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Now Mamata doesn't see PM hand in ED, CBI raids

But Bengal Govt's resolution blames BJP Central and State's leaders for ED-CBI misuse

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo broke ranks with the Opposition parties in giving clean chit to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday on the alleged misuse of Central agencies against Opposition leaders.

The Bengal Government passed a resolution against the BJP's spirited use of Central agencies, and Mamata held a section of Central BJP leadership and their Bengal counterpart, not the Prime Minister, responsible for allegedly misusing the ED and the CBI against the Opposition parties.

The resolution against the alleged "excesses of Central agencies" in Bengal was passed by 189:69 votes. The BJP legislators voted against the motion prompted by the recent arrests of former Education Minister Partha Chatterjee and senior party leader Anubrata Mondal for alleged involvement in the SSC scam and cow smuggling in that order.

The resolution also highlighted the arrests of senior Trinamool Minister Firhad Hakim and late Subrata Mukherjee by the CBI soon after the BJP was defeated by a huge margin in the last year's Assembly elections.

Mamata then called it a



frustrated attempt by the BJP Government to harass the TMC after failing to defeat it politically in the elections.

The agencies have on several occasions quizzed CM's nephew Abhishek Banerjee, his wife Rujira Narula Banerjee and sister-in-law Maneka Gambhir in coal scam related cases.

Though she went all guns blazing against Bengal BJP leaders, the CM curiously spared the Prime Minister. Holding a section of the BJP both in Delhi and Kolkata responsible for the recent raids in Bengal, Mamata said she did not see the PM's hand in the alleged malicious raids being conducted by the ED and the CBI. A section of the Central BJP leaders and their Bengal counterparts were behind the "nefarious" acts of the agencies, she said.

Attached ₹48 cr assets of Partha in school scam: ED chargesheet

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

The Enforcement Directorate on Monday submitted an 872-page chargesheet in the school-level recruitment scam, saying it had recovered properties of former Bengal Minister Partha Chatterjee and his associates, including jailed aide Arpita Mukherjee, worth more than ₹100 crore and attached assets worth ₹48.22 crore.

According to ED sources, the chargesheet submitted before a special court mentioned assets that included cash worth ₹49.80 crore and gold worth ₹5.06 crore. The remaining wealth was in the form of assets, including immovable properties like apartments, lands and companies etc owned by the duo.

Both Chatterjee and Arpita were arrested on July 22. The first chargesheet filed on the 58th day since the ED started its probe has also mentioned about a total of 35 bank accounts having total deposits worth ₹7.89 crore.

Sources said the sleuths tried to ascertain the veracity of the remaining 65 accounts that had also been discovered. The ED lawyers said whatever had been discovered till now could be the tip of the iceberg.

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King Charles III and members of the Royal family follow behind the coffin of Queen Elizabeth II, draped in the Royal Standard with the Imperial State Crown and the Sovereign's orb and sceptre, as it is carried out of Westminster Abbey after her State Funeral, in London, on Monday. The Queen, who died aged 96 on September 8, was buried at Windsor alongside her late husband, Prince Philip, who died last year

AP

C'garh HC judge helping PMLA accused: ED to SC

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

In a startling disclosure, the Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday told the Supreme Court that some constitutional functionaries of Chhattisgarh and a High Court judge were trying to help a few accused in a money laundering case arising out of the multi-crore rupees Nagrik Apurti Nigam (NAN) scam in the State.

The ED, which made the submissions before a bench headed by Chief Justice Uday Umesh Lalit through Solicitor General Tushar Mehta on behalf of the anti-money laun-

dering probe agency, is seeking transfer of the trial outside Chhattisgarh.

The bench, also comprising justices Ajay Rastogi and S Ravindra Bhat, took note of the sealed cover materials provided by the ED and permitted the State Government and other parties to file documents that they wish to submit in a sealed cover. While fixing the case for hearing on September 26 the SC also asked the parties to file written submissions on the maintainability of ED's plea. The top law officer alleged that some high constitutional functionaries of the State, along with the SIT, were "weakening

the case in connivance with the accused, which included two senior IAS officers.

He said the accused had not only attempted to influence the witnesses to withdraw their statements given before the ED, but even the SIT had made seven attempts to stall the proceedings. "If this comes out in the public domain, it might shake the faith of people in the system. A sitting judge of the High Court was in touch with constitutional authorities who were helping the accused," he told the bench. The solicitor general said he did not want to make the names public.

Mehta said the ED's plea

for transfer of the case out of State was mentioned six times for urgent listing. However, the bench said, "Whatever documents are in a sealed cover, we have not seen them but the SG has requested that we have a look at them so we will see them. In case we find that the material is to be made public, we will allow that."

Earlier, the ED, on March 4, had sought the urgent hearing of its plea challenging the grant of anticipatory bail to two senior IAS officers by the Chhattisgarh High Court in the money laundering case arising out of NAN scam.

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CAPSULE

EC SEEKS TO LIMIT CASH DONATIONS TO PARTIES

New Delhi: The Election Commission (EC) is learnt to have proposed bringing down anonymous political donations from ₹20,000 to ₹2,000 and cap cash donations at 20 per cent or at a maximum of ₹20 crore to cleanse election funding of black money. The move comes against the backdrop of the poll panel recently delisting 284 defaulting and non-compliant registered unrecognised political parties (RUPPs), declaring more than 253 of them inactive. The EC also wants every candidate to open a separate bank account for election purposes. **P4**

SC STAYS DISMISSAL OF GUJ CADRE IPS OFFICER

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday stayed for a week the Centre's order dismissing Satish Chandra Verma, a senior IPS officer who assisted the CBI in its probe in the Ishrat Jahan encounter case, a month before his scheduled retirement. **P4**

Chorus grows for Rahul's return as Congress chief

Tharoor meets Sonia ahead of nominations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The chorus is growing in the Congress to bring back Rahul Gandhi as its president. As many as eight State units of the party so far have passed resolutions in favour of Rahul, whose ongoing Bharat Jodo Yatra has received encouraging response.

The States are Bihar, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Puducherry, and Himachal Pradesh. While the

Congress ruled States of Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh were the first to pass the resolution along with the party's Puducherry unit, the others followed the suit on Monday seeking Rahul's return at party's helm of affairs.

Similar resolutions were passed in 2017 before Rahul was elevated as the Congress president, a post he relinquished in 2019 after the massive loss of party in the Lok Sabha polls following which Sonia Gandhi took over as the interim party chief.

However, Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee authorised Sonia Gandhi to select all office bearers, including the State unit president and the organisation's next national president. State Congress



Legislature leader Aradhana Mishra said a resolution was passed unanimously at the party's convention calling upon party president Sonia Gandhi to be their leader authorised for

Bharat Jodo Yatra extension

New Delhi: The Congress on Monday announced the "extended" part of Bharat Jodo Yatra with 2,300 km within Odisha from October 31 followed by 800 km in Assam from November 1. The party also announced to share similar yatras within the limits of the States like Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, UP among others in due course. **P5**

selecting all office bearers.

Meanwhile, amid reports that he may run for the top party post, senior leader Shashi Tharoor met Sonia Gandhi ahead of the start of filing of the nominations from Sep 24.

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Mann deplaned for being drunk? AAP rejects report

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH



De-boarded allegedly from a plane at Frankfurt Airport, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann has landed in a major controversy. Even as Mann and his Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) have strongly denied reports that the CM was asked to get off the flight because he was drunk, his rivals and critics have found a reason to say "cheers".

Taking the ruling AAP and Mann head on for allegedly "shaming Punjabis" by being deplaned from a Lufthansa flight in Germany, the Opposition parties in Punjab demanded Chief Minister's resignation and an inquiry by the Union Civil Aviation Ministry.

