into votes. The party high command has sent several messages to the state leadership to

ensure that fissures between the two seniors that have often crept up do not implode just ahead of the 2023 polls. Even during the Padyatra, one could see Rahul Gandhi being flanked by both leaders on either side or in deep discussion while walking at a slower pace. The idea is to ensure that the national walkathon undertaken by Gandhi should be a success and not hindered by the friction that the state unit may have.

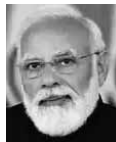
Even though both the top party leaders have overtly expressed unity in the party and between themselves, their respective loyalists have left no stone unturned to showcase their support for their respective favourites, which has turned the situation even more fragile. That has led many leaders to believe that even if the Congress's chances in the assembly polls turn in their favour, the race to occupy the chief minister's chair could turn out to be a major hurdle.

N Sadhasiva Reddy | Bengaluru

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

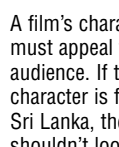
Why should good roads, education and health institutions exist only in big cities?



Prime Minister
—Narendra Modi



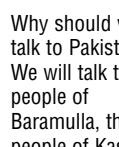
US Secretary of State
—Antony Blinken



Actor
—Dipika Chikhlia



Olympic champion
—E Kipchoge



Union Home Minister
—Amit Shah

What we're seeing is that if they (N Korea) continue down this road, it will only increase the condemnation.

A film's characters must appeal to the audience. If the character is from Sri Lanka, they shouldn't look like Mughals.

To be the first to win three Olympic marathon golds, that's my bucket list.

Why should we talk to Pakistan? We will talk to the people of Baramulla, the people of Kashmir.

FIRST COLUMN

COVID EFFECTS MAY BE RESULTING IN DEATHS

Covid after-effects could be the reason for spurt in sudden cardiac arrests



LK JHA

Doctors have reported seeing a significant surge in cases of heart attack and heart failure in the post-Covid period. Their incidence has gone up by more than one-fourth in the last one year, according to our experience at Sarvodaya Hospital, Faridabad.

After the pandemic, the incidence of heart attacks and heart failure has increased by 25-30 per cent in people who got infected with Covid. Patients who had to be hospitalized or put on a ventilator due to Covid are now much more vulnerable to heart complications, and we are seeing a considerable surge in such cases.

There are two ways by which Covid affects the heart. First is direct infection of the heart muscle, due to which it gets weakened, leading to heart failure. The second is that after Covid, a mild form of the infection persists in the body for many months. The arteries remain inflamed, leading to the tendency of clotting inside the heart. This results in heart attack and other complications. Many incidents have come to light in recent months of sudden heart attack in people after doing vigorous exercise. In these cases, the heart muscle may still be inflamed due to Long Covid, triggering a heart attack.

The social media platforms are abuzz these days with videos of artists on stage suddenly collapsing and dying, with the spectators watching the incidents with disbelief. Even some of the celebrities have succumbed to this phenomenon of becoming victims of cardiac arrests after exercise in gym or state performance. There are scopes for the people to speculate when incidents of similar nature appear on the social media platforms with short videos. There is a need to understand that we are still in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic.



The people who had a severe form of Covid need to take precautions. It is difficult to predict heart problems in recovered Covid patients. But there are blood tests that measure inflammatory markers like ESR and High-sensitivity C-reactive Protein (hs-CRP). These can tell whether any form of infection still exists in the body, and how much is the risk. It is advisable not to do any vigorous exercise for the next six months after getting Covid infection. Only light exercises in the form of brisk walking or mild jogging are OK. Don't indulge in any kind of strength training exercises like weight-lifting or extreme treadmill because your heart may still be weak.

We have seen an increase of 30 per cent over the last five years in the number of young patients with heart attacks coming to the hospital. They are also showing up with more extensive heart complications, with multiple blockages. Our advice is not to ignore any kind of symptoms, especially pain in the chest or upper part of the stomach. If you do activities like brisk walking or climbing the stairs and feel any kind of stiffness or heaviness in the chest, you should be very mindful. Many people attribute heart-related symptoms to acidity or arthritis, but any gastritis that persists for 2-3 days is unusual.

It is important in these cases to get tests done to rule out heart problems. Diabetes and tobacco are the top two risk factors for heart disease in India. Diabetic people have three times higher chances of having a heart attack than non-diabetic individuals. Smoking is also very dangerous for the heart, due to which we are seeing many young patients with heart attacks.

(The author is a cardiologist at Sarvodaya Hospital, Sector 8, Faridabad)

Pity that women don't understand manpower

From behind the desktop, wife can be seen indulging her pleasure of doing much pointless work

After I have undertaken my mandatory walk or stint on the treadmill, I do not undertake any wasteful expeditions. My wife is no "mechanical bride". She is as complete a human being as ever there was, and inordinately humane at that, but she is tidying up this, minding that apart from the regular chores all the time. Like planets, she is in a state of perpetual motion. Her living room is her pride, her bedroom her work of art. Having done my quota of physical activity, why should I waste man-power on frivolous movements? Parked in front of my desktop or sprawled on the bed, it gives me the vertigo to watch my wife indulging her pleasure of doing such pointless work. But women, I guess, do not understand much about man-power!

I had told my wife very early during our marriage that it takes many to solve a problem and there are various steps to solving it. My job was to reflect on the nature of the problem, so she could do the solving. That is division of labour. My wife gave me that look which she perfected in a short time living with me. The translation would run in volumes but I get it in an instant. Ever since she has gone about doing her things; I have learnt to manage to cope up with my vertigo reasonably well. But now that domestic helps are becoming a little unpredictable she expects me to join her in these mad pursuits.

I have some rule of thumb excuses to dodge the draft. "Is it necessary, we will be leaving in a couple of days, anyway?" "Is it legal?" I escaped the edict to locate the source of a leak (my version of investigating the source of Oxus) from somewhere behind the geyser. I said the municipality will have to be notified, the power supply company will have to be informed. "So the government has now entered our bathroom? And in the next move they will be sprawled right in our bedroom?" She said facetiously. But she let it pass; she was just testing me. She knew that my intervention would have resulted in flooding the bathroom anyway and a call to the National Disaster Management Authority.

During the course of the same week I was asked to go up to the terrace to see whether the help was malingering or tending to the many plants and pots. I pleaded that I had lost my cap and standing in the sun for long made me feel giddy and nauseated. My Ray Ban aviator glasses were missing. Maybe this was also just a dry run and she let me get away with this one as well. Now I know why; she was laying a perfect ambush, she trapped me on an S-bend!

My books—poor me in my untidy environment of books—are her greatest eyecore. There was a time when we could dedicate one big hall to my books, neatly displayed, easily accessible. Even in the



MAYBE THIS WAS ALSO JUST A DRY RUN AND SHE LET ME GET AWAY WITH THIS ONE AS WELL. NOW I KNOW WHY; SHE WAS LAYING A PERFECT AMBUSH, SHE TRAPPED ME ON AN S-BEND!

(The author is a former IPS officer)



middle of the night if I was seized by an urge to look up a reference or browse a few pages it was no problem.

But gone are days and in the more frugal circumstances, in the brutal struggle for existence my books have lost out to the many shelves and almirahs which according to my wife contain objects of absolute necessity. The rest of my books have been dispatched to a room on the first floor. I argued with my wife that I and my books had co-evolved. It is like my environment for me, you can't destroy my habitat. "Don't you have any concern for the sole member of that rare species called husband?" My wife said that you could survive with your thousand books and the rest of it is an indulgence." I said these are not a thousand but only six hundred. She threatened to count each one of them so I climbed down and it was agreed that if I imported some books from upstairs an equal number would have to be deported.

Now my wife has a suspicion that some illegal immigrants from the first floor are hiding in the pile. Of course my children have sent me a few hundred in the last few years, but they are all legal. I told her, "I have papers from Amazon, even for the imported ones. Don't

husbands have human rights?" "So long as they don't create a pigsty in the bedroom," she said. The clutter and the pile are intruding into alien territory of her nicely curated corner. "Don't you quote all the time "I would rather be an unsatisfied Socrates than a satisfied pig". "So, Mr. Socrates of the slums, don't be a pig."

My wife has served me notice that either I do the needful or she will take things in her own hand. And in matters like these she is an extremist. Either I find a way to somehow accommodate these books on the uppermost shelves by weeding out some for extinction or see them deported en masse. I am a human being not an uncaring cruel natural agency like evolution!

I have avoided the task so far by pointing out that the aluminium ladder has become a little unstable and by generally playing on her insecurity that her aging sixty six plus husband might take a bump. This has worked so far, but for how long? Aluminium ladders can be mended! Our departure from Patna has earned me a reprieve but how long can I be an exile?

I had asked my wife, sometime back, to buy me a pair of walking shoes and a couple of track pants. Normally I am pressured into

accompanying her on these missions because of size issues but over the years I have managed to find comprehensive strategies to evade the demand. But this time she did not say a word. I got my pair of shoes and track pants from Decathlon but the inventory included an un-indented trekking backpack, a pair of mountain trekking shoes, a rucksack, trekking gloves, trek zip off pants, a solid looking harness, and waterproof all weather multilayer peel off jacket. She sat down triumphantly. "When we get back to Patna you are going to go on your climbing expedition and plant the books in proper order, tidy up the clutter on the lower reaches and leave no waste on the top. You are equipped for every season and every eventuality, the activity is perfectly legal and does not violate any of your human rights. I checked up with our family lawyer."

It has steeled my resolution. I shall arise and go now and go to the Arctic tundra, report triumphantly for Facebook, wearing all that gear, petting a caribou or riding a sled. Chase the lions chasing antelopes and gazelles for lunch in the Serengeti Savannahs in the darkest Africa. At least I would earn some admiring oohs and aahs from known and unknown women friends!

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

THERE ARE TWO MODELS: ONE OF PM MODI WHICH GIVES EMPLOYMENT AND PEACE; THE OTHER IS THE GUPKAR MODEL WHICH LED TO PULWAMA. —UNION HOME MINISTER AMIT SHAH



IF THE GUPKAR MODEL GAVE GUNS AND STONES TO KASHMIRI YOUTH, WHY IS THE PM INVITING THESE LEADERS TO MEETINGS IN DELHI? —NATIONAL CONFERENCE VICE-PRESIDENT OMAR ABDULLAH

Ukraine war: Grain trade disruption and India's role

Russia and Ukraine were breadbaskets of the world, but they have now created a global shortage of wheat

Since the war broke out in Ukraine, the international order of trading has experienced a severe jolt in terms of grain trade. Food production and export supply have rapidly decreased due to crop failures and supply chain disruptions which have failed to meet the growing global demand, further adding to global food insecurity, particularly in Africa and West Asia.

In recent years, Ukraine, along with Russia, have emerged as major players in the world grain market and are commonly considered the breadbasket of the world. Prior to the war, Ukraine and Russia accounted for 14 per cent of world wheat production and around 25 per cent of world export of wheat.



RITUPARNA KAUSHIK



ARPAN GANGULY



YASHOBANTA PARIDA

(Authors are Assistant Professors in Economics at FLAME University, Pune)

Prior to the Russian invasion of Ukraine on Feb 24, 2022, grain exports rose by 8.5 per cent between 2021 and 2022. Thereafter, grain exports are estimated (as of July 29, 2022) to have decreased by 53.2 per cent for 2022-23.

