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TEACHERS AS
NATION BUILDERS

WORLD 9

CHINA, JAPAN GROUND FERRIES, FLIGHTS
AS TYPHOON APPROACHES

MONEY 10

INDIA'S TRADE WORRIES GROW
AS EXPORTS DOWN, IMPORTS UP

NEW DELHI, MONDAY SEPTEMBER 5, 2022; PAGES 12 ₹3

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VERSTAPPEN
WINS DUTCH
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12 SPORT

Tatas' ex-chief Mistry dies in road accident

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Industrialist, Tata Group's former chairman, and head of Shapoorji Pallonji Group Cyrus P Mistry died in a road accident on Sunday afternoon, when the car — in which he and three others were travelling — rammed into a divider in the neighbouring Palghar district in Maharashtra.

Mistry and three others were returning from Ahmedabad to Mumbai when their car hit a divider on a bridge near Charoti in the Palghar district, at 3.15 pm.

Palghar Police said the driver lost control of the vehicle and the car crashed into a divider near Charoti on a bridge over a river. Mistry died on the spot.

While a fellow traveller Jahangir Binshah Pandole too died on the spot, two others Anahita Pandole and Darius Pandole sustained injuries.

The two injured Pandoles were admitted to a nearby hospital. Dr Anahita, a gynecologist at Breach Candy hospital in south Mumbai, was driving the car, when the mishap occurred.

Mistry was 54 and is survived by his wife Rohika Chagla and two sons Firoz Mistry and Zahan Mistry.

Mistry's death came nine weeks after his Industrialist-father Pallonji Mistry passed



Wreckage of the Mercedes car in which businessman and former Tata Sons Chairman Cyrus Mistry was travelling when it met with an accident in Palghar on Sunday

PTI

away at an age of 93 on June 28 in Mumbai.

Mistry, who was the sixth chairman of Tata Group and second non-Tata to lead the country's leading business group, had an Irish passport on account of his mother being an Irish citizen of Indian extraction. Having acquired Overseas Citizenship of India, he was a permanent resident of India.

Terming Mistry's death as a "big loss" to the world of business, Prime Minister Narendra Modi tweeted, "The untimely

demise of Shri Cyrus Mistry is shocking. He was a promising business leader who believed in India's economic prowess. His passing away is a big loss to the world of commerce and industry. Condolences to his family and friends. May his soul rest in peace."

Worth approximately \$10 billion in 2018, Cyrus Mistry had taken over as the chairman after Ratan Tata announced his retirement in December 2012.

Continued on Page 2

Govt creating atmosphere of fear in country, spreading hate: Rahul

At 'mehengai par halla bol' rally, Cong workers demand Rahul be made party chief

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi on Sunday declared his party's war against "mehengai" and attacked the NDA Government for allegedly creating an atmosphere of fear in the country and spreading hate and anger among the people.

Rahul's "mehengai par halla bol" call on Sunday may or may not have delivered a warning shot to the NDA Government at the Centre, but the impressive show did revive the noise for his re-appointment as the party president in the upcoming Congress' organisational polls.

Speakers who preceded Rahul hailed him as their "leader" and some urged him to take up the job of the party president. Slogans and placards too made it clear that Rahul may have refused to get into the party presidential race, but the decision was far from sealed.

Madhya Pradesh Congress



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi waves at supporters during 'Mehangai Par Halla Bol' rally at Ram Lila Maidan, in New Delhi on Sunday

PTI

Committee chief Kamlanath called for strengthening the hands of Rahul while Congress Lok Sabha leader Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, said, "We want Rahul as president... We can see the posters want Rahul as president." Even the so-called G-23 leaders like Bhupinder Singh Hooda raised the slogans of Rahul zinabad before delivering his speech while Mukhul

Wasnik described Rahul and Sonia Gandhi as his leader.

Accusing the Narendra Modi Government of weakening India in the last eight years, Rahul said the grand old party along with other parties will defeat the ideology of the BJP and the RSS.

His statement is significant given the call by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar

for the unity of Opposition parties a day earlier. Nitish is scheduled to make a three-day visit to the national Capital from Monday to carry on with his agenda of Opposition unity to take on the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Addressing the "Mehengai par halla bol" rally at Ram Lila Maidan, Rahul claimed that the ruling dispensation is "taking

India backward, spreading hatred and fear" that would benefit India's enemies such as China and Pakistan.

"Modi has weakened India in the last eight years. Our economic strength has weakened as a result of price rise, unemployment, hate and fear," he said.

"It is an ideological war. Our party along with other parties will defeat the BJP and RSS' ideology," Rahul said.

Rahul called upon the party workers to say "Only Congress workers can save India".

He also tried to explain why the Congress has chosen to do a Bharat Jodo Yatra. "The Government has closed roads to Parliament. When we try to speak in House, our mikes are turned off. So, we have to go to the people and tell them the current situation and hear what others have to say," said Rahul.

Congress president Sonia could not make it for the rally as she is abroad accompanied by Priyanka Gandhi for treatment.

"We have to go directly to people," Rahul added and then attacked the media and other agencies for only "working" for the Government setting aside all democratic values.

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CAPSULE

TRUMP CALLS BIDEN 'ENEMY OF THE STATE'

Washington: Donald Trump has lashed out at his successor Joe Biden by branding him an "enemy of the state" at his first rally since the FBI searched the former US president's Florida estate for sensitive classified files.

STICKY BOMBS SEIZED FROM TERRORIST: POLICE

Srinagar: In a first such instance in the Kashmir valley, security forces have recovered sticky bombs or magnetic IEDs from a hybrid terrorist in Sopore township of Baramulla district of the union territory, police said on Sunday.

SHAH CAN DISTURB COMMUNAL CHORD: JD(U)

Patna: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U) on Sunday alleged that Union Home Minister Amit Shah will try to "trigger communal disturbances" during his tour of the state later this month.

SC TO HEAR ED CHIEF EXTENSION PLEAS TODAY

New Delhi: The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday plea filed by Randeep Singh Surjewala and Mahua Moitra, challenging the extension of tenure of the Enforcement Directorate (ED) director and the amended law allowing such extensions up to five years.

AGENCIES ■ DHAKA

Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, in an interview to ANI, called India a "tested friend" and lavished praise on Prime Minister Narendra Modi for rescuing Bangladeshi students stuck in Ukraine and also providing vaccines to fight Covid-19.

Hasina said the "long standing" water-sharing dispute between the two countries should be resolved to ease the problems the citizens of her country are facing.

She said, "We are downstream, water is coming from India. So, India should show more generosity... I think it should be solved. We found that PM (Modi) is very eager to solve this but the problem is in your country. We share only Gange water but we've 54 other rivers."

The Bangladesh PM is set to visit India between September 5 and 8, during which she will hold bilateral consultations with Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Hasina also shared details of the trauma she suffered in 1975 when several of her fam-



ily members, including her father Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, were assassinated. She said, "India is our tested friend. We always remember their contribution during our 1971 war. And beside that even 1975, when we lost all my family members. So, the then Prime Minister (Indira), she gave us shelter in India."

She said we have many bilateral problems, but we solved many others.

The Teesta river dispute is an important point of bilateral talks between India and Bangladesh, as Bangladesh has sought a fair and equitable distribution of Teesta waters from India.

Hasina praise the Indian Government's support in the evacuation of Bangladesh students, who, like many Indians, were stuck in Ukraine after the outbreak of the conflict.

"I really would like to express my thanks to Prime Minister that during this war between Russia and Ukraine, many of our students were just stuck, and they came to Poland for shelter. But when you evacuated your students, Indian students, they also brought our students back home. So it is really... You have shown a clearly friendly gesture. I thank Prime Minister (Modi) for this initiative," Hasina said.

It's Cong's parivar bachao rally: BJP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Sunday condemned Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for allegedly attacking four pillars of democracy and asserted that people have voted for the BJP and "wiped-out Congress" as voters have a knack of knowing as "who is a performer".

Addressing a Press conference soon after Rahul's address to his party workers at Ramlila ground, BJP spokesperson Sambit Patra described the former's speech as "immature" and "repetitive" saying "Rahul and responsibility can never go together".

Terming the Congress rally as "parivar bachao rally", he said Sonia and Rahul, who are on bail in the National Herald case, are playing a musical chair game in the selection of new Congress chief.

Referring to Rahul's speech where he said the country was being monopolised by "two industrialists", the BJP leader said it is the Congress which is the party of two people while the country belongs to all.

Patra took strong objection and exception to Rahul alleged-

ly attacking the Constitution and other pillars of democracy — judiciary, the Election Commission and media.

He condemned the former Congress president for allegedly saying that the judiciary is working "under the pressure of industrialists" and that "media is on sale (media bika hua hain)". "The language used against the media is abysmal," he said, adding that it is also for the media to seek an explanation from Congress.

The BJP leader urged the Supreme Court to initiate contempt proceedings against Rahul for his alleged comments. "It calls for a case of contempt", he said.

Patra picked up other threads of Rahul's speech to lash out at him. "Rahul said we wanted separate GST, Rafael, INS Vikrant and build border roads...they only 'wanted' and nothing happened...your performance is zero, you only sell dreams", he said. In a sharp attack on the Congress, Patra said all Nehru-Gandhi family members gave the slogan of "garibi hatao" but no headway was made towards mitigating poverty in the country.

Continued on Page 2

People to decide our party name, says Azad in his first rally in J&K

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

Sporting a colorful turban Ghulam Nabi Azad on Sunday came out all guns blazing at the maiden public rally in Jammu after quitting the Congress party. Azad dished out priorities of his new political outfit and slammed those leaders trying to "defame" him and label him "power hungry".

Addressing an impressive public rally after receiving a red carpet welcome at the Jammu airport, Azad announced the top priority of his party will remain the restoration of full Statehood to Jammu & Kashmir, protection of land and job rights of its residents, creation of job opportunities for the unemployed youth, and the return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri pandits.

"I've not decided upon a name for my party yet. The people of J&K will decide the name and the flag for the party. I'll give a Hindustani name to my party that everyone can understand," Azad announced amid a thunderous applause from the supporters.

Several prominent leaders, including former Deputy Chief Minister Tara Chand, former Ministers GM Saroori, Taj-Mohi-ud-Din, Jugal Kishore and legislators, who resigned from the Congress in his support, as well as former PDP legislator Syed Bashir and former MLA Shoaib Nabi Lone from the Apni Party, shared the dias with Azad.

Striking an emotional chord with the Dogri speaking population of the Jammu region, Azad also lauded the last Dogra ruler, Maharaja Hari Singh, for his vision of introducing land and job safeguards in 1925-30.

He said, "Indian Constitution and J&K Constitution safeguarded this law for 72 years. So this was not unconstitutional."

"From Presidents to Prime Ministers, both from Congress and other parties accepted this Constitutional safeguard which was adopted by Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha and therefore who are we to say that it is wrong," he said.

Continued on Page 2

Kerala ex-Minister turns down Magsaysay on party's advice

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOCHI

Former Kerala Health Minister K K Shailaja, who hogged the limelight for her exemplary handling of the Covid-19 crisis in the State, has refused to accept the prestigious Ramon Magsaysay award on the advice of the party.

Shailaja was selected for the Magsaysay Award (the Asian equivalent of the Nobel Prize) by the Manila-based committee for her "sterling contributions" as Health Minister in managing the Nippah and Covid-19 pandemics that devastated the State during 2017 and 2019-2021 respectively.

Her leadership as the State Health Minister had earned her a lot of encomiums from all



over the world.

But the CPI(M) central committee decided that she should not accept the award. Shailaja said she had discussed with the party leadership the offer made by the Award committee.

"But the decision of the party leadership was not to accept the award as Ramon Magsaysay, the former Philippines president, after

whom the award has been instituted was an anti-Communist and was responsible for the killing of many Communist party workers in Philippines," Shailaja told journalists at Thiruvananthapuram.

Party general secretary Sitaram Yechury said that the award is in the name of Ramon Magsaysay who has a history of alleged brutal oppression of Communists in the Philippines.

Yechuri told reporters in New Delhi that the award was being given for the manner in which the public health issues have been managed in Kerala. "This is a collective effort of the LDF Government and the Health Department in Kerala."

He pointed out that the Magsaysay Award has not been given to any active politician so far. *Continued on Page 2*

Tomato flu after Covid & monkeypox

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Since the first case of tomato flu, or Hand-Foot-Mouth Disease (HFMD), surfaced on May 6, more than 100 cases of the infection, mainly in children below the age of 5, have been reported from across the country. Health experts have warned that the viral infection is likely to increase in monsoon season.

This viral infection causes tomato-shaped red blisters on various parts of the body.

So far, tomato flu cases have been reported from at least four Indian States — Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Haryana, and Odisha.

Dr Bhawuk Dhir, a dermatologist at Delhi-based RML Hospital, said that after Covid, then monkeypox, and now HFMD, this is a clear sign of



heading towards an era of viral diseases.

"Clearly, we are heading towards an era of viral diseases with the rampage of Covid-19, monkeypox, and now HFMD — as was predicted by various researchers in the past," Dr Dhir said.

"Tomato flu is nothing but

a variant of HFMD rather than a different disease. It is caused by Coxsackie virus A16 (a non-polio enterovirus), which is highly contagious and spreads through secretions from the nose, throat, fluid from the blisters and fecal-oral route," Dr Dhir explained.

He said that in most cases,

it is a mild, self-limiting viral disease and requires supportive care for recovery. A few may develop complications such as meningitis and disseminated infection.

Last month, the Union Health Ministry issued guidelines on tomato flu, underlining that its treatment is similar to other viral infections like isolation, rest, plenty of fluids and a hot water sponge for relief from irritation and rashes. Supportive therapy of paracetamol for fever and body ache and other symptomatic treatments are required.

Talking about the management of this infection, Dhir said that it is mainly supportive. "Children with complications may require hospitalisation. No specific antiviral therapy is available for the treatment of this disorder.

Currently, available antivirals such as acyclovir have not been proven effective in trials," he said.

Asked when to visit the doctor, he said that when the patient is unable to maintain adequate hydration or decreased oral intake, lethargy and irritability.

Although in rare complications such as neurologic encephalitis, meningitis, paralysis, and myocarditis, one should visit the doctor, Dr Dhir advised.

"Children who are unable to drink sufficiently to maintain hydration should be hospitalised for parenteral fluid therapy," he said.

In fact, in a joint statement, a group of Indian doctors has also raised concern about the rising cases of HFMD among school-age children during this monsoon season.

Nitish takes ‘sadachari’, ‘bhrashtachari’ swipe at BJP

PTI ■ PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar took a swipe at the BJP on Sunday, saying the party considers those with it "sadachari" (people with good conduct) and those who speak against its policies "bhrashtachari" (corrupt), JD(U) sources said.

Kumar, speaking at the Janata Dal (United) national council meeting here, wondered if poaching leaders from other parties is not corruption, an apparent reference to opposition leaders crossing over to the BJP in many states, the sources said.

Kumar asserted he will work to unite opposition parties across the country to take on the BJP amid the buzz that his party is eying the opposition leadership role for him in the run up to the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

He told reporters after the meeting that a united



Opposition can oust the BJP from power at the Centre.

During his visit to Delhi, likely between September 5-8, Kumar will also meet President Droupadi Murmu and Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar.

JD(U) chief spokesperson K C Tyagi told reporters that Kumar will also meet leaders from around six regional parties besides those from the Congress in Delhi.

Tyagi asserted his party is

not projecting Kumar as the prime ministerial face of the Opposition while describing him as the "rising sun". "The sun rises in the east."

The veteran socialist leader claimed that Kumar's decision to snap ties with the BJP last month has enthused the opposition camp in the same way V P Singh's entry into its fold had done in late 80s.

Tyagi noted some leaders like Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao want a non-BJP and non-Congress front, but added the JD(U) does not agree with this.

The Congress being in the fold is necessary for a viable alliance against the BJP, he said. The Congress is part of the ruling grand alliance in Bihar.

Speaking to reporters, JD(U) president Lalan Singh alleged BJP leader and Home Minister Amit Shah's proposed visit to Bihar later this

month is aimed at disturbing communal harmony in the state.

"It will not make any impact," he said, claiming the grand alliance will win all 40 Lok Sabha seats in the state in 2024.

The JD(U) passed two resolutions related to political situation in the country in its two-day meeting which ended on Sunday.

The party has charged the BJP-led central government with imposing an "undeclared emergency" in the country, "misusing" probe agencies to silence opposition voices and stoking "communal frenzy" in society.

A party resolution said Kumar's "vision and mission" behind Bihar's development have been praised in and outside India. The JD(U) leader may reach Delhi on September 5 to meet several opposition leaders, party sources said.

UPA MLAs camping in Raipur reach Ranchi ahead of crucial trust vote

PTI ■ RANCHI

At least 30 MLAs of the ruling UPA coalition in Jharkhand made their way back to Ranchi on Sunday afternoon from Raipur, to attend a special session of the assembly on Monday in which Chief Minister Hemant Soren will seek a vote of trust.

The legislators had been camping at a resort near Raipur since August 30.

The chartered plane carrying the MLAs landed at Ranchi airport around 6 pm, an official told PTI.

Fearing poaching of its MLAs by the opposition BJP to topple the government, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM)-led UPA alliance had shifted the legislators to a luxurious resort in Nava Raipur.

The legislators were brought in two buses from the airport and shifted to the Circuit House near Ranchi's Jail Chowk area, officials said.

The MLAs would be brought directly to the assembly on Monday in a bid to avoid any possible attempt of



poaching by the opposition, UPA sources said.

Meanwhile, Soren on Sunday evening told reporters that the opposition was "hatching a conspiracy" against the Jharkhand government, but asserted it will not be successful in any such attempt.

As per a letter sent to the MLAs by the assembly secretary, the chief minister has expressed his willingness to move a motion of confidence to prove his majority.

Following a petition by the BJP seeking Soren's disqualification from the assem-

bly in an office-of-profit case, the Election Commission (EC) communicated its decision to Governor Ramesh Bais on August 25, sparking a political crisis in the state.

Though the EC's decision has not yet been made official, there is a buzz that the poll panel recommended the CM's disqualification as an MLA. The ruling UPA, however, has maintained that Soren's disqualification will not affect the government, as the JMM-Congress-RJD coalition enjoys an absolute majority in the 81-member House.

Police arrest kingpin of international immigration racket

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Police has arrested the kingpin of the 'biggest' international immigrants racket, days after four agents were arrested last month for allegedly duping people on the pretext of sending them to abroad fraudulently. The accused has been identified as 52-year-old Narayanbhai Chaudhary, a resident of district Gandhinagar in Gujarat. Police said that they have also recovered 325 Indian passports, 175 VISAS and more than 1200 forged Immigration stamps of different countries and airports along with other incriminating materials.

The agents used to charge an amount of 65-70 lakhs per passenger for facilitation of the journey, other procedures and for final illegal settlement of the victims in USA, police said, adding that four such agents of the same gang were arrested in August. According to Tanu Sharma, the DCP, IGI Airport unit, on June 6, a male passenger named Ravi Rameshbhai Chaudhary holding an Indian passport was deported from Kuwait by flight.

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

N.I.T. No.	S.N.
17-A & C-2022-23-W-V	

1 Name of work with its location: A) Improvement and standardization of L-Xing No.579 A & B: 568, 576, 571 by repairing road surface, height gauge etc. on NDLS-PWL & Ring railway under Sr.DEN/V/DLI.
C) Cess repair at different locations on DEE-RE & NDLS-PWL section under Sr.DEN/V. Similar nature of work: Any civil engineering work involving each work in banks/cutting

2 Approx. Cost of work: A) Rs. 45,19,829.45, C) Rs. 1,46,63,492.78

3 Earnest Money Deposit: (It should be in the form of net banking or payment gateway only. **Note:-** FDR will not be accepted as EMD for tender invited on IREPS as per Railway Boards letter no. 201025/CE-I/CT/5/1 dated 31.08.2016)
A) Rs. 90,400.00, C) Rs. 2,23,300.00

4 Completion period of Work A) 6 Months, C) 6 Months

5 Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender: Upto 15:00 hrs. on 27.09.2022. Opening of tender at 15:00 hrs. On 27.09.2022

6 Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be purchased etc.: Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

No.: 128-W/280/OET/2021-22/N-V/INT-17-A & C-2022-23-W-V Date: 02.09.2022 2286/2022

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

N.I.T. No.	14(A,B,C)-22-23-W-2
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1. Name of work with its Location

A) Annual zone for repair and maintenance of service building and staff quarters in the section of ADEN/MUT for the year 2022-23 PE 30.06.2023.

B) Annual zone for repair to bridge, parapets toe wall cess repair, desilting of waterway in the section of ADEN/MUT for the year 2022-23. PE 30.06.2023.

C) Upgradation of water booths and toilets at 12 stations with repairing and replacement of steel doors, windows, wire gauge jali in staff quarters in the section of SSE/W/SMQL under ADEN/SMQL.

2. Approx. Cost of Work 14 (A,B,C)-22-23-W-2 As per IREPS Notice

3. Earnest Money 14 (A,B,C)-22-23-W-2 As per IREPS Notice

4. Completion period of Work 14 (A,B,C)-22-23-W-2 As per IREPS Notice

5. Cost of tender on cash/bid post 14 (A,B,C)-22-23-W-2 As per IREPS Notice

6. Date and time for submission of tender and opening of tender 16.09.2022 to 30.09.2022 upto 15:00 hrs. Opening of tender: 30.09.2022 at 15:00 hrs.