Rubbishing all reports as "baseless rumours", AAP lashed out at the Opposition saying that Mann was feeling unwell

so he missed the flight. The AAP also accused the Opposition of spreading "propaganda".

Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Singh Badal asked the ruling party to divulge if the Punjab Chief Minister was deplaned because he was "too drunk to walk", and also reveal if this was the "real reason" why he could not attend the AAP's national convention.

"Disturbing media reports

quoting co-passengers say Punjab Chief Minister Mann was deplaned from a Lufthansa flight as he was too drunk to walk. And it led to a 4-hour flight delay. He missed AAP's national convention. These reports have embarrassed and shamed Punjabis all over the globe," tweeted Sukhbir.

Meanwhile, a spokesperson of Lufthansa airline said, "Our flight from Frankfurt to Delhi departed later than originally planned due to a delayed inbound flight and an aircraft change."

Congress MLA and the Leader of Opposition in Punjab Vidhan Sabha Partap Singh Bajwa demanded the Chief Minister's resignation over his "deplaning". He also urged the Union Civil Aviation Ministry to conduct an inquiry into the alleged incident.

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Indian mission in UK condemns attack on Hindus, seeks action

PTI ■ LONDON

India on Monday strongly condemned violence against the Indian community and vandalism of Hindu premises in the eastern England city of Leicester as it sought immediate action against those involved in these attacks.

In a statement, the High Commission of India here said it had "strongly" taken up the issue and called for protection for those affected from the UK authorities following reports of clashes over the weekend in the city, described as "serious disorder" by the local police.

There have been reports of clashes between Hindu and Muslim groups in the city since fans clashed following an India-Pakistan Asia Cup cricket



match at the end of last month.

"We strongly condemn the violence perpetrated against the Indian community in Leicester and vandalism of premises and symbols of Hindu religion," the High Commission statement read.

"We have strongly taken up this matter with the UK author-

ities and have sought immediate action against those involved in these attacks. We call on the authorities to provide protection to the affected people," the statement said.

Leicestershire Police said its operation in the east Leicester area affected by the disorder continues to prevent any further disorder, with 15 people arrested.

"The impact this disorder is having on our local communities is not acceptable," the police said in a statement.

"We will not tolerate violence, disorder or intimidation in Leicester, and we continue to call for calm and dialogue. Our police operations and investigations continue with rigour and at scale," it said.

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Punjab forms all-women SIT for Chandigarh varsity video probe

PNS ■ CHANDIGARH

The Punjab Police on Monday constituted a three-member "all-women" special investigation team (SIT) to probe the allegations of recording and alleged leak of "objectionable" videos of several girl students by a fellow hostel at the Mohali's Chandigarh University.

This came after hundreds of university students ended their two-day-long agitation at 1.30 am on Monday following the assurances from the authorities.

The SIT has been formed under the overall supervision of senior IPS officer Gurpreet Kaur Deo, holding the charge of ADGP Community Affairs



Division and Women Affairs, to ensure the effective and speedy investigation into Chandigarh University video leak case, said Director General of Police (DGP) Gaurav Yadav.

Yadav said that the team, comprising SP (Counter Intelligence) Ludhiana Rupinder Kaur Bhatti as in-charge with DSP Kharar-I Rupinder Kaur and DSP AGTF Deepika Singh as its members, will thoroughly probe the case

and no person involved will be spared. The SIT will function under the supervision of DIG Rupnagar Range Gurpreet Singh Bhullar and SAS Nagar (Mohali) SSP Vivek Sheel Soni, and can co-opt any other member, based on functional requirements.

"Investigation is going on at full pace and the police late on Sunday made three arrests, including that of the student and two others from Himachal Pradesh after seizing certain electronic devices from their possession," he said, while expressing gratitude to his Himachal counterpart and the Himachal Police for extending all cooperation to the Punjab Police.

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BJP gets Captain

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Kiren Rijiju.

In a boost to the BJP in Punjab, former Chief Minister and Punjab Lok Congress (PLC) head Amarinder Singh joined the BJP along with his followers here on Monday in the presence of Union Ministers Narendra Singh Tomar and

Amarinder Singh also merged the PLC with the BJP. Singh (80) had floated the PLC last year after quitting the Congress following his unceremonious exit as Chief Minister, but his party failed to win any seat in the State Assembly polls.

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Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Damage caused by monsoon in K'taka pegged at ₹3,600 cr: CM

PTI ■ BENGALURU

The monsoon this year caused a damage to the tune of Rs 3,600 crore to the crops, houses and infrastructure in Karnataka, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said on Monday.

He said the State would claim Rs 1,645 crore from the Centre under the National Disaster Relief Fund.

"More than 10.06-lakh hectare of agricultural land and

42,048 houses were damaged in the flood. We had earlier estimated that the crop loss occurred in 5.8 lakh hectares but according to a broader estimate now, the loss happened in 10.06 lakh hectares till Sunday. We have estimated that Rs 1,550 crore will be required for the crop loss," Bommai told the Karnataka Assembly.

Bommai was participating in the discussion on the floods this year and the measures

taken by the government.

He said till Sunday, compensation to the tune of Rs 377.44 crore was deposited into the bank accounts of 3.26 lakh farmers through direct benefit transfer. "We are depositing the money as the details are uploaded in the government data. We are giving compensation to the farmers within the season, which is a record. We have formulated a system to ensure that there is no dearth of funds," the Chief Minister said.

Bommai said the State government has estimated to pay Rs 850 crore for the damage to 42,048 houses due to the monsoon this year.

Already, Rs 3,104.74 crore has been released for the damage to the houses in three years since 2019, Bommai said. He added: "A sum of Rs 1, 527 crore will be required for the completion of houses, which we will release based on the progress in the construction of houses."

UPCC authorises Sonia to select next prez of Cong

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

With the organisational election process of the Indian National Congress almost in its final stages, the delegates of the Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee on Monday authorised party president Sonia Gandhi to select the next president of the organisation.

While presenting the proposal during the session of the elected delegates (members) of Pradesh Congress Committee held at UPCC headquarters here on Monday,



Rajya Sabha MP and Congress Working Committee member Pramod Tiwari said that all the right to choose the state president, national president and all the office-bearers be given to Congress national president Sonia Gandhi.

The proposal was approved by former UPCC president Nirmal Khatri, former Union Minister Pradeep Jain Aditya, Congress Legislature Party leader Aradhana Mishra Mona, former leader of CLP Pradeep Mathur and others all the delegates.

NCR-PULSE

30-YR-OLD NIGERIAN TESTS POSITIVE FOR MONKEYPOX

New Delhi: A 30-year-old Nigerian woman has tested positive for monkeypox in Delhi, making it the city's ninth and India's 14th case of the infection. The woman was admitted to the LNJP Hospital here with blisters and pus-filled lesions on genitals on September 16. Her test report came back on Sunday, they added.

ENTRANCE TEST FOR PG TO BE HELD IN OCTOBER: DU

New Delhi: Delhi University's on Monday said that the entrance test for postgraduate programmes is likely to be held in the second week of October. According to DU Registrar Vikas Gupta, the university has received a communication from the NTA regarding the tentative date for the PG entrance. The PG entrance exams are likely to be held in the second week of October as communicated by the university.

23-YR-OLD MAN, FRIEND ARRESTED FOR KILLING WIFE

New Delhi: A 23-year-old man was arrested, along with his friend, for killing his wife in northeast Delhi's Jafrabad area. After killing his wife on Saturday, Shahden Malik and his 19-year-old friend Md Aasif, took an auto to Anand Vihar from where they escaped to their hideout in Uttar Pradesh. A senior police officer said that Malik had married his girlfriend secretly against the will of his family.