The ongoing war continues to reshape geo-political relations between nations, exposes fissures in the global supply chain, and the dominance of nations strategically situated to take advantage of the food crisis.

Continuous imposition of new Western sanction packages, blockade of Black Sea ports, loss of human life and destruction of Ukrainian agricultural fields have severely disrupted the global wheat supply.

Nations in Africa, West

Asia and Southeast Asia, sourcing their wheat from Ukraine or Russia, are facing dire shortages of grain and are in urgent need of finding alternative sources to meet their grain requirements.

On the other hand, grain shortages have also led to an increase in the price of wheat in the international market. Given this growing shortage in the world supply of wheat and rising prices (which further adds to food insecurity in developing countries), to what extent can India fill the growing void in grain trade?

India is the second largest producer of wheat in the world economy, with a share of around 13.5 per cent (107.59 MT) of total world production in 2020. However,

it accounts for a very small proportion of total world exports of wheat (1-2 per cent) with its share increasing from 0.14 per cent in 2016 to 0.54 per cent in 2020.

Nearly the bulk of wheat production is either for domestic consumption or for storage. More recently, based on a notification dated May 13, 2022, India imposed a temporary ban on wheat export due to the destruction of wheat crops caused by unprecedented heat waves in the country.

The ban was intended to ward off domestic farmers and consumers from the global grain shortage, enhance food security, and thwart inflationary pressures. This was met with criticisms from several advanced

nations who urged India to contribute to addressing growing food insecurity and fulfil its responsibility as a G20 nation. However, India has sought to maintain its trade ties with neighboring nations as it continues to export wheat to countries such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the United Arab Emirates and Indonesia.

To export more wheat or not is a dual-edged sword. In terms of benefits, firstly, India can enter new and potential markets by filling the void left by Ukraine and Russia in Africa and West Asia. Secondly, greater wheat exports can potentially increase the prices wheat traders or farmers receive. Thirdly, wheat exports can help stem the

massive volume of grain wastage every year.

However, even if the Government seeks to fill the void, it should plan the move in such a way that it does not hamper local consumption but also, more importantly, ensure that wheat farmers are protected from the vagaries of global competition. The extent to which gains from wheat exports will trickle down to farmers in terms of higher MSP or higher profitability remains unclear.

Outcomes will significantly vary for farmers from richer agricultural states like Punjab (who benefited from access to large-scale production technologies during the Green Revolution) vis-à-vis those from poorer agricultural states where agricultural

networks (in terms of access to markets, input costs, irrigation facilities, or technology) remain disjointed and weak.

The equitable distribution of gains from wheat exports to the farming community will remain a potent challenge moving forward.

Moreover, the role and intervention of FCI (Food Corporation of India) add an additional layer of complication, as an increase in exports might end up drawing out stocks from the FCI (in the absence of a bumper season), which would lead to conflict with other developed nations at the World Trade Organisation stage (as FCI stocks are meant for domestic consumption and welfare programs only).

Russian rockets hit Ukrainian city

Near nuke plant

AP ■ KYIV

Seven Russian rockets slammed into residential buildings in the southern Ukrainian city of Zaporizhzhia before dawn Thursday, killing one person and trapping at least five in the city close to Europe's biggest nuclear power plant, the governor of the mostly Russian-occupied region said. The strikes came just hours after Ukraine's president announced that the country's military had retaken three more villages in one of the regions illegally annexed by Russia, the latest battlefield reversal for Moscow.

Governor Oleksandr Starukh wrote on his Telegram channel that many people were rescued from the multi-story buildings, including a 3-year-old girl who was taken to a hospital for treatment. He initially reported two people were killed but later said that one woman initially thought to have died was saved by doctors.

Photos provided by emergency services showed rescuers scrambling through rubble in the wreckage of a devastated building.

Regional authorities reported another rocket attack later in the morning, but there were no immediate details of casualties or what was struck.

The deputy head of the Ukraine president's office, Kyrylo Tymoshenko, said 10 people had been killed in the latest Russian attacks in the Dnipro, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson regions.

Zaporizhzhia is one of



four regions that Russian President Vladimir Putin annexed in violation of international laws on Wednesday, and is home to a nuclear plant that is under Russian occupation. The city of the same name remains under Ukrainian control.

The head of the U.N.'s nuclear watchdog is expected to visit Kyiv this week to discuss the situation at the Zaporizhzhia facility after Putin signed a decree Wednesday declaring that Russia was taking over the six-

reactor plant. Ukraine's Foreign Ministry called it a criminal act and said it considered Putin's decree "null and void." The state nuclear operator, Energoatom, said it would continue to operate the plant.

Rafael Grossi, the director-general of the International Atomic Energy Agency, plans to talk with Ukrainian officials about the Russian move. He will also discuss efforts to set up a secure protection zone around the facility, which has been damaged in the fighting

and seen staff including its director abducted by Russian troops.

Grossi will travel to Moscow for talks with Russian officials after a stop in Kyiv.

The U.S. Sent its international development chief to Kyiv on Thursday, the highest-ranking American official to visit Ukraine since Russia illegally annexed the four regions.

The head of the U.S. Agency for International Development, Samantha Power, was holding meetings with government officials and

residents. She said the U.S. Would provide an additional \$55 million to repair heating pipes and other equipment.

USAID said the United States has delivered \$9.89 billion in aid to Ukraine since February. A spending bill signed by U.S. President Joe Biden last week promises another \$12.3 billion directed both at military and public services needs. Power said Washington plans to release the first \$4.5 billion of that funding in the coming weeks.

Meanwhile, leaders from more than 40 countries are meeting in Prague on Thursday to launch a "European Political Community" aimed at boosting security and prosperity across the continent, a day after the Kremlin held the door open for further land grabs in Ukraine. Speaking in a conference call with reporters, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said that "certain territories will be reclaimed, and we will keep consulting residents who would be eager to embrace Russia."

The precise borders of the areas Moscow is claiming remain unclear, but Putin has vowed to defend Russia's territory — including the annexed regions — with any means at his military's disposal, including nuclear weapons.

In his nightly video address Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said that the Ukrainian army recaptured three more villages in the Kherson region.

Novooskrysenko, Novohryhorivka, and Popovavlivka are all situated northeast of Kherson.

Ukrainian forces are seizing

back villages in Kherson in humiliating battlefield defeats for Russian forces that have badly dented the image of a powerful Russian military and added to the tensions surrounding an ill-planned mobilization. They have also fueled fighting among Kremlin insiders and left Putin increasingly cornered.

On Wednesday, the Ukrainian military said the Ukrainian flag had been raised above seven Kherson region villages previously occupied by the Russians. The closest of the liberated villages to the city of Kherson is Davydiv Brid, some 100 kilometers (60 miles) away.

The deputy head of the Ukrainian regional government, Yuriy Sobolevskyi, said military hospitals were full of wounded Russian soldiers and that Russian military medics lacked supplies. Once they are stabilized, Russian soldiers are being sent to Crimea, which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014. When Russian troops pulled back from the Donetsk city of Lyman over the weekend, they retreated so rapidly that they left behind the bodies of their comrades. Some were still lying by the side of the road leading into the city on Wednesday.

Ukrain's presidential office said 10 more bodies of people pulled back from the Donetsk city of Lyman over the weekend, they retreated so rapidly that they left behind the bodies of their comrades. Some were still lying by the side of the road leading into the city on Wednesday.

Zelenskyy: Putin wouldn't survive nuclear attack



AP ■ CANBERRA

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said on Thursday it was "hard to say" whether the risk of nuclear war had increased with his military's territorial gains, but he remains confident his Russian counterpart would not survive such as escalation in hostilities.

Zelenskyy was addressing the Lowy Institute international think tank in Sydney via video link after Ukraine's military retook ground illegally annexed by Russia last week.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has warned that he won't hesitate to use nuclear weapons to ward off Ukraine's attempt to reclaim control of Moscow-occupied areas.

Asked if the risk of Russia using nuclear weapons had risen, Zelenskyy said through an interpreter: "It's hard to say."

He questioned whether Putin had enough control over the Russian campaign to direct a tactical nuclear strike. The Russians found it "hard to control everything that is happening in their country, just as they're not controlling everything they have on the battlefield," Zelenskyy said.

Zelenskyy said Putin understood that the "world will never forgive" a Russian nuclear strike.

"He understands that after the use of nuclear weapons he would be unable any more to preserve, so to speak, his life, and I'm confident of that," Zelenskyy said.

Spain, Germany discuss energy crisis before EU summit

AP ■ MADRID

The leaders of Spain and Germany held talks in Spain Wednesday, two days before both participate in an European Union summit to discuss Europe's energy crisis derived from Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez hosted German Chancellor Olaf Scholz in the northwestern city of A Coruña. The two centre-left leaders were accompanied by 15 ministers from their governments.

The EU summit in Prague on Friday will likely include discussions on Germany's plan to subsidise gas prices for its consumers and businesses, a move that has raised questions from France and Italy.

Sánchez said that he "empathises" with Germany due to its pressing need to find alternatives to Russian gas and oil, while adding that the EU should find common solutions. Both Sánchez and Scholz support reforming the EU's energy market.

"The consequences of the



war in Ukraine impact us all, but clearly it has a greater impact on the countries with a higher dependency on Russian carbon-based fuels ... so we empathise with the situation that Germany is in," Sánchez said. "(And) Germany is Europe's leading economy, so it is in all our interests that Germany does well."

Scholz, meanwhile, reiterated his support for Spain's push to build another, larger pipeline with France that could pump natural gas, and potentially green hydrogen, northwards to the rest of Europe. That plan, however, has received zero support from French president Emmanuel Macron.

Sweden seizes evidence at Baltic Sea pipeline leak site

AP ■ COPENHAGEN

Sweden's domestic security Agency said on Thursday that its preliminary investigation of leaks from two Russian gas pipelines in the Baltic Sea "has strengthened the suspicions of serious sabotage" as the cause and a prosecutor said evidence at the site has been seized.

The Swedish Security Service said the probe confirmed that "detonations" caused extensive damage to the Nord Stream 1 and Nord Stream 2 pipelines last week. Authorities had said when

the leaks off Sweden and Denmark first surfaced that explosions were recorded in the area.

The agency, which said what happened in the Baltic Sea was "very serious", didn't give details about its investigation.

But in a separate statement, Swedish prosecutor Mats Ljungqvist said "seizures have been made at the crime scene and these will now be investigated".

Ljungqvist, who led the preliminary investigation, did not identify the seized evidence. Ljungqvist said he had



given "directives to temporarily block (the area) and carry out a crime scene investigation".

Now that the initial probe is completed, a blockade around the pipelines off Sweden will be lifted, he said. The governments of

Denmark and Sweden previously said they suspected that several hundred pounds of explosives were involved in carrying out a deliberate act of sabotage.

The leaks from Nord Stream 1 and 2 discharged huge amounts of methane into the air. Last week, undersea explosions ruptured Nord Stream 2 and its sister pipeline, Nord Stream 2, at two locations off Sweden and two off Denmark. The pipelines were built to carry Russian natural gas to Germany.

Danish authorities said the two methane leaks they were

monitoring in international waters stopped over the weekend. One of the leaks off Sweden also appeared to have ended.

Russian President Vladimir Putin accused the West of attacking the pipelines, which the US and its allies have vehemently denied, noting that Russia has the most to gain in wrecking havoc on Europe's energy markets.