7. Similar Nature of Work 14 (A,B,C)-22-23-W-2 As per IREPS Notice

8. Website particulars notice board location complete details of tender can be seen and address of the office from where the tender form can be used etc. Above tender available on IREPS site i.e. www.ireps.gov.in

NIT:- 14(A,B,C)-22-23-W-2 Dated: 01.09.2022. 2264/22

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ICICI Bank
Branch Office: ICICI Bank Limited, Plot No 23, Shal Tower 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh Delhi-110005
PUBLIC NOTICE - TENDER CUM E-AUCTION FOR SALE OF SECURED ASSET
[See proviso to rule 8(6)]
Notice for sale of Non-movable assets
E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8 (6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable property mortgaged/charged to the Secured Creditor, the **physical possession** of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of ICICI Bank Limited will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is", and "Whatever there is" basis as per the brief particulars given hereunder;

Sr. No.	Name of Borrower(s)/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Loan Account No.	Details of the Secured asset(s) with known encumbrances, if any	Amount Outstanding	Reserve Price/ Earnest Money Deposit	Date and Time of Property Inspection	Date & Time of E-Auction
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)	(G)
1.	Pankaj Sharma (Borrower), Monika Sharma (Guarantor) LBGUR00002370762	Flat No. 109, Type S Hig -2, First Floor, Mahagun Mansion, On Plot No. 114, Vaidhah Khand, Indrapuram, Ghaziabad And/ or Flat No. 109, Block Milano, Type S, Hig 2, Mahagun Mansion, Indrapuram, Ghaziabad. Area- 2585 Sq. Ft	Rs 1,29,07,714.85 as on August 30, 2022	Rs. 1,05,00,000/- Rs. 10,50,000/-	September 12, 2022 From 01:00 PM to 02:00 PM	September 27, 2022 From 11:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

The online auction will take place on the website of e-auction agency **M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited (URL Link-<https://disposahub.com>)** The Mortgagees/ noticees are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest till **September 26, 2022** before **05:00 PM** failing which, this/these secured assets/s will be sold as per schedule.

The Prospective Bidder(s) must submit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) Demand Draft (DD) (Refer Column E) at : **ICICI Bank Limited, Plot No 23, Shal Tower 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh Delhi-110005** on or before **September 26, 2022 before 05:00 PM** and thereafter they need to submit their offer through the above mentioned website only on or before **September 26, 2022 before 05:00 PM** along with scan image of Bank acknowledged DD towards proof of payment of EMD. Kindly note, in case prospective bidder(s) are unable to submit their offer through the website then signed copy of tender documents may be submitted at : **ICICI Bank Limited, Plot No 23, Shal Tower 3rd Floor, New Rohtak Road, Karol Bagh Delhi-110005** on or before **September 26, 2022 before 05:00 PM**. Earnest Money Deposit DD/PO should be from a Nationalised/ Scheduled Bank in favour of "**ICICI Bank Limited**" payable at **Delhi**

For any further clarifications with regards to inspection, terms and conditions of the e-auction or submission of tenders, kindly contact **ICICI Bank Limited on 9372730494/7304914763**

Please note that Marketing agencies **1. M/s NexXen Solutions Private Limited 2. Augoe Asset Management Pvt Ltd** have also been engaged for facilitating the sale of this property.

The Authorised Officer reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without furnishing any further reasons.

For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please visit www.icicibank.com/n4p4s

Date: September 05, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

People to decide our party name...

From Page 1
Launching a scathing attack on the Congress party, Azad said that people are trying to defame us (me and my supporters who left the party) but their reach is limited to computer tweets.

Criticizing the party, Azad said, "Congress was made by us by our blood, not by computers, not by Twitter. People are trying to defame us but their reach is limited to computers and tweets. That is the reason Congress is nowhere to be seen on the ground."

Slamming Congress, Azad further said, "People from Congress now go to jail in buses, they call DGP, Commissioners, get their names written and leave within an hour. That is the reason Congress has been unable to grow".

Referring to one of the most contentious issues of bringing back Kashmiri pandits to the Kashmir Valley, Azad said the return and rehabilitation of Kashmiri pandits in Kashmir Valley will also be a priority of the new party.

Shah will try to trigger communal disturbances during Bihar visit: JD(U)

PTI ■ PATNA

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar's JD(U) on Sunday alleged that Union Home Minister Amit Shah will try to "trigger communal disturbances" during his tour of the state later this month.

JD(U) national president Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan, however, added that the people of Bihar were vigilant, and Shah will not be able to reap benefits for the BJP.

"When Amit Shah ji will be here he will try to trigger communal disturbances in Bihar and across the country. But, the people of Bihar are alert (satark) and they (BJP) will not be able to cash in on communal polarisation," Lalan told reporters here.

Shah is scheduled to visit Purnea and Kishanganj, both districts with a high concentration of Muslims, on September 23-24. With the BJP rattled by the sudden snapping of ties by Kumar, fireworks



are expected during the tour of the home minister, widely regarded as his party's principal strategist.

Lalan asserted that the BJP will be decimated and the 'Mahagathbandhan' comprising JD(U), RJD, Congress and the Left will win "40 out of 40 seats" in the state.

He also predicted that the saffron party, which currently has more than 300 MPs, will be "back to its starting point when it won only two seats".

"It is possible," he insisted, adding, "They (BJP) had a vote share of 38 per cent. Imagine what will happen if the remaining 62 per cent come together. Once momentum is gained, the united opposition may get 75 per cent of the total vote share."

Preparations begin for annual Ramlila at Red Fort after 2 yrs

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Preparations have begun for the annual Ramlila at the Red Fort that will open up for the public after a gap of two years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

With Dussehra around the corner, Delhi's Luv Kush Ramlila Committee is gearing up with the theme of Ayodhya's Ram Mandir this year to stage its Ramlila. Luv Kush Ramlila Committee performed the 'Bhoomi Pujan' at Red Fort ground on Sunday. Former Union Minister Harsh Vardhan, Special Officer of Delhi Municipal Corporation Ashwani Kumar and Delhi Police Special Commissioner (Law and Order) Deependra Pathak were present during the ceremony.

After Bhoomi Poojan, Harsh Vardhan said that Luv Kush Ramlila is the number one and most popular Ramlila not only in the country but in the world.

He said the Ramlila is widely watched by viewers on

TV and social media. This year's theme of Luv Kush Ramlila is the Ram Temple of Ayodhya. The stage will be 180 feet long and 60 feet wide.

The height of the pandal will be 70 feet. According to Arjun Kumar, Luv Kush Ramlila Committee president over 20 popular artists from Mumbai will participate in this year's Ramlila.

Shri Dharmik Ramlila Committee also kick-started the preparation by conducting a 'bhumi puja' at Madhavdas Park on the premises of the historic building on Sunday.

The committee which used to organise the annual programme on the occasion of Dussehra before the emergence of the pandemic in 2020 has entered its 100th year.

The puja was attended by political dignitaries like former union minister Murli Manohar Joshi, Kerala Governor Arif Mohammad Khan, Congress' Alka Lamba, BJP MP Manoj Tiwari and Hans Raj Hans among others.

Centre to bring Model Prisons Act: Amit Shah asks States to adopt model jail manual



PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

The Union Government will bring a Model Prisons Act by amending the British-era law in the next six months for which detailed discussions are underway with State Governments, Home Minister Amit Shah said here on Sunday.

He also urged all the state governments to immediately accept the Model Prison Manual introduced by the Central government in 2016 with "a need to reassess our views regarding prisons" and carry forward prison reforms.

So far, only 11 states and Union Territories have adopted the Manual, he said addressing a gathering at the inauguration of the 6th All India Prison Duty Meet.

Kerala ex-Minister...

From Page 1

"So, for all these factors together, she politely refused it saying that she will be the first politician to get it," Yechury said.

M.V Govindan, the newly appointed secretary of the Kerala CPI(M) too said that the party was against accepting an award instituted in memory of a person who reportedly ordered the killing of labours and Communist party workers in the Philippines.

Shailaja had won the 2021 Assembly election from the Mattannur constituency with a record margin, but she was not considered for induction into the Council of Ministers.

It's Cong's...

From Page 1
"Before 2014, 22 per cent people were below the poverty line today only 10 per cent are below the poverty line with 12 per cent rising above the poverty line..." , he said.

Patra said it goes to the credit of the Modi government that "despite Global Covid19 pandemic the number of poor did not increase in the country" and the World Bank and IMF also appreciated that "there is no increase in the poverty", he said.

Taking a swipe at Rahul he said the former in his speech said "Janta sab janti hair" which Patra said is absolutely correct "that is why it votes for the BJP...you were wiped out from Uttar Pradesh in last assembly polls". He said people very well know "who is a performer."

Tatas' ex-chief Mistry dies in road accident

From Page 1

He functioned as the Tata Group chairman for nearly four years. However, in October 2016, the board of Tata Sons, the Tata Group's holding company, voted Mistry out as the chairman of the Tata Group. Group's former chairman Ratan Tata returned as its interim chairman.

Natarajan Chandrabekaran was named as the new chairman a few months later.

In a vindication of sorts for Mistry, National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) declared Chandrashekan's appointment as illegal and restored him in the post in December 2019.

On his part, Mistry announced that he would not return as the chairman of the Tata Group, but preferred to

remain on the board of directors of the Group. However, the Supreme Court stayed NCLAT's order on January 10, 2020. Mistry filed a cross appeal in the court, seeking explanations for anomalies in the NCLAT. The apex court upheld his dismissal.

Born on July 4, 1968 in a Parsi family from then Bombay now Mumbai to parents Pallonji Mistry and Pasty Perin Dubash - both of whom belonged to Zoroastrian faith with roots in India, Mistry did Civil Engineering from the University of London in 1990.

He later studied at London Business School and was awarded International Executive Masters in Management from the University of London.

After his education, Mistry joined his family con-

struction company Shapoorji Pallonji & Co. Ltd as a director in 1991. Mistry was the managing director of the company, before becoming the head of the Shapoorji Pallonji Group. The Pallonji family holds an 18.5 per cent stake in Tata Sons.

N Chandrasekaran, chairman of Tata Sons who succeeded Mistry, mourned the business leader's "untimely demise". "I am deeply saddened by the sudden and untimely demise of Mr. Cyrus Mistry. He had a passion for life and it is really tragic that he passed away at such a young age. My deepest condolences and prayers for his family in these difficult times," Chandrasekaran said in a statement. Describing Mistry as "a friend, gentleman, a man of substance, RPG Enterprises

chairman Harsh Goenka said, "I got to know Cyrus well during his all-too-brief tenure as the head of the House of Tata. I was convinced he was destined for greatness. If life had other plans for him, so be it, but life itself should not have been snatched away from him. Om Shanti."

Expressing her shock over Mistry's death, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman tweeted, "Cyrus Mistry's death comes as a shock. He was committed to carrying forward and strengthening his business in infra and infra projects. He desired to keep contributing to India's economic progress. Condolences to his family and friends."

Nationalist Congress Party chief Sharad Pawar termed Mistry as a "dynamic and brilliant entrepreneur".

"Deeply saddened to hear about the shocking news of the untimely demise of the former Tata Sons Chairman Cyrus Mistry. He was a dynamic and brilliant entrepreneur. We lost one of the brightest stars of Corporate World," Pawar said. "Devastating News My Brother Cyrus Mistry passed away. Can't believe it. Rest in Peace Cyrus," NCP MP Supriya Sule tweeted.

Condoling Mistry's death, Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal said: "Deeply anguished & shocked by the sudden passing away of Cyrus Mistry. Indian industry has lost one of its shining stars whose contributions to India's economic progress will always be remembered...My heartfelt condolences to his family & friends"

Cong protests against price hike

SAURAV GUPTA ■ NEW DELHI

Hundreds of Congress workers at the 'Mehngai par halla bol' rally in Delhi's Ramlila Maidan on Sunday chanted slogans of "Rahul Gandhi zindabad" and "Sonia Gandhi zindabad" and displayed posters demanding that he should be made party president. "We want Rahul as INC President," read the posters.

The rally also saw the presence of women, children and the elderly persons who braved the scorching heat and participated in the gathering to register their protest against "skyrocketing" prices of essential commodities.

Streets were jam-packed with party workers and people were holding banners and placards chanting slogans such as "aam aadmi ko lutna band karo, band karo, band karo" and "pahle lde the goro se, ab ladenge choro se". They also conducted a march against inflation in the area.

Stalls selling tea, fried snacks, shoe polish, stoles with Congress party symbol, ice cream, among others, were set up around Ramlila Maidan to show the difference between the prices at the duration of their party and today's prices.

On gate number three of Ramleela Maidan, a pakoda stall was set up by the members of the congress, where



Congress supporters gather for Mehngai Par Halla Bol rally at Ramlila Maidan, in New Delhi on Sunday
Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

they seen giving pakodas to the people and saying 'yeah hai mehngai k pakode'.

As soon as Rahul came on the dias, the crowd gave him a standing ovation and raised slogans of "Rahul zindabad". Ramlila Maidan was packed with Congress supporters and workers who came from different parts of the country to listen to their leader. People jostled at entry gates to get inside the venue.

Some men, who came in a group from Jhunjhunu in Rajasthan wearing traditional turbans, danced to the tunes of patriotic songs. Songs talking about inflation like "Mehangai

Dayan Khaye Jat Hai" were also played at the venue.

Meanwhile, people picked various ways to register their protest against inflation and unemployment. Some sat on streets around Ramlila Maidan, wearing Congress T-shirts and hats with the slogan of "Halla bol against Mehngai" written on them, while some reached the venue barefoot.

Sanjeev Chopra, a farmer who came from Kurukshetra all way to Delhi, just to join this fight of congress against the skyrocketing inflation said that he along with his two sons was sitting in the ground

from 10 in the morning to support the party in this fight.

"Since the BJP Government came to power, they had nothing for the poor people and the farmers. They are only helping the rich people in getting richer by making the poor people poorer. They have promised that they will provide jobs to the youth of the country, but instead, they had just raised the prices of the basic necessities," Chopra said. "The situation (of inflation) is such that I cannot even afford a pair of shoes, that is why I came here barefoot," Avesh, who came from Saharanpur, UP, said.

Mohammad Azam sat in the middle of the road wearing the Congress T-shirt and hat.

Rajendra Choudhary, a resident of Noida, said that in the upcoming 2024 elections, the Congress party will come to power, as this party thinks about the poor people and youth of the country.

Many Congress workers, who came to attend the 'Mehngai Par Halla Bol' rally, put up banners demanding Rahul Gandhi to once again lead the party. People were also seen taking pictures with Rahul's posters.

"Rahul is our true leader and we have full faith in him that he will restore the glory of the Congress. He should be made the party president," Anurag Gohil, who came to attend the rally from Muzaffarnagar in western Uttar Pradesh, said. The Congress has deferred its presidential election to next month.

The chorus for Rahul becoming the party's national chief has been growing. Many party leaders have openly demanded that he be made the president, the post he quit in June 2019 after a poll debacle.

The rally comes ahead of the opposition party's 3,500-km 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' from Kanyakumari to Kashmir, starting September 7, highlighting the issues of price rise and unemployment, and promoting communal harmony.

Appu Ghar in G'gram sealed over ₹49 cr pending dues



Gurugram: The Haryana Shahari Vikas Pradhikaran (HSVP) on Sunday sealed the Appu Ghar amusement park in the Sector-29 area of Gurugram due to non-payment of the monthly lease payment to the tune of more than Rs 48.57 crores which includes lease rent amount of more than Rs 24.28 crores and an equal amount of penalty over the last several years, the officials said.

Officials of the HSVP said that notices in 2015, 2016, 2017, 2021 and 2022 had been issued to the Amusement park management regarding the pending dues but the management failed to act against the notices.

According to reports, International Recreation and Amusement Ltd (IRAL), the operator of the theme park, and HSVP had signed a contract in 2011. According to the contract, the IRAL has taken the theme park on lease for 33 years and will have to pay more than Rs 48.57 crore as rent to the HSVP from 2011

onwards. However, despite being given repeated notices by the HSVP, the due amount was not paid by IRAL. According to the orders "IRAL failed to pay a single penny in the discharge of the ground rent as per the lease agreement". HSVP officials said, IRAL was running the amusement park and was given several notices by HSVP to clear the dues but the management did not take the notice seriously.

Subsequently, on September 2 this month, HSVP administrator Jaspreet Kaur cancelled the lease deed. Even before cancelling the lease deed, 30 days show cause notice was granted to cure the breaches and defaults to the company.

Apart from this, a penalty of about Rs 95.20 lakh on account of water supply is also outstanding against IRAL from the year 2016 which is payable to HSVP as on August 31, the orders said. "The lease deed was cancelled for non-payment of the amount.

India lost visionary: Kejriwal, Sisodia condole death of Mistry in accident

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his deputy Manish Sisodia on Sunday condoled the death of former Tata Sons chairman Cyrus Mistry. They said that the country has lost a "business visionary".

Mistry (54) was killed on Sunday when his car hit a road divider on a bridge in Maharashtra's Palghar district neighbouring Mumbai.

"Shocked to learn about the sudden demise of Cyrus Mistry Ji. This is a huge loss for the business community of the country. My condolences to his family, may God give them the strength in this hour of grief," Kejriwal tweeted.

In a tweet, Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said, "Saddened by the death of the former Tata Sons Chairman, Cyrus Mistry. With his untimely passing, India has lost a business visionary who still had so much left to contribute to India's economic growth. My heartfelt condolences to his family... May his soul rest in Peace".

Mistry and another person travelling in his car were killed on the spot, while two others, including the driver, were injured in the accident.

Liquor vend shelves still empty in Capital

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government run liquor vends are still struggling to meet the demand of the consumers in the national Capital, despite four days since the old liquor regime has been back in the city. The booze lovers are starting to lose their patience as they are unable to get their favourite brand in the city.

The liquor vend shelves are still empty, the famous brands in Whiskey like Royal Stag, Royal Challenge, Blenders Pride, Chivas Regal, Red Label, etc are missing. In beer, the only brand available in almost all the liquor stores is Tuborg. All the brands such as Bira, Kingfisher, Bad Monkey, and Bee young vanished from the market.

A liquor vend owner at Mayur Vihar Phase 3, said that they are asking the supplier to supply the brands but it was not available to procure.

"The supply is also less due to which they have to sit ideal whole day as they are unable to meet the demand of the market. The customers are going empty-handed even the beers are also not available," he said. Another liquor vend owner at Khichripur, East District said, "The supply is coming on a daily basis but in a very limit-



ed quantity. The brands available with suppliers are only cheap brands and the famous brands are missing."

"The demand in the market is back to normal but the supply is so short that the whole day we are telling the booze lover that the brands are not available. We also have no clue that till when the supply will get back to normal," he added.

The tippers also were disappointed with the situation in the Capital and had to visit the adjoining states like Uttar Pradesh and Haryana, just to buy their favorite brand.

Jitendra Pandre, a booze lover said, "from the past three days, I am regularly visiting the liquor shop just to get a Red Label bottle as it is the only brand which I like, but the brand is not available. Only cheap brands are available in the city."

5th Municipal Valuation panel to meet on Sept 9

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Fifth Municipal Valuation Committee on Sunday has decided to meet on the 9th and 10 September for a personal hearing on the 16 objections received by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), following the recommendation of the MVC to increase 37 per cent in Unit Area Value of all categories of colony.

The Chairman, Anindo Majumdar, IAS (Retd.), and four members, namely, Umesh Kumar Tyagi IAS (Retd.), Naveen ND Gupta, CA, M Badar Mahmood, Advocate, and Randhir Sahay, Additional Commissioner met on September 3rd, 2022 to decide the course of action to be taken on the objections received on the Interim Report presented by it.

According to a senior official familiar with the matter said that the corporation has received 16 objections to date from citizens in respect of the Interim Report of the Municipal Valuation Committee. The Committee will give personal hearings to petitioners. It will meet on Friday and Saturday. "The Delhi Government has set up the Fifth Municipal Valuation Committee u/s 116 (1) of the

Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957 (as amended). As per Section 116 (5)(a)," he said.

"The functions of the Fifth Municipal Valuation Committee include, making recommendations to the Corporation on matters relating to classification of vacant lands and buildings in any ward of Delhi into colonies and groups of lands and buildings and fixation of base value per unit area of vacant land or per unit area of covered space of building and factors for increase or decrease, or for no increase or decrease thereof," he informed.

"The civic body had published a public notice seeking objections within 30 days to the recommendations contained in the Interim Report which had been uploaded on the website of the Corporation mcdonline.nic.in regarding which citizens could send their objections to the official email id, mvc5.sdmc@mcd.nic.in. or physically at the office of the Chairman, Fifth municipal valuations committee, Room no. -18, Ambedkar Stadium Office Complex, Delhi Gate-110002," he said.

"MVC has recommended a 37 per cent increase in Unit Area Value of all categories of Colony. The UAV has not increased for 18 years.