POLICE HEAD CONSTABLE COMMITS SUICIDE

New Delhi: A Delhi Police Head Constable died allegedly by suicide on Monday morning by shooting himself with a firearm at Prasad Nagar police station. The HC identified as Manoj is survived by his wife, his daughter and a son. Police said that they are investigating the reason behind his this extreme step.

MEETING HELD FOR KERBSIDE CHARGING OF EVS

New Delhi: Dialogue and Development Commission of Delhi (DDCD) Vice Chairperson, Jasmine Shah on Monday convened a meeting on the implementation of kerb side charging for Electric Vehicles (EVs) in Delhi. Kerbside charging is an emerging concept globally wherein EVs can be charged while being parked on roadside kerbs itself using either street light lamp posts or through dedicated charging posts.

NCRTC STARTS INSTALLATION OF PSDS

New Delhi: National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) on Monday started the work of installation of the Platform Screen Doors (PSDs) at priority section on Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) corridor. The installation work has been started from Guldhar RRTS station. According to a senior NCRTC official, in this process, various parts of PSDs such as automatic sliding doors, fixed door panels, platform end gates, emergency escape doors, and fixed screens are being installed on the platform.

BJP gets Captain

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Singh himself lost from his home turf of Patiala Urban.

The PLC contested the elections in alliance with the BJP and the Sukhdev Singh Dhindsa-led Shiromani Akali Dal (Sanyukt).

"This is a party working in the interest of the country. I thank the leadership of the BJP for welcoming us. I discussed this with all my party members and we decided to do this," Singh said during the induction ceremony, adding that he had told Prime Minister, Nadda ji and Amit Shah that he would join the party once he had returned from abroad after his treat-

ment.

"For Captain Amarinder Singh, nation comes first. There is no compromise on that front. We are very happy to have this merger. I welcome Captain and his people," Tomar said at the induction, adding, "It is important for national security that Punjab has stability and peace. His presence in the BJP will strengthen us. It is a historic day."

"Punjab and Sikhs have always been there to protect the country," Tomar further said.

Tomar lauded Singh's keeping national security over the party loyalty and agreeing with the Centre on

extending the jurisdiction of the Border Security force while the latter was the State Chief Minister. He also pointed to the Prime Minister's steps to fulfill interests of the Sikh community.

Rijiju said the country's unity and integrity is of the utmost importance and said even while Singh represented Congress as Chief Minister he always kept aspects of national unity and integrity above party politics.

Along with former Punjab Chief Minister, ex-deputy speaker of Punjab Assembly, Ajaib Singh Bhatti, also joined the BJP.

Before his joining, Singh met Shah and Nadda.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi participates in a snake boat race exhibition in Punnarnada Lake of Kerala, on Monday. Rahul is in Kerala for the Bharat Jodo Yatra PTI

Mann deplaned for being drunk? AAP...

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"The Civil Aviation Minister should seek details from the Lufthansa airline about the 'de-boarding' of Punjab Chief Minister and make the report public...It is a national shame that a sitting Chief Minister is deplaned by an airline," he said adding that though the AAP spokesperson denied the reports, people travelling with Mann narrated the incident to him.

Mann, who was on a visit to Germany from September 11-18, was scheduled to take a Lufthansa 760 flight from Frankfurt to Delhi that was supposed to take off at 1.40 pm, but departed at 5.34 pm instead and landed in Delhi at 4.40 am. The delay was reportedly caused by Mann, who had to be asked to de-board because he was "found unfit to travel". Later, he took a different flight and landed

in India early on September 19.

One media report quoted an Indian co-passenger as saying: "The CM was not steady on his feet as he had imbibed excessive alcohol & had to be supported by his wife and security personnel." Meanwhile, Mann on Monday arrived at the Delhi Chief Minister's official residence on his arrival in New Delhi.

Indian mission in UK condemns attack on...

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The force said a number of neighbouring police forces, including the mounted police unit, had been deployed to bring matters under control. Dispersal and stop and search powers were also used to restore calm. "Officers became aware of groups of young men gathering on Sunday afternoon in the North Evington area of the city. Officers spoke to them and took steps, including putting in place a temporary police cordon, to minimise harm and disturbance to communities," the police said.

It followed clashes on Saturday evening, when

the police said it became aware of a video circulating showing a man pulling down a flag outside a religious building on Melton Road, Leicester, and said the incident would be investigated. Videos circulating on social media showed a temple flag being ripped out. Police had imposed similar dispersal orders earlier this month after a few days of unrest in the wake of the India versus Pakistan match in Dubai on August 28. The police and community leaders have been calling for calm over the past few weeks, amid reports of men coming in from other cities of the UK to stoke disorder in Leicester.

Chorus grows for Rahul's return...

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Tharoor also presented a petition by a group of young party members seeking reforms and a pledge by AICC president candidates to implement the Udaipur Declaration in entirety, if elected. Tharoor also shared the petition on Twitter. "I welcome this petition that is being circulated by a group of young Congress members, seeking constructive reforms in the party. It has gathered over 650 signatures so far. I am happy to endorse it and to go beyond it," the former Union Minister tweeted.

Tharoor has not ruled out

contesting the polls. "I have only welcomed the fact that an election will be held. I believe that is very good for the party. Of course it is gratifying that this general statement of democratic principle has immediately led to large numbers of people around the country welcoming the prospect of my contesting. But as I have made it clear, I have not declared my candidacy," he told news agency PTI.

"I hope many will contest in order to give the membership a wide choice. So far I have neither ruled myself in nor ruled myself out," the former

Union Minister asserted.

The process for filing nominations for the election 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.

The Maharashtra Pradesh Congress Committee (MPCC) on Monday passed a resolution for appointing Rahul as the national president of the party. The resolution was passed in a meeting of 553 delegates of the MPCC. The resolution was moved by former Maharashtra Chief Minister Ashok Chavan.

C'garh HC judge helping PMLA accused: ED to...

From Page 1

A bench headed by the then Chief Justice N V Ramana (since retired) had assured early listing of the case to the ED. The ED had said its plea against the grant of bail needed an urgent hearing in view of the fact that the evidence has been "cooked up" allegedly in favour of the accused senior officers in the case. "Here is one matter from Chhattisgarh and there is a kind of disturbing situation with a constitutional functionary and the grant of bail and I am seeking transfer (of the case). Every day the evidence is being cooked up," the law officer had said.

Prior to this, the Chhattisgarh High Court had granted anticipatory bail to IAS officers, Anil Tuteja and Alok Shukla, in the money laundering case related to the Chhattisgarh Civil Supply Corporation scam.

In 2019, the ED lodged an Enforcement Case Information

Report (ECIR) under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, which was based on the FIR and charge sheet filed by the Chhattisgarh police's economic offences wing (EOW) and the anti-corruption bureau (ACB) in the civil supply scam.

Referring to an income tax raid, it said the mobile phone records of two accused officers revealed that they and others have weakened the offence of corruption by procuring favourable reports from prosecuting agencies and the state SIT.

The ED has also filed a separate petition seeking transfer of trial outside Chhattisgarh and transfer of further investigation with an impartial agency like CBI.

According to an Income Tax Department reference to the Chhattisgarh government, searches against Deputy Secretary to CM Bhupesh Baghel, Saumya Chaurasia,

Joint Secretary Anil Tuteja and RERA chairman Vivek Dhand (1981-batch IAS officer) revealed generation of tainted wealth to the tune of crores of rupees from distilleries of country liquor.

Tuteja is a promotee IAS officer who initially joined as a civil servant through State Civil Services in 2003 and was promoted to the IAS on September 28, 2012.