Separately the Swedish coast guard said "the remaining emissions is more or less unchanged", and that it was returning to its ordinary environmental rescue operations.

EU lawmakers condemn Myanmar's crackdown on media freedom

AP ■ BRUSSELS

EU lawmakers on Thursday condemned the crackdown on media freedom in military-ruled Myanmar and called for the release of "every unfairly detained journalist."

Since the military seized power in February last year, it has forced at least 12 media outlets to shut down and arrested about 142 journalists, 57 of whom remain detained.

Most of those still detained are being held under an incitement charge for allegedly causing fear, spreading false news or agitating against a government employee.

In its resolution adopted by show of hands, the EU Parliament cited the cases of BBC freelance producer Htet Htet Khine; Sithu Aung Myint, a Frontier Myanmar columnist and contributor to Voice of America; and freelancer Nyein Nyein Ay.

"Strongly condemning the military junta's violent and illegitimate rule in Myanmar, MEPs urge it to drop all politically motivated charges against the members of the press and media workers, and unconditionally release every unfairly detained journalist," the EU Parliament said.

"They also call on the junta to immediately end its abuses, including arbitrary arrests and detention, torture, sexual violence and other ill-treatment, as well as unfair trials against people working in the media."



agitating crimes against a government employee."

Htet Htet Khine was sentenced on September 15 to three years' hard labour. On September 27, a court sentenced her to a further three years, with a reduction for time served. She has been in detention since August 2021.

"We remain concerned for her safety and wellbeing in detention, and call for the release of Htet Htet Khine and other media workers who have been unjustly detained in Myanmar," said BBC Media Action Chief Executive Officer Caroline Nureye.

Sithu Aung Myint was arrested in August 2021 along with Htet Htet Khine.

Some of the closed media outlets have continued operating without a license, publishing online as their staff mem-

bers dodge arrest. Others operate from exile.

The army's takeover led to mass public protests that the military and police responded to with lethal force, triggering armed resistance and escalating violence that have led to what some UN experts characterise as a civil war.

According to detailed lists by the Assistance Association for Political Prisoners, a watchdog group based in Thailand, 2,336 civilians have died in the military government's crackdown on opponents and at least 15,757 people have been arrested.

EU lawmakers also called for restoration of the civilian government and the "unconditional release" of Myanmar's former president, Win Myint, and former leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

21 more Malaysian scam victims return from Cambodia, Laos



AP ■ SEPANG (MALAYSIA)

An additional 21 Malaysians rescued from human traffickers in Cambodia and Laos returned home on Thursday, as the government intensified efforts to locate scam victims reported missing abroad.

Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah, who met some of the returning victims at Kuala Lumpur's airport, said the government has now managed to rescue 273 people out of 401 reported missing in Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar and Thailand.

Most have returned except for 60 still in immigration detention centres in those countries who are waiting to be processed, he said at a news conference.

Saifuddin, who heads a new government group tackling the issue, said officials have stepped up measures to locate the remaining 128 people. He said most of the victims are in their 20s and urged Malaysians to check carefully before taking any jobs outside the country.

The government has pledged to rescue Malaysians caught in what has been called "modern slavery" in the region.


The issue took on more urgency after a 23-year-old Malaysian died in a Thai hospital near the Myanmar border after falling prey to a human

trafficking scheme.

Some opposition politicians believe the 401 people reported missing are only a fraction of the actual number of Malaysians who have been caught in such scams. The opposition has urged the government to take legal action against local agents working with the human trafficking syndicates and ban false job advertisements.

Cambodia officials say they have uncovered numerous illegal online schemes that lured illegal workers and have arrested hundreds of people from China and Taiwan for involvement. Police said scammers, mainly from China, have used Cambodia as a base for extorting money. Apart from Cambodia, scammers are also known to have set up bases in Laos and Myanmar near the Thai border.

A UN envoy has said the scam networks, which often have links to transnational organised crime, are set up in countries with weak law enforcement, attracting educated young workers with promises of high earnings. The workers are then subject to isolation and the threat of violence unless they succeed in cheating victims reached by phone into transferring payments into overseas bank accounts.



छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल
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// सर्व संबंधित को सूचना //

भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, नई दिल्ली की ई.आई.ए. अधिसूचना दिनांक 14/09/2006 (यथा संशोधित) के अन्तर्गत सर्व साधारण को सूचित किया जाता है कि मेसर्स प्रकाश इण्डस्ट्रीज लिमिटेड, ग्राम-भास्करापुरा, खडपाड़ा, बड़सरा, कुर्डीह, कुसमुरी, धनौली खुर्द एवं केवरा, तह.-भैयाथान, जिला-सूरजपुर (छ.ग.) के भास्करापुरा खुर्दी एवं भूमिगत कोयला खदान की उत्पादन क्षमता 1.0 मिलियन टन/ वर्ष के माईनिंग लीज क्षेत्र 932.00 हेक्टेयर के पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति हेतु लोक सुनवाई बायत मुख्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मण्डल, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर में आवेदन किया गया है। उक्त खदान परियोजना के संबंध में आपत्तियाँ/सुझाव/विचार, टीका-टिप्पणियाँ, इस सूचना के जारी होने के दिनांक से 30 दिवस के भीतर क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मण्डल, कन्या परिसर रोड, शासकीय आयुर्वेदिक चिकित्सालय के पास, मन्माकला गंगारु, अंबिकापुर, जिला-सरगुजा (छ.ग.) के कार्यालय में मौखिक या लिखित रूप से कार्यालयीन समय में प्रस्तुत की जा सकती है। इस खदान परियोजना के लिए लोक सुनवाई दिनांक 09/11/2022, दिन-बुधवार, पूर्वाह्न 11:00 बजे से स्थान-शासकीय हाईस्कूल के निकट ग्राम केवरा, वि.खं. भैयाथान, जिला-सूरजपुर (छ.ग.) में नियत की गई है। यह भी सूचित हो कि :

- लोक सुनवाई में सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों द्वारा मास्क का उपयोग किया जावेगा तथा समय-समय पर सेनेटाईज़र का उपयोग किया जाना अनिवार्य होगा।
- कोरोना वायरस के नियंत्रण एवं रोकथाम हेतु शासन द्वारा जारी समस्त दिशा-निर्देशों का अक्षरशः पालन किया जाना अनिवार्य होगा।

ई.आई.ए. अधिसूचना दिनांक 14/09/2006 (यथा संशोधित) के प्रावधानों के अनुसार खदान परियोजना को डाफ्ट ई.आई.ए. रिपोर्ट, कार्यपालक सार की प्रतियाँ (हिन्दी व अंग्रेजी में) एवं इसकी को. डी. (साफ कॉपी) जन सामान्य के अवलोकन/पठन हेतु डायरेक्टर, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, इंदिरा पर्यावरण भवन, जोरबाग रोड, नई दिल्ली, साईटस्ट्रेट 'डी', एकीकृत क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, अण्डय भवन, नार्थ ब्लॉक, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला-रायपुर, कार्यालय कलेक्टर, सूरजपुर, जिला-सूरजपुर, मुख्य कार्यपालन अधिकारी, जिला पंचायत-सूरजपुर, जिला-सूरजपुर, अनुविभागीय अधिकारी (रा), कार्यालय अनुविभागीय अधिकारी (रा.) भैयाथान, जिला-सूरजपुर (छ.ग.), खनिज अधिकारी, कार्यालय कलेक्टर (खनिज शाखा), सूरजपुर, जिला-सूरजपुर, कार्यालय महाप्रबंधक, जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र, सूरजपुर, जिला-सूरजपुर, मुख्य कार्यपालन अधिकारी, जनपद पंचायत, भैयाथान/ओडगी, जिला-सूरजपुर, सरपंच/सचिव, ग्रामपंचायत-भास्करापुरा, खडपाड़ा, बड़सरा, कुर्डीह, कुसमुरी, धनौली खुर्द एवं केवरा, तह.-भैयाथान, जिला-सूरजपुर (छ.ग.), सरपंच/सचिव, ग्राम पंचायत-भरसेडी, तह.-ओडगी, जिला-सूरजपुर (छ.ग.), सदस्य सचिव, मुख्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मण्डल, पर्यावास भवन, नार्थ ब्लॉक, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, जिला-रायपुर (छ.ग.) एवं क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी, क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मण्डल, कन्या परिसर रोड, शासकीय आयुर्वेदिक चिकित्सालय के पास, मन्माकला गंगारु, तह.-अंबिकापुर, जिला-सरगुजा (छ.ग.) में रखी गई है।

हस्ता/- सदस्य सचिव
छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल
नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर (छ.ग.)

Biden to mark IBM investment with Democrats in tough races

AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden is ready to celebrate a new USD 20 billion investment by IBM in New York's Hudson River Valley with two House Democrats running in competitive races in next month's critical mid-term elections.

Biden is taking part in a Thursday afternoon announcement at the IBM facility in Poughkeepsie, New York.

He is expected to hold out the company's plans as part of what the White House says is a manufacturing "boom" spurred by this summer's passage of a USD 280 billion legislative package intended to boost the US semiconductor industry and scientific research.

Democrats facing tough mid-terms races have largely avoided appearing with Biden in the leadup to November's elections.

But Biden, whose approval ratings remain underwater, will be joined by two House incumbents in competitive New York races who are bucking the trend: Reps. Sean Patrick Maloney and Pat Ryan.

"When I heard @POTUS was looking to see the benefits of the CHIPS & Science Act first-hand, I told him that the Hudson Valley was the perfect place," Maloney wrote on



Twitter on Wednesday.

"I'm thrilled to host him in Poughkeepsie this week to celebrate the major wins and good-paying jobs we are delivering here in NY."

The CHIPS and Science Act, which Biden signed into law in August, was a rare piece of legislation for which the president was able to win bipartisan support.

IBM's USD 20 billion investment over the next decade is intended to bolster research and development and manufacturing of semiconductors, mainframe technology, artificial intelligence and

quantum computing in New York's Hudson River Valley, according to the White House.

"As we tackle large-scale technological challenges in climate, energy, transportation and more, we must continue to invest in innovation and discovery — because advanced technologies are key to solving these problems and driving economic prosperity, including better jobs, for millions of Americans," said Arvind Krishna, IBM's chairman and CEO.

The IBM investment comes on the heels of chip-maker Micron announcing

earlier this week an investment of up to USD 100 billion over the next 20-plus years to build a plant in upstate New York that could create 9,000 factory jobs.Maloney, chairman of the powerful Democratic congressional campaign fundraising arm, is running against Republican state Assemblyman Mike Lawler in New York's 17th District. Ryan is up against state Assemblyman Colin Schmitt in the 18th District.

The boundaries of most New York districts, including Maloney's and Ryan's, have been affected by redistricting. Ryan in August won a close special election to serve out the term of Democrat Antonio Delgado, who vacated his 19th District seat after he was appointed lieutenant governor by Democratic Gov Kathy Hochul. Ryan is running to serve a full term in the 18th District, where he lives.

Maloney, who had served New York's 18th District since 2013, decided to run in the 17th District. His Hudson Valley home fell inside the new boundaries after redistricting.

Hochul, who took office last year after Democrat Andrew Cuomo resigned amid sexual harassment allegations, is also scheduled to attend.

She's looking to win a full term in next month's election against Republican Rep. Lee Zeldin.