Crimes committed by foreigners in city rose by 91.6% in 2021: NCRB

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The recently released National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) report shows that the crimes committed by foreigners in the national Capital have increased to 91.6 per cent in 2021 in comparison to the last year.

A maximum number of these offences were committed by African, and Myanmar nationals besides other Asian countries, it said. According to the data, in 2020 -- the year which saw the pandemic -- crimes committed by foreigners stood at 168. However, in 2021, it rose to 322.

On analysing the data of the two years, it has been observed that there has been an increase of 91.6 per cent in crimes committed by foreigners. A senior police officer said many of the African nationals who visit India on the pretext of getting medical treatment stay back illegally even after the expiration of their visa.

While there is a section of people who genuinely travel for health issues but there are also a good number of people who after arriving here engage in drug smuggling, cheating and other illegal activities, he said. "We have been conducting

tenant verification and raids as per secret inputs. Those who are found staying illegally are then eventually deported back to their respective countries," he said.

The data shows that most of these crimes committed by them fall under the Foreigners Act 1946 and Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939, Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985, cheating etc.

Meanwhile, crime against foreigners has reduced in the national capital from 62 in the year 2020 to 27 in the year 2021, the NCRB data showed.

Most of the crimes committed against foreigners include cases of cheating, rape and theft among others.

A senior police officer attributed the reduction in crime against foreigners to public awareness, sensitisation of police as well as the public and efforts taken by the officials in prompt registration of cases and online facilities for the registration of cases which is also available right at IGI premises.

The reduction in the number of cases can also be attributed to the lockdown as the flights from abroad were restricted and banned for a specific period, the officer said.



Teachers flag bearers of education revolution in city, says Sisodia

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Deputy Chief Minister, Manish Sisodia said on Sunday the teachers of the Government schools have been improving the quality of life of lakhs of children with their untiring efforts and commitment.

Speaking at an event on the eve of Teachers' Day, he dubbed teachers and principals of the city Government schools "flag bearers" of the "Delhi education revolution".

Sisodia interacted with some school heads of Delhi government schools on 'Sunday Breakfast' to discuss the future plans for government schools, education and children of Delhi. During the meeting, the Deputy Chief Minister motivated principals to innovate for developing a better school environment, sharing them with other schools, establishing better relations between the school and the community, etc. On behalf of the Delhi government he also thanked

the teachers for influencing the lives of lakhs of children through their work.

"As a Education Minister of the Kejriwal Government, I am proud that our school heads are constantly innovating, thinking afresh, adopting innovations for the betterment of schools, teachers and children," said Sisodia.

"Whatever changes the world is seeing today in Delhi government schools have been made possible because of the efforts of school principals.

By promoting the innovative ideas of all their fellow teachers, encouraging the teachers and children to do better, establishing a better relationship between the teacher-students community, and creating a conducive learning environment in the school, our school leaders have helped Delhi government schools flourish in the past seven years," said Sisodia.

"Our teachers have contributed incredibly in nation building.

'Explore new avenues to adopt traditional medical practices'

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena on Sunday visited the Chaudhary Brahma Prakash Ayurved Charak Sansthan (CBPACS) and directed officials to explore new avenues to adopt ancient, often lesser-known, traditional medical practices, as to develop this institute into a leading Ayurveda Centre in the world.

As per a senior official, Saxena urged the officials to expand the capacities of the hospital and adopt newer medical procedures so that the centre is equipped with holistic treatment facilities for all diseases. At the same time, the LG said that the CBPACS could be developed into a centre for knowledge sharing with neighbouring countries.

"The LG, accompanied by senior officials, also launched a mega plantation drive of 10,000 medicinal trees on the Campus with active participation of students and locals. Saxena further asked the officials to utilize at least 25 acres of the available land for plantation of medicinal trees like Moringa, Amla, Trifala, etc," he said. "The LG



also directed to plant Desi Gulab, which is used for various medicinal purposes, over at least one acre of land," he stated. "Saxena took a round of the entire hospital and interacted with the patients undergoing treatment for various ailments at the hospital.

The LG also inspected the paediatrics department and sought to know the treatment being administered to the children," he said. "The LG particularly asked the officials to increase the capacity of the paediatrics department to accommodate more children. Saxena

directed the hospital authorities to further strengthen the existing leech therapy department and also develop a fish treatment and Tibetan medicine departments in coming days," official said.

"Saxena asked the officials to open various facilities like Panch Karma, naturopathy and Ayurvedic massage to the general public at a reasonable cost so that the centre receives a larger footfall while adding to the financial sustainability of the hospital," he informed.

"The LG directed officials to tie up with big Ayurvedic

and naturopathy institutions in the country and offer similar services/treatments in Delhi for which people have to travel to other states," he said.

"The LG also instructed to open a cafeteria at the centre that so that people coming in from far off places can find a leisure space in the natural ambience of the hospital.

Saxena also directed officials to collect feedback from the passed out students about the job prospects and accordingly increase the training capacity of the hospital," officials added.

BJP organises Janta ki Adalat



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP on Sunday organised "Janta ki Adalat" in which people of the national capital questioned Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Deputy CM Manish Sisodia on the alleged liquor scam.

The BJP leaders asked questions from Kejriwal and Sisodia over their excise policy and sought explanation. In the Janta ki adalat, Kejriwal and Sisodia were made an accused.

Delhi BJP state president Adesh Gupta questioned that in the new excise policy, the sale of liquor increased more than double, but how was there revenue loss of ₹3000 crores? Why was the commission raised from 2 per cent to 12.5 per cent to benefit the liquor mafia? Referring to his questions, Gupta said that what was the crime committed by the women of Delhi, whom you got

beaten up by calling bouncers. What equitable distribution did you keep talking about by opening these shops next to temples, schools? "What was the compulsion that he implemented the liquor policy just before the Punjab elections.

Punjab elections were fought with the money of liquor mafia and money was wasted like water in the elections," he claimed.

Meanwhile, Leader of Opposition Ramvir Singh Bidhuri questioned that Kejriwal said that the number of liquor vends was not increased, but why still opened more than 850 such shops in the street? While questioning Manish Sisodia, Bidhuri said that Sisodia used to say in the assembly that there are 100 wards of Delhi where liquor shops cannot be opened, but why did you open them by violating Delhi's master plan.

Yogendra resigns from SKM coordination panel

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Farmer leader Yogendra Yadav has resigned from the Samyukta Kisan Morcha coordination committee but said he will remain a "soldier" of the farmers' collective. The SKM made Yadav's resignation letter public at a press conference at Gurudwara Rakabganj in the national capital.

In the letter, Yadav has said he will no longer be in the coordination committee of the SKM -- an umbrella body of about 40 farmer unions -- which had spearheaded the farmers' movement last year.

"I will no longer be able to shoulder the responsibility of being the member of SKM's coordination committee. It is important that the energies of all movements and opposition political parties be joined to fight against the anti-farmer Modi government. So, for this I am in touch with other movements as well apart from farmers' movement.

In October last year, the SKM had suspended Yadav from the farmers' body for a month after he had met the bereaved families of the BJP workers killed during the Lakhimpur violence. "Seeing my this priority, it will not be



possible for me to do justice with the responsibility of SKM coordination committee," Yadav said in his letter to SKM.

He appealed to the farmers' body to relieve him of his responsibilities. He stressed that being a member of "Jai Kisan Andolan", he will always be the "soldier" of the SKM.

He said Jai Kisan Andolan President Avik Saha will be available to shoulder these responsibilities in his place. The press conference was organised after a national general body meeting of the SKM which was attended by farmer leaders Darshan Pal, Rakesh Tikait, Hannan Mollah among others.

The SKM also decided to organise rallies in each state and submit memorandums of demands to governors of those state on November 26, a SKM statement said.

Rijiju raps ex-SC judge for remarks on lack of freedom of expression

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Law Minister Kiren Rijiju has hit out at former Supreme Court judge Justice B N Srikrishna for his remarks on lack of freedom of expression, saying those who speak without restrictions to abuse a popularly elected Prime Minister are crying about freedom of expression.

Responding to a tweet which quoted a portion of an interview given by Justice Srikrishna (ret'd) to a national daily, Rijiju said "Those people who speak all the time without any restrictions to abuse the popularly elected Prime Minister are crying about freedom of expression!"

They will never talk about emergency imposed by Congress party and never dare to criticise some Regional Party CMs."The former top court judge had said that today things are "very bad." "I must confess, if I were to stand in a public square and say I don't like the



face of the Prime Minister, somebody might raid me, arrest me, throw me in jail without giving me any reason. Now that is something that all of us oppose as citizens," the former Supreme Court Judge had said.

In a series of tweets on Saturday, the law minister said he does not know whether a former judge of the Supreme Court has actually said this.

"If it's true then the statement itself is demeaning the institution he has served," the minister said without naming anyone.

Army Chief's Nepal visit to boost def ties

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Nepal will review their bilateral defence ties during Army Chief General Manoj Pande's four-day visit to Kathmandu beginning Monday. This is his first visit to Nepal as the Army chief.

Giving details of his schedule, officials said here on Sunday, Pande will call on the President and Prime Minister of Nepal besides the Chief of the Army Staff of the Nepali Army.

He will also meet with the country's senior military and civilian leadership and will discuss avenues for enhancing India-Nepal defence relations.

Continuing a tradition of friendship between both armies, the Indian Army Chief will be conferred with the honorary rank of General of Nepal Army on Monday in a ceremony at Sital Nivas, the official residence of the President of Nepal.

Pande is scheduled to visit Nepal Army Headquarters where he will pay homage to the martyred soldiers and have



interactions with the senior leadership of the Nepali Army. During his visit, the Army Chief will also interact with the student officers and faculty of the Nepali Army Command and Staff College Shivpuri.

India – Nepal relations are historic, multifaceted, and marked by common cultural and civilizational ties, apart from mutual respect and trust. India attaches the highest priority to its relationship with Nepal in accordance with its 'Neighborhood First' and 'Act East' policies.

This visit will provide an opportunity to take stock of the existing bilateral defence ties and strengthen cooperation in areas of mutual interest.

Def Min Rajnath to visit Mongolia, India-Japan 2+2 meet on Sept 8

In 2+2 dialogue, two nations expected to expand further bilateral cooperation in areas of defence and security

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Japan will review the entire spectrum of their defence and strategic ties during the two plus two dialogue between Defence and External Affairs Ministers of the two countries later this week.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will also visit Mongolia to give a boost to ties between the two countries. It will be the first ever visit to Mongolia by an Indian Defence Minister.

While Rajnath's three-day Mongolia visit begins Monday, he and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will hold the two plus two dialogue with their Japanese counterparts on September 8.

The Japanese delegation will be headed at the talks by Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi and Defence Minister Yasukazu Hamada. The 2+2 dialogue is taking place five months after Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida visited India for the annual India-Japan summit.

At the summit in New Delhi, Kishida announced an investment target of five trillion Yen (₹3,20,000 crore) in India over the next five years.

In the 2+2 dialogue, the two sides are expected to deliberate on ways to further expand bilateral cooperation in the areas of defence and security besides taking stock of the developments in the Indo-



Pacific, sources said.

The two sides are expected to deliberate on ways to further expand bilateral cooperation in the areas of defence and security besides taking stock of the developments in the Indo-Pacific. The '2+2' dialogue with Japan was initiated in 2019 to deepen bilateral security and defence cooperation further and bring greater depth to the special strategic and global partnership between the two countries.

India and Mongolia will review the entire spectrum of defence and strategic ties during Rajnath's visit. Giving details about the minister's schedule, officials said his visit will provide further fillip to strategic partnership with the East Asian nation. It will also enhance and consolidate the defence cooperation and strategic partnership between the two countries.

During the visit, Rajnath will hold bilateral talks with Mongolia's Minister of Defence, Lt General Saikhanbayar. Rajnath will call on the President of Mongolia U. Khurelsukh and Chairman of the State Great Khural of Mongolia G Zandanshatar.

Underlining the age old ties, they said the two democracies have a common interest in fostering peace and pros-

perity in the entire region. India and Mongolia share a strategic partnership and the defence is a key pillar of this partnership.

The bilateral defence engagements with Mongolia have been expanding over a period of time to include wide ranging contacts between the two countries, including Joint Working Group meeting, military to military exchanges, high level visits, capacity building and training programmes and bilateral exercises.

During bilateral talks, the two Defence Ministers will review the bilateral defence cooperation between India and Mongolia, and explore new initiatives to further strengthen bilateral engagements. The two leaders will also exchange views on regional and global issues of shared interest, they added.

As regards the two plus two architecture, sources said India has such an arrangement with few countries including the U.S., Japan, Australia and Russia.

India has been ramping up strategic ties with its key partners in the backdrop of the geopolitical turmoil, largely triggered by the Ukraine crisis, China's aggressive posturing in the Indo-Pacific and escalating tension between Beijing and Taipei in the Taiwan Strait.

Tharoor meets Gehlot to discuss upcoming AICC president elections



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor met Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot here on Sunday and discussed the upcoming AICC president polls, sources said.

The meeting comes amid buzz that both leaders are in the race for the top party's post. The meeting lasted for about half an hour.

Last week, Gehlot had sought to play down reports about him being the frontrunner for the Congress president's post and said efforts will be made till the last minute to persuade Rahul Gandhi to take over the reins of the party again.

Tharoor has said he would decide whether to throw his hat in the ring for the Congress president polls only after the election notification comes out.

The notification for the Congress president's election will be out on September 22 and the process for filing nominations will be held from September 24 to 30.

The last date for withdrawal of nominations is October 8 and the election, if required, will be held on October 17. The results will be out on October 19.

India far behind in organ donation; lack of awareness, legal process to blame

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Despite having one of the largest populations, India is far behind other developing nations when it comes to organ donation mainly due to lack of public awareness, religious taboos, and complicated legal structure.

Data speaks. According to the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO), the organ donation rate (ODR) has marginally improved from 0.27 in 2013 to 0.21 in 2021.

Taking serious note of the dismal organ donation landscape in the country, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar said, "There are a number of areas in the country where no eye bank exists and the bone and skin banks are rare to find.

"The facility of organ retrieval and transplantation is limited to only a few places in the country."In this regard, I will talk to concerned authorities in the Government of India to ensure a robust and practical infrastructure with the support of public and private healthcare systems."



The Vice President was speaking on the concluding day of the two-day event organised here by Dadhichi Deh Daan Samiti (Dadhichi) and 46 NGOs from 22 States across the country to launch Swasth Sabal Bharat campaign aiming to promote body-organ donation.

As per a report, the number of brain-dead donors in 2019 was 715 which reduced to only 315 in 2020. Though the figure improved in 2021 with 552 registrations, it is still lesser when compared to the demand. Member of Parliament Sushil Modi, called for setting up institutes in every state for successful organ transplantation by qualified

surgeons. "Besides, it is my personal suggestion that we should take people's consent on donating their organs on their driving license.

Thus, if a person dies due to an accident or suffers brain-dead, then her/his organs will be preserved for donation on the basis of the consent given in the driving license."

We have requested the Government to declare a fortnight to be observed every year for creating awareness of body-organs donation, Dadhichi patron Alok Kumar said, adding that the campaign aims to dispel unawareness among people and enlighten them to the fact that they can

restore life in several people in need of organs. The previous day, Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Health Minister also expressed concern at the lack of awareness and involvement of people in body-organ donation and assured that he will take up the matter with the PMO to incorporate the issue in the priority list. "This is our quest for a healthy and strong India.

The presence and the response of the Ministers and senior officials of the Union Ministry of Health assure us that the campaign shall receive all infrastructural and other support for body-organs donation," added President of Dadhichi Deh Dan Samiti Harsh Malhotra.

He cited results of CVoter survey which said that "It is not prejudice or superstitions that prevent citizens from considering organ donation as an option.

It is the lack of credible information and ignorance over the issue. More than 85% of respondents in the survey clearly stated that they did not know about donating organs like kidneys, liver, heart, lungs and eyes," he added.

Inflation under control due to PM's policies: BJP

PTI ■ JAIPUR

Hitting back at the Congress for its criticism on the issue of price rise, the BJP on Sunday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has brought the inflation rate under control despite adverse circumstances which is being "appreciated" by citizens but the Congress party is not able to see it.

BJP national general secretary and in-charge for Rajasthan, Arun Singh, said inflation rate in other countries has gone up to 20-25 per cent but it is the vision and policies of the prime minister that inflation is under control in India.

"Inflation is not going to be an issue here because the prime minister has controlled the inflation," Singh told reporters when asked about the issue of inflation being raised by the Congress. Singh was in Jaipur



to take a meeting of the party leaders. "Look at the neighbouring countries of Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Bangladesh, even you go and see in the UK or U.S...The way inflation has increased in the countries of the world, 10 per cent, 15 per cent and up to 20-25 per cent, but in India, it is the vision and policies of PM Narendra Modi that inflation is under control despite adverse circumstances," he said.

"The Congress is not able to see the ground reality, and,

therefore they keep on making allegations," he said. The Congress is holding a rally in Delhi on Sunday over the issue of price rise. The BJP leader, while referring to a report on the economy, said India's economy stands at the fifth position in the world, which was at the 10th place in 2014. "We are moving towards becoming the third largest economy by 2027. Entire world is appreciating India.

The GDP growth is almost 8 per cent and that too despite adverse circumstances. Covid came and then the Russia-Ukraine war happened. The way the PM has tackled inflation; it is being appreciated by the country. Congress should see this," he said. Targeting the Ashok Gehlot led Congress government in Rajasthan, he charged that law and order has deteriorated and crimes are increasing. He said the

Congress will not only face a defeat in the 2023 Assembly election in the state but the number of seats it will get will also be very less. Singh held a meeting of the party's state office bearers and held discussion on various issues.

Later in the day, the BJP's state core committee meeting was held at the party office in which the organisational and political issues were discussed.

State president Satish Poonia chaired the committee meeting which was attended by the members of the core committee including state general secretary (organisation) Chandrashekhar, Leader of Opposition Gulab Chand Kataria, Deputy Leader of Opposition Rajendra Rathore, Union Ministers Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Arjun Ram Meghwal, Kailash Chaudhary and national secretary Alka Gurjar etc.



Union Home Minister Amit Shah inaugurates smart schools made of ₹9.54 crore, in presence of Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel, in Ahmedabad on Sunday

PTI

Jaishankar holds telephonic talks with Iranian Foreign Min

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Sunday held a telephonic conversation with his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, focusing on bilateral cooperation, and the Iran nuclear deal. The phone call was initiated by the Iranian foreign minister.

"Received a call from FM@Amirabdollahian of Iran. Discussed our bilateral cooperation and JCPOA. Look forward to remaining in touch," Jaishankar tweeted. The Iran



nuclear deal also figured in the talks. The Joint Comprehensive

Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly known as the Iran nuclear deal, was finalised in 2015 between Tehran and several world powers including the European Union.

It was aimed at curbing Iran's nuclear ambitions. The US had withdrawn from the deal in May 2018 and reimposed sanctions on Iran. There have been fresh efforts now to restore the deal. Iran has been a key country for India in the Gulf region. The two sides have been jointly focusing on improving connectivity

between South East Asia and Central Asia. India has been projecting Iran's Chabahar Port as a key regional transit hub including Afghanistan.

Located in the Sistan-Balochistan province on the energy-rich Iran's southern coast, the Chabahar port is being developed by India, Iran and Afghanistan to boost connectivity and trade ties. India has been in touch with Iran over the developments in Afghanistan as well following its takeover by the Taliban on August 15 last year.

NSG holds inaugural medical seminar

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The National Security Guard (NSG) organised the inaugural medical seminar covering lectures on a range of issues like diet, lifestyle and its impact on heart disease besides early nutrition and health outcomes in children.

The seminar was inaugurated by NSG Director General MA Ganapathy in the presence of Additional Director General (Medical) Dr Vinay Kumar, Vice Chairman of Medanta Hospital Dr Rajneesh Kapoor and Inspector General (Provisioning), NSG, Shalin besides DIG (Medical) of the paramilitary Dr AC Bhardwajan. Lectures were

delivered by the doctors of the Composite Hospital of NSG on topics like varicose vein, the role of early nutrition and health outcomes in children, emergency medicine polytrauma, principles of management of eye diseases and ante-natal plus intrapartum care, the NSG said in a statement.

"This programme was the first of its kind to be organized in NSG and apart from Medical Officers of NSG, Medical Officers from all the CAPFs including Director (Medical) of CRPF attended the event. . The topics chosen are of utmost importance in day-to-day clinical practice and will be beneficial to all the medical fraternity," it said in a statement.

Focus on giving company to lonely jumbo Shankar in Delhi Zoo

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

As Shankar, an African jumbo living all alone for the last two decades in Delhi Zoo, cannot be released in the wild, the focus will be on its behavioural and environmental enrichment to ensure it did not feel lonely and is stress-free.

Efforts will also be made to bring two female elephants from Africa to give company to Shankar in the zoo.

These are the recommendations of a three-member panel set up by the Union Environment Ministry which will soon submit the report to the Delhi High Court.