The IT Department had searched his wife Minakshi and son Yash's premises at who run five beauty salons styled as Meenaskshi Beauty and Academy Pvt Ltd and Tuteja Tutorials on February 27, 2020.

"Incriminating documents seized from such premises include digital evidence, wherein there are proof showing nexus of Anil Tuteja with Anwar Dhebar(brother of Mayor, Raipur, Aizaz Dhebar) and found to be involved in collection of bribes in the State," reads a I-T Department's

reference to the State Government.

"Role of Tuteja is key in providing Government approvals to these distilleries and are given in accordance with bribe being paid/offered by these distillers," it said.

It said, "WhatsApp chats recovered from the mobile of Anil Tuteja (7974188790) show show that Rs 3 crore have exchanged hands through one Manish, on behalf of Tuteja and Saumya."

Tuteja, according to the I-T Department, also collected Rs 5 crore with the help of IFoS officer Anil Rai and another chat reveals payment of another Rs 4.5 crore from Ashol Chaturvedi, General Manager of Textbook Corporation and partly to Ram Gopal, (Treasurer PCC) for settlement of corruption case against him.

During questioning, Tuteja also admitted to having in receipt of over Rs 43 crore

committee of students that will be given updates in the case; suspension of the warden of the hostel where the incident took place; and the replacement of doors in girls' hostel wash-rooms.

The varsity authorities have placed both the wardens of the hostel, where the incident took place, under suspension. Also, the university will remain closed till September 24.

As of now, three arrests have been made in the matter, including the 22-year-old varsity's girl student - accused of filming the video and forwarding it - and two men both from Shimla.

Attached ₹100 cr assets of...

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He added the properties could run into many hundred crores. Meanwhile, according to reports published by a Bangladeshi media house Chatterjee allegedly had expanded his business to that country also where he reportedly invested in scrap iron business, stone, textile and ship-breaking business. Arpita Mukherjee allegedly was in the knowof Chatterjee's Bangladeshi venture, sources said.

Punjab forms all-women...

From Page 1

Already, Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann had ordered to conduct a high level probe into the matter.

At the same time, the State police chief appealed to everyone to maintain peace and harmony. "Do not fall for unverified rumours. Let's work together for peace in society," he said. Meanwhile, protests by the students that rocked the Chandigarh University campus since Saturday night were called off after the authorities assured their demands would be met. The demands include the constitution of a 10-member

reference to the State Government.

reference to the State Government.

reference to the State Government.

reference to the State Government.

reference to the State Government.



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday recorded the statement of AAP MLA Durgesh Pathak in connection with its money laundering probe into the now-scrapped excise policy of the Kejriwal Government. Pathak is the AAP's in-charge for Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) polls.

With this, four of AAP's senior party leaders, including former Health Minister Satyendar Jain, Deputy Chief Minister Sisodia and Okhla MLA Amanatullah Khan are facing the heat from central investigating agencies like the CBI, ED and the Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) that

ED grills Durgesh Pathak in excise policy case

comes under the Lieutenant Governor (L-G).

According to sources, Pathak's statement was recorded under the criminal sections of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA). "Pathak will be questioned about his role in this case and his purported links with Vijay Nair, former CEO of an entertainment and event management firm and an accused in the case," sources added.

The ED had earlier examined Pathak's phone after the first round of raids conducted by it on September 6. Earlier in the day, Delhi Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said that AAP MLA Durgesh Pathak had been summoned by the ED in connection with its excise policy investigation.

Raising concern over the summons to Pathak, Sisodia wondered whether the agency was targeting the MCD polls.

Sisodia – who has been named as one of the accused in the liquor policy case – took to Twitter and said, "What does AAP's MCD in-charge have to do with the liquor policy? Today the ED has summoned the AAP's MCD polls in-charge Durgesh Pathak. Is their target the liquor policy or the MCD elections?" "Now, the BJP-ED-CBI alliance will contest both the Gujarat and Delhi (civic body) elections," the AAP's spokesperson Saurabh Bharadwaj charged in a tweet in Hindi. He said the EDs summon to Pathak has made it clear that MCD elections are going to be held in Delhi. AAP

leader Atishi hit out at the BJP and alleged that the ED's move has made it clear that the "actual target" is the "rising political graph" of AAP national convenor Kejriwal, not the excise policy. The ED's probe into Delhi excise policy is "just an excuse," she charged.

"The ED's summons to @AamAadmiParty MCD election in-charge Durgesh Pathak makes it clear that investigation into liquor policy is just an excuse. The rising political graph of @ArvindKejriwal is the actual target," Atishi said in a tweet in Hindi.

The ED had last week conducted raids at multiple locations across the country in connection with Delhi Excise Policy 2021-22 after taking over the case from the CBI.

L-G reviews work on decongestion of 77 corridors

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Reviewing the progress of work on the decongestion of 77 corridors, Lieutenant-Governor (L-G) VK Saxena on Monday directed the Public Works Department (PWD) to remove encroachments from public land, particularly areas along arterial roads so as to ensure smooth flow of traffic.

During the meeting, officials informed the L-G that out of the 620 tasks on these 77 corridors, 334 tasks have been completed while 109 including 44 long-term tasks and 25 short-term ones were pending.

According to officials, 119 projects were reported unfeasible and the L-G asked them to explore alternative measures.

Officials informed the L-G that five tasks pertaining to shifting/removal of electricity poles and transformers and seven tasks related to removal



of trees were pending and he directed them to complete these works by September 30. Officials told the L-G that since the last meeting on July 4, ten tasks involving repaving of roads, installation of iron grills, widening of bridges, shifting of garbage dumping sites and removal of trees, electricity and telephone poles, etc. had been completed.

"With this traffic flow was expected to be better on Moti Bagh RTR, New Rohtak Road, old Patparganj Road,

Loni Road, Babarpur Road, old Gurgaon Road and Bijwasan – Najafgarh Road," officials said. "The L-G directed officials to provide specific timelines with regards to short-term pending works and a concrete action plan for the long-term ones, which includes construction and widening of roads, removal of bus terminals, creating new parking spaces along major roads, construction of multi-level parking lots, construction of foot over bridges, underpasses and unavailability of land for certain projects among others," officials said.

"Upon being informed that there were many encroachments on Right of Way on major roads, Saxena directed the PWD to remove encroachments from the public land particularly those along arterial roads so as to decongest these stretches and ensure smooth flow of traffic," officials said. Task Force teams for each

traffic range were created in January 2017 with an objective to act on major travel corridors in consultation with all stakeholders to improve traffic flow. The Task Force teams had identified 77 corridors of around 400 KMs for improvement.

The tasks identified for this purpose comprise of road engineering interventions to address choke points, regulation through augmented traffic police deployment and systems, manual intervention during peak hours etc.

The meeting was attended by Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar, Vice-Chairman of the Delhi Development Authority Manish Kumar Gupta and representatives from agencies like PWD, Municipal Corporation of Delhi, Forest Department, Home Department, Delhi Police and Delhi Urban Shelter Improvement Board among others.

Ex-SP MLA from MP held for threatening to blow up Parliament

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police's Crime Branch has arrested 56-year-old Kishor Samrite, a former Samajwadi Party MLA from Madhya Pradesh's Lanji area for threatening to blow up Parliament. Police said that Samrite was arrested from Bhopal and he will be brought to Delhi on Tuesday and produced before the court.

According to Ravinder Yadav, Special Commissioner of Police, Crime Branch, Samrite had sent one package to Parliament containing one threatening letter, some flags, a copy of the Constitution and some gelatin sticks.

"Samrite had threatened that if his 70 demands were not met, he would blow up Parliament House on September 30. Accordingly a case was registered at Parliament Street Police Station in the national Capital and a probe was initiated into the matter," said the Special CP.