Lanka's Parliament defers debate on 22nd constitutional amendment

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The much-anticipated debate for the adoption of the 22nd Amendment to Sri Lanka's Constitution aimed at empowering Parliament over the executive president was deferred on Thursday as Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena told the House that the government will have more discussions to seek views of the opposition to make it a "meaningful" exercise.

The parliamentary debate was fixed for October 6 and 7. However, it was speculated that due to disagreements in the ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna (SLPP) party coalition the debate would not take place.



"We have decided to have more discussions to seek views of the opposition as they raised some concerns", Prime Minister Gunawardena told Parliament. "We are willing to have talks to make sure that this amendment would be meaningful. At the moment it is a useless exercise", the main opposition leader Sajith

Premadasa said in response. New dates are yet to be fixed.

The government sources said a section of the ruling coalition was in disagreement with the amendment. They do not want any pruning of presidential powers.

Some members of the SLPP went public with their opposition to 22A.

CDC, WHO, Uganda to host regional meeting as Ebola spreads

AP ■ NAIROBI

The Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention says Uganda next week will host a ministerial meeting on the outbreak of the Sudan strain of the Ebola virus which has no proven vaccine and which has caused alarm in the East Africa region.

Acting director Ahmed Ogwell told journalists on Thursday the three countries that suffered the devastating West Africa outbreak of Ebola in 2014-16, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia, also are invited to the October 12 meeting.

The current Ebola outbreak in central Uganda has a 69 per cent case fatality rate, which Ogwell called "very high".

French writer Annie gets Nobel Prize

AP ■ STOCKHOLM

French author Annie Ernaux, who mined her own biography to explore life in France since the 1940s, was awarded this year's Nobel Prize in literature on Thursday for work that illuminates murky corners of memory, family and society.

The Swedish Academy said Ernaux, 82, was recognised for "the courage and clinical acuity with which she



uncovers the roots, estrangements and collective restraints of personal memory".

She is the first French literature laureate since Patrick Modiano in 2014.

Ernaux told Swedish broadcaster SVT by telephone that the award was "a great honor" and "a very great responsibility".

Ernaux started out writing autobiographical novels, but quickly abandoned fiction in favour of memoirs.

Anders Olsson, chairman of the Nobel literature committee, said Ernaux had used the term "an ethnologist of herself" rather than a writer of fiction.

Her more than 20 books, most of them very short, chronicle events in her life and the lives of those around her. They present uncompromising portraits of sexual encounters, abortion, illness and the deaths of her parents.

Solomon Islands leader rules out China base in his country

AP ■ CANBERRA

The Solomon Islands prime minister assured Australia on Thursday that he would not "endanger his country" by allowing China to establish a naval base in the South Pacific.

Solomons Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare made his first visit to the Australian capital Canberra since his counterpart Anthony Albanese's centre-left Labour Party came to power at elections in May.

"Prime minister, I reiterate again that Solomon Islands will never be used for foreign military installations or institutions of foreign countries, because this will not be in the interest of Solomon Islands and its people," Sogavare told Albanese in front of reporters before their meeting began in Parliament House.

A bilateral security agreement between China and the Solomons signed early this year raised concerns of a Chinese naval base being established in the South Pacific. China has denied seeking a military foothold in the Solomons.

"My government's legacy is to safeguard the future of Solomon Islands and its people, and not to endanger the country and its citizens or the security of any forum country," Sogavare added, referring to the Pacific Islands Forum, a bloc of 18 regional neighbours that includes Australia.

The pair released a joint statement after their meeting rather than hold a customary joint press conference. The leaders "reaffirmed mutual security commitments and the Pacific family first approach to



regional peace and security", the statement said.

Australia wants the Solomons to turn to its neighbours to support its security needs rather than China.

Australia already has a bilateral security treaty with the Solomons signed in 2017. It provides a legal basis for the rapid deployment of Australian police, troops and associated civilians in the event of a major security challenge.

Australian police have been in the Solomons' capital Honiara since November to maintain peace after rioting.

Australia had led a force of Pacific Islands police and troops under the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands from 2003 to 2017. It included 2,300 police and troops from 17 nations, invited by the Solomons' government. The deployment successfully ended the conflict that killed 200 people.

In the five years of ethnic and civil unrest before RAMSI arrived, the Solomons was close to becoming a failed state.

Sogavare and Albanese embraced when they met at a Pacific Islands Forum summit in July in Fiji, in a sign that bilateral relations were mending after Australia's nine years of conservative rule.

But relations remain testy. Sogavare accused Australia of interfering in domestic politics last month by offering to pay for Solomons' elections next year.

Sogavare had argued that his country could not afford to hold elections and host the regional Pacific Games next year.

Solomons lawmakers last month voted to delay the election until 2024, which critics condemned as a power grab. Sogavare accused Australia of attempting to influence that vote with its offer to help with elections.

In the joint statement on Thursday, Sogavare welcomed Australia's commitment of 16.68 million Australian dollars (USD 10.86 million) to pay for the games and its offer of support for the 2024 elections.

China's vast Xinjiang hit with Covid travel restrictions

AP ■ BEIJING

The sprawling Xinjiang region in western China has been hit with sweeping COVID-19 travel restrictions as the government ratchets up control measures across the country ahead of a key Communist Party congress later this month.

Trains and buses in and out of the region of 22 million people have been suspended, and passenger numbers on flights have been reduced to 75 per cent of capacity in recent days, according to Chinese media reports. A notice from the regional government on Tuesday said the measures were enacted to "strictly prevent the risk of spillover" of the virus.



A Xinjiang official apologized for the spread of the epidemic to other regions and provinces in China, particularly in recent days. As is often the case with China's draconian "zero-COVID" policy, the measures seemed out of proportion to the number of cases detected. The National Health Commission announced on Thursday that 97 cases had been recorded in Xinjiang in

the latest 24-hour period, after 91 cases were reported the previous day. All of them were asymptomatic.

Officials are desperate not to be called out for new outbreaks in their regions and Xinjiang has been under special scrutiny over the government's establishment of a series of prison-like re-education centres in which Muslim minorities have been taught to renounce their religion and allegedly subjected to a range of human rights abuses.

Xinjiang's vast surveillance system, relying on ubiquitous checkpoints, facial and even voice recognition software, and universal cell phone monitoring has made controlling travel among the population especially easy.

Gambia recalls syrups blamed for 66 child deaths

AP ■ BANJUL (GAMBIA)

Gambia has launched an urgent door-to-door campaign to remove cough and cold syrups blamed for the deaths of more than 60 children from kidney injury in the tiny West African country.

Speaking to The Associated Press, the Director of Health Dr Mustapha Bittaye confirmed the wave of child deaths from acute kidney injury, sending shockwaves across the country of 2.4 million people and around the world.

The World Health Organisation has issued an alarm in response to the deaths.

"WHO has issued a medical product alert for four contaminated medicines identified in The Gambia that have been potentially linked

to acute kidney injuries and 66 deaths among children," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said in a statement issued on Wednesday.

"The loss of young lives is beyond heartbreaking for their families," he said. The four medicines are cough and cold syrups produced in India, said the WHO statement.

While the contaminated products have so far only been detected in Gambia, they may have been distributed to other countries, said the statement.

The WHO is pursuing investigations with the company and regulatory authorities in India, it said.

"WHO recommends all countries detect and remove these products from circulation to prevent further harm to patients," it said.

Teaming up with the Gambia Red Cross Society, the Ministry of Health has dispatched hun-

dreds of young people to collect the suspect syrups through a house-to-house campaign.

<p>PUBLIC NOTICE</p> <p>General public is hereby informed that Mr. Bipin Devi W/o Mr. Jayant Prasad Sharma is intending to sell Residential Plot No. 10A, area measuring 105 Sq. Yds. i.e. 877 Sq. Meters, out of Khata No. 319, Situated in the area of Village Chhapra, under Sak Lok Colony, Pargana & Tehsil Dadr, District Gauraha Buth Nagar, U.P. to Mrs. Reeta W/o Mr. Ashok Kumar, to be financed & mortgaged by my client i.e. M/s. DMV Housing Finance Pvt. Ltd. The Original Sale Deed dt. 27.10.2009 regd. vide doc. No. 12087 pertaining to the aforesaid property has been lost and complaint bearing I.R. No. 202200055376/2022, was registered on 22.09.2022 with U.P. Police. Any person(s) found in possession of aforesaid original sale deed, then kindly contact the undersigned along with original property document, within 7 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid sale deed shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.</p> <p>RAVISH TIWARI (Advocate) Ch. 830, Patil House Courts, New Delhi - 110001 Mob.: +91-9876188325</p>	<p>PUBLIC NOTICE</p> <p>General public is hereby informed that Mr. Ramesh S/o Sh. Ramkishan is intending to sell Land area measuring 25 Sq. Yards, comprised in Khata No. 384, situated at Matka Vihar, Village Khara, Pargana Lam, Tehsil & District Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh, to Mrs. Sameer W/o Mr. Nilesh Kumar, to be financed & mortgaged by my client i.e. M/s. DMV Housing Finance Pvt. Ltd. The first page of Original Sale Deed dt. 30.11.2005 regd. vide doc. No. 3443 pertaining to the aforesaid property has been lost and complaint bearing I.R. No. 2020039/2022, was registered on 22.09.2022 with Delhi Police. Any person(s) found in possession of aforesaid original sale deed, then kindly contact the undersigned along with original property document, within 7 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid sale deed shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.</p> <p>Raghav Tiwari (Advocate) Ch. 830, Patil House Courts, New Delhi - 110001 Mob.: +91-9876188325</p>
<p>PUBLIC NOTICE</p> <p>General Public is hereby informed that Mr. Sahib Singh Bedi has acquired the Eastern Half Portion of Entire Ground Floor (Without Roof Rights), "said Floor" Built on Property Bearing No. C-47, Land area measuring 438 Sq. Yds. Situated in the area of Village Basai Darapur and Colony Known as Kirti Nagar, New Delhi vide Re/Inquisition Deed dated 18.12.2012, Doc.No. 30382 and Now, Mr. Sahib Singh Bedi is mortgaging the above said property with IndusInd Bank Ltd. & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 07 days of this publication to Mr. Munesh Dhaswal/ Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Venues North, Unit no 607, 8th Floor, GD-17L Tower; (8-Venue), Netaji Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9066707172/9816228636 (NCH).</p> <p>CH. C-77, C-1, JOSEPH BLOCK TIS HAZARI COURTS, DELHI-110054</p>	<p>PUBLIC NOTICE</p> <p>This is to inform general public that Mr. Sahib Singh Bedi has acquired the Eastern Half Portion of Entire Ground Floor (Without Roof Rights), "said Floor" Built on Property Bearing No. C-47, Land area measuring 438 Sq. Yds. Situated in the area of Village Basai Darapur and Colony Known as Kirti Nagar, New Delhi vide Re/Inquisition Deed dated 18.12.2012, Doc.No. 30382 and Now, Mr. Sahib Singh Bedi is mortgaging the above said property with IndusInd Bank Ltd. & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 07 days of this publication to Mr. Munesh Dhaswal/ Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Venues North, Unit no 607, 8th Floor, GD-17L Tower; (8-Venue), Netaji Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9066707172/9816228636 (NCH).</p> <p>CH. C-77, C-1, JOSEPH BLOCK TIS HAZARI COURTS, DELHI-110054</p>

बैंक ऑफ इंडिया BOI
BANK OF INDIA

POSSESSION NOTICE (For Immovable property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the authorised officer of the **Bank of India, NDSME Branch** under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13 (12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 issued a demand notice dated 07-07-2022 calling upon the borrower **Shri Santosh Kumar Yadav and Smt. Anita Yadav** to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs. 18,44,618.63** plus int. w.e.f. **29.06.2022 (Rs. Eighteen Lakh Forty Four Thousand Six Hundred Eighteen and Paise Sixty Three** plus int. w.e.f. **29.06.2022)** within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice.