The panel was set up at the direction of the court which had taken cognizance of Shankar's loneliness last year following a petition by a school student. The tusker had arrived



in India in 1998, as a diplomatic gift from Zimbabwe to President Shankar Dayal Sharma. "The report will soon be submitted to the Court," said sources in the Ministry. The committee, which is represented by an official from the Central Zoo Authority (CZA), Animal Welfare Board of India

(AWBI) and Project Elephant in the Ministry, has completely ruled out the option to release the animal in the wild as it has lived in the enclosure throughout its life. "It will have survival issues in the wild. Moreover, since it is of African origin it will have to compete with the Asian elephant in its

Indian habitat, said the sources. Stating that two female elephants of African origin will be brought from Shankar's original home, the panel has enlisted several ways to ensure animal enrichment.

"It means providing mental and physical stimulation for our animals – opportunities for them to increase their activity, stimulate their brains, promote positive social interaction, and encourage natural behaviours," explained the sources.

For instance, mud baths are an all-time favorite of pachyderms. Elephants in captivity also enjoy mud baths and can be seen giving their friends a helpful shove and rolling around to play in the mud. The report prepared by the panel has highlighted the importance of behavioural enrichment, particularly in elephants

in which boredom soon leads to social tension, aggression and abnormal behaviour.

In fact, according to vet experts, even zoo visitors can easily recognize if an elephant is bored and has not got enough to do: The elephant is observed to be "weaving", i.e. it stays in one place while slowly moving its head from side to side.

Unfortunately, even elephant keepers who are highly committed and imaginative in their efforts to keep their elephant group occupied may not be able to completely prevent such stereotypical behaviour, they said.

Thus, behavioural and environmental enrichment is an important component of modern elephant keeping. Every enrichment programme includes daily hygiene and rou-

time training sessions. In addition, elephants must be allowed to spend a lot of time in their outdoor enclosure. It must be designed to be both comfortable and environmentally enriching, the report has suggested.

Scratching trees and mud pools are necessary for hygiene purposes, but at the same time, they are also a way to keep the elephants active. However, more outdoor activities need to be introduced to keep the elephants busy over a longer period of time, it said, according to the sources.

Another way of keeping zoo elephants busy is by allowing them to spend plenty of time searching for food and preparing it for eating as well giving them appropriate toys, suggested the panel, as per the sources.

Chit fund scam: CBI raids TMC leaders' houses

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

Within two days of arresting Trinamool Congress leader and Halishahar municipal chairman Raju Sahani for his alleged involvement in chit fund scam, the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Sunday conducted multiple raids in the houses of a number of TMC leaders, including an MLA and a second municipal chairman.

The investigating agency raided seven properties of TMC MLA from Bijpur Subodh Adhikari. Bijpur is in North 24 Parganas in northern fringes of Kolkata.

Houses of another municipality chairman, Kamal Adhikari and a corporator were also raided sources said adding some documents and foreign currency were recovered from these premises.

Kamal Adhikari is the chairman of Kachrapara municipality which too lies in

Bijpur Assembly constituency.

Earlier on Friday the CBI recovered Rs 80 lakh and documents related to a number of properties both in Bengal and Bengaluru from the houses of Raju Sahni the chairman of Halishahar municipality.

The names of Adhikari's bobbed up following intense grilling of Sahni. Another apartment of Adhikari was being raided when reports last came in.

Sunday's development comes within a few fortnights of the arrest of top TMC leaders Partha Chatterjee and Anubrata Mondal. While Chatterjee a former Education Minister was arrested for his alleged involvement in school level recruitment scam, Mondal was arrested in relation to cow smuggling.

The TMC hit back after Sunday's development with senior leader Saugato Roy once again saying that there was a continuous effort on the part of



the BJP government to tarnish the images of the ruling party leaders.

"The TMC has no problem with law taking its own course but the way the BJP is trying to tarnish the image of TMC leaders is deplorable... It is an act of vendetta after failing to defeat us politically," Roy said.

Meanwhile in a new development Bengal Criminal Investigation Department on

Sunday recovered Rs 1.39 crore from the house of Jayprakash Saha a fish merchant from Gajol area of Malda district bordering Bangladesh.

The man was arrested following reports that huge money had been piled up in the house of a local business man, CID officials said.

"The cash has links with drug smuggling... This man is involved in smuggling of phensedyl," a CID officer said.

Kerala ropes in TN, Karnataka to revive high-speed rail project

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The ruling CPI(M) in Kerala has come out with a new strategy to revive the 532 km long Thiruvananthapuram-Kasaragod semi-high speed rail project, which has hit a road block following widespread opposition from the general public because of environmental and ecological hazards as well as displacement of thousands of households from the regions through which the rail track passes.

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan has proposed to extend the rail track to Mangalore in Karnataka thereby bringing that State as a beneficiary of the project. The CPI(M) and Vijayan hope that by roping in Karnataka, the Centre's opposition to the project could be resolved. Following Saturday's conference of chief ministers from the Southern States at Thiruvananthapuram which

was presided over by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Kerala has sounded the Government of Karnataka about the new proposal.

Vijayan has succeeded in mobilizing the support of Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin who has reportedly demanded the Centre for a high-speed rail corridor in his State linking Chennai. Thoothukudi, Madurai and Coimbatore. The Indian Railways as well as the Central Government had recently told the Kerala High Court that no approval has been given to the Semi High Speed Rail Linking Thiruvananthapuram and Kasaragod which the Kerala Government claims would bring down the travelling time to five hours.

Alok Kumar Varma, former chief engineer of Indian Railways while welcoming the move to have a high speed rail corridor linking the three South Indian States said the sudden change of mind of



chief minister Vijayan is because he has understood the futility of the K-Rail as the semi high speed rail project is known.

"A stand alone rail line linking the three States would be another failure because the Kerala Government is still obsessed with the standard gauge which has become a museum piece. Let then go ahead with the broad gauge track so that the entire rail tracks in the country get benefited. We cannot have one railway system for South India and another for rest of the country," Varma told The Pioneer.

He said the Kerala

Government had initially thought of Bullet Trains but gave it up and switched over to the Japanese technology. "It was all based on bogus, fabricated and false detailed project reports. All studies have found that neither the bullet train nor the K-Rail projects would materialize in Kerala because of environmental issues, density of population and lack of space.

Now that Indian Railways has decided to add a third track between Ernakulam and Shornur, it would be ideal if they dump the K-Rail and opt for broad gauge high speed connectivity, a proven technology," said Varma.

Those who 'exploited' Rampur now facing consequences, says Yogi

PNS ■ LUCKNOW/RAMPUR

Launching a veiled attack on the Samajwadi Party, particularly Azam Khan, in Rampur on Sunday, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath said those who "exploited" Rampur for vested interests were now facing the consequences.

Rampur is considered a bastion of the Samajwadi Party and its leader Azam Khan carries a lot of clout in the district. Addressing a gathering, Adityanath claimed that by electing BJP candidate Ghanshyam Singh Lodhi in the recent Lok Sabha bypolls, people of Rampur stood with development, security and prosperity, and heralded the beginning of a new era."

Khan spent over two years in jail following registration of multiple cases against him. He came out a few months ago after the Supreme Court granted him interim bail in a cheating case.

Adityanath alleged that development schemes in the past were made person-centric, serving as means of exploitation while keeping public interest at bay.

The CM further said that the same 'Rampuri chaaku' that got into the wrong hands earlier and became a means of exploitation, was ensuring security of the common man, women, youth and traders today due to BJP's positive intent, attracting investment.

While launching 22 devel-

opment projects worth Rs 72 crore in Rampur, Adityanath said, "For 10-12 years, the ruling governments treated Rampur as their den for their selfish motives. No schemes or projects were implemented for the development of the region and it was just reduced to a place having no identity. The faith of people in BJP here will take Rampur to new heights."

Congratulating the people on the launch of various development projects and expressing gratitude to them for their support to Ghanshyam Singh Lodhi, the CM said Rampur residents paved the way for a new era by being in favour of development, security and prosperity and gave a clear message to those who exploit-



ed the land which has its own mythological and historical identity.

Assuring the people that the double-engine government would continue to work with a development-oriented approach, the CM said both the Central and state governments would ensure that benefits of the welfare schemes reached each and every person without any discrimination and on the mantra of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka

Vikas, Sabka Vishwas aur Sabka Prayas'.

Stating that the contribution of every section of the society ranging from craftsmen, artisans, youth, women, farmers, traders, and labourers was essential for the prosperity and growth of the country, the CM also called upon people to work together with the government for making India prosperous and self-reliant by inviting investment and generating employment opportunities.

Highlighting that Rampur's Amrit Sarovar got a mention in PM Narendra Modi's 'Mann Ki Baat' programme, the CM said that the region should work with the same dedication for progress. "In the last 5.5 years,

we completed projects worth Rs 3,200 crore in Rampur and various programmes were launched to bring a new identity to the region. Similarly, apart from all other projects, incentives were provided to encourage investment. In the last eight months, 20 new industrial units have been established in Rampur. An investment of Rs 540 crore has been made and 600 people have been directly employed while 4,500 people have received indirect employment. Besides, three industrial units have also been set up, giving employment to 1,200 people," Adityanath pointed out.

"They (previous governments) made plans for their interests and converted schools,

colleges, educational institutions here into party offices, guest houses, etc. The BJP worked to keep the heritage of the region intact by preserving and safeguarding institutions of historical importance," he said.

The CM further said that the state government also encouraged Rampur's violin, knife, cap, zardozi and other products related to the handicrafts industry by linking them to programmes like Vishwakarma Shram Samman Yojana and ODOP.

The CM said that in the next five years, the government would not only establish UP as a riot-free state but also link one individual from each family in the state to employment and self-employment oppor-

tunities. The CM also said that all the demands put forward by the public representatives in Rampur would be taken forward in a planned and phased manner on priority.

The chief minister urged all the people to encourage more and more investment in all fields, including education, agriculture, health. Citing the example of health ATMs, he said: "Health ATMs should be set up as a pilot project at all places to fulfil the needs of people."

The CM also provided financial assistance to 33 destitute daughters and honoured meritorious students by giving them tablets and smartphones. Nutritional kits were also provided to children.



Govt. of Haryana

75

Azadi Ka
Amrit Mahotsav



गुरुर्ब्रह्मा गुरुर्विष्णुः गुरुर्देवो महेश्वरः ।
गुरुः साक्षात् परब्रह्म तस्मै श्रीगुरुवे नमः ॥

“Instead of celebrating my birthday,
it would be my proud privilege,
if 5th September is observed as Teachers' Day.”
- Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

Teachers' Day
Nation remembers
the great educationist,
statesman and former President
Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan
on the occasion of his
Birth Anniversary
Monday, 5th September, 2022



“The sacred tradition of
Guru-Shishya is deeply rooted in our
Indian culture. A teacher can play
an active role in the development
of civilized society and Nation.”
- Manohar Lal



“It's our endeavour to bring a new
dawn in India through a modern
education system with the innovative
ideas of the 21st century. This vision
has to be led by our teachers
and educational institutions.”
- Narendra Modi

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Rahul's Halla Bol

Rahul Gandhi's determination stands out; but he needs to hone up his organising skills

The most conspicuous feature of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's speech at Delhi's Ramlila Maidan on Sunday was his aggressiveness. While his party is falling apart, with senior leaders walking out, yet, unruffled by these developments, he was out to convince his cadres that Congress can defeat the Bharatiya Janata Party in the battle of 2024. There were various sub-themes in Gandhi's speech: the BJP is spreading anger and hatred in the country; the entire media is in control by the BJP because it (the media) is largely owned by "two businessmen"; these two businessmen are the only persons whom Modi works for and who have gained in the last eight years; the Government is undermining institutions.

Gandhi's determination stands out; now he has to hone his skills to hold his party together and cobble a coalition against the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance. His speech may boost the morale of the rank and file of the grand old party which



has been facing defeats in the polls, and that may be the necessary condition for its revival, but it is not the sufficient condition. For it takes more than fiery speeches and spirited cadres to revive a political party that has been facing one setback after the other for quite some time. The need of the hour, from the Opposition's perspective, is coherence and consistency in the efforts of various anti-BJP leaders. That is not much perceptible though.

Come to think of it, the Opposition is not clear even about the anti-BJP front all of them desire so ardently. Would it be a third front, comprising all non-Congress parties? Or would it be some kind of mahagathbandhan that would include most, if not all, non-BJP parties, including the Congress? Who would lead or spearhead that? Would there be a thread of some principle or a set of principles that would bind all anti-BJP parties? If not, how would such a hodgepodge fare with the electorate? If yes, what kind of thread would that be? Nobody knows the answers. Anti-Modi slogans and smart one-liners are poor substitute for a principled coalition.

Then there is the issue of Rahul Gandhi's persistence. While Modi and other BJP leaders are known for diligence and doggedness, Gandhi is yet to prove his mettle as an election winner. Some anti-BJP leaders are also seen as casual. Consider the case of Akhilesh Yadav's Samajwadi Party supporting Shrikant Tyagi, a notorious goon whose misdeeds have gone viral. How on earth can such a party expect to be taken seriously by the voters in Uttar Pradesh? In short, Gandhi and other Opposition leaders must realise that they have to do much more than organise rallies and engage smart social media teams. They should not lose sight of the fact that they are pitted against a party that has at its disposal a well-oiled election machine.

PICTALK



Volunteers carry an idol of Lord Ganesha for immersion during the 'Ganesh Chaturthi' festival in Chennai

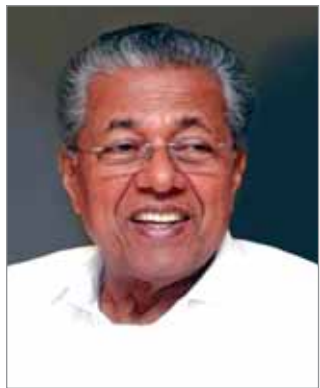
PTI

Paradise lost!

The drug menace has gone out of proportions in Kerala, even ordinary people are getting sucked into

Kerala has become the narcotics hub of South India if the words of Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan are any indication. While replying to a calling attention motion last Wednesday, Vijayan told the legislative assembly that 16, 128 cases have been registered and 17, 834 persons have been arrested in the State during the last eight months for drug trafficking and abuse. The year 2020 saw 4650 cases and 5674 arrests while in 2021, the police cracked 5,334 cases and arrested 6,704 persons under Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. To describe the situation as alarming is to simplify the issue.

This is the culmination of a disaster that has struck Kerala since the early 1980s. "Narcotics An Octopus", a television documentary aired by State-run Doordarshan in 1986 forewarned the authorities about the impending danger due to drug abuse.



An eminent physician like Dr MRR Menon had forecast the possibilities of designer and synthetic drugs causing havoc in the State three decades ago itself. While cannabis and heroin were the villains of that era, synthetic drugs like MDMA have taken a lead over other substances in the succeeding decades. While the drug menace was confined to tourist spots like Kovalam beach those days, the year 2022 projects a State which is completely under the grip of narcotics traders. The situation is worse than the Opium Wars staged in China during the 18th and 19th centuries. Many murders and suicides have been reported in various districts during the last two

years. The mighty persons who have the right connections at the right places ensure that such incidents are not probed effectively. The returns from the narcotics business are mind-boggling. The most disturbing trend is the ever-increasing number of girls and women who function as junkies and pushers. Even school teachers are engaged in selling narcotics because the returns are high. Law enforcement agencies need highly qualified professionals to tackle this menace as drug dealers keep changing their modus operandi on a faster note. V D Satheeshan, leader of the Opposition, said that he visited one of the de-addiction centers where more than 50 percent of the addicts were young girls. An issue that was highlighted in 1986 through a documentary has grown like cancer and has afflicted the entire soul of the State over the last three days. Whom to blame?

Teachers as nation builders



J S RAJPUT

Dr S Radhakrishnan whose birthday is being celebrated as teacher's day today, always emphasized that education is just not a skill to earn a living but a pursuit of higher self.



Ancient India earned its global stature, acceptability, and credibility purely based on the intellectual prowess of its scholars, philosophers, and seekers of the unknown. It was their single-minded devotion to exploring the universe and secrets of nature that brought seekers of knowledge far from the Indian shores to great institutions like Taxila, Nalanda, Vikramshila, and Vallabhi. The more they explored, the more they felt enchanted and the dexterous pursuit continued.

This pursuit was disturbed on various occasions because of historical developments, but its resilience saw to it that it thrives even in the most debilitating environment. One could put it in another way, the 'pursuit of knowledge (Jnan), wisdom (Pragya), and truth (Satya) were always considered in Indian thought and philosophy as the highest human goal'. And, as a consequence, the aim of education in ancient India extended far beyond the basics of acquiring necessary knowledge and skills as preparation for living a good life but 'for complete realization and liberation of the self'.

Unfortunately, it has been relegated to the darker corners of the background in the glamour and glitz of the materialistic pursuit ignited by the advent of liberalization, privatization, and globalization. India too is impacted by it, and there is a growing realization that most of the challenges before humanity are related to the wanton pursuit of squeezing natural resources. A change in approach is necessary. India decided in 2020 that 'The rich heritage of ancient and eternal Indian knowledge and thought' would be a guiding light for their education policy in the future. It has, thus, accepted that education in India must be 'rooted in a culture committed to new knowledge.' They must inspire everyone to wake up and realize the dreadful magnitude of the devastation being inflicted on nature must stop. Those in power interact on global issues of pollution, climate change, potable water, population

concerns, human rights, and much more, present big plans before people, but after that, it all ends. There is a solution that Indians are aware of from ancient times, 'Aparigraha'. It was put up before the world by Mahatma Gandhi, 'the world has a sufficient resource to meet the needs of everyone but not the greed of anyone. It is a tough proposition, but it has to be achieved as there is no other way. The Teacher can do it! A new chapter has to be written in every discipline and with emphasis on multidisciplinary concerns of human knowledge.

Towards this, teachers shall have to realize, that they are makers of the future! It is their responsibility to shape every learner coming to them as an unaware and uninitiated person into a personality! That would shape the future generations and would prepare citizens committed to their nation, and their people but fully conscious of their role as international citizens as well.

Dr S Radhakrishnan, the legendary teacher was one of the finest intellectual brains of the 20th century and was a matchless interpreter of Eastern and Western thought, philosophy, and the concept of a man. India celebrates his

DR S RADHAKRISHNAN WAS ONE OF FINEST INTELLECTUAL BRAINS OF THE 20TH CENTURY, A MATCHLESS INTERPRETER OF EASTERN AND WESTERN THOUGHT, PHILOSOPHY AND 'CONCEPT OF A MAN'. INDIA CELEBRATES HIS BIRTHDAY ON FIFTH SEPTEMBER EVERY YEAR

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

CYBER CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN

Sir — The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) has come out with a worrying report: cyber crimes against children are on the rise. Prolonged COVID-19 pandemic forced youngsters to cool their heels at home hoping against hope that attending physical classes, from the unending and monotonous virtual ones, would become a reality sooner than later. Study from home through e-classes also meant unbridled and unrestrained access to smart phones. Many parents were, and are, at a loss to understand the complexity of these sophisticated gadgets. Therefore, parental guidance to children was not forthcoming or was little.

This emboldened cyber tricksters. The NCRB report has said that in 2021, there were 1,081 reported cyber crimes against children. Unreported incidents may be much more. Karnataka, Delhi and Kerala topped in cyber crimes against children. According to the bureau, phishing and sexual harassment were the most common cyber crimes that occurred against unsuspecting children. Children themselves must be conversant with the latest cyber security modalities. These days, children are smart enough to swiftly spot mistakes in grammar, misspelled words, unusual content and urgency in messages — common errors committed by cyber criminals. The Government, for its part, should strengthen the Pocco Act.

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

LET LAW TAKE ITS COURSE

Sir — A wolf in saffron attire! Despite the alleged delay by the police to arrest Murugha Mutt seer and the open support extended to him by Yeddyurappa, BJP leader and former Chief Minister, the Karnataka police has finally arrested the seer under the Pocco Act for alleged sexual abuse of many high school girls. The seer has also been booked under the SC and ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act. The arrest of the seer has been made only after

Don't talk out of hat



Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's comments that Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao turned Telangana from a surplus State to debt State and every child born in the State of Telangana incurs a debt of ₹1,25,000 is nothing but fooling the public. Sitharaman has forgotten that comparing the debt-ridden States, Telangana is not even in the top 10 States. Top debt-ridden States are Punjab, Rajasthan, Kerala, West Bengal, Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. Which means that

Telangana's debt is quite low as compared to Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, both of which are high debt States and which are both ruled by the BJP.

Telangana is debt ridden because most of the amount here is spent on irrigation projects. As per March 2021, India's external debt is ₹570 billion, recording an increase of \$115 billion over its level by March 2020, according to the RBI. Now our internal debt is ₹95,83,366 crore, which is 19.5 per cent higher than previous year. We are a debt-ridden country because of waiving of loans to corporates, not because of irrigation. That means, every child born in India is incurring more debt as compared to Telangana. Before criticising others, people like Nirmala Sitharaman should check the facts. Simply coming to Telangana and trying to fool the State's people is not correct.

Zeeshaan | Kazipet

serious protests were made by various organisations condemning the inordinate delay by the local police in arresting him.

We hope that the inquiry in this case will be carried out in an impartial manner and exemplary punishment awarded to the accused, if found guilty. As the country is yet to come out of the shock over the decision of the BJP-run Gujarat Government to release the 11 rapists and murderers in the Bilkis Bano case, one only hopes that the BJP-led Government in Karnataka will not follow the bad precedence set by its Gujarat counterpart and desist from interfering in the course of the law and give justice to the victims.