After finishing his education Samrite had first joined the National Students Union of India, then the Janata Dal. In 2007 he joined the Samajwadi Party and won by-elections from the Lanji constituency. "He remained an MLA for

10-11 months. Samrite has been previously booked for several cases like rioting, arson, extortion etc," said the Special CP. "A Special Court had also given him a five-year sentence," the senior officer said.

According to sources, Samrite has people in several departments who give him information. Then with the aid of RTI he uses that information to blackmail people.

"He has been accused of blackmailing businessmen and earlier, he had also taken money from a jeweller in Jabalpur after blackmailing him," sources said.

Last year in June, Samrite was arrested on charge of blackmailing and extortion and he was sent to jail on judicial remand in Balaghat district.

A case against Samrite, was registered at Bhaveli police station of the district after a businessman Rajesh Pathak had lodged a complaint at Superintendent of Police Balaghat office, accusing the former MLA of blackmailing and threatening to get a fake case registered against him.

Pathak, in his complaint, claimed that Samrite was demanding ₹20,000 per month from him.

ACB notices to five in Waqf Board graft case

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Anti Corruption Branch (ACB) has sent notices to five people including two members of the Delhi Waqf Board and three businessmen in connection with irregularities in the Board.

According to sources, their names cropped up during the course of investigation. "After a diary was recovered in the raid which is crucial to the case, the officials have to record the testimonies of these five people to get a clear picture," the source

said. AAP Okhla MLA, Amanatullah Khan is already in the ACB's custody and the officials are grilling him daily for hours. On September 16, the ACB had arrested Khan in connection with a graft case. The ACB is probing alleged irregularities in the recruitment in the Delhi Waqf Board, which Khan heads as the chairman.

Last Friday, the ACB had conducted searches at Khan's house and other premises linked to him and seized Rs 24 lakh as well as two unlicensed weapons,

officials said. The ACB had issued a notice to Khan on Thursday for questioning in connection with the Prevention of Corruption Act case registered in 2020. Khan had tweeted about notice, claiming he had been summoned as he built a new Waqf Board office.

Earlier, the ACB had written to Lieutenant-Governor's Secretariat demanding that Khan be removed as Delhi Waqf Board chairman for allegedly hampering a probe by "bullying" witnesses in a case against him.



A polluted Yamuna flows under the Signature Bridge in New Delhi on Monday

PTI

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP president Adesh Gupta on Monday alleged that the AAP is not only giving protection to its "criminal MLAs" but also hiding their links with "terrorists and the underworld" while the Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri advised Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal to let the law decide who is innocent and who is tainted. "The way Kejriwal is defending his MLAs is in bad taste," he said

Addressing the media, Gupta said that during the raid of the Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) at the arrested AAP MLA Amanatullah Khan's premises, a red diary was found along with cartridges and money.

Gupta claimed, "It is suspected that in this diary information about his and other AAP MLAs' links with terrorists and the underworld are hidden. To prevent this fact from coming to the fore, Kejriwal has already started



giving clean chits to his MLAs."

Gupta alleged that Khan, despite being the chairman of the Waqf Board, closed the primary school running in Fatehpur Masjid of Chandni Chowk and built 11 new shops and spent the money received from there for his personal benefits.

"The work of the Waqf Board is to provide education to the poor children of the minority community, but the school which was running for years was closed and a market was made there so that the money could be collected. All the issues which the AAP used to talk about when it came to

power have now been conveniently forgotten," Gupta alleged.

Gupta said that the true face of the AAP has been unveiled in front of the people of Delhi as Kejriwal defends his corrupt Ministers and considers himself and his associates above the law.

Taking a dig at Kejriwal, Bidhuri advised him to let the law decide who is innocent and who is tainted. Bidhuri's statement came after Kejriwal gave a clean chit to all MLAs who are either arrested or facing CBI and ED charges.

Bidhuri said that there are several instances when Kejriwal and his leaders have given a clean chit to the accused leader. While the Enforcement Directorate (ED) issued a notice to MLA Durgesh Pathak, Deputy CM Manish Sisodia gave him a clean chit. "A CBI investigation is going on against Sisodia, but he is issuing certificates of honesty to others. If the ED has issued a notice, then he should at least wait till investigation," he said.

Jacqueline grilled by EOW for 7 hours again

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Police's Economic Offences Wing (EOW) on Monday again questioned Bollywood actor Jacqueline Fernandez for seven hours in connection with an investigation related to an extortion case linked to alleged conman Suresh Chandrashekhkar.

Last Wednesday, Fernandez was quizzed for over eight hours along with Pinki Irani, the person who allegedly introduced the actor to Chandrashekhkar.

Investigation had revealed that Chandrashekhkar had on his birthday offered a motorcycle to Fernandez's agent Prashant but he declined to take it.

All the same, Chandrashekhkar left the two-wheeler and its keys at Prashant's place, police had said earlier. The vehicle was seized, they added.

Chandrashekhkar, who is currently in jail here, is accused of cheating many people, including high-profile individuals such as former Fortis Healthcare promoter Shivinder Mohan Singh's wife Aditi Singh. **SR**

Construction of Hanuman Mandir Vatika in full swing: NDMC Vice-Chairman

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The redevelopment work of the historic Hanuman Mandir Vatika in the NDMC area is in full swing with the lighting work of the street poles already complete while stainless steel railing have been installed around the plants and trees to protect them.

Hundreds of devotees and visitors go to famed Hanuman temple situated at Connaught Place daily. Several street vendors such as tea stalls and snack shops along with the bangle shops are also present at the temple complex which attracts the visitors to the temple. The Vice Chairman of the New Delhi Municipal Committee (NDMC), Satish Upadhyay informed that the work of the granite flooring at the Bengal shops located at the temple will be completed till next week. "The work of the Canopies which are to be placed at the roof of these shops are designed by the architect department, the design is yet to be finalized and the process of the estimate is pending. After the finalization of the design the tenders will be

invited for the same," Upadhyay said. "The main gate of the Hanuman temple will be replaced by the new one. The architect department has made the design of the gate and it will be finalized soon," Upadhyay informed.

"A big pole of 50 feet made of stainless steel also known as Dhaaja will also be constructed at the temple to attract visitors and devotees. The tender for this has been awarded and the work will be completed in the time bound manner," VC, NDMC said.

Meanwhile, a day earlier, Upadhyay laid foundation stone of state-of-art "Smart Public Toilet cum Hygiene Block" at Hanuman Mandir to facilitate the visitors and aiming to keep the city clean.

While informing about the details of the Smart Public Toilet Block, Upadhyay informed that it's will be a huge and magnificent toilet block and having provision of four water closet (WC) seat for ladies, five WC seat for gents, one WC seat for physically abled person, one WC seat for transgender and 10 Urinals facilities.

417 fresh dengue cases reported in a week



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

With 417 fresh cases of dengue reported in the past one week, the total number of people infected with the vector borne disease has reached 918 in the national Capital. According to a report released by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) on Monday 92 cases of malaria and three cases of chikungunya also reported this year.

Out of the total cases, a total of 396 dengue cases have been recorded this year till September 19 in the capital. The remaining cases traced in the city belong to others states and some are untraced.

A senior MCD official familiar with the matter said that the reason behind the rising number of untraced cases is that the patients do not provide their current address or full address, due to which

when the hospital officials visit their places, the patients are not available. "Most of the cases that are reported in the capital are from the adjoining states, who visit Delhi for the better treatment. Around 60 per cent cases of Dengue reported in Delhi are either from any other state or untraceable. The most important thing to curb the dengue cases in the city is that the people should avoid the mosquito breeding in their

houses," he added. Amid the spike in cases of dengue in Delhi, mosquito breeding has been found at public places and government offices, including a police academy and a metro station, during an anti-dengue drive following which legal measures were taken by the civic authorities.