The borrower having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under sub-section (4) of section 13 of Act read with rule 8 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002 on this **4 th day of October of the year 2022;**

The borrower in particular and public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to charge of the **BANK OF INDIA** for an amount **Rs. 18,25,574.69** and interest thereon.

The borrower's attention is invited to provisions of sub-section (8) of section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the security assets.

Description of the Property

All that part and parcel of the property consisting of Flat No. / Plot No – 52, Second Floor (without roof rights), Pocket 26, Sector 24, Rohini, New Delhi – 110085 land measuring 28 sq. mtrs. Bounded as: North-East by House No. 89 & Passage, On the North West by House No. 51 & Passage, On the East South by House No. 53, On the West South by Road

Date : 04-10-2022, Place: New Delhi Auth. Officer, Bank of India, New Delhi SME

N Korea flies warplanes near S Korea after missile launches

AP ■ SEOUL

South Korea says North Korea flew 12 warplanes near their mutual border on Thursday, prompting South Korea to launch 30 military planes in response. South Korea's military says eight North Korean fighter jets and four bombers flew in formation. It says the North Korean planes were believed to have conducted air-to-surface firing drills. It says South Korea responded by scrambling 30 warplanes. Earlier, North Korea fired two ballistic missiles toward its eastern waters, and South Korea conducted naval drills with the United States and Japan off the Korean Peninsula's east coast in response.

North Korea launched two short-range ballistic missiles toward its eastern waters on Thursday after the United States redeployed an aircraft carrier near the Korean Peninsula in response to Pyongyang's previous launch of a nuclear-capable missile over Japan.

The latest missile launches suggest North Korean leader Kim Jong Un is determined to continue with weapons tests aimed at boosting his nuclear arsenal in defiance of international

sanctions.

Many experts say Kim's goal is to eventually win US recognition as a legitimate nuclear state and the lifting of those sanctions, though the US and its allies have shown no sign of allowing that to happen. The latest missiles were launched 22 minutes apart from the North's capital region and landed between the Korean Peninsula and Japan, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

The first missile flew 350 kilometres and reached a maximum altitude of 80 kilometres and the second flew 800 kilometres on an apogee of 60 kilometres. The flight details were similar to Japanese assessments announced by Defence Minister Yasukazu Hamada, who confirmed that the missiles didn't reach Japan's exclusive economic zone. He added that the second missile was possibly launched on an "irregular" trajectory. It is a term that has been used to describe the flight characteristics of a North Korean weapon modelled after Russia's Iskander missile, which travels at low altitudes and is designed to be maneuverable in flight to improve its chances of evading missile defenses.

<p>जनसंपर्क संचालनालय छत्तीसगढ़ शासन इन्द्रावती भवन, नवा रायपुर, अटल नगर, जिला-रायपुर, छत्तीसगढ़ फोन:- 0771-2221616</p>	
<p>क्रमांक 4736 / जससं / वि.अ.प्र / 2022</p>	<p>नवा रायपुर, दिनांक : 06 / 10 / 2022</p>
<p>गणतंत्र दिवस परेड 2023 के अवसर पर नई दिल्ली में व्यनित होने पर प्रदर्शित की जाने वाली छत्तीसगढ़ राज्य की झांकी निर्माण के लिए निविदा आमंत्रित सूचना</p>	
<p>जनसम्पर्क संचालनालय, छत्तीसगढ़ शासन, नवा रायपुर की ओर से नई दिल्ली में आयोजित होने वाली गणतंत्र दिवस 2023 की राष्ट्रीय परेड में व्यन होने पर प्रदर्शित होने वाली झांकी की डिजाईन/मॉडल प्रस्तुत करने तथा अनुभेदन परभावत तथा रक्षा मंत्रालय के निर्देशानुसार फेब्रिकेशन आदि कार्य कर झांकी तैयार करने हेतु अनुभवी झांकी/टेब्यु निर्माताओं/फर्मों से गुहरबंद निविदा आमंत्रित की जाती है।</p>	
<p>इच्छुक (झांकी) टेब्यु निर्माता/फर्म जनसंपर्क विभाग की वेबसाईट www.dprcg.gov.in से निविदा प्रारूप, नियम-शर्तों डाऊनलोड कर निविदा में भाग ले सकते हैं। निविदा प्रपत्र शुल्क राशि रु. 2,000/- (दो हजार रूपए मात्र) (वापसी योग्य नहीं) का "संचालक, जनसंपर्क संचालनालय" रायपुर के नाम से रायपुर में देय डिमाण्ड ड्राफ्ट टेकिनकल बिड लिफाफा के साथ जमा करना अनिवार्य है। उक्त निविदा में किसी प्रकार परिवर्तन अथवा संशोधन होने पर जानकारी उक्त वेबसाईट में प्रदर्शित की जायेगी। संशोधन सूचना समाचार पत्रों में प्रकाशित नहीं किया जायेगा।</p>	
<p>(1) पूर्णतः नये प्रपत्र जमा करने की अंतिम तिथि दिनांक 28 / 10 / 2022, दोपहर 2 बजे तक। (2) प्रपत्र खोलने की तिथि दिनांक 28 / 10 / 2022, सायं 3 बजे।</p>	
<p>R.O No:- 94815/5 R.O Date:- 06/10/2022</p>	<p>आयुक्त जनसंपर्क संचालनालय छत्तीसगढ़ शासन</p>

World Bank downgrades India's growth forecast to 6.5% for FY 23

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

The World Bank on Thursday projected a growth rate of 6.5 per cent for the Indian economy for the fiscal year 2022-23, a drop of one per cent from its previous June 2022 projections, citing deteriorating international environment.

In its latest South Asia Economic Focus released ahead of the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the Bank, however, noted that India is recovering stronger than the rest of the world.

The Indian economy grew by 8.7 per cent in the previous year.

"The Indian economy has done well compared to the other countries in South Asia, with relatively strong growth performance... Bounced back from the sharp contraction during the first phase of COVID," Hans Timmer, World Bank Chief Economist for South Asia, told PTI in an interview.

India, he said, has done relatively well with the advantage that it doesn't have a large external debt, there are no problems coming from that side, and that there is prudent monetary policy, he observed.

The Indian economy has done especially well in the services sector and especially service exports.

"But we have downgraded the forecast for the fiscal year



that just started and that is largely because the international environment is deteriorating for India and for all countries. We see kind of an inflection point in the middle of this year, and first signs of slowing across the world," he said.

The second half of the calendar year is weak in many countries and will be relatively weak also in India, he said.

Timmer said that's mainly because of two factors. One is the slowing of growth in the real economy of high-income countries.

The other one is the global tightening of monetary policy that tightens financial markets and not just that it leads to

capital outflows in many developing countries, but it also increases interest rates and uncertainty in developing countries which has a negative impact on investment.

"So, it (India) has done relatively well. It is not as vulnerable as some of the other countries. But it's still in tough weather. It (India) has to navigate the higher commodity prices and there are more headwinds at the moment," he said in response to a question.

India is doing better than the rest of the world, he said, adding that there are more buffers in India, especially large reserves at the central bank. That's very helpful. "Then the government has very actively

IMF warns of higher recession risk and darker global outlook

AP ■ WASHINGTON

The International Monetary Fund is once again lowering its projections for global economic growth in 2023, projecting world economic growth lower by USD 4 trillion through 2026.

Kristalina Georgieva, managing director of the IMF, told an audience at Georgetown University on Thursday that "things are more likely to get worse before it gets better", saying the Russian invasion of Ukraine that began in February has dramatically changed the IMF's outlook on the economy.

Many countries are already seeing major impacts of the war on their economies. Georgieva said the insti-

tution downgraded its global growth projections already three times. It now expects 3.2 per cent for 2022 and now 2.9 per cent for 2023.

"The risks of recession are rising," she said, adding that the IMF estimates that countries making up one-third of the world economy will see at least two consecutive quarters of economic contraction this or next year.

The projections come after the OPEC+ alliance of oil-exporting countries decided on Wednesday to sharply cut production to support sagging oil prices in a move that could deal the struggling global economy another blow and raise politically sensitive pump prices for US drivers just ahead of key national elections.

reacted to the COVID crisis," he said.

The Indian government has set an example for the rest of the world, like expanding social safety nets, using digital ideas. "I think it's almost up to a million people that they are reaching at the moment. It's a good response also," he said.

At the same time, he said that he does not agree with all the policies of the Indian government.

"Especially their reaction to the high commodity prices might seem logical in the short run, but might backfire in the long run. For example, the export ban on wheat and the export ban or the very high tariffs on rice exports," he said.

They seem logical to create food security domestically, but ultimately that creates more problems in the rest of the region and the rest of the world.

OPEC output cut: Fuel price freeze gets longer

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The record six-month-long freeze in petrol and diesel price revision in all likelihood will be extended after international oil prices rose on the announcement of deep production cuts by OPEC+.

Some of the world's top oil-producing countries on Wednesday agreed to slash production by two million barrels per day to spur recovery in oil prices that had dropped to pre-Ukraine war levels.

For India, this is bad news as a fall in oil prices in recent weeks had helped it cut down on its import bill as well as limit losses that state-owned fuel retailers were incurring on selling petrol and diesel.

Prior to the decision of OPEC+, losses on diesel had come down to about Rs 5 per litre from a peak of around Rs 30 a litre while oil companies had started making a small profit on petrol, industry sources said.

But the rise in prices of crude oil, which is refined to produce petrol, diesel and other products, and the weakening of the rupee against the US dollar would mean losses on diesel widen and margins on petrol erode, they said.

India imports 85 per cent of its oil needs and international oil prices directly dictate domestic pricing.

State-owned fuel retailers - Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL) and



Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL) -- have changed the retail selling price of petrol and diesel in line with the international costs for a record six months now to help the government manage runaway inflation.

This prize freeze led to the firms booking losses on fuel sales as oil prices rose to a multi-year high of around USD 120 per barrel during May/June. Prices had started to ease in August and dropped to January levels last month.

The basket of crude oil that India imports had dropped to USD 84.75 per barrel on September 27 but the spurt in international oil prices following the OPEC+ decision led to rates rising to USD 92.17 on October 5.

Oil firms were hoping to recoup the losses they had

booked since April if the declining trend was to continue but the reversal means they are back to square one, sources said.

IOC, BPCL and HPCL are supposed to revise the retail price of petrol and diesel daily in line with cost. But they froze rates for a record 137 days beginning November 4, 2021, just as states like Uttar Pradesh went to polls. That freeze ended on March 22 this year and rates went up by Rs 10 per litre each in just over a fortnight before a new freeze came into effect from April 7.

Petrol currently costs Rs 96.72 a litre and diesel Rs 89.62 in the national capital. This is down from Rs 105.41 a litre price on April 6 for petrol and Rs 96.67 a litre for diesel as the government cut excise duty to cool rates.