Shalini Gerald | Chennai

FLOODS DON'T SEE BORDERS

Sir — Pakistan is facing its worst flood in several years. Many people have lost their lives and property due to these devastating floods. Pakistan and India are part of the South Asian region, which is more vulnerable than others to climate change and glob-

al warming. The growing heat and drastic changes in climate are the primary reasons behind these natural disasters. According to experts, the frequency and impact of these disasters will increase in the coming years. The countries of the South Asian region will be affected more.

Since this region is one of the most populated regions in the world, the devastation and deaths will be huge if proper action is not taken as soon as possible. Leaders of this region should collectively take this issue to global forums and attract the attention of global leadership. The Governments of all South Asian nations should make a combined task force to tackle such situations. Leaders of the region should implement policies that will help reduce global warming and pollution in the region. This issue should be taken very seriously before it becomes too late.

Deba Prasad Nayak | Cuttack

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

Who commits rape incidents? Most of the incidents are committed by relatives or acquaintances.

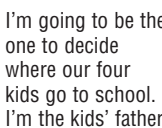


Rajasthan CM —Ashok Gehlot



You don't actually kiss the Queen's hands in the ceremony of kissing hands. You brush them gently with your lips.

Former UK Prime Minister —Tony Blair



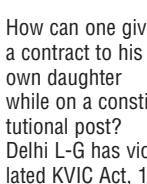
I'm going to be the one to decide where our four kids go to school. I'm the kids' father.

American rapper —Kanye West



I always shake hands.... I just move on. I cannot force anybody to shake my hand.

Belarusian tennis player —Victoria Azarenka



How can one give a contract to his own daughter while on a constitutional post? Delhi L-G has violated KVIC Act, 1961.

AAP's Rajya Sabha MP —Sanjay Singh

FIRST COLUMN

FESTIVITY, MOURNING ARE COMPLIMENTARY

Joys and sorrows coexist, giving meaning to each other



RAVI VALLURI

Manikarnika Ghat at Varanasi is well-known for two soul-stirring acts. At one of the Ghat, Lord Shiva is venerated by devotees and at the other end the dead are consigned to flames. One pauses to wonder whether celebration and mourning can occur simultaneously. Well, these two singular emotions are nothing but a reflection of a sutra or knowledge point from the art of living. Simply put, it means that opposite values are complementary.

Human life and history of nations are replete with vicissitudes and synodic curves. There is no straight line in life. It is a cyclical process where celebrations are more often than not accompanied by bereavements and mourning. This perhaps maintains the balance in life and in the universe.

On the night of 14/15 August 1947, India overthrew the colonial yoke under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, who was a canny politician. He knew that violence would only beget violence, and the Indian arsenal was not robust enough to take on the military might of the British.

India was partitioned, with West and East Pakistan on two sides. Massive migration took place as millions of Muslims trekked to West or East Pakistan. Similarly, millions of Hindus and Sikhs traversed in the opposite direction. Several thousand could never reach their destinations. Celebration was accompanied by wailing and mourning as reckless religiosity and vengeance subsumed the voice of sanity and reason.



In the Indian subcontinent, communities which for several years lived together attacked each other in a brutal manner. The carnage was intense, with massacres, arson, forced conversions, mass abductions, and savage sexual exploitation. It is widely estimated by historians that around 75000 women were raped, with several of them disfigured or dismembered. Ironically, celebration was once again dovetailed with mourning.

India was partitioned in 1947, and the province of East Bengal was rechristened as East Pakistan and was separated from the other four provinces by 1,800 km of the Indian territory. The noted socialist Dr Ram Manohar Lohia termed this bifurcation a historical monstrosity.

This division on religious lines was planned and executed by the evil mind of the cartographer Cyril Radcliffe, who had never been to India. The devious ploy of divide et impera was mischievously conceived by the British in the tumultuous year of 1905 by Lord Curzon who reorganized Bengal into East and West Bengal on religious lines. From 1905 to 1947, the genesis for a series of anti-Hindu communal riots had been laid in Bengal. Unfortunately, except for 'The Great Calcutta Killings' of 1946, there is hardly any debate on the rioting and arson in the state.

Meanwhile, down the line in post-independence history there was palpable tension between the provinces of East and West Pakistan. Mujibur Rahman, the prominent Awami League leader, had won the elections in the undivided Pakistan with widespread support but the Punjabi Pakistani generals were reluctant to part with power. Their celebrations turned into a mourning, as India helped to raise and assisted the Mukti Vahini in East Pakistan which retaliated against the abuse of power by the leaders of West Pakistan.

The epochal day of 26 March 1971 is considered the official Independence Day of Bangladesh. There was carousing in India and widespread celebration with the dismemberment of Pakistan. One state celebrated its Independence Day, while the other was plunged in mourning and darkness.

The epochal day of March 26, 1971, is considered the official Independence Day of Bangladesh. There was carousing in India and widespread celebrations with the dismemberment of Pakistan. One state celebrated its Independence Day, while the other was plunged in mourning and darkness.

(The author is an officer of the Indian Railway Traffic Service)

Rural entrepreneurship replaces digital divide



DINESH TYAGI

Common Services Centres are playing key role in transforming the countryside with improving ease of doing business

On India's 75th anniversary of Independence, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced from the ramparts of Red Fort that India will become a developed country by the year 2047. The ambitious promise comes on the back of transformational initiatives that are changing the lives of citizens and driving the nation's leadership narrative across the globe.

The Prime Minister stated that India will march ahead in this 'techade' and hailed the role of the Digital India Programme in bringing the digital revolution and transformation in the life of common citizens, especially in rural India. Like always, he underlined the role of over four lakh Common Services Centers (CSC) in providing access to services and opportunities to the rural population for empowering citizens and promoting digital inclusion.

A unique model rooted in the entrepreneurial skills of over five lakh Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs), CSCs provide last-mile access to digital technology, digital literacy, and a host of services to citizens across the nation. In 2014, there were around 83,950 CSCs. Over the last eight years, CSCs have grown from 83,950 to 5.30 lakh, and of these, three lakh CSCs are at Gram Panchayat level, signaling a shift towards a digitally integrated economy and socially inclusive society.

Digital literacy of citizens is an essential tool for every citizen to reap the benefits of information technology to emerge as a leading knowledge society. In 2017, CSC started implementing the Government's flagship digital literacy scheme, Pradhan Mantri Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan, to provide training to six crore rural citizens focusing on one person from every eligible household across all the Gram Panchayats of the country. The scheme specifically targeted marginalized sections of society like SC/ ST, Minorities, the Below Poverty Line (BPL), women, and persons with disabilities. So far, 5.34 crore citizens have been trained under the scheme.

In his address, the Prime Minister termed India as an aspirational society powered by a collective spirit. It is a similar collective spirit that led the VLEs to surmount the challenges and disruption caused by Covid-19 pandemic and provide citizens in rural areas access to various crucial services like healthcare, tele-law and banking during the lockdown.

During the lockdowns in 2020-21, the CSC offered free telemedicine consultations to citizens in rural areas through experienced doctors of Apollo and Fortis Hospitals, WelcomeCure, and Jiva Ayurveda. During 2020-21 and 2021-22, the CSC conducted over six lakh telemedicine consultations for citizens across the country.

The CSC also provided citizens much-needed access to banking services through



THE CSC'S AMBITIOUS RURAL E-MOBILITY PROGRAM, LAUNCHED IN 2020, HAS BEEN CONTRIBUTING TO THE GROWING SHIFT TOWARDS RENEWABLE ENERGY OPTIONS THROUGH THE SUPPLY OF E-MOBILITY VEHICLES, SETTING UP OF CHARGING INFRASTRUCTURE, AND SOLAR ENERGY UNITS

(The author is Managing Director at Common Services Centers, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology)



its BCs and DigiPay (AEPS) during the pandemic led lockdown. Citizens could visit their nearest CSC or get their pension and other entitlements delivered at their doorstep during the lockdown. During FY 2020-2021 through Aadhaar-based DigiPay, CSCs carried out 857.26 lakh transactions for withdrawing Rs 10463.59 crore as entitlement money for MGNREGA, pensioners, Ujjwala beneficiaries, Jan Dhan account holders, and PM Kisan Samman Nidhi beneficiaries, etc. In FY 2021-22, CSCs carried out 1112.17 lakh transactions for withdrawing Rs. 14562.38 crore of entitlement money.

Through Bank BCs and Bank Mitras, the CSC conducted 1122.44 lakh transactions worth Rs 42838.71 crores during FY 2020-21. In the financial year 2021-22, 1053.26 lakh transactions worth Rs 46394.90 crore were conducted through CSC Bank BCs and Bank Mitras.

In his address, the Prime Minister also stressed on the country becoming Atmanirbhar by developing local industries and manufacturing. Grameen eStores started by CSC have been connecting producers to consumers at the local level. During the Covid pandemic in 2020, CSCs started delivering essential commodities to citizens at their doorsteps in villages. From a humble beginning to serve the community during the pandemic, Grameen eStores today has 3.30 lakh CSCs registered on its platform. Around 46 lakh orders worth Rs 610 crores have been carried out through these stores. The

CSC has partnered with around 125 companies, both MNCs and Vocal4Local companies, to provide a variety of products like FMCG, automobile, mobiles, electronic items, and computer accessories to citizens across the country.

The CSC's ambitious Rural e-Mobility program, launched in 2020, has been contributing to the growing shift towards renewable energy options, through the supply of e-mobility vehicles, setting up of charging infrastructure, and solar energy units and rooftops in rural areas of the country. So far, the CSC has tied up with more than 23 companies for e-vehicles and renewable energy options.

In his address, the Prime Minister exhorted farmers to take to natural farming to become self-reliant. He said, Nano Fertilizers have brought a new hope in the country to boost self-reliance. The CSC has set up an online platform for providing small and marginal farmers in India access to essential services and agriculture inputs. The CSC plans to onboard 6000 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), one from each block of the country, on the platform. These FPOs will enroll about one crore farmers for availing various services like sale of farm produce, rent and hire of agriculture implements, soil testing, agriculture and animal tele consultations, easy loan facility and insurance services, etc., through the platform.

Agri inputs like fertilizers, organic manure, quality seeds, and Nano Fertilizers from IFFCO are also available on the platform. The

platform will also provide farmers with the facility to avail government schemes.

The CSC has embarked on a new initiative called the CSC Bal Vidyalaya to provide technology-based quality education for pre-school children, particularly in rural areas. What differentiates the CSC Bal Vidyalaya from other schools is the use of technology to motivate the child to become an independent learner. Currently, 2000 Bal Vidyalayas with over 4000 educators are functional in 28 States.

The CSCs also empower children and youth with a range of educational and skill building courses. In rural areas where access to quality education is critical, the CSCs have stepped in to provide NIOS and NIELIT services to students to pursue school/ IT education. The CSC is also providing online coaching for school students, engineering and government exams.

India's ongoing transformation and resilience displayed during the COVID-19 crisis are not only driven by the digital revolution and empowerment tapping into rural entrepreneurs but will also continue to be key drivers for India's journey to become a developed nation. The Prime Minister's pitch from the ramparts of Red Fort was rightly on making the rural India to lead the transformation of the Indian economy, and in this backdrop the scale of startups spreading in the rural parts of the country shows the remarkable changes being brought by the ease of doing business in which the CSC is playing a key role.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

THE BJP HAS POACHED 277 MLAS ACROSS STATES TO TOPPLE NON-BJP GOVERNMENTS. WHERE DID THE MONEY COME FROM?

—AAM AADMI PARTY MLA. SAURABH BHARADWAJ





MANISH SISODIA CLAIMS HE GOT A CALL AND WAS ASKED TO SWITCH SIDES. FROM WHICH NUMBER? WE WANT A FORENSIC INVESTIGATION.

—BJP MP MANOJ TIWARI

Blood safety: Addressing the issue of infections

A national or regional blood regulatory system is necessary to ensure the monitoring of blood safety



ANUBHA TANEJA MUKHERJEE

(The author is Thalassemia Patients Advocacy Group Member Secretary)

everyone going through a blood transfusion.

Recently in Hyderabad, a three-year-old thalassemia patient allegedly contracted HIV after receiving blood from the Indian Red Cross Society's blood bank (IRCS). The boy underwent an HIV test a few days back and the results were positive. Such instances set an alarm that we need to proactively raise our voices to strengthen the blood safety laws and regulations of our country. This isn't the first time such a case has been reported. In the last three months, we have had two cases, including that of the Hyderabad kid. The other case was in Nagpur where four children suffering from thalassemia were infected with HIV while undergoing blood

transfusions.

To ensure that every patient receives safe blood, such occurrences demand enhanced blood screening and testing processes. The importance of blood quality cannot be overstated, as unsafe blood can result in transfusion-transmitted illnesses and death. Concerns have been expressed over the absence of testing and poor safety of blood transportation in India. Generally, blood donors' medical histories and prior disease records are not considered. There is little concept of recurrent blood donation that can maintain the continuity of blood bank services, as the vast majority of donors are one-time, voluntary donors. This makes it extremely difficult for thalassemia patients to obtain safe, high-quality blood from banks.

In India, the poor safety of blood and lack of rigorous testing measures have been a growing concern. All collected blood units must undergo serological testing for HBV (Hepatitis B), HIV and HCV (Hepatitis C), syphilis, and malaria. Due to the window time for certain infections, the presence of hidden diseases, and the ongoing creation of novel variants that defy even contemporary screenings, those who receive blood are still at risk of developing TTIs despite the necessary testing. Consequently, there is an urgent need to offer an additional safety net for blood transfusions.

The Nucleic Acid Amplification Test is a cutting-edge screening method for

infectious diseases. Important for donor notification and counselling, NAT also uses serological tests to resolve erroneous reactive contributions. Within the current system, blood banks are free to apply whichever testing techniques they want. Companies may charge a processing fee based on the specialised tests or technologies they employ. Consequently, it is vital to commission a study on best practices related to blood safety, supporting blood banks in a particular region with NAT testing for thalassaemic, and supporting technologies for assembling specialised pools of voluntary thalassemia donors. As of now Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Karnataka have implemented NAT testing. If other states choose to include NAT testing in their blood screening, they must submit suggestions to the Centre as part of their programme implementation plan. HIV, HBV, and HCV have a shorter infectious window duration due to the sensitivity and specificity of NAT for viral nucleic acids. Due to its greater sensitivity and capacity to shorten the window time, NAT is a suggested but optional test for screening for TTIs (to reduce the remaining risk of infection), hence making transfusions safer. Blood Centers should not replace the serology screening of TTIs with an alternative test, but instead, use an extra test to ensure better patient safety.

A single blood donation which consists of 300ml of blood can help save four lives,

yet people are unwilling/unaware of this. The blood supply chain has been disrupted since the pandemic, particularly for those who require regular transfusions, as everyone was hesitant to step out, let alone go for a blood donation. These concerns indicate a greater void in the current blood transfusion services regulatory structure. Due to the inherent dangers of blood and the complexity of providing enough, timely, and fair access to safe blood products, a national or regional blood regulatory system is necessary. Within this system, a competent blood product regulating authority ensures the production of blood products and monitoring of blood safety adheres to the relevant criteria.

Ukrainian port city, Kharkiv come under Russian shelling



AP ■ KYIV

Russian shelling hit the southern Ukraine port city of Mykolaiv during the night, damaging a medical treatment facility, the city's mayor said Sunday. Mykolaiv and its surrounding region have been hit daily for weeks in the conflict. On Saturday, a child was killed and five people were injured in rocket attacks in the region, governor Vitaliy Kim said. Mykolaiv city mayor Oleksandr Senkevych did not specify whether there were any injuries in the overnight attack, which he said also damaged some residences. Mykolaiv, on the Southern Bug River about 30 kilometers upstream from the Black Sea, is a significant port and ship-building centre. In Kharkiv, Ukraine's sec-

ond-largest city, Russian shelling late Saturday set a large wooden restaurant complex on fire, according to the region's emergency service. One person was killed and two injured in shelling in the region, governor Oleh Syniehubov said. Pavlo Kyrylenko, governor of the eastern Donetsk region where Russian forces have been trying to take full control, said four people were killed in shelling on Saturday. The head of the U.N. Nuclear watchdog said Saturday that the Russian-controlled Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant in Ukraine was disconnected from its last external power line but was still able to run electricity through a reserve line amid sustained shelling in the area. International Atomic Energy Agency Director-

General Rafael Grossi said in a statement that the agency's experts, who arrived at Zaporizhzhia on Thursday, were told by senior Ukrainian staff that the fourth and last operational line was down. The three others were lost earlier during the conflict. But the IAEA experts learned that the reserve line linking the facility to a nearby thermal power plant was delivering the electricity the plant generates to the external grid, the statement said. The same reserve line can also provide backup power to the plant if needed, it added. "We already have a better understanding of the functionality of the reserve power line in connecting the facility to the grid," Grossi said. "This is crucial information in assessing the overall situation there." In addition, the plant's

management informed the IAEA that one reactor was disconnected Saturday afternoon because of grid restrictions. Another reactor is still operating and producing electricity both for cooling and other essential safety functions at the site and for households, factories and others through the grid, the statement said. The Zaporizhzhia facility, which is Europe's largest nuclear plant, has been held by Russian forces since early March, but its Ukrainian staff are continuing to operate it. Vladimir Rogov, the head of the Russia-installed local administration in Enerhodar, the city where the plant is located, was quoted by Russian news agencies as saying there had been no new shelling of the area on Sunday as of midday.

US Navy assault ship takes part in Baltic Sea training

AP ■ ABOARD USS KEARSARGE

US Navy amphibious assault ship USS Kearsarge is taking part in international training in the Baltic Sea amid Russia's war in Ukraine and tensions in the region. The Kearsarge is the first ship of the Wasp class to take part in international training in the Baltic in at least two decades. Associated Press journalists visited the ship last week. "It's a first off for us in recent memory and it's been very exciting," said Capt. Tom



Foster, the commanding officer of the Kearsarge. With some other U.S. Navy ships, the Kearsarge has been training for several months with the militaries of Sweden and Finland, which formally applied to join NATO after Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24.

"We'll continue to operate in those areas. And always the goal there is promoting safety and security in those regions and in international waters," Kelley said. The USS Kearsarge allows for training by such aircraft as AV-8B Harriers, UH-1 Y Venom and AH- 1Z Viper helicopters as well as MV-22 Osprey planes. The Baltic Sea countries are Sweden, Finland, Russia, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Germany and Denmark. The training mission is to promote safety and security in the region. "In the past several months, we have been operating in the Baltics and in the Mediterranean," said Capt. Aaron Kelley, commander of the Kearsarge Amphibious Ready Group.

China's National People's Congress chairman Li Zhanshu to visit Nepal

PTI ■ KATHMANDU

Li Zhanshu, the head of China's legislature and the third-ranked leader in the country's political hierarchy, will visit Kathmandu next week during which he will hold talks with Nepal's top leadership. Li, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress - the country's parliament, is visiting Nepal on September 12 at the invitation of Speaker of the House of Representatives Agni Prasad Sapkota, according to a press release issued by the Foreign Ministry. During his visit, Li will hold delegation-level talks with Sapkota, who will also host a banquet in honour of the Chinese leader as well as the members of his delegation in the evening, it added. During his stay in Nepal, Li will call on President Bidya Devi Bhandari and meet Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba. Li, who is expected to



retire at the Communist Party's national congress next month, will also meet the Chairperson of the National Assembly Ganesh Prasad Timilsina and Minister for Foreign Affairs Narayan Khadka. Former prime minister and Chairman of Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) K P Sharma Oli, and former prime minister and CPN-Maoist Centre chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" will also hold separate meetings with the visiting Chinese leader. Earlier this month, China pledged Rs 15 billion in grant assistance to Nepal to invest in various projects this year.