In a statement on Monday, it said, MCD takes "strict action" of breeding of mosquitoes are found at any site, and added, it has "started proceedings to lodge a police complaint" against a private construction company, undertaking construction work at IIT-Delhi campus in Hauz Khas, since "heavy breeding of mosquitoes were found at the site". An immediate reaction was not available from the institution or other associated authorities.

Cases of vector-borne diseases are usually reported between July and November, but the period may stretch till mid-December. Last year, 9,613

dengue cases, the highest number of cases of the vector-borne disease recorded in the national capital in a year since 2015, and 23 deaths were reported. In the years prior to 2021, the total number of dengue cases reported were -- 4,431 (2016), 4,726 (2017), 2,798 (2018), 2,036 (2019) and 1,072 (2020), the report said.

In 2015, the city had witnessed a massive outbreak of dengue when the number of dengue cases reported crossed 10,600 in October itself, making it the worst outbreak of the vector-borne disease in Delhi since 1996. The number of dengue fatalities logged in 2021 was the highest in the national capital since 2016, when the officially reported death count was 10. Delhi had recorded two deaths due to dengue in 2019, four in 2018, and 10 each in 2017 and 2016. The report also stated that two cases of malaria and seven cases of chikungunya have been reported so far this year in Delhi.

Sisodia gives green signal for 2nd phase of Chandni Chowk redevelopment

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Deputy Chief Minister, Manish Sisodia on Monday held a meeting regarding the redevelopment second phase of Delhi's famous Chandani Chowk. The first phase of the Chandni Chowk redevelopment project was completed in 2021.

According to officials, under the second phase of the redevelopment project, the government aims to revive and beautify the historical architectural character of the buildings in the Chandni Chowk area. "This will be done by maintaining the balance between historic and modern architectural designs. The project includes conservation of

heritage structures as per original material and construction techniques, structural retrofitting, restoration and unification of facade of heritage structures, colour and signage scheme for shops, lighting and facade illumination of shops and buildings, and interpretation of storyline of heritage structures on various spots by using plaques and QR codes to enhance the visitor experience," said the officials.

Speaking about the project, Sisodia said that the Delhi Government completed the first phase of the redevelopment of Chandni Chowk in 2021 and the response of the public to it was overwhelming. "In the first phase, we focused on decongesting the area and



landscaping to improve the shopping experience for the visitors. To further add to it, now the government will focus on reviving the architecture of historical buildings and shops

in the area. This will enhance the look of Chandni Chowk and will provide a unique experience to the visitors," said Sisodia. "In the present situation Chandni Chowk has a



blend of historic and modern architecture buildings which have emerged over the years, as per the requirements of the locals in the area. But to provide a unified look to the mar-

ket, these buildings require a facelift," said Sisodia. He said that during the implementation of the redevelopment plan, officials will ensure that no inconvenience is caused to the

How Chandni Chowk will undergo second round of redevelopment

- Conservation of heritage structures as per original material and construction techniques
- Structural retrofitting, restoration and unification of facade of heritage structures
- Colour and signage scheme for shops
- Lighting and facade illumination of shops and buildings
- Interpretation of the storyline of heritage structures on various spots by using plaques and QR codes to enhance the visitor experience

owners of local shops and historical buildings. "Along with this, the government is also planning to revamp the roads of the Shahjahanabad area to

provide a better shopping experience for visitors and a better opportunity to explore the cultural heritage of Delhi," said Deputy Chief Minister Sisodia

MiG-21 Srinagar squadron to retire on Sept 30

Remaining four squadrons will be phased out by 2025

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Air Force (IAF) is sticking to its schedule of phasing out the ageing MiG-21 fighter jets and is all set to retire its Srinagar-based Squadron Number 51 on September 30. Known as 'Sword Arms', this squadron became a household name when one of its pilot Wing Commander (now Group Captain) Abhinandan Varthaman shot down a Pakistani F-16 in an aerial combat three years back.

The IAF has planned to retire all its remaining four squadrons (one squadron has 18-20 jets) by 2025 and Varthaman's squadron is one of them. The MiGs were inducted into service in the early 1960s and over subsequent years several mishaps took place involving this jet thereby



raising a question mark about its flight safety record.

Varthaman was awarded Vir Chakra for his action on February 27, 2019 when Pakistan Air Force launched an aerial attack in Kashmir a day after the IAF destroyed terrorist infrastructure in Balakot in retaliation to the killing of 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel on February 14 in Pulwama.

Varthaman successfully

chased away an intruding F-16 and shot it down in aerial combat. He crossed the border and his MiG-21 was shot down by the Pakistanis and captured.

The IAF pilot was released and returned to India two days later. The IAF inducted 874 MiG-21s since 1963 and this plane is the longest serving aircraft in its inventory. Till now, nearly 400 mishaps have taken place involving this aircraft

with 200 pilots and 60 civilians losing their lives. In the last seven months, six accidents occurred thereby putting a question mark over the safety record of these jets. In fact, the plane was called "Flying Coffin" at one time thereby flagging growing concerns over its safety record.

The IAF has over the years started phasing out MiG-21, which at one point of time formed the mainstay of India's

air defence. The planes were upgraded from time to time to ensure operational readiness and fill the gap with delays in procurement of the latest jets. Incidentally, Russia and erstwhile Soviet Union stopped flying the MiG-21s besides Bangladesh and Afghanistan. The phase out plan in the last few years has seen the frontline SU-30s replacing the MiG-21s. With the induction of nearly 100 indigenously designed and manufactured Tejas light combat aircraft (LCA), the IAF will ensure full readiness in the next few years.

Faced with depleting fighter jet squadron fleet strength, the IAF now plans to manufacture multi-role aircraft within the country with foreign collaboration. At least 114 jets are planned to be manufactured here under the Strategic Partnership policy. The proposed cost of the deal is more than 15 billion dollars.

The US, Russia, France and Sweden are likely to pitch for the deal with their F-16 and F-18, MiG-25, Rafales and Gripen jets respectively.

Army Day parade shifted to Pune

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian Army will shift its annual Army Day Parade, held on January 15, from New Delhi to the Southern command area next year in an effort to showcase its prowess and capabilities to the people of other regions.

Till now, the parade was held only in the national capital. The headquarters of the Southern Command is located in Pune.

Incidentally, the Air Force Day annual parade also will take place this year outside the national capital for the first time, on October 8 in Chandigarh. The fly past and parade will be held there instead of Hindan airbase, Ghaziabad.

The annual high profile event, till now, used to take place at the Hindan airbase for the past few years after shifting from the Palam airbase in 2006. The Palam airbase hosted the annual event for many

decades. As regards the decision to shift the annual Army Day parade, sources said here on Monday, the main reason is to reach out to more people and apprise them of the ethos of the force. It will be the 75th Army Day parade.

On this day in 1949, the Indian Army got its first chief. Lieutenant General KM Cariappa took over as the reins of the armed force as first Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army from General Sir Francis Butcher, the last British Commander-in-Chief of India.

Holding the Army Day parade in different parts of the country will instill a sense of patriotism and encourage youth to join the Army, they said adding the venue will be decided shortly. On holding the annual Air Force Day event, sources said after gauging the response of this year's parade and fly past, the IAF may hold the annual parade, in other cities of the country in the coming years. The main objective of shifting the fly past from

the national capital region is to expose the general masses to the IAF especially the thrilling aerobatics performed by front line fighter jets, they said. These demonstrations may also inspire youngsters to opt for a career in the IAF, sources said.