Stock markets rise for 2nd session, Sensex gains 156 pts

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark BSE Sensex rose by 156 points while the Nifty closed above the 17,300 level on Thursday after gains in metal, IT and capital goods shares amid foreign capital inflows.

Rising for the second straight session, the 30-share BSE benchmark advanced 156.63 points or 0.27 per cent to settle at 58,222.10.

The index opened higher and later jumped 513.29 points or 0.88 per cent to a day's high of 58,578.76 on gains in metal, FMCG, IT and oil stocks. However, profit booking in select banking and tech stocks in the closing session trimmed the gains. The broader NSE Nifty advanced 57.50 points or 0.33 per cent to end at 17,331.80 as 27 of its shares ended in the green.

Among Sensex shares, Tata Steel, Larsen & Toubro, ICICI Bank, HCL Technologies, Infosys and Axis Bank were among the winners.

However, Bharti Airtel, Hindustan Unilever, IndusInd Bank, HDFC and Bajaj Finance were among the laggards.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services said, "The Indian market is maintaining its resilience despite mixed cues from global equities and surging oil prices. Both domestic and foreign investors are supporting the rally."

The market was also bolstered by expectations on Q2 results session, with improvement in sectors like metal, IT, and realty, Nair added.



"Weakness in European indices and SGX Nifty slipping into the red prompted investors to cut their bullish bets. But key domestic benchmarks still ended in the green thanks to traders betting big on IT, metal and realty stocks."

"However, inflationary concerns worldwide and central banks hiking interest rates persistently has spooked markets and kept investors on tenterhooks on worries of a global slowdown," Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Equity Research (Retail), Kotak Securities Ltd, said.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge jumped 1.30 per cent and midcap index climbed 1.13 per cent.

Among the BSE sectoral indices, metal jumped 3.89 per cent, capital goods (2.34 per cent), realty (2.15 per cent), industrials (1.96 per cent), commodities (1.67 per cent) and power (1.61 per cent).

FMCG and telecommuni-

cation were the laggards.

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

Stock exchanges in Europe were trading in the negative territory in mid-session deals. The US markets ended marginally lower on Wednesday.

The domestic equity markets were closed on Wednesday for the Dussehra festival.

In the previous session on Tuesday, the BSE benchmark had jumped 1,276.66 points or 2.25 per cent to settle at 58,065.47. The Nifty rallied 386.95 points or 2.29 per cent to end at 17,274.30.

Meanwhile, the international oil benchmark Brent crude futures climbed 0.14 per cent to 93.50 per barrel.

Foreign institutional investors were net buyers as they bought shares worth Rs 1,344.63 crore on Tuesday, according to data available with BSE.

Rupee falls 32 paise to close at all-time low of 81.94 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee plunged 32 paise to close at an all-time low of 81.94 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday amid high volatility as firm crude oil prices weighed on the local unit.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local currency opened on a positive note at 81.52, then pared all the gains to settle at an all-time low of 81.94 against the American currency, registering a decline of 32 paise over

its previous close.

During the day, the local unit witnessed an intra-day high of 81.51 and a low of 81.94 against the greenback.

On Tuesday, the rupee appreciated by 20 paise to end at 81.62 against the US dollar.

The forex market was closed on Wednesday on account of Dussehra.

"Rupee, after appreciating marginally on Tuesday, is again starting to come under pressure. The dollar strengthened after services PMI and private payrolls numbers from



the US came in better than estimates," said Gaurang Somaiya, Forex & Bullion Analyst, Motilal Oswal Financial Services.

India's service sector activity falls to 6-month low in Sept amid inflationary pressures: PMI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian services sector activity fell to a six-month low in September, as new business inflows rose at the slowest rates since March, amid inflationary pressures and competitive conditions, a monthly survey said.

The seasonally adjusted S&P Global India Services PMI Business Activity Index fell to 54.3 in September, from 57.2 in August, highlighting the weakest rate of expansion since March.

For the fourteenth straight month, the services sector witnessed an expansion in output. In Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) parlance, a print above 50 means expansion, while a score below 50 denotes contraction.



"The Indian service sector has overcome many adversities in recent months, with the latest PMI data continuing to show a strong performance despite some loss of growth momentum in September," said Pollyanna De Lima, Economics Associate Director at S&P Global Market Intelligence.

The upturn was reportedly restricted by price pressures, an

increasingly competitive environment and unfavourable public policies, the survey said.

Lima further noted that the steep depreciation of the rupee seen towards the end of the month due to interest rate hikes in the US present additional challenges to the Indian economy.

"Currency instability poses renewed inflation worries as imported items become more costly, and undoubtedly means that the RBI will continue hiking interest rates to protect the rupee and contain price pressures," Lima said.

On September 30, the monetary policy committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) raised the key lending rate or the repo rate to 5.90 per cent — the highest since April 2019.

FMCG sales remained subdued in Q2; cos expect recovery in coming months

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The country's FMCG industry continued to face challenges of retail inflation and slowdown in rural areas in the second quarter but expects demand to improve in the second half of this fiscal.

Leading makers such as Marico, Godrej Consumer Products Ltd (GCPL) and Dabur in their quarterly updates said demand across categories in the industry continued to remain soft during the second quarter on account of continued impact on unprecedented inflation.

However, the companies expect that in the remaining two quarters of the fiscal, mod-



erating inflation and the festive season should support consumption growth in the second half.

"With the moderation in inflationary pressures due to correction in commodity prices, and the monsoon largely being on track (apart for a few states), we expect consumption to improve in the second half of the year," GCPL said in its quarterly updates.



Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, India's G20 Sherpa Amitabh Kant, Quality Council Of India Chairman Adil Zainulbhai, Secretary Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIT) Anurag Jain, Additional Secretary DPIT Anil Agrawal and QCI Secretary General Dr Ravi P Singh at the celebrations of completing 25 years with the motto "Gunnawatta se Atmanirbharta". On the occasion, Goyal said, "With all the festivals coming up, there is no better festival than celebrating India's quality, and it should become the DNA of every citizen." Renowned musician Sukhwinder Singh composed a special anthem for the occasion that celebrates the positive change brought into people's lives via multiple avenues.

Airtel 5G service goes live in 8 cities, customers to pay as per 4G plan

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Bharti Airtel on Thursday said its 5G services have gone live in eight cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Siliguri, Nagpur and Varanasi.

The customer availing 5G services will have to pay as per their existing 4G plan, it said. "Airtel has been at the forefront of India's telecom revolution for the last 27 years. Today marks one more step in our journey as we build out the finest network to deliver the best experience for our customers."

"For us, our customers are at the core of everything we do. Our solution will therefore work on any 5G handset and the existing SIM that customers have," Bharti Airtel Managing Director and CEO Gopal Vittal said in a statement.

Bharti Enterprises Founder

and Chairman Sunil Mittal had announced launch of 5G service in 8 cities on October 1.

A company spokesperson said that customer will be able to avail the services as per their 4G plan. Airtel subscribers getting 5G signals in their area can switch to 5G but if they find that 5G is consuming high data than can switch back to 4G network. "Access to 5G is optional," the spokesperson said.

At present, 5G models of Apple, Samsung, Xiaomi, Vivo, Oppo, Realme and OnePlus are compatible with Airtel 5G Plus service. The compatible models include Samsung's flagship devices including Fold series, Galaxy S 22 series, Samsung M32, iPhone 12 series and later models, Realme 8s 5G, Realme X7 series, Realme narzo series, Vivo X50 onwards smartphones, Vivo IQOO series, Oppo Reno5G Pro and other device.

RBI asks credit info companies to appoint internal ombudsman by April 1

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank of India Thursday asked Credit Information Companies to appoint internal ombudsman by April 1 next year in order to improve the efficiency of their grievance redressal mechanisms.

The Internal Ombudsman (IO) will not handle complaints received directly from the complainants or members of the public and, instead, deal only with the complaints that have already been examined by the CIC but have been partly or wholly rejected by the CIC, the RBI said in a circular. In order to make the Reserve Bank-Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS) 2021 more broad based, central bank in August this year.

Sebi clarifies on guidelines pertaining to instruction slips for share pledging

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

To curb the misuse of Power of Attorney (PoA) given by clients to stock brokers, Sebi on Thursday widened the scope of the Demat Debit and Pledge Instruction (DDPI) for pledging and repurchasing of securities for margin purposes.

Mutual fund transactions executed on stock exchange order entry platforms and tendering of shares in open offers through stock exchange platforms will also be covered under the DDPI, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in a circular.

The DDPI serves the same purpose of PoA and significantly mitigate the misuse of PoA. The guidelines, which will be effective from November 18, also comes against the back-



drop of instances of misuse of PoAs.

"In view of the representations by and consultations with broker associations and depositories, it has been decided to widen the scope of DDPI to include mutual fund transactions being executed on stock exchange order entry platforms and tendering shares in open offers through stock exchange platforms," Sebi said.

'Half of digital transformation over, cost-to-income ratios on tech spends plateaued'

PTI ■ MUMBAI

HDFC Bank has completed over half of the digital transformation work it had undertaken over two years ago and is past the peak on tech spends as a percentage of the income, a senior executive said on Tuesday.

It can be noted that concerns on the digital front had led to an unprecedented penal action on the largest private sector lender from the RBI, including a complete ban on launching new digital initiatives and also an embargo on selling new credit cards around two years ago.

PROTEAS BEAT INDIA IN 1ST ODI

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Below-par death bowling coupled with ordinary fielding and batting, except for Sanju Samson and Shreyas Iyer, hurt a second-string Indian team as it slumped to a nine-run defeat against South Africa in the rain-truncated first ODI of the three-match series here on Thursday.

Opting to bowl in the rain-hit 40-over-a-side game, India started on the right note reducing South Africa to 110 for 4 in 22.4 overs before David Miller and Heinrich Klaasen hit strokeful half-centuries to guide South Africa to 249 for 4.

Down at 110 for four, Miller (75 not out off 63 balls) and Klaasen (74 not out off 65 balls) added 139 runs for the unbroken fifth wicket to take the visitors to close to 250-run mark.

Shardul Thakur was the pick of the bowlers for India with figures of 2/35 from eight overs.

The Indian bowlers struggled in the death overs, conceding 54 runs in the last five overs.

If that was not enough, the Indian fielders dropped as many as four catches in the outfield to help South Africa's cause.

Chasing a stiff target of 250, Samson (86 not out off 63 balls) and Iyer (50 off 37 balls) struck fifties, while Shardul Thakur (33 off 31 balls) used the long handle to good effect towards the end but it was not enough in the end.

India endured a disastrous start to their chase, losing both Shubman Gill (3) and skipper Shikhar Dhawan (4) cheaply to be reduced to 8 for 2 inside six overs.

While Kagiso Rabada cleaned up Gill in the third over, Dhawan inside-edged one on to his stumps from a Wayne Parnell delivery in the sixth over.

Ishan Kishan and debutant Rituraj Gaikwad then tried to sta-



bilise the innings with a 48-run partnership for the third wicket before the latter was stumped by Quinton de Kock off the bowling of Tabraiz Shamsi as India slumped to 48 for 3 in 16.4 overs.

In the reserves for the T20 World Cup squad, Iyer helped his cause with a 37-ball 50 and together with Sanju Samson shared 67

runs for the fifth wicket to keep India in the hunt.

Iyer decorated his innings with eight hits to the fence before handing a simple catch to Rabada at mid-on off Lungi Ngidi's bowling.