Biden picks White House veteran to run revived climate drive



AP ■ WASHINGTON

President Joe Biden on Friday brought back John Podesta, a behind-the-scenes veteran at getting things done on climate in past Democratic administrations, to put into place an ambitious US climate programme newly revived by USD 375 billion from Congress. Biden named Podesta as a senior adviser, charged with implementing the landmark clean-energy and climate spending under the huge health care and climate bill passed by Congress in August. Podesta will also lead the administration's climate task force. Further reshaping the White House's climate team for a significantly more hopeful phase, Biden also announced the departure of his current climate adviser, Gina McCarthy. A former Environmental Protection Agency chief, McCarthy had led Biden's domestic climate program during Democrats' two years of struggle - often seeming all but doomed - to get the climate financing through Congress. McCarthy was trusted on Capitol Hill and delayed her departure until Biden could sign the new climate measures into law last month. McCarthy had been expected to serve only the opening half of Biden's term. Ali Zaidi, McCarthy's deputy, will succeed her as national climate adviser, the White House said. Zaidi said in an interview that the key will be implementing the law and working with federal agencies to achieve Biden's goal of slashing carbon emissions over the next decade and beyond. "We are in a paradigm shift, where we finally have the resources we need to accelerate climate action in a way we have never been able to before," Zaidi said. "The law gives us the hammers, the nails and the plywood - but we've got to build the clean energy future that we seek." A surprise administration-backed deal struck last month with two Democratic holdout senators salvaged a pared-down version of Biden's domestic spending program. That includes funding for the biggest US effort ever at slowing down the fossil-fuel-driven warming of the Earth. Podesta's 'deep roots in climate and clean energy policy and his experience at senior levels of government mean we can truly hit the ground running to take advantage of the massive clean energy opportunity in front of us,' Biden said in a statement. The pick of Podesta, a veteran of Democratic White

Houses dating back to Bill Clinton's in the early 1990s, is in line with a Biden trend of picking tested, familiar figures from past administrations, passing over potentially more exciting and younger figures from the progressive movement. The more experienced figures include John Kerry, the former secretary of state charged with U.S. Climate diplomacy abroad. Podesta's jobs for Democratic presidents include acting chief of staff for Clinton and helping push through some early landmark climate efforts by Barack Obama. The subsequent election of Donald Trump saw his administration reverse Obama's legacy efforts to cut climate-damaging fossil fuel emissions, as well as appoint conservative judges who have since blocked some key climate initiatives. Podesta has been serving as head of the Center for American Progress think tank, and in that role he has been closely following the U.S. Efforts to step up climate action after the setbacks of the Trump administration. Podesta is perhaps best-known to the public for his 2016 role as the unwitting victim of hacking of his email account, an attack that U.S. Intelligence said had Russian involvement. The email theft and leak were credited with helping Trump win the presidency over Hillary Clinton. Podesta was then Clinton's campaign manager. The legislation that passed last month, called the "Inflation Reduction Act" is meant to infuse nearly \$375 billion over the decade in climate change-fighting strategies that Democrats believe could put the country on a path to cut greenhouse gas emissions 40% by 2030. That includes tax rebates for electric vehicles, a 10-year consumer tax credit for renewable energy investments in wind and solar and other tax breaks for consumers to go green. For businesses, the bill has \$60 billion for a clean energy manufacturing tax credit and \$30 billion for a production tax credit for wind and solar, seen as ways to boost and support the industries that can help curb the country's dependence on fossil fuels. The bill also gives tax credits for nuclear power and carbon-capture technology that oil companies such as Exxon Mobil have invested millions of dollars to advance. The bill would impose a new fee on excess methane emissions from oil and gas drilling while giving fossil fuel companies access to more leases on federal lands and waters.

THE ARTEMIS I MISSION MARKS START OF NEW SPACE RACE TO MINE MOON

THE CONVERSATION ■ SYDNEY

NASA plans to launch the Artemis I lunar mission this Saturday, September 3, after a first attempt earlier in the week was cancelled at the last minute due to engine trouble. The mission is an exciting step towards returning humans to the Moon for the first time since 1972. But this time it's not just about putting our footprints on lunar dust: it marks the beginning of a new space race for lunar resources. This time around, everybody wants to mine the Moon. Return to the Moon Much about the Artemis programmeme is noble and inspiring. Artemis I is the program-

meme's first mission, and it will carry out a 42-day uncrewed test flight to orbit the Moon and return to Earth. The trip will use a new launch vehicle, the Space Launch System (SLS), which is the most powerful rocket currently operational in the world. On board will be three mannequins made of materials replicating male and female biology. NASA will use the mannequins to test the comfort and safety of the launch vehicle and spaceflight capsule for humans. There are also many other experiments on board, and a series of small satellites will be launched to provide data when the capsule nears the Moon. The lessons from this mission will be applied to Artemis II, the mission planned for 2024 that will see the first



woman and the first person of colour reach the Moon. A new space race?

However, humanity's return to the Moon is not all about exploration and the

pursuit of knowledge. Just as the 1960s space race was driven by Cold War geopolitics, today's space programmemes are underpinned by today's geopolitics. Artemis is led by the US, with participation by the European Space Agency and many other friendly nations including Australia. China and Russia are collaborating on their own Moon programmeme. They plan to land humans in 2026 and construct a Moon base by 2035. India too is working on robotic Moon landers and a lunar spaceflight program-meme. The UAE plans to launch a lunar lander in November this year as well. All of these program-memes are aiming to do more than simply land astronauts for brief visits to the Moon. The

longer-term goal of the race is to acquire lunar resources. Resources on the Moon Water ice has been found in the southern regions of the Moon, and it is hoped certain gases that can be used for fuels can also be mined. These resources could be used to support long-term human habitation on and near the Moon in lunar bases, as well as permanent space stations orbiting the Moon, such as NASA's planned Gateway. The Australian Space Agency is supporting Australian industry to be part of the Artemis programme and America's planned later voyages to Mars. Australian scientists are also developing lunar rovers to assist lunar mining efforts.

On Colombia's San Andres, historic church's roots run deep

AP ■ SAN ANDRES (COLOMBIA)

First Baptist Church was born by a tamarind tree perched on a hill overlooking the turquoise waters of the Caribbean. Under the tree's shade, First Baptist's founder taught English-speaking former slaves and their descendants how to read using the Bible. The tree still stands more than 175 years later — even if crooked after surviving devastating hurricanes. The church is so crucial to the history of the Colombian island of San Andres that detailed record of births and deaths are kept here in crumbling books that date back nearly two centuries. The "mother church", as it is often called, is a source of pride for the Raizals, the English-speaking, mostly Protestant inhabitants of San

Andres, Providencia and the smaller islands and keys that form an archipelago in the western Caribbean near Nicaragua, about 440 miles (710 kilometres) from the Colombian mainland. "For a young person like me, it's finding my roots — it's good to know where we come from," said the Rev. Shuanon Hudgson, 26, the church's associate pastor. "It's like Marcus Garvey says," Hudgson continued: "A people without knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots." And this church has been a pillar. Under the tree, a stone plaque commemorates the birth of the congregation: "Baptist work was established here by Rev. Phillip Beekman Livingston (Jr.) in 1844." Three years later the congregation began to meet nearby under a thatched hut.

Sunak promises to support next UK Govt

PTI ■ LONDON

Rishi Sunak said on Sunday that if he loses the Conservative Party leadership race, his job would be to support the next government, giving the first hint at what's in store beyond Monday's election result to replace Boris Johnson as British Prime Minister. In his final interview with the BBC before the results are declared, the British Indian former Chancellor said he plans to stay on as a member of Parliament and continue to work for his constituents in Richmond, Yorkshire, if he is defeated by Foreign Secretary Liz Truss in the race. "I look forward to supporting the Conservative government in whatever capacity," said Sunak, when asked about his future plans if the result does not go his way. "I'm going to stay as a member of Parliament...It's been a great privilege to represent my constituents in



Richmond in North Yorkshire as their member of Parliament and I'll love to keep doing that as long as they'll have me," he said. On whether he would consider a second go at the top job at 10 Downing Street in a few years' time if he loses this time, he said: "Gosh, we've just finished this campaign and I need to recover from this one." This is being seen as the first sign that even the 42-year-old former finance minister believes he may not have got enough votes to clinch the Tory leadership election. With

him not ruling out another run, it will also fan speculation that he might want to have a second go at being elected the UK's first Indian-origin Prime Minister if he is beaten by Truss this time. From being the clear frontrunner in the early knockout stages of the contest with the Tory MPs, Sunak has been trailing Truss in most surveys of party members voting to elect a new leader to succeed Johnson. Both candidates have gone head-to-head in a dozen hustings events up and down the UK in an attempt to win over votes, with the issue of the cost-of-living crisis as a result of soaring household energy bills and inflation dominating the agenda. The online and postal ballots cast by an estimated 160,000 Tory members are being tallied by the Conservative Campaign Headquarters (CCHQ), with the winner announced on Monday at 1230 pm local time

by Sir Graham Brady — chair of the 1922 Committee of backbench Tory MPs and returning officer of the leadership election. The two finalists in the race will find out who between them has clinched the top job at 10 Downing Street around 10 minutes before the public announcement. The newly elected Tory leader will make a brief acceptance speech soon after at the Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre in central London — near Downing Street. The rest of Monday will involve the winning candidate putting the final touches to his or her Cabinet posts. On Tuesday, the day will begin with a farewell speech by outgoing Prime Minister Boris Johnson on the steps of his Downing Street office one last time before he is flown out to Aberdeenshire in Scotland for his audience with the Queen to formally resign as the head of government.

US secrets: Trump's unprecedented disregard of norms

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Donald Trump isn't the first to face criticism for flouting rules and traditions around the safeguarding of sensitive government records, but national security experts say recent revelations point to an unprecedented disregard of post-presidency norms established after the Watergate era.

Document dramas have cropped up from time to time over the years.

Democrat Lyndon B. Johnson's national security adviser held onto explosive records for years before turning them over to the Johnson presidential library.

The records showed that the campaign of his successor, Richard Nixon, was secretly communicating in the final days of the 1968 presidential race with the South Vietnamese government in an effort to delay the opening of peace talks to end the Vietnam War.

A secretary in Ronald Reagan's administration, Fawn Hall, testified that she altered and helped shred documents related to the Iran-Contra affair to protect Oliver North, her boss at the



White House National Security Council.

Barack Obama's CIA director, David Petraeus, was forced to resign and pleaded guilty to a federal misdemeanour for sharing classified material with a biographer with whom he was having an affair.

Hillary Clinton, while Obama's secretary of state, faced FBI scrutiny that extended into her 2016 presidential campaign against Trump for her handling of highly classified material in a private email account.

The FBI director recommended no criminal charges but criticised Clinton for her

"extremely careless" behaviour.

As more details emerge from last month's FBI search of Trump's Florida home, the Justice Department has painted a portrait of an indifference for the rules on a scale that some thought inconceivable after establishment of the Presidential Records Act in 1978.

"I cannot think of a historical precedent in which there was even the suspicion that a president or even a high-ranking officer in the administration, with the exception of the Nixon administration, purposely and consciously or even accidentally removing such a sizable vol-

ume of papers," said Richard Immerman, who served as assistant deputy director of national intelligence from 2007 to 2009.

FBI agents who searched Trump's Mar-a-Lago resort on Aug. 8 found more than 100 documents with classification markings, including 18 marked top secret, 54 secret and 31 confidential, according to court filings.

The FBI also identified 184 documents marked as classified in 15 boxes recovered by the National Archives in January, and it received additional classified documents during a June visit to Mar-a-Lago.

An additional 10,000 other government records with no classification markings were also found.

That could violate the Presidential Records Act, which says that such records are government property and must be preserved.

That law was enacted after Nixon resigned from office in the midst of the Watergate scandal and sought to destroy hundreds of hours of secretly recorded White House tapes.

It established government ownership of presidential records starting with Ronald Reagan.

The act specifies that immediately after a president leaves office, the National Archives and Records Administration takes legal and physical custody of the outgoing administration's records and begins to work with the incoming White House staff on appropriate records management.

According to the National Archives, records that have no "administrative, historical, informational, or evidentiary value" can be disposed of before obtaining the archivist's written permission.

Documents have been recovered from Trump's bedroom, closet, bathroom and storage areas at his Florida resort, which doubles as his home.

In June, when Justice Department officials met a Trump lawyer to retrieve records in response to a subpoena, the lawyer handed them documents in a "Redweld envelope, double-wrapped in tape."

Trump has claimed he declassified all the documents in his possession and had been working in earnest with department officials on returning documents when they conducted the Mar-a-Lago search.

US election conspiracies find fertile ground in conferences

AP ■ OMAHA (US)

On a quiet Saturday in an Omaha hotel, about 50 people gathered in a ballroom to learn about elections.

The subject wasn't voter registration drives or poll worker volunteer training. Instead, they paid USD 25 each to listen to panelists lay out conspiracy theories about voting machines and rigged election results.

In language that sometimes leaned into violent imagery, some panelists called on those attending to join what they framed as a battle between good and evil.

Among those in the audience was Melissa Sauder, who drove nearly 350 miles from the small western Nebraska town of Grant with her 13-year-old daughter.

After years of combing

internet sites, listening to podcasts and reading conservative media reports, Sauder wanted to learn more about what she believes are serious problems with the integrity of US elections.

She can't shake the belief that voting machines are being manipulated even in her home county, where then-President Donald Trump won 85 per cent of the vote in 2020.

"I just don't know the truth because it's not open and apparent, and it's not transparent to us," said Sauder, 38. "We are trusting people who are trusting the wrong people."

It's a sentiment now shared by millions of people in the United States after relentless attacks on the outcome of the 2020 presidential election by Trump and his allies.

Nearly two years after

that election, no evidence has emerged to suggest widespread fraud or manipulation while reviews in state after state have upheld the results showing President Joe Biden won.

Even so, the attacks and falsehoods have made an impact: An Associated Press-NORC Centre for Public Affairs Research poll from 2021 found that about two-thirds of Republicans say they do not think Biden was legitimately elected.

Events like the one held Aug. 27 in Nebraska's largest city are one reason why.

Billed as the Nebraska Election Integrity Forum, the conference featured some of the nation's most prominent figures pushing conspiracy theories that the last election was stolen from Trump through widespread fraud or manipulation of voting machines.

China, Japan ground ferries, flights as typhoon approaches

AP ■ BEIJING

Cities in eastern China suspended ferry services and classes and flights were cancelled in Japan on Sunday as Typhoon Hinamnor, the strongest global storm this year, blew its way past Taiwan and the Korean seas with fierce winds and heavy rains.

Shanghai grounded ferry services and deployed more than 50,000 police officers to aid with rescues and guide traffic away from danger areas. The eastern business hub of Wenzhou ordered all classes suspended on Monday.

Hinamnor is forecasted to move gradually northward into the East China Sea with maximum sustained winds of 175 km (109 miles) per hour, according to the Hong Kong Observatory.

Evacuations and flight cancellations have been ordered in Japan's southern Okinawa Island. The typhoon is also expected to bring intense rainfall to the Korean Peninsula, bringing the possibility of flooding.

China's National Meteorological Centre issued a yellow typhoon warning at 10 am Sunday, and warned of heavy rains in northeastern Zhejiang, Shanghai and self-governing Taiwan.

Ships were told to return to port to take shelter from the wind, and the centre also urged people against large gatherings both indoors and outdoors.

In Japan, the typhoon lashed Okinawa and nearby



islands with heavy rain and fierce winds, threatening flooding and grounding more than 100 flights connecting the islands and parts of the main southern island of Kyushu.

Footage on Japan's NHK national television showed trees violently shaken by the storm, with fierce rainfall hitting the pavement. A greenhouse for mangoes on Ishigaki Island was knocked down. On the main Okinawa island, two elderly people fell down and were slightly injured, according to media reports.

Officials said the slow-moving typhoon could add to

rainfall and risks of flooding in the southern region where dense rain clouds have been stuck.

In Taiwan, over 600 residents in New Taipei, Taoyuan and Hsinchu counties were evacuated to shelters on Saturday amid the heavy rain and strong winds, according to the island's Central News Agency.

The typhoon caused a landslide in Miaoli county and blew over some 100 roadside trees. About 40 flights and more than 100 ferry services across Taiwan were also cancelled Saturday.

Chile votes on proposed Constitution with big changes

AP ■ SANTIAGO

Chileans are voting in a plebiscite Sunday on whether to adopt a far-reaching new constitution that would fundamentally change the South American country.

The proposed charter is intended to replace a constitution imposed by a military dictatorship 41 years ago.

For months, opinion polls have shown a clear advantage for the rejection camp, but the difference has been narrowing, giving hope to the charter's supporters that they can pull out a victory.

"We are clearly in a situation in which the result will be close," said Marta Lagos, head of MORI, a local pollster. "The Chilean is a political animal who



decides at the last minute."

The outcome will have a resounding impact on President Gabriel Boric, 36, who has been one of the main proponents of the new constitution. Analysts say voters also likely view the vote as a referendum on Chile's

youngest-ever president, whose popularity has plunged since taking office in March.

Voting is mandatory in the plebiscite, which climaxes a three-year process that began when the country once seen as a paragon of stability in the

Israel: Attack on bus in West Bank wounds 6 troops, civilian

AP ■ JERUSALEM

The Israeli military said that Palestinian gunmen opened fire on a bus in the occupied West Bank on Sunday, wounding six soldiers, one of them seriously, and a civilian.

The Magen David Adom paramedic service said two people who suffered gunshot wounds were airlifted by helicopter to a hospital in Haifa.

The Israeli military said it apprehended two Palestinians suspected of carrying out the midday attack on a main West Bank highway.

The suspects fled the scene in their vehicle, which burst into flames shortly after the shooting, security camera footage aired by Israeli media appeared to show.

The men exited the burning vehicle and were subsequently apprehended.



It was unclear what caused the vehicle to catch fire.

Defense Minister Benny Gantz said that Israeli security forces "laid their hands on the suspects in a speedy and professional operation."

The attack took place on Route 90, the main north-south highway running through the West Bank's Jordan Valley.

The road is dotted with

Israeli settlements and Palestinian villages and towns.

Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war and has built dozens of settlements in the territory.

Most of the international community considers the settlements illegal and an obstacle to peace with the Palestinians, who seek the territory as the heartland of a future state.

Hamas executes 5 Gazans charged with murder, aiding Israel



AP ■ GAZA CITY

Gaza's Hamas authorities Sunday executed five Palestinian men convicted in separate cases of murder and alleged collaboration with Israel.

The Interior Ministry said the executions meant "to achieve public deterrence and security," but rights groups in the past have questioned fair trial standards in the military and civilian courts of the Islamic militant group.

Two of the men, both members of the Palestinian security forces, were killed by firing squad, and the other three were hanged at dawn at a security site in Gaza City.

The executions were the first since Hamas executed three Gazans who were put to death in a hasty trial of killing a leader of the group in 2017.

Hamas took over Gaza in 2007 after fierce clashes with forces loyal to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas. It has issued 180 death sentences and followed through on 33 of them "without the ratification of the Palestinian President in violation of

Palestinian law," according to the Palestinian Center for Human Rights.

The Palestinian Authority, based in and exerting limited self rule in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, signed onto international treaties banning capital punishment in 2018.

Two of those put to death Sunday, ages 44 and 54, were charged with collaborating with Israel and providing it with information that aided the Israeli military in striking targets in Gaza, the ministry said. They had been detained since 2009 and 2015, respectively.

The three others were found guilty of murder in separate cases, including one man who allegedly took part in a shootout that killed a man and a teenage girl during a family dispute in July.

Hamas and Israel have fought four wars and numerous smaller engagements since 2007, the most recent in May 2021. Israel, the United States and the European Union consider the group a terrorist organization for its attacks targeting Israeli civilians.

Fire-stricken California town has learned to live on edge

AP ■ WEED (US)

The fire-stricken Northern California town of Weed has long been seen by passers-by as a whimsical spot to stop along Interstate 5 and buy an ironic T-shirt, but residents say they've grown edgy in recent years due to a new danger: Dark skies, swirling ash and flames that race so quickly they leave little time for escape.

Their fears exploded to life again in recent days as California's latest inferno burned homes and buildings and forced evacuations in the small community about 280 miles (451 kilometres) north-east of San Francisco.

Among the thousands of people displaced was Naomi Vogelsang. Her home destroyed, dog missing, and 10-year relationship with her boyfriend recently ended – all she could do on Saturday was sit outside a wildfire evacuation centre with \$20 in her pocket, waiting for a ride to the casino.

"It can't be any worse," she said.

The day before, flames raced from Roseburg Forest

Products, which makes wood products, into Weed's Lincoln Heights neighbourhood where a significant number of homes burned and residents had to flee for their lives. The blaze known as the Mill Fire had spread to more than 6.6 square miles (17 square kilometres) by Saturday evening and was 25% contained.

After fleeing the fire, 63-year-old Judy Christenson remembered a similar escape 40 years ago when, as a young parent, she had to rush her children out of a burning home. Last summer, a wildfire forced her to evacuate and leave her pets behind. Now, Christenson says she leaves harnesses on her pets all the time so she can grab them at a moment's notice and leave.

"Whenever this happens, I get really bad," Christenson said from the front seat of a car at an evacuation center in Yreka as Felix, her orange cat, napped in the backseat. "I can't think straight."

Nestled in the shadow of Mt Shasta — a 14,000-foot (4,267-metre) volcano that is the second-highest peak in the Cascade Range — Weed is no



stranger to wildfires.

Strong winds in the area that fan flames drew the town's founder for a very different reason. Abner Weed, a Civil War soldier who is said to have witnessed the Confederate Gen Robert E Lee's surrender before moving to California, chose to put a sawmill there because the wind would dry out the timber, according to Bob West, a lifelong resident who co-owns

Ellie's Espresso and Bakery, a coffee and sandwich shop that contains some historical items of the town's past.

The winds make Weed and the surrounding area a perilous place for wildfires, whipping small flames into a frenzy. Weed has seen three major fires since 2014, a period of extreme drought that has prompted the largest and most destructive fires in California history.

India's trade worries grow as exports down, imports up

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A marginal contraction in exports coupled with a continuing surge in the country's import bill through the month of August has renewed concerns over India's widening trade deficit and its impact on the broader economy.

The rupee, which has already depreciated 7 per cent against the US dollar through this calendar year, will likely remain under pressure, adding to inflation and macroeconomic vulnerabilities, analysts and experts said.

On Saturday, the government released preliminary data that showed India's exports fell by 1.15 per cent year-on-year to \$33 billion in August, while imports rose 36.8 per cent to \$61.7 billion.