The fly past this year may take place in the backdrop of the Sukhna Lake in Chandigarh where a large number of people from nearby towns can also come and see the gala event.

The IAF will showcase most of its frontline fighter jets including the newly inducted Rafales, SU-30, Mirage, Mig 29s and Jaguars. The Surya Kiran and Sarang teams will also perform hair raising aerobatic stunts. The decision to have the IAF fly past in Chandigarh comes at a time when the present NDA government has hosted several high profile events outside the national capital.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has hosted several foreign VIPs in different cities.

Just 5 Covid drugs make it to 'essential list'

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Although a plethora of drugs and vaccines were used to manage Covid-19 during the last two years of pandemic, only five medicines, including Paracetamol and Methylprednisolone, have been included in the recently released National List of Essential Medicine (NLEM) 2022 as effective to check the virus spread. All these drugs are also listed in 'other indications'. Those also included in the Covid management list are Dexamethasone, Enoxaparin and Oxygen.

However, many others which were much sought after during the Covid crisis and were available in the black market could not find a place in the list. The members of the Standing National Committee



on Medicines (SNCM) for revision of NLEM 2022 said the non-inclusion was due to results of some drugs being 'inconclusive' and some others still being investigated.

Regarding the Covid-19 vaccine such as (COVAXIN, Covishield, Sputnik V, MODERNA and Johnson & Johnson), which were approved in India for restricted use under emergency situation, the SNCM panel found to have established their protective effect and also, their favourable

risk-benefit ratio. "However, factors such as duration of protection, protection against various mutants, requirement of boosters, use in special populations and long-term sequelae of vaccination are yet to be established with these vaccines. "Considering these aspects, the committee was of the opinion that with availability of further long-term efficacy and safety data, these vaccines may be considered for inclusion in future," it stated.

The members of the SNCM deliberated on essentiality of medicines for Covid-19 and opined that "the data of new medications are still not conclusive and complete in regulatory perspective. Therefore, in absence of unequivocal evidence of efficacy and safety, the new Covid-19 medicines have not been

included as of now. However, the supportive management has been added in a separate section." It was noted that the conditional approval/ emergency use approval was granted to some new medicines for Covid-19, keeping in mind the risk of growing pandemic vs the potential benefit (risk-benefit ratio) on the basis of the available in vitro, non-clinical and clinical trial data. However, the panel categorically said, "The data of such medicines is still not conclusive and complete from the regulatory perspective."

Therefore, in absence of unequivocal evidence of efficacy and safety, these Covid-19 drugs do not qualify all criteria of 'essentiality'. Hence, the committee did not recommend inclusion of such new medicines for Covid-19 in the list.

SC stays Centre's decision dismissing IPS officer Verma

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday stayed for a week, the Centre's decision dismissing Satish Chandra Verma, a senior IPS officer who probed CBI investigation into the alleged fake encounter case of Ishrat Jahan in Gujarat. Verma was dismissed from the service on August 30, a month before his scheduled retirement on September 30.

A bench of Justices K M Joseph and Hrishikesh Roy allowed Verma to approach the Delhi High Court challenging his dismissal and said it is for the high court to consider the question as to whether the stay or vacation of dismissal order is to continue. "We are of the view that in the facts of this case, the interests of justice would require that order passed

by the respondent dismissing the appellant is not to be implemented till one week from today," the bench said. Verma had moved to the apex court after the High Court allowed home ministry to take action against him in wake of a departmental inquiry that proved charges against him, including interacting "with public media" when he was chief vigilance officer of North Eastern Electric Power Corporation, Shillong.



SC refers plea for framing norms for death penalty to Constitution Bench

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday referred to a five-judge Constitution Bench a suo motu plea on framing of guidelines on how and when potential mitigating circumstances be considered during trial in cases which entail the death penalty as the maximum punishment.

A Bench headed by Chief Justice Uday Umesh Lalit said it was of the opinion that this matter required a hearing by a larger bench to have clarity and uniform approach as to when an accused, facing death penalty as maximum sentence, is required to be heard with regard to mitigating circumstances. "Let matter be placed

before the CJJ for orders in this regard," Justice S Ravindra Bhat said while pronouncing the verdict. A death sentence is irreversible and every opportunity should be given to the accused for consideration of mitigating circumstances so that the court concludes that capital punishment is not warranted, the bench had observed while reserving its verdict on August 17.

The top court had taken note of the issue, saying there was an urgent need to ensure that mitigating circumstances for conviction of offences that carry the possibility of a death sentence are considered at the trial stage.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is for information of General Public that Mr. Rajesh Kalra S/o Late O.P. Kalra and Babita Kalra W/o Rajesh Kalra, both R/o C-42, Soami Nagar North, New Delhi-110017 have disowned our son, Mr. Vikram Kalra and his wife Kanika from all movable and immovable assets and properties with immediate effect and severed all our relations with both of them. Anybody dealing with him or her or both of them together, in any manner whatsoever will be doing so at his/her cost, risk and responsibilities. We and our entire family has nothing to do with it now.

Advocate
Smriti Maheshwari
M: 9910946260

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Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of Orix Leasing & Financial Services India Ltd. that Mr. Raju Yadav is owner of Property No. CP-3 area measuring 120 Sq. Yds, out of Khara No.376 Min. Situated at Krishna Garden Colony in the area of Village Haraswa, Pargana Dasona, Tehsil & Distt. Ghaziabad, UP. The said property was of late Mr. Raju Yadav, who died on 17.03.2015 for his undivided share, registration No. 1456, and also acquired remaining 76 portion after demise of Late Mr. Bhuplal Yadav, by virtue of Gift deed dated 25.08.2012 registered on 29.04 executed by Mr. Ajay Yadav son of late Mr. Bhuplal Yadav. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owner want to take a loan against the said property from Orix Leasing & Financial Services India Ltd. if anybody has any objection/s upon the ownership of Mr. Raju Yadav in respect of the said property its sale/Mortgage, and any kind of objection kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
200, 10th Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar, N. Delhi-15
Ph: 011-4110257-38, kumar.associates.advocates@gmail.com

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Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of ICICI Bank Ltd. that Mrs. Ranesh Karia, Mr. Manoj Kumar Sharma & Mr. Sandeep Kumar Sharma are claiming owners of Residential Property bearing No. 13/483, (area measuring 180 sq. mtrs), situated in Sector-13, residential colony known as Vasantnagar, Ghaziabad, (UP); hereinafter referred to as the said property (as legal heirs of late Mr. Shivam Sunde), who was owner of the above property by virtue of sale deed dated 23.08.2004, registration No. 17852. All persons are hereby informed that, above mentioned claiming owner/legal heirs want to sell the said property to Mr. Nishkant Hardev Singh Tyagi, or its nominee who is taking loan for purchase the said property from ICICI Bank Ltd. if anybody has any objections upon the ownership of Mrs. Ranesh Karia, Mr. Manoj Kumar Sharma & Mr. Sandeep Kumar Sharma in respect of the said property its sale/Mortgage, & any kind of objection kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
200, 10th Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar, N. Delhi-15
Ph: 011-4110257-38, kumar.associates.advocates@gmail.com

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Dinesh Arora S/o Late Shri A.K. Luna, R/o S-1504, Paramount Emotions, Bistrah, Greater Noida West, Distt Gautam Budh Nagar, UP-201306 have declared that my name has been wrongly mentioned in my Passport as Dinesh Kumar Arora and my correct name is Dinesh Arora.

PD(90175)C

EC proposes limiting donations to parties

New Delhi: The Election Commission (EC) is learnt to have proposed bringing down anonymous political donations from ₹20,000 to ₹2,000 and cap cash donations at 20% or at a maximum of ₹20 crore to cleanse election funding of black money.