But Samson and Thakur kept India in the hunt with an attacking 93-run partnership of just 64 balls for the sixth wicket.

With India needing 45 off the last three overs, Ngidi struck twin blows, dismissing Thakur and Kuldeep Yadav in successive balls to hand South Africa the upper hand.

Needing 30 off the last over, Samson tried his best, smashing one six and three fours but to no avail.

Earlier sent into bat, South Africa made a relatively slow start,

reaching 41 for no loss after 10 overs.

India skipper Shikhar Dhawan's decision to bowl was justified by new ball bowlers Mohammed Siraj and Avesh Khan.

Siraj, in particular, was brilliant as he swung the ball both ways to trouble the Proteas batters initially but without any luck.

Dhawan introduced Shardul Thakur in the ninth over and in two balls the pacer gave his team the first chance, inducing an edge from Janneman Malan but Shubman Gill dropped a sitter at the first slip.

But Shardul got his man four overs later as Malan flicked one straight to Shreyas Iyer at short mid-wicket.

Leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi was taken to task by South Africa skipper Temba Bavuma (8) as he conceded 31 runs from his first three overs.

Bavuma, who was struggling for runs in the preceding T20I series, reverse-swept and drove Bishnoi for two boundaries in the 14th over.

But Bavuma's short and attacking innings was cut short by Thakur, who went through his defence as the batter registered another single digit score in the tour.

Kuldeep Yadav gave India another breakthrough soon, cleaning up Aiden Markram for a duck with a sharp leg-spin.

Quinton de Kock went about his business in quiet fashion and held one end together before perishing in the 23rd over.

De Kock scored 48 off 54 balls with the help of five boundaries before he was trapped in front of the wicket by Bishnoi as South Africa slumped to 110 for 4 in the 23rd over.

Two overs later, Miller effortlessly struck the visitors' first six of the innings, straight over long-on boundary off the bowling of Bishnoi.

Miller and Klaasen then took the attack to the opposition. Miller played sensibly and dispatched the loose balls to the boundary to record his 18th half-century off 50 balls with the help of four boundaries and one hit over the fence.

Klaasen soon followed suit and registered his fourth ODI fifty in 52 balls. Death over bowling continued to haunt India as Miller and Klaasen brought up their century partnership in just 84 balls.

To add to that, India dropped as many as four catches, displaying poor outfield fielding standards.

Pretorius ruled out of T20 World Cup



PTI ■ LUCKNOW

South African allrounder Dwaine Pretorius has been ruled out of the ongoing ODI series in India and the upcoming T20 World Cup due to a fractured left thumb, Cricket South Africa (CSA) said on Thursday. The pace bowling all-rounder, who was the joint-highest wicket-taker for South Africa in the T20 World Cup last

Playing in IPL helps in passing information easily: Rabada

PTI ■ LUCKNOW

Playing in the IPL helps gather information on Indian cricketers which can be easily passed on for analysis during national duty, says South African pace ace Kagiso Rabada.

The South African quick, who is currently in India for a white-ball series, has gained a lot of popularity in the country due to his impressive stints with Delhi Capitals and Punjab Kings in the IPL. "It is something we have prepared before going into the series. Lucky enough with leagues like the IPL, we play a lot with these players and

against them as well, so information can be easily passed around," Rabada told the broadcaster ahead of the first ODI.

"Analysis has been done and has to be done," he added. The right-arm, who will lead the South African pace attack at the T20 World Cup later this month in Australia, sees ODIs as an extension of the shortest format of the game. "I think T20 and One-Day cricket are kind of similar, it is just a longer version of it. "You have similar game-plans and obviously it is less pressure than T20s, I would say the processes are pretty similar."

year, sustained the injury during the third T20I against India in Indore -- the only match he played in the series.

He had returned with figures of 3 for 26 as South Africa won the match by 49 runs for a 1-2 result in favour of India.

"The nature of the injury requires surgical intervention and Dwaine will consult the Cricket South Africa designated hand surgeon on arrival in

South Africa," CSA chief medical officer Dr Shuaib Manjra said.

Pretorius has featured in eight T20Is so far in 2022, taking 12 wickets at an average of 20.66 and most importantly, scoring quick runs with the bat down the order.

"Normal rehabilitation procedures will follow to ensure he speedily returns to playing cricket," Manjra said.

India to face Pakistan in women's Asia Cup today

PTI ■ SYLHET

India would expect that opener Shafali Verma comes out of the lean patch she has been enduring for some time and the team extends its domination of Pakistan when the two arch-rivals clash in their women's Asia Cup T20 match, here Friday. The Indian team gave ample game time to its fringe players, making as many as eight changes in the last two games, but against Pakistan -- one of title contenders -- the Harmanpreet Kaur-led side is expected to have full strength team on the field.

Pakistan are coming into the contest after suffering a shock four-wicket defeat at the hands of minnows Thailand on Thursday.

The two sides currently occupy the top two spot in the points table with India, who have won three games on the trot, leading the table.

While an India-Pakistan tie always generates hype, the recent two matches between the two sides failed to produce a close game with India winning comfortably. India were at their ruthless best as they brushed aside Pakistan at the Commonwealth Games in July. In fact, India have won the last five meeting against the neighbours in the format easily.

After being rested for a game each, the star openers Shafali Verma and Smriti Mandhana will be expected to provide a strong start.

The big-hitting Shafali will be feeling the pressure as she still looks low on confidence. She was able to spend some time in the middle in the match against Malaysia but looked scratchy and far from her best.

The teenager will be eager to shake



off the rust and play some dominant knocks with the T20 World Cup fast approaching.

On the other hand, Mandhana and skipper Kaur are coming off stellar performances in the white-ball series against England. Jemimah Rodrigues, who returned to the side after a wrist injury, is in imperious touch.

After notching up her career-best score in the opener, she brought her second consecutive half-century of the tournament and along with all-rounder with Deepti Sharma inspired a win against UAE.

The bowlers have continued to be clinical in all three games.

On the other hand, Pakistan batters, who were hardly tested in the wins over Malaysia and Bangladesh, had the perfect opportunity to get some runs under their belts. But, barring opener Sidra Ameen who scored a fifty, they failed to impress, failing to breach the 120-run mark against Thailand.

Their bowling attack, which has been clinical in the tournament, had few runs to defend. Their batters will have their task cut out against a confident and firing India bowling attack.

TEAMS (FROM)

India: Harmanpreet Kaur (c), Smriti Mandhana, Deepti Sharma, Shafali Verma, Jemimah Rodrigues, Sabbineni Meghana, Richa Ghosh (wk), Sneha Rana, Dayalan Hemalatha, Meghna Singh, Renuka Thakur, Pooja Vastrakar, Rajeshwari Gayakwad, Radha Yadav and KP Navgire.

Pakistan: Bismah Maroof (c), Aiman Anwer, Aliya Riaz, Ayesha Naseem, Diana Baig, Kainat Imtiaz, Muneeba Ali, Nida Dar, Omaira Sohail, Sadaf Shamas, Sadia Iqbal, Sidra Ameen, Sidra Nawaz.

Paine out cheaply on return from sexting scandal

AP ■ BRISBANE

Former Australia captain Tim Paine was out cheaply on Thursday in his first match since a sexting scandal ended his international career, with his return failing to inspire his state side Tasmania.

The 37-year-old quit as Test skipper last November on the eve of the Ashes campaign against England when lewd text messages he sent to a female colleague in 2017 were about to be made public.

A week later he took leave from all forms of cricket for the "foreseeable future" as the scandal took its toll.

But he never retired and Tasmania coach Jeff Vaughan declared him physically and emotionally ready to return this week.

"Physically he is probably in the greatest spot of his physical career," said Vaughan. Emotionally he is sound."

Paine strode to the crease at the Allan Border Field against Queensland in the Sheffield Shield to a warm welcome from a modest crowd.

But batting at seven, the veteran wicketkeeper lasted just 19 balls for his six runs, edging a short-pitched delivery from Gurinder Sandhu to Matthew Renshaw at slip as Tasmania slumped to 74-6.



Praneeth, Aakarshi win singles title

PTI ■ SURAT

Top seed B Sai Praneeth of Telangana and Chhattisgarh's Aakarshi Kashyap produced superlative performances to claim the men's and women's singles badminton gold medals respectively in the National Games here on Thursday.

While Praneeth, a former world championships bronze medallist, had to work hard for his 21-11 12-21 21-16 victory over Karnataka's Mithun Manjunath in the men's singles final, Aakarshi saw off top seed Malvika Bansod of Maharashtra 21-8 22-20 in the women's singles summit clash.

Thirty-year-old Praneeth's success meant that Telangana grabbed three gold medals in badminton. They had won the mixed team and women's doubles titles earlier.

Praneeth dominated the opening game, jumping to an 8-2 lead and never looking back. However, Mithun came



back stronger in the second game but eventually could do nothing but acknowledge that he was outplayed.

"Once the game started to drift away from me, I played it cool to concentrate

for the third game," said Praneeth.

Mithun kept pace with Praneeth for the most of the third game but the experienced campaigner did enough to quell the challenge

of his young opponent.

"Once I took the lead at 16-15, I played it safe. I saw Mithun was tiring and I had just put the shuttle in," said Praneeth, who finished the match with a smash.

Gambhir-led India Capitals wins LLC title



PTI ■ JAIPUR

India Capitals made a stunning recovery after stumbling early to defeat Bhilwara Kings by 104 runs and lift the Legends League Cricket trophy here.

Former New Zealand skipper Ross Taylor sizzled with a fiery 41-ball 82. He slammed eights sixes and four boundaries and along with Aussie veteran Mitchell Johnson (62 off 35), led the Capitals' stunning revival to post a daunting 211/7 after being sent in at the Saiwaj Mansingh Stadium on Wednesday.

The Gautam Gambhir-led side was rattled to be 21/4 inside the first five overs with Rahul Sharma (4/30) and

Monty Panesar (3-0-13-2) inflicting early blows. But Taylor held the fort in the duos' 126-run stand that came off just 60 balls.

Later, Windies powerhitter Ashley Nurse finished off in style with a 19-ball 42 not out with one six and six boundaries.

In reply, the Kings' openers, Morne van Wyk (5) and William Porterfield (12), were out inside the first four overs.

A lot depended on the broad shoulders of Yusuf Pathan (6), but he did not last long. Shane Watson (27) was unfortunate to be run out, while Jesal Karia (22) showed promise but could not carry on for long.



HAALAND NETS BRACE IN CITY'S WIN

AP ■ PARIS

Erling Haaland continued his remarkable goalscoring form by netting twice as Manchester City thrashed FC Copenhagen 5-0 in the Champions League on Wednesday, while Chelsea saw off AC Milan to revive their hopes of reaching the last 16.

HOLDERS Real Madrid survived a spirited challenge from Ukrainians Shakhtar Donetsk at the Santiago Bernabeu to win 2-1 and extend their advantage in Group F.

Lionel Messi scored but Paris Saint-Germain were held to a 1-1 draw by Benfica in Lisbon.

Haaland went into City's game against Copenhagen at the Etihad Stadium having becoming the first player in Premier League history to score three successive home hat-tricks in Sunday's demolition of Manchester United.

The Norwegian slammed in the opening goal on seven minutes with his weaker right foot before prodding in a rebound for his second 25 minutes later.

The 22-year-old has now scored 28 times in his 22 Champions League appearances, already breaking Ruud van Nistelrooy's record for most goals in a player's first 30 games in the competition.