For the first five months of this fiscal year (April-August), exports totalled USD 192.6 billion, while imports stood at \$317.8 billion, leaving India with a record trade deficit of \$125.2 billion, or nearly two and half times the level in the same period a year ago. In April-August last year, the trade deficit stood at \$53.8 billion.

If the current trends continued through the remaining part of the fiscal, India's trade deficit may touch \$250 billion by March 2023, analysts said. This would compare to a trade deficit of \$192.4 billion in the previous 2021-22 fiscal year.

A widening trade gap has a direct impact on the current



account deficit (CAD), which in turn influences the Indian rupee's resilience, investor sentiments and macroeconomic stability. India's CAD, the broadest measure of India's sell-and-buy balance with the rest of the world, is likely to touch \$105 billion or 3 per cent of the GDP this fiscal.

The sharp deterioration in the export-import imbalance has come on the back of several developments that include the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war that caused a huge spike in global oil and commodity prices, supply chain bottlenecks due to the slow easing of Covid restrictions in China and pent-up demand for imports as the manufacturing sector recovered from the pandemic's shadow.

Also, the July 1 introduction of an export duty on diesel and jet fuel (ATF) to take windfall profits that refiners

were making has dented exports. Petroleum products are the second biggest forex earner behind engineering goods.

The new duty, together with obligations for refiners to supply in the domestic market first, has led to a 10-11 per cent fall in petroleum product exports.

The export fall comes as the oil import bill balloons. India spent about \$99 billion on oil imports in April-August, more than the \$62 billion spent in the entire 2020-21 (April 2020 to March 2021) fiscal and more than half of the \$120.4 billion spending in the 2021-22 fiscal.

While India is 85 per cent dependent on imports to meet its oil needs, a domestic coal crisis also forced the tapping of overseas supplies of the dry fuel for meeting the power demand during peak summer.

'13.5% Q1 GDP growth below expectation, cause for concern'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's GDP growth of 13.5 per cent in the April-June quarter of 2022-23 has turned out to be a cause for 'disappointment and concern', as there was expectation of a bigger bounce back from the first quarter of last year when economic activity was crippled by the Delta wave of Covid-19, former RBI governor D Subbarao said on Sunday.

Subbarao added that risk factors for the country's growth outlook in the short term include high commodity prices, possibility of a global recession, monetary tightening by the RBI and an uneven monsoon that could threaten crop output, especially of rice.

"The economy clocked growth of 13.5 per cent in the first quarter (April-June) of this fiscal year which would have been cause for celebration in any other circumstance.

"In the event, it's turned out to be a cause for disappointment and even concern," he told PTI in an interview.

India's economy expanded 13.5 per cent in the April-June quarter, the quickest pace in a year. As per the RBI's estimates, the country's GDP is expected to witness a growth of 7.2 per cent in the current financial year.

"Disappointment because there was expectation of a bigger bounce back from the first quarter of last year when economic activity was crippled by the Delta wave," he said.

The GDP growth, though



lower than the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) estimate of 16.2 per cent, was fuelled by consumption and signalled a revival of domestic demand, particularly in the services sector.

According to Subbarao, the GDP growth in the first quarter turned out to be a cause of concern because contrary to what the headline numbers indicate, there has in fact been a slowdown in the growth momentum which points to growth decelerating further in the quarters ahead.

Gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 13.5 per cent against the US dollar on account of capital outflows and a rising current account deficit.

Even so, the rupee has been more resilient compared to other emerging market currencies, as reflected in the broader 40 currency real effective exchange rate (REER) which is still over 100, Subbarao said.

"Rupee movement going forward will largely depend on commodity prices and financial conditions in the global economy, in particular the monetary policy stance of the US Federal Reserve," he noted.

Asked what does rupee at 80 to a dollar mean for common Indians, he said depreciation will bring in imported inflation but it will also be expansionary in the sense that it will provide support for exports.

As in 2019, Prime Minister Narendra Modi envisioned to make India a USD 5 trillion economy by 2024-25.

According to Subbarao, while private investment, which has been subdued for the last several years, has yet to take

off, exports which drove the strong recovery last year are facing headwinds because of a global slowdown. Besides, raising public investment will be challenged by fiscal constraints.

"As a result, the sole engine that drove growth in the past quarter was private consumption which expanded robustly on account of the services sector reopening, but whether it can be sustained will depend on the benefits of growth going to the lower income segments of the population," he argued.

To a query on weakening of the Indian rupee to a record low, Subbarao said the rupee has depreciated by about 7 per cent against the US dollar on account of capital outflows and a rising current account deficit.

The proposal is at the discussion stage, the official added. The Government has already rolled out the scheme with an outlay of about ₹2 lakh crore for as many as 14 sectors, including automobiles and auto components, white goods, pharma, textiles, advance chemistry cell and speciality steel.

The objective of the scheme is to make domestic manufacturing globally competitive and to create global champions in manufacturing. Discussions are on for the PLI scheme for moulded furniture and toys, the official said.

The toy industry has demanded an extension of the scheme for the sector as it would promote local manu-

Govt considering PLI scheme for furniture sector



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government is considering a Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme for certain types of furniture to boost domestic manufacturing, and exports and create jobs in the sector, an official said.

The proposal is at the discussion stage, the official added. The Government has already rolled out the scheme with an outlay of about ₹2 lakh crore for as many as 14 sectors, including automobiles and auto components, white goods, pharma, textiles, advance chemistry cell and speciality steel.

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The toy industry has demanded an extension of the scheme for the sector as it would promote local manu-

facturing and create jobs. Manu Gupta, promoter of Playgro Toys India, said the government's initiatives are helping the industry, but a National Toy Policy and Production Linked Incentive scheme would further support the growth of the sector.

Talking about the furniture sector, Trade Promotion Council of India Chairman Mohit Singla said there is already established competitiveness in the moulded furniture sector, and the PLI scheme would be a thoughtful step in that direction.

"Like we have industrial parks for the pharma sector, a similar move to develop a furniture cluster will give a fillip to the sector," Singla said.

As per estimates, furniture export, at present, is about USD 400 million per year. Global furniture exports currently stand at \$264 billion, and half of the market share is dominated by five countries - China, Germany, Poland, Italy and Vietnam.

Over 1.55 lakh updated ITRs filed till Sept 2

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Over 1.55 lakh updated income tax returns (ITR-U) have been filed up to September 2, the income tax department said on Sunday.

The income tax department had in May this year notified a form for filing updated income tax returns (ITRs). The taxpayer will have to pay an additional amount over and above the due tax while filing ITR-U. "Over 1.55 lakh Updated ITRs have been filed upto 2nd September, 2022," the I-T department tweeted.

It said more than 20,000 taxpayers have filed Updated ITRs for both AYs 2020-21 and 2021-22 (2019-20 and 2020-21 fiscal years).

Finance Act 2022 introduced a new provision for filing Updated Income Tax Returns under section 139 (8A) of the Income-tax Act, 1961.

Mahindra Lifespace aims 2.5-fold jump in housing sales bookings in 3 yrs

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Realty firm Mahindra Lifespace Developers Ltd is targeting a 2.5-fold jump in its annual sales bookings to ₹2,500 crore in the next three years on better housing demand, its MD and CEO Arvind Subramanian has said.

Mumbai-based Mahindra Lifespace had achieved sales bookings of ₹1,028 crore in the last financial year.

In an interview with PTI, the company's Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Arvind Subramanian said: "We have started the first quarter with an extremely strong performance on all fronts".

The company clocked ₹600 crore of residential sales during the April-June quarter of the 2022-23 fiscal year.

PSU banks to open 300 branches in unbanked areas by Dec 2022

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As part of the financial inclusion drive, public sector banks will open about 300 brick-and-mortar branches in the unbanked areas of various states by December 2022.

These new branches will cover all remaining unbanked villages with a population of more than 3,000, according to sources.

A Maximum number of 95 branches will be opened in Rajasthan followed by 54 in Madhya Pradesh.

The public sector banks will open 38 branches in Gujarat, 33 in Maharashtra, 32 in Jharkhand and 31 in Uttar Pradesh.

The progress with regard to the opening of branches in the rural areas was reviewed in the recent meeting of heads of



public sector banks with the Financial Services Secretary last month.

Banks have been asked to open branches at allocated locations by the respective State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) by December 2022, the sources said.

Bank of Baroda will open 76 branches, while State Bank of India will establish 60 branches.

Financial Inclusion is a national priority of the government as it is an enabler for inclusive growth.

'I-T dept nod not needed for Adani to by NDTV shares'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Adani group believes that there is no restriction by tax authorities on it acquiring a stake in NDTV, a statement that has also been backed by tax experts.

The Adani group has acquired a little-known firm, VCPL, that lent over ₹403 crore to NDTV's founders more than a decade ago in exchange for warrants that allowed the company to acquire a stake of 29.18 per cent in the news group at any time.

Adani has since exercised those rights but NDTV says such conversion is barred by income-tax authorities.

The Adani group in a statement said Vishvapradhan Commercial Pvt Ltd (VCPL) has informed that the income tax department orders only apply to share of NDTV held by RRRP Holding Pvt Ltd.

'Settlement, commitment framework will help CCI ensure faster market corrections'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As it steps up scrutiny of anti-competitive practices, CCI chief Ashok Kumar Gupta has said the proposed introduction of the settlement and commitment framework under the competition law will help reduce litigations and ensure faster market corrections.

The Competition Commission of India (CCI), which works to ensure fair business practices in the marketplace, is already empowered to invoke leniency provisions in cartel cases, subject to certain conditions.

On August 5, the government introduced the Competition (Amendment) Bill, 2022 in the Lok Sabha to amend various provisions of the competition law and the bill has been referred to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance.

Among the amendments proposed is the introduction of



the settlement and commitment framework, which will help reduce litigations.

"The existing statutory framework already provides for lesser penalty for cartels on self-reporting. Thus, the commitment and settlement mechanism for certain anti-competitive agreements... Would make the law holistic in providing for trust-based solutions," Gupta told PTI.

Gupta noted that the proposed settlement and commitment mechanism is likely to enable the regulator to resolve anti-trust cases faster and free up its scarce resources.

Once the framework is in place, entities concerned will have the option to address the anti-competitive issues in a swifter manner, without undergoing lengthy investigations and inquiries.

Stellar Value Chain Solutions to exit from distribution biz

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Integrated supply chain solutions provider Stellar Value Chain Solutions has decided to exit from the express distribution business as the segment is increasingly becoming economically unviable, a top company official has said.

As part of this strategic shift, the company will now focus its play only on the integrated storage and movement solution space with a network consisting of 21 warehouses and an equal number of branches and hubs across 21 cities pan-India, according to Anshuman Singh, the promoter of Stellar Value Chain Solutions.

Besides, Stellar Value Chain will concentrate on three key sectors—consumer, ecom-

merce and auto—to drive its supply chain solutions business and growth going forward, he said.

At the opening of its warehousing hub in Punjab last December, Singh had said that the company had lined up 200 logistics parks across the country.

"One of the learnings from the pandemic has been that the express model in the country has become outdated. It is done. So, we are completely getting out of the express model," Singh told PTI.

Stating that supply chain essentially comprises storage and movement, Singh said, however, during the pandemic, segment players got into a "product mode," and thereby into product, especially on the transportation side.

FPI inflows hit 20-month high of ₹51,200 cr in Aug

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Foreign investors have pumped in a little over ₹51,200 crore into the Indian equity markets in August, making it the highest inflow in 20 months, amid improving risk sentiment and stabilisation in oil prices.

This comes following a net investment of nearly ₹5,000 crore by Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) in July, data with depositories showed.

FPIs had turned buyers for the first time in July after nine straight months of massive net outflows, which started in October last year. Between October 2021 till June 2022, they withdrew ₹2.46 lakh crore from the Indian equity markets.



India will continue to attract FPI flows this month too, although at a slower pace as compared to August, given continued rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve along with quantitative tightening, said Manish Jeloka, Co-head of Products and Solutions, Sanctum Wealth.

Arpit Jain, Joint Managing

Director at Arianth Capital Markets, said inflation, dollar prices and interest rate will dictate FPI flows.

According to data with depositories, FPIs pumped in a net amount of ₹51,204 crore into Indian equities during August. This was the highest investment made by foreign investors since December 2020, when they had infused a net ₹62,016 crore in equities.

"Foreign investors started pumping in money into emerging markets as interest rates curve flattened and oil prices stabilised. Currency markets gained sanity and commodity prices fell as China's growth and financial market took a hit," said Vijay Singhania, chairman of TradeSmart.

Byju's may raise \$500 mn at \$23 bn valuation

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Edu major Byju's is likely to raise over USD 500 million (about ₹3,900 crore) at a valuation of around USD 23 billion in about a week, sources privy to the development said.

The company is planning to use the funding for acquisition in the US, they added.

The company is in discussion with Abu Dhabi's Sovereign Wealth Funds (SWF) and Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) for raising in the range of USD 400-500 million and USD 250-350 million, respectively, according to the sources.

"Byju's is in an advanced stage of discussion with some investors. The company is likely to raise over USD 500 million in about a week. The

transaction is expected to be closed at a valuation of around USD 23 billion," one of the sources told PTI, who did not wish to be named.

Byju's declined to comment on the development.

According to the source, the funding is part of the company's plan to use the fund for inorganic expansion, especially in the US.

The company has already acquired US-based reading platform Epic for USD 500 million and coding site Tynker for USD 200 million.

The other overseas acquisitions of Byju's include Singapore-based Great Learning for around USD 200 million and Austria's mathematics operator GeoGebra for approximately USD 100 million.

Govt may invite bids by March for NMDC's steel plant sale

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government is likely to invite preliminary bids for the strategic sale of NMDC's Nagarnar Steel Plant by March-end, an official said.

The official said that NMDC's under-construction steel plant in Chhattisgarh is expected to commence operation this month, and once the demerger process is complete, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) will proceed with the privatisation of Nagarnar Steel Plant.

"The demerger of NMDC and Nagarnar Steel Plant (NSP) is in the final stages, and the plant is expected to commence operation this month. We will proceed with appointing merchant bankers thereafter," the official told PTI.

The official said the preliminary bids or EoI is likely to be invited from bidders by March-end.

The sale process will happen in the next fiscal beginning April 2023.

NMDC, the country's largest iron ore mining company, is setting up a 3 million tonne per annum steel plant at Nagarnar near Bastar in Chhattisgarh. The unit is being constructed over 1,980 acre at an estimated cost of ₹23,140 crore.

Post demerger, Nagarnar Steel Plant will be a separate company.

68% of cos believe AI in HR raises overall job accuracy: Report

PTI ■ MUMBAI



Around 68 per cent of companies surveyed believe that the implementation of Artificial Intelligence in the Human Resource process increases overall job accuracy, according to a report.

The report revealed that 72 per cent of respondents agreed that using AI in the HR process boosts productivity and saves time as they believe it can automate many HR-related procedures and boost the effectiveness of the system through chatbots.

The report by HR solutions provider Genius Consultants is based on an online survey with over 825 organisations spread across sectors including banking and finance, construction and engineering, education, FMCG, hospitality, HR solutions, IT, ITES and

BPO, logistics, manufacturing, media, oil and gas, pharma, among others.

It further revealed that over 44 per cent of respondents indicated that AI-based chatbots are currently the preferred tool for initial interactions during the hiring process, which also helps new hires settle into their responsibilities and understand the company's many aspects later.

However, 48 per cent said they are skeptical about using chatbots as most people are yet to adapt with the developing technology.

Similarly, the report also revealed that 68 per cent of the participants did not think that AI technology would be preferable for orientation and the HR process, as the implementation incurs huge costs and raises concerns over privacy.

In contradiction, over 63 per cent said AI technology was a big helping hand for employee onboarding and training as it could yield more impactful results at work, it said. Over 56 per cent of respondents believed that AI would take over humans in the coming years, it added.

Paytm says no link with Chinese loan merchants under ED scanner

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Digital financial services firm One97 Communications, which operates under the Paytm brand, on Sunday denied any link with the merchants that are under the Enforcement Directorate scanner in the Chinese loan app case.

Paytm said that none of the funds frozen by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) belongs to it or any of its group firms.



"As a part of ongoing investigations on a specific set of merchants, the ED has sought information regarding such merchants to whom we provide payment processing solutions. We wish to clarify that these merchants are independent

entities, and none of them are our group entities," Paytm said in a regulatory filing.

The ED on Saturday said it has conducted raids at six premises of online payment gateways, such as Razorpay, Paytm and Cashfree in Bengaluru, over the alleged irregularities in instant app-based loans "controlled" by Chinese persons.

The searches that started on Friday as part of an ongoing probe still underway, the agency said.

RAFA EXTENDS WINNING STREAK

Nadal defeats Gasquet in straight sets to go 18-0 up against French player

AP ■ NEW YORK

Rafael Nadal demolished Richard Gasquet in ruthless fashion to march into the last 16 of the US Open on Saturday with his 18th straight victory over the French veteran.

Second seed Nadal improved his record against Gasquet to a perfect 18-0 with a clinical beatdown of his close friend on the Arthur Ashe Stadium court.

Nadal's 6-0, 6-1, 7-5 victory in 2hr 17min sees him advance to a meeting with American 22nd seed Frances Tiafoe on Monday for a place in the quarter-finals.

"He's a great player, he's very charismatic, very fast," Nadal said of Tiafoe.

Tiafoe made the last 16 for a third successive year by seeing off Argentina's Diego Schwartzman 7-6 (9/7), 6-4, 6-4.

"He can play very aggressive, I need to keep improving to keep playing better and better to have chances to get through."

Nadal was left with a bloody nose on Thursday when he accidentally struck himself in the face with his racquet but reported no lingering effects on Saturday.

"It's a little bit bigger than usual but it's okay," Nadal said. "The nose is still there."

Nadal and Gasquet, who came up through the ranks of junior tennis together, first met as professionals on clay in Estoril 2004, with Nadal winning in three sets.

Since that first encounter, the duo's head-to-head record has been a story of unrelenting dominance by Nadal.

Gasquet has only taken four sets off the Spanish master, the last of which came at the Canadian Masters in 2008.

Saturday's encounter again followed the same script, with Nadal



showing no mercy as he raced to a crushing win.

ALCARAZ INTO LAST 16

Spanish teenager Carlos Alcaraz claimed a season-leading 47th win of the year as he marched into the fourth round despite breaking one of his shoes.

The third seed defeated Jenson Brooksby of the United States 6-3, 6-3, 6-3 on the back of 46 winners.

Alcaraz next faces 2014 champion Marin Cilic who fired 26 aces and 74 winners in total past Britain's Dan Evans in a 7-6 (13/11), 6-7 (3/7), 6-2, 7-5 win.

The 19-year-old managed to break one of his tennis shoes as he slid to reach a ball in the middle of the match.

"It's the third time that I have done this. As you can see, I do a lot of sliding," said Alcaraz.

Apart from the broken shoe, which he gave away to a fan at the end of the match, his only other problem Saturday was having to fight back from double break down in the third set.

"He was playing with a high level, high intensity, he's a tough opponent," said Alcaraz.

British seventh seed Cameron Norrie made the fourth round for the first time with a comfortable 7-

5, 6-4, 6-1 win over Danish teenager Holger Rune.

He next faces Russian ninth seed Andrey Rublev who needed five match points to see off Canada's Denis Shapovalov 6-4, 2-6, 6-7 (3/7), 6-4, 7-6 (10/7).

IGA WINS

In women's singles, world number one Swiatek downed unseeded Lauren Davis 6-3, 6-4.

Petra Kvitova inspired by Serena to upset Muguruza

AP ■ NEW YORK

Petra Kvitova saved two match points before completing a remarkable third set comeback to defeat Garbine Muguruza and reach the last 16 of the US Open on Saturday.

The Czech 21st seed looked to be heading for elimination as she trailed 5-2 in the third after the opening two sets were shared.

But the two-time Wimbledon champion rallied superbly to level at 5-5 and then fought off two Muguruza match points at 5-6 before holding to force a tie break and sealing a 5-7, 6-3, 7-6 (12/10) victory at the Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Kvitova said she had drawn inspiration from Serena Williams' defeat on Friday night, when the 23-time Grand Slam champion saved five match points before eventually being eliminated.

"I watched Serena last night and it was amazing how she was saving match points, so I tried to



do the same today," Kvitova said.

"It was a great match, a great fight. She was serving very well and I was dealing with nerves," the 32-year-old added.

Kvitova, whose best performances at the US Open were quarter-final appearances in 2015 and 2017, will play either Jessica Pegula of the USA or China's Yuan Yue in the fourth round.

Swiatek came back from 1-4 down in the second set to reel off five successive games against the American who called a medical time out in the first set to have her blood pressure taken.

The 21-year-old Pole will face Wimbledon quarter-finalist Jule Niemeier of Germany for a place in the last eight.

Swiatek has now won three matches in a row for the first time since capturing her second French Open in June. "It's not like I lost confidence or something. I still know

anything can happen on these tournaments," she said.

Sixth seed Aryna Sabalenka, who made the semi-finals in 2021, brushed aside French qualifier Clara Burel, 6-0, 6-2 in just 68 minutes.

Pegula, the eighth seed, ended the run of Chinese qualifier Yuan Yue, 6-2, 6-7 (6/8), 6-0.