The move comes in the backdrop of the poll panel recently delisting 284 defaulting and non-compliant registered unrecognised political parties (RUPPs), declaring more than 253 of them inactive.

Sources said that Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar has written a letter to Union Law Minister Kiren Rijju recommending a slew of amendments in the Representation of the People (RP) Act.

According to sources, the EC has batted for lowering the threshold limit for cash donations made to political parties from ₹20,000 to ₹2,000. "If the EC's proposal is approved by the Law Ministry, all donations above ₹2,000 shall be reported through contribution report, thereby enhancing transparen-

cy in funding," sources said. As per rules in force currently, political parties have to disclose all donations above ₹20,000 through their contribution report that is submitted to the EC. The proposals are aimed at ushering in reforms and transparency in donations received by political parties, and also the expenditure incurred by candidates trying their luck at the hustings, they said.

The Income-tax department recently raided a number of such entities across the country on charges of tax evasion after the EC shared its report with its administrative authority, the CBDT.

The Commission found, the sources said, that while donations reported by some political parties were nil, their audited accounts statement showed receipt of huge amounts, proving large-scale transactions in cash, below threshold limit of ₹20,000. The EC has also sought to restrict cash donations at 20% or at maximum ₹20 crore out of total funds received by a party, whichever is less.

Enough wheat stock, hoarders will be penalised: Centre

New Delhi: Amid rising food crisis in several parts of the world, the Centre on Monday said there is sufficient wheat stock in the country and that it will take action against hoarders, if needed, to boost domestic supply.

The Centre may consider steps like asking for disclosure of wheat stocks by traders and imposing stock limits to augment domestic availability. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) data showed that As on September 19, eight states — Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Delhi, Punjab, Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur — have recorded rainfall deficits.

Retail prices of wheat have risen by 19 per cent to Rs 31.02 per kg from Rs 26.01 per kg a year-ago.

Wheat flour price too have increased by 18 per cent to Rs 36 per kg in the same period. The inflationary trend in wheat has forced the government not only to ban export of the crop but also impose curbs on out-bound shipment of some by-products of wheat.

DK Shivakumar questioned in second money laundering case

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Monday questioned Karnataka Congress president D K Shivakumar in connection with a second money laundering case being probed by the agency against him.

The 60-year-old Congress leader reached the agency's office at A P J Abdul Kalam Road in central Delhi around 12 noon and was seen entering the office after getting a pass made from the front office.

The ED issued him the latest summons last week in a second money laundering case after taking cognisance of a 2020 CBI case linked to the alleged possession of disproportionate assets.

Shivakumar, who was accompanied by a group of about four persons, stepped out for lunch during break and re-joined the session. The former Karnataka minister did not reply to questions posed by reporters, saying he will speak to them later.

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CIN No: L65190GJ1994PLC021012, www.icicibank.com

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

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Prasanta Kumar Senthil/ Urmila Senthil/ Vi Locality Panchughanta CP Town Jaleswar PS Jaleswar, Balasore Orissa Jaleswar- 756032/ LBJLE00003106052	At Village- Panchughanta, Plot No- 972/1600/ 1638 Khata No 407/398 P.S. And Tahasil- Jaleswar District- Balasore Orissa Jaleswar/ (Admeasuring an area of A.C.035 Decimals/ (Date of symbolic 15.09.2022	May 21, 2022 Rs. 12,21,395/-	Jaleswar/ Delhi

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

Date : September 20, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

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

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

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Varun Bhardwaj/ Sakshi Bhatia LBGUR00003440388	Flat No 1303, 13th Floor, Tower-K 2, Situated at Plot No-8, Eco Village-1, Phase- 2, Sec-1, Grater Noida, Noida, Uttar Pradesh/ September 15, 2022	June 23, 2021/ Rs. 47,75,856/-	Delhi/ NCR
2.	Amrit Kumar/ Juhli Tiwari/ LBNOD00003258433/ LBNOD00003134801	Office No- 522, 5th Floor, Block- C, Esquare, Hotshot Developer Pvt Ltd., Plot No C-02, Sector- 96, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh/ September 15, 2022	June 23, 2021/ Rs. 62,21,416/-	Delhi/ NCR
3.	Rama Shanker/ Abhishek Raghuvanshi/ LBNOD00002901976	Flat No- 1403, 14th Floor Block A2, Ecovillage 1, Plot No 8, Sector-1, Greater Noida, Noida/ September 15, 2022	July 06, 2021/ Rs. 13,82,550/-	Delhi/ NCR
4.	Bilal Ahmed/ Monshina Khatoun LBNOD00005344625/ LBNOD00004090712	Shop No FF-214, Floor No 1, Plot No- GH 01, Gaur City, At Gaur City Centre, Sector-04, Noida/ September 15, 2022	August 30, 2021/ Rs. 12,91,798/-	Delhi/ NCR
5.	Seema Saxena/ Ashish Mohan/ LBDEL00002975843	Flat No-1906, 19th Floor, Tower M, Grand Ajnara Heritage, GH-01/B, Sector-74, Gautam Buddha Nagar/ September 15, 2022	August 30, 2021/ Rs. 51,54,568/-	Delhi/ NCR

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

Date : September 20, 2022
Place: Delhi/ NCR Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that my client Shanti Devi is the owner of Plot of Land Measuring 76 Sq. Yds., Part of Khata No. 271/1/1, 102, 20/5, 26/15, 26/14, Situated at waka Mauja Gochi, Tehsil Gochi, Distt. Fardabad, Haryana, having acquired the same vide sale deed duly registered in the office of SR Ballabgarh, as Doc.No. 3719, Book No. I, dated 21.07.2014 executed by Saroj Devi read with linkal No. 28911.

And whereas she has lost the following documents pertaining to the said property:-

1. Original Sale Deed dated 15.09.2010 executed by Ram Pandey in favour of Indu Devi

2. Original Sale Deed dated 28.05.2012 executed by Indu Devi in favour of Rama Sharma

All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Shop No. 5 & 6, Pk-E, CSC, Mayapuri Vihar-I, Delhi-51, Mob. 9810063351

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform public in general that Kotak Mahindra bank Ltd has organized an auction in below mention respect of Vehicles.

VEHICLES FOR SALE

1) EICHR VECV EICHER1114 HR55AF4730- YOM - 2019 MINIMUM RESERVE PRICE 883605

UNDER HYPOTHECATION WITH M/S KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK IS UNDER SALE IN ITS "AS IS WHERE IS CONDITION"

INTERESTED PARTIES CAN GIVE THEIR QUOTATIONS (ONLINE/ OFFLINE) WITHIN 15 DAYS FROM THIS PAPER PUBLICATION I.E. ON OR BEFORE 4.10.2022 (PLEASE NOTE THAT CLOSING AUCTION DATE WOULD NOT BE A WEEKLY OFF/HOLIDAY).

BRANCH ADDRESS: KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK 3RD FLOOR, PLOT NO 7, SECTOR 125, NOIDA-201313 OR CONTACT: RAJESHANTIL KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK LTD. CONTACT NO. 09711173320 EMAIL -rajesh.anti@kotak.com

People with Type 2 diabetes may develop dementia: Docs

New Delhi: Those having Type 2 diabetes (T2D) can risk developing dementia in their later part of life, doctors say. However, giving a ray of hope to such a vulnerable population, a team of scientists has found that a healthy lifestyle can almost cut down by half the likelihood of people with Type 2 diabetes developing the neurodegenerative condition.

The results hold importance given that there is no cure for dementia, to date, which makes its prevention all the more important. The researchers will present the study at the five-day annual meeting of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) in Stockholm,

Sweden, starting Monday. The study