"I've never witnessed anything like it in my life," City's Jack Grealish told BT Sport.

"For the first and second goals I was just laughing. He is always there.

"The 'keeper said something to me as I was walking back. He said 'He's not human!' I said 'You're telling me?' Hopefully he can carry on this form and take us to glory."

Visiting centre-back Davit Khocholava put through his own net, with Haaland waiting behind him, to make it three before half-time.

Haaland was denied a fourth City treble as he was replaced at the interval, but a Riyad Mahrez penalty and Julian Alvarez's fourth goal for the club completed the rout.



Pep Guardiola's men remain three points clear of second-placed Borussia Dortmund in Group G and will qualify for the knockout phase with a victory in the Danish capital next week.

Jude Bellingham scored for the third time in as many Champions League outings as Dortmund romped to a 4-1 victory at Sevilla.

The Spanish club responded to the defeat -- and a desperately poor start to the season which has left them 17th in La Liga -- by sacking coach Julen Lopetegui shortly after the final whistle.

CHELSEA EASE TO 1ST WIN

Chelsea ended their wait for a win in Group E as goals from Wesley Fofana, Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang and Reece James sealed an impressive 3-0 triumph over Italian champions AC Milan at Stamford Bridge.

The Blues made it back-to-back victories under new boss

Graham Potter to set up a crucial clash at the San Siro in six days' time.

Chelsea are second in Group E, level on points with third-placed Milan, one point behind leaders Salzburg who edged out Dinamo Zagreb 1-0.

"It's easier when you win games," said Aubameyang. "The mood is very good at the moment. We'll try to keep it up."

Shakhtar put on a battling display in Madrid, with goalkeeper Anatoliy Trubin making 11 saves, but could not overcome a two-goal deficit against Real.

Goals in the first half-hour from Rodrygo and Vinicius Junior put Real in control and the 14-time champions made it three wins from three in Group F despite Aleksandr Zubkov's effort for Shakhtar.

Madrid will be sure of a last-16 spot if they can beat second-placed Shakhtar next time out.

RB Leipzig are just a point

behind Shakhtar after Joe Hart's error helped the Germans down Celtic 3-1.

The former England goalkeeper's poor pass led to Andre Silva restoring Leipzig's lead in the second half before the Portugal striker netted again late on.

BENFICA HOLD PSG

Benfica remain level on points with leaders PSG at the Group H summit after a hard-fought draw against one of the tournament favourites.

Messi produced a trademark left-footed finish into the top corner after a neat exchange of passes also involving Neymar and Kylian Mbappe to score his 127th Champions League goal in the 22nd minute.

Benfica levelled four minutes before the break as Danilo Pereira scored an own goal and both sides spurned chances to win in the second half.

Messi only scored 11 goals

Walker in WC fitness race after groin surgery

AP ■ MANCHESTER

England defender Kyle Walker faces a race to be fit for the World Cup after Manchester City revealed he had undergone groin surgery.

Walker suffered the injury in the first half of City's 6-3 victory against Manchester United at the Etihad Stadium on Sunday.

No timescale has been put on his return but it is understood City believe he still has a chance of playing at the World Cup, which gets under way for England against Iran in Qatar on November 21.



"Kyle Walker has undergone surgery after suffering a groin injury to his left leg during the first half of our 6-3 win over Manchester United on Sunday," a City statement said on Thursday.

in 34 games in his first season for PSG last term, but already has eight in 13 this time around.

"It's normal, it takes a little time," PSG skipper Marquinhos told Canal Plus. "Now he feels a little more comfortable... I hope Leo Messi has a great season until the end to win this title."

Kyrgios reaches Japan Open quarter-finals

AP ■ TOKYO

Nick Kyrgios roared back from a "frustrating" first set on Thursday to reach the quarter-finals of the Japan Open, defeating Polish player Kamil Majchrzak 3-6, 6-2, 6-2.

Despite his slow start, the maverick Australian emerged victorious in typical crowd-pleasing style, showing off with aggressive aces and some exaggeratedly effortless points.

The 27-year-old, who was knocked out in the last eight at the US Open, said that despite Majchrzak breaking his serve, there was "never really doubt in my mind that I was going to win".

Kyrgios, whose lawyer appeared for him at a court hearing in Australia this week for a charge of common assault, will face either third-seeded US player Taylor Fritz or Japan's Hiroki Moriya in the quarter-finals.

Fritz has had a "breakthrough year", fifth-seeded Kyrgios said, while the crowd in Tokyo is bound to get behind home favourite Moriya.

"Either way, it's going to be a tough match."

"I wanna win for me"

Earlier in the day, Frances Tiafoe came through a second set battle to secure a spot in the quarter-finals, saying he wasn't bothered by rising expectations.

The 24-year-old American, who has been in the spotlight since beating Rafael Nadal on the way to a first Grand Slam semi-final at the US Open last month, beat Spaniard Bernabe Zapata Miralles 6-1, 7-6 (9/7).



The American breezed through the first set before Miralles fought back to take the second to a tie-break that saw some of the best rallies of the 1hr 32min encounter.

"Good match today, tough second set," said Tiafoe, who has won his last 13 tie-breaks.

"Sometimes it tips well your way. I'm playing very aggressive, I'm serving well in the tie-breaks, always a couple of aces."

He will face Miomir Kecmanovic in the last eight, after the Serb beat Britain's Dan Evans 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (7/4).

After stunning Nadal at Flushing Meadows, Tiafoe played a starring role at the Laver Cup in London where his Rest of the World Team beat Europe for the first time in the competition's history.

But the fourth-seeded player, currently world

Swiatek wins first match since US Open

AP ■ OSTRAVA

Iga Swiatek won her first match since clinching the US Open title on Wednesday as Ajla Tomljanovic retired injured from their second-round tie in Ostrava.

The world number one was leading 7-5, 2-2 in a tight encounter when the Australian quit, shortly after clutching her knee in pain.

"It was a great match and it's unfortunate that something happened -- I hope she's going to recover quickly," said Swiatek.

number 19, said he was comfortable with all the attention he is receiving.

"I don't really care about what other people think I should be doing because I've had recent success. "You know: 'Oh, is he going to be the next...?'," he said.

"I've been on tour for seven or eight years now, none of that really moves me. I wanna win for me, I'm not trying to achieve anybody else's goals



Reid & Schopman voted FIH coaches of the year

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Indian men's and women's Hockey team coaches Graham Reid and Janneke Schopman were on Thursday voted as FIH Coaches of the Year in their respective categories.

This is the second consecutive time Reid won the award, while India coach Sjoerd Marijne was the winner of the FIH women's coach of the year award last season.

Under Australian Reid, India has reached many new highs, which includes winning its first Olympic medal (bronze) at the Tokyo Games in 2021, after a gap of 41 years. India also won a silver medal at the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games, climbing back onto the podium after missing out in the previous edition in Australia.

India played its first full season of FIH Hockey Pro League in 2021-22, and earned a well-deserved place on the podium, finishing in the third



position behind Netherlands and Belgium.

Reid's team managed to score 62 goals, the highest tally of goals scored by a team, not just in this season, but in the history of the Pro League.

Reid, who took charge in April 2019, was also the coach of the Indian men's hockey team that won the inaugural

FIH Hockey5s in Lausanne this year, winning every single game along the way.

He got 31.4 points in the online voting, followed by Netherlands coach Jeroen Delmee (26.9 points) and Belgium coach Michel van den Heuvel (20.2 points). Schopman, on the other hand, got 38.2 points in the voting as she beat Netherlands coach Jamilon Mulders (28.2) and Australia coach Katrina Powell (19.5) in the coveted award.

After India's remarkable run in the Tokyo Olympic Games in 2021, where they missed out on a bronze medal by a whisker, the tough task of replicating similar success fell to Schopman.

The Indian team under Schopman made its debut in the FIH Hockey Pro League in the 2021-22 season and produced incredible results, including wins over Germany, Netherlands, Spain and eventual champions Argentina (in a shoot-out) to finish in the third position.

TT World C'ships: Indian men's team bows out

PTI ■ CHENGDU

India's campaign at the World Table Tennis Championships ended on Thursday following the men's team's pre-quarterfinal defeat against formidable China, here on Thursday.

The mighty China toyed with the Indian team for an easy 3-0 win that secured their passage into the quarterfinals. Left-handed Manush Shah replaced Manav Thakkar in India's lineup. Harmeet Desai opened the tie against Fan Zhendong but his challenge fizzled out in just 15 minutes against world number one Chinese, who emerged a 11-2, 11-9, 11-5 winner.

Next on the Chinese firing line was G. Sathiyar, ranked 37th, facing Ma Long. The multiple Olympic and World Championships medallist Chuquín finished the contest rather quickly, allowing just five points in the second and none in the third to post a 14-12, 11-5, 11-0 win. India's misery ended when Wang Chuquín beat Manush Shah 11-4, 11-5, 11-6.

Verstappen looks for 'perfect weekend' in Japan to retain title

AP ■ TOKYO

Max Verstappen on Thursday said that he needs "a perfect weekend" to clinch his second straight Formula One championship at this weekend's Japanese Grand Prix.

Red Bull's runaway championship leader can secure the title at Suzuka if he gains eight points on nearest rival Charles Leclerc of Ferrari and six on team-mate Sergio Perez.

That would happen if Verstappen wins the race and claims the fastest lap, or if he finishes first and Leclerc finishes lower than second place.

The flying Dutchman is trying not to think too hard about wrapping up the title, despite 12 previous Formula One world championships having been crowned at the Japanese Grand Prix.

"It would be very nice if it was here, but if it doesn't happen here I will be even more in favour the next race," said the

25-year-old, who missed the chance to clinch the championship at last week's Singapore Grand Prix after a seventh-place finish.

"It doesn't really change anything, you just want to have a good weekend and maximise everything you can."

"I need a perfect weekend to be able to clinch the title here but to be honest I'm not really thinking about it too much."

Verstappen would become only the third driver after Michael Schumacher and Sebastian Vettel to clinch the title with four races to spare if he gets the job done in Suzuka.

The Japanese Grand Prix returns after a three-year absence because of Covid and Verstappen is excited to be competing in front of the "crazy" Japanese fans again. "They're very passionate -- crazy but in a good way, and they really dress up," said Verstappen, who has won 11 of 17 races so far this season. "

AP ■ LEVERKUSEN

Former Liverpool and Real Madrid midfielder Xabi Alonso has been named as Bayer Leverkusen's new coach, replacing Gerardo Seoane after he was dismissed by the Bundesliga club on Wednesday.

"Bayer and Gerardo Seoane go their separate ways. World and European Champion Xabi Alonso becomes new head coach of the Werkselt," the club said on their Twitter account.

Leverkusen confirmed the departure of the Swiss coach in the wake of Tuesday's 2-0 loss at Porto in the Champions League.

As a player, Alonso won the 2010 World Cup and two

European Championships with Spain. He also lifted the Champions League trophy with both Liverpool and Madrid.

He managed Real Sociedad's reserve team in his home Basque region for three years until May, seeing them promoted to Spain's second tier for the first time in 60 years, before they were relegated at the end of last season.

2ND INNINGS

Jorge Sampaoli is set to begin his second stint as Sevilla's coach after the Spanish club announced his hiring on Thursday.

Sevilla said the 62-year-old Argentine agreed to a contract for the remainder of this season plus one more.

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