Azarenka eased past Petra Martic 6-3, 6-0 to set up a last-16 clash with 2016 finalist Karolina Pliskova who downed Olympic champion Belinda Bencic 5-7, 6-4, 6-3.

Mbappe stars in PSG win

AP ■ PARIS

Kylian Mbappe scored a goal in each half as Paris Saint-Germain beat 10-man Nantes 3-0 on Saturday to stay on top of the Ligue 1 table from Marseille, who beat Auxerre 2-0 with Alexis Sanchez on target.

Marseille had briefly gone to the summit with that win, but PSG responded in style later and are leaders thanks to their far superior goal difference, having scored 24 goals in just six league outings this season.

Mbappe joined Neymar at the top of the scorers' charts on seven for the campaign thanks to his brace at the Stade de la Beaujoire, with his opener coming in the 18th minute.

The France star curled a superb strike over goalkeeper Alban Lafont and into the net at the end of a breakthrough after being set up by Lionel Messi.

Nantes had beaten PSG at home in this fixture last season but their hopes of taking anything from the reigning champions this time were seriously hampered when they had Brazilian full-back Fabio sent off midway through the first half.

PSG scored again shortly after half-time as Messi set up Mbappe to finish at the near post, with the goal initially being disallowed for offside only to be awarded following a VAR check.

Rested at kick-off, Neymar came off the bench after that and played a part in the third goal in the 68th minute as his shot came back off the upright and Nuno Mendes followed up to finish.

PSG now turn their atten-



tions to the Champions League and their opening group game at home to Juventus on Tuesday, when the in-form Neymar is sure to return to the starting line-up.

"There is always the risk that you can break a player's dynamic if they are in good form but don't accept being left out of the team," admitted PSG coach Christophe Galtier of his decision to bench the Brazilian.

"But I had a long discussion with him yesterday. I made my decision and he accepted it," Galtier, who said Vitinha had taken a heavy knock to his kneecap, insisted his team would still have to raise their game in the Champions League.

"We are on a good run. We are scoring goals and playing well. The players are playing for each other, but the Champions

League is another level.

"I watched Juve this afternoon and this will be a different match. We cannot expect an easy game."

Runners-up in Ligue 1 last season, Marseille begin their Champions League campaign away at Tottenham Hotspur on Wednesday, and they warmed up in fine fashion by easing to victory against newly-promoted Auxerre in Burgundy.

Brazilian international Gerson scored the opener, converting the rebound after Cengiz Under hit the post.

Arsenal loanee Nuno Tavares hit the post for Marseille in the second half, before Sanchez -- rested at kick-off -- came on and finished off a cut-back from fellow substitute Matteo Guendouzi to make it 2-0 six minutes from time.

Lewa leads Barca to win at Sevilla

AP ■ BARCELONA

Robert Lewandowski scored again as Barcelona defeated Sevilla 3-0 in La Liga on Saturday, while Real Madrid made it four wins from four with victory over Real Betis.

Barcelona rode their lucky early on at the Ramon Sanchez Pizjuan as Marc-Andre ter Stegen denied Ivan Rakitic and Youssef En-Nesyri before the visitors struck against the run of play.

Raphinha headed in the rebound after Lewandowski's dinked effort was cleared off the line, but the Poland star didn't need long to get on the



scoresheet himself.

Lewandowski controlled a flighted pass from Jules Kounde on his chest and

volleyed past Bono for his fifth league goal in four appearances.

Eric Garcia tapped in

Brighton rout heaps pressure on Leicester

AP ■ BRIGHTON

Brighton extended their superb start to the Premier League season with a 5-2 victory that left bottom of the table Leicester in turmoil.

Graham Potter's fourth placed side made it four wins from their first six games thanks to a second half surge at the Amex Stadium.

Kelechi Iheanacho put Leicester ahead in the first minute, but a Luke Thomas own goal and Moises Caicedo's strike gave Brighton the advantage.

Patson Daka equalised for Leicester, but the struggling vis-

itors collapsed after half-time as Leandro Trossard put Brighton in front before Alexis Mac Allister's double sealed the rout.

Leicester have taken just one point from their first six games, losing five in a row to leave boss Brendan Rodgers under severe pressure.

In a damning assessment of Leicester's predicament, Rodgers admitted after Thursday's defeat against Manchester United that the Foxes, who twice narrowly failed to qualify for the Champions League under his leadership, are not the same club they were two years ago.

Leao claims derby honours for Milan

AP ■ MILAN

Rafael Leao fired AC Milan to a Serie A title statement win with his brace in Saturday's 3-2 derby triumph over Inter Milan lifting his team top of the pile.

Portugal winger Leao struck twice in each half for the champions in a pulsating clash at the San Siro which put Milan a point ahead of Atalanta and Roma at the summit.

Fans bounced in the stands after a thrilling match full of goalmouth incident which was decided by Leao and Olivier Giroud, who after Marcel Brozovic's 21st minute opener for Inter shot Milan two goals to the good on the

hour mark.

However they also had the magnificent Mike Maignan to thank for the three points after the France goalkeeper pulled off four superb stops from Lautaro Martinez, Edin Dzeko — also a scorer — and Hakan Calhanoglu.

A second defeat in five matches leaves Inter fifth, level on nine points with Juventus who underwhelmed in their 1-1 draw at Fiorentina, the first of three matches on a bumper Saturday which finishes with Lazio hosting Liverpool's midweek opponents Napoli.

An already breathless encounter which started with the usual spectacular pre-match displays from the fans



kicked into an even higher gear in the second half.

Giroud put Milan head in the 54th minute in fortunate fashion when he met the irrepressible Leao's low cross with a scuffed finish which

squeaked past Samir Handanovic.

Leao then nearly brought the house down six minutes later, a jinking run leaving him in front of Handanovic just yards from goal where he

made no mistake.

Substitute Dzeko pulled a goal back seven minutes later and then Maignan stepped in to keep resurgent Inter out and ensure Milan claimed local bragging rights and top spot.

Juve had the chance to go top temporarily of Italy's top flight against fierce rivals Fiorentina but after taking a ninth-minute lead through Arkadiusz Milik on his first Juve start they failed to earn the win.

But they can count themselves fortunate to have left Florence with a draw after Christian Kouame levelled midway through the first half and Mattia Perin pushed Luka Jovic's penalty onto the post just before the break.



MAN CITY HELD AS BAILEY RESCUES VILLA

AP ■ BIRMINGHAM

Erling Haaland extended his remarkable start to life in the Premier League, but Pep Guardiola admitted Manchester City were not precise enough in Saturday's 1-1 draw at struggling Aston Villa.

Haaland has been remarkably prolific since his £51 million (\$58 million) move from Borussia Dortmund in the close-season and he struck again in the second half at Villa Park.

The Norway striker's 10th goal in his first six Premier League games gave him a share of the record with Micky Quinn, who hit the same tally for Coventry in 1992.

But Guardiola's side were

punished for failing to build on their lead as Leon Bailey's blistering finish left the champions frustrated.

"We were not precise in our final third touches, especially in the first half. We had chances to score a second when the game was in our hands but we didn't," Guardiola said.

"We were just not precise enough in the crosses, we missed a few situations and that's why we could not score. We defended well apart from one action."

It was the first time this season City had failed to score more than once in a game, after netting 19 times in their opening five matches.

After their 3-3 draw against Newcastle in August, this was

the second time they had failed to take maximum points.

Unbeaten City sit in second place, above Tottenham on goal difference and one point behind leaders Arsenal, who play their game in hand at Manchester United on Sunday.

Villa are outside the relegation zone on goals scored after a battling display that should ease the pressure on under-fire boss Steven Gerrard for a few days at least.

"I'll always take the hits, that's my job. The players have come together today. They put an incredible amount of effort into the game," Gerrard said. "We have lost too many points this season and we need to do things slightly different."

PAK BEAT INDIA BY 5 WKTS

PTI ■ DUBAI

At tactically superior Pakistan caught India completely off-guard with a Mohammed Nawaz punt as they exacted sweet revenge with a five wicket victory in an exciting Super 4 game of the Asia Cup here on Sunday.

Chasing a tough target of 182, the ever dependable Mohammed Rizwan (71 off 51 balls) anchored the Pakistan innings but it was left-handed batter Nawaz, known more for his orthodox left-arm spin, who played the decisive knock of the match.

His 42 off 20 balls was something that India didn't factor in and there was no game-plan for him as Khushdil Shah and Iftikhar Ali completed a deserving victory with a ball to spare.

The Rizwan-Nawaz partnership of 73 in just 6.5 overs in the mid-stage of the innings had the Indians nagging.

Yuzvendra Chahal (1/43 in 4 overs) and Hardik Pandya (1/44 in 4 overs), the two bowlers who were brilliant last Sunday, were pedestrian on the day as Nawaz took both of them to cleaners.

While Pandya's short-ball tactic fell flat, Chahal was taken to cleaners by both Rizwan and Nawaz as creases on Rohit Sharma's forehead increased with each passing over.

By the time Nawaz was holed out in the deep off Bhuvneshwar Kumar's bowling, he had inflicted enough damage on the psyche of the Indian attack.

Not having a replacement pacer of Avesh Khan in the main squad also affected India's chances although to be fair to Ravi Bishnoi (1/26 in 4 overs), he gave it his all.

Finally, it all ended when Bhuvneshwar gave away 19 runs in the 19th over with only seven left off Arshdeep's final over which Pakistan got with a ball to spare.

Earlier, the much-criticised top-order batters finally showed what they are capable of as India put up a stiff 181 for 7 after being put into bat.

Skipper Rohit Sharma (28) and KL Rahul (28) were outstanding in the Powerplay while



Virat looks a lot calmer, he needed that break: Shastri

FIANS ■ DUBAI

Former India head coach Ravi Shastri believes talismanic batter Virat Kohli looks a lot calmer after returning from the one-and-a-half break to return for Asia Cup 2022. Shastri added that the break taken by Kohli after India's tour of England ended was a much-needed one.

Kohli, in a prolonged lean patch seen from him not scoring a century in interna-

tional cricket since November 2019, began Asia Cup 2022 with a crucial 35 in the thrilling five-wicket win over Pakistan in India's first Group A match. He then scored an unbeaten 59 in India's second Group A win over Hong Kong.

"Virat Kohli looks a lot calmer, he needed that break. When you are mentally tired, you are fighting against yourself. Your body tells you something to do, your mind

tells you something to do, but you can't take it.

The break could have helped him. The fact that he spent some time on the field would also help him," said Shastri ahead of India's Super Four match against Pakistan at the Dubai International Stadium. Meanwhile, former Pakistan left-arm pacer Wasim Akram urged fans from both teams to not go overboard irrespective of what the result is at

the end of the match.

"And that's where we experts have to suggest to fans from both India and Pakistan.

The teams will compete, and they will give their 100 percent, day in and day out. But in the end, it's a game of cricket. Somebody has to win, somebody has to lose.

"Any team loses, just say 'bad luck, well tried, better luck next time'. Whichever team wins, 'well played'.

Shadab Khan (2/31 in 4 overs), who got important wickets of Rahul and Rishabh Pant (14).

His innings had four boundaries and a six along with

Virat Kohli (60) gave glimpses of his vintage self by playing one of his most sublime knocks in recent times to take India to a more than respectable total.

What everyone wanted from India's top-order was a change in mindset and the strike rates of 175 (Rohit), 140 (Rahul) and 136 (Kohli) were a testimo-

ny to that.

Kohli deserves the maximum credit for the total India achieved against Pakistan spinners, especially leg-spinner

Saurashtra to host ROI in Irani Cup from Oct 1-5



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Former Ranji Trophy champions Saurashtra will host Rest of India from October 1 to 5 in the Irani Cup, which returns to the domestic calendar after 2019.

Saurashtra had beaten Bengal to win their maiden title in March 2020, days before the COVID-19 pandemic shut down the entire country.

Madhya Pradesh had won their maiden title this season but they are expected to feature in Irani Cup next

year.

"Team Saurashtra had become Ranji Trophy Champion of Season 2019-20 on 13th March 2020. Team Saurashtra was then to play Irani Trophy at SCA Stadium from 18th March 2020. Unfortunately, Irani Cup could not be played due to the Pandemic of Covid-19.

"It is very heartening that Domestic Season 2022-23 of BCCI are to be played in full swing and Irani Cup is to be played after two long years," said Saurashtra Cricket Association in a statement. SCA also thanked BCCI secretary Jay Shah for "considering its request to host and play prestigious Irani Cup 2022".

Former B'desh skipper Rahim retires from T20Is to focus on ODI & Tests

PTI ■ DHAKA

Bangladesh wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim on Sunday announced his retirement from T20Is to focus on the longer formats.

The 35-year-old former Bangladesh captain, however, intends to continue playing franchise cricket "when the opportunity arrives".

"I would like to announce my retirement from T20 INTERNATIONALS and focus on Test and ODI formats of the game," Mushfiqur wrote on his Twitter.

"I will be available to play franchise leagues when the opportunity arrives. Looking forward to proudly represent my nation in the two formats," he added.

The announcement comes a few days after Bangladesh were knocked out of the Asia Cup after failing to win a single match in the tournament. Mushfiqur has been going

through a rough patch in the shortest format with only three double digit scores in the last 10 T20Is.

In the Asia Cup, he could manage only five runs in two matches.

The right hander has represented Bangladesh in 102 T20Is, scoring 1500 runs at a strike rate of 115.03.

MS TO LEAD

Former India skipper MS Dhoni will continue to lead the Chennai Super Kings in the IPL 2023, the franchise CEO Kasi Vishwanathan confirmed on Sunday.

"MS Dhoni will lead the CSK team in the next year of the IPL tournament," Vishwanathan told a news channel.

Notably, the talismanic leader, who has led CSK since the inception of IPL in 2008, relinquished his captaincy just two days before IPL 2022 started and handed it to all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja.



Verstappen wins 4th race in a row at Dutch GP

AP ■ ZANDVOORT

Formula One championship leader Max Verstappen made quick work of a safety car restart to win the Dutch Grand Prix on Sunday in front of 100,000 adoring fans, and make it four straight wins for the first time in his F1 career.

Verstappen's 10th win matched his tally from last year and the Red Bull driver extended his championship lead to 109 points. With seven races left a second straight title is looking increasingly likely as his challengers - Ferrari's Charles Leclerc and teammate Sergio Perez in joint second - continue to fall further back.

"Very lovely result guys," Verstappen said to his team, before telling his legions of supporters he was "proud to be Dutch."

His second straight win here - and 30th career win - was even more special because of a gearbox problem in Friday's first practice session.

"I had to work for it even more, an incredible weekend," Verstappen said. "We had great pace again."

George Russell finished second for Mercedes ahead of Leclerc, with Lewis Hamilton dropping from first to fourth.

"As a team we showed incredible pace today. The team result wasn't quite what we hoped for but we can take a lot of confidence moving forward," Russell said. "We are slowly getting closer to that top step."

Verstappen looked to be

coasting to victory when a safety car came out on Lap 56 of 72, after the engine cut out on Valtteri Bottas' Alfa Romeo.

Verstappen changed tires and was behind leader Hamilton's Mercedes with 12 laps left.

But Hamilton was on a slower medium tire and Verstappen on the quicker softs left the British driver pretty much a sitting duck, much like when he lost the title to Verstappen at last year's season-ending Abu Dhabi GP.

Hamilton misjudged his restart and Verstappen overtook him straight away to bring a huge roar from the Orange Army. The Dutchman also took an extra point for the fastest lap.

"I had a good run in the restart, we had a bit more top speed and that helps to attack into Turn 1," Verstappen said. "From there onwards we had really good balance in the car again."

An angry Hamilton took it out on his team, using an expletive on radio to tell them he wasn't happy about not swapping for new tires under safety car, when Russell had.

Hamilton appeared to brake late when Russell overtook him and they nearly collided. Hamilton could no longer contain his rage and unleashed another expletive-laced rant.

It got worse as Leclerc overtook Hamilton to move into third on an otherwise poor day for a Ferrari team unable to cut out the most basic errors.



Tilak scores maiden ton in 1st unofficial Test

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Promising batter Tilak Varma scored his maiden first-class hundred while Kuldeep Yadav bowled with much more control as the first 'unofficial Test' between India A and New Zealand A ended in a draw here on Sunday.

The match ended after New Zealand scored 133 for 4 in their second innings.

This was after India A skipper Priyank Panchal declared his team's innings at 571 for 6 with Tilak becoming the third centurion of the innings with a fine 121 off 183 balls.

The highlight of Indian bowling was Kuldeep Yadav's 2/38 in 22 overs. While the match meandered towards a draw, the left-arm wrist spinner did his cause no harm, bowling with a lot more control and precision compared to his first innings effort when he gave away 119 runs in 34 overs.

The delivery to get rid of right-handed opener Chad Bowes (5 off 20 balls) was a classic left-arm wrist spinner's googly.

Bowes pressed forward to play a defensive stroke but saw the delivery turn away after pitching and the edge was taken at slips by Rituraj Gaikwad.

He also trapped Mark Chapman plumb in-front but what was heartening to see in the second innings was the way he varied the pace of his deliveries and gave the ball air.

The best part about the match was Kuldeep adding miles to his legs with a total of 56 overs in the game. He will at least play one more 'Test' among the remaining two (as Rahul Chahal is set to get a game) and then play domestic cricket for UP before going for the Bangladesh tour.

TILAK SHINES

Tilak had played only four first-class games before this 'unofficial Test' and his highest score was 90.

But on the day, he completed a well-deserved ton, first of the many that one would expect from the blade of the young turk from Hyderabad.

TRENT ROCKETS WIN MEN'S HUNDRED FINAL

AP ■ LONDON

Trent Rockets captain Lewis Gregory led from the front as his side defeated Manchester Originals by two wickets with just two balls to spare in a tense men's Hundred final at Lord's on Saturday.

The climax to the second season of the 100 balls per side tournament looked like being a one-sided affair.

Medium-pacer Sam Cook took 4-18 as the Rockets restricted the Originals to a seemingly modest 120-9 on a slow pitch, with Australian Ashton Turner's 26 the top score of the innings.

But England batsman Dawid Malan's 19 was the

highest score of the Rockets' reply, with Alex Hales -- bidding for an international recall -- out for just eight.

At 110-8, the Rockets needed 11 to win from the final set of five balls bowled by England international Richard Gleeson.

Gregory, himself an England all-rounder, promptly launched Gleeson over mid-off for six before flicking the subsequent full toss for four and then hitting the winning runs as he finished 17 not out off six balls.

"It was nice to be there at the end and get the team over the line," said Gregory.

The Hundred also features a parallel women's competition. Earlier on Saturday, South

Africa's Marizanne Kapp and England rising star Alice Capsey led the way as the Oval Invincibles retained their title with a five-wicket win over Southern Brave.

In front of a record crowd of 20,840 at Lord's -- the highest attendance for a domestic women's match in England -- the Invincibles beat the Brave in the final for the second year in a row by chasing down a target of 102 with six balls to spare.

The 32-year-old Kapp took 1-19 and led the chase with 37 not out, while teenager Capsey, the breakout performer from last year's tournament, returned figures of 2-17 and made a useful 25.

Nishimoto, Yamaguchi take honours at Japan Open



AP ■ OSAKA

Home favourites Kenta Nishimoto and Akane Yamaguchi thrilled the crowd at badminton's Japan Open in Osaka on Sunday, winning the men's and women's singles titles for the host country.

World number 21 Nishimoto stunned Taiwan's number four seed Chou Tien-chen 21-19, 21-23, 21-17 to finally claim his first international title, having lost in his previous six final appearances.

Nishimoto's win gave the home crowd something to cheer after Japan's number two seed Kento Momota lost in the first

round earlier in the week.

The 28-year-old Nishimoto said he was "really happy and also a bit relieved" after landing his first title.

"I was very worried going into the third game," said Nishimoto. "He's a veteran player with a lot of skill who knows how to play cleverly, so I had to be careful right until the end."

Chou, who reached the semi-finals of last week's world championships in Tokyo, is known as badminton's comeback king but he could not find a way past Nishimoto in the third game.

"I just tried to keep pushing," said Chou.

"It worked in the second set but in the third set I made some mistakes and it was difficult to move closer."

Yamaguchi gave Japan another Gold medal to celebrate when she beat South Korea's An Se-young 21-9, 21-15 in the women's final.

Yamaguchi retained her world title last week in Tokyo and she still had enough left in the tank to win her third tournament of the year. "Me and my opponent were both really tired so I wanted to take control of the game right from the start," said the 25-year-old world number one.

"I had to take it to the limit,

and when I hit that limit, I had the crowd to push me forward."

In women's doubles, South Korea's Jeong Na-eun and Kim Hye-jeong beat their compatriots Baek Ha-na and Lee Yu-lim 23-21, 28-26 to win the title.

Chinese pair Liang Weikeng and Wang Chan took the honours in men's doubles, beating Denmark's Kim Astrup and Anders Skaarup Rasmussen 21-18, 13-21, 21-17.

In mixed doubles, Thailand's Dechapol Puavaranukroh and Sapsiree Taerattanachai beat Japan's Yuta Watanabe and Arisa Higashino 16-21, 23-21, 21-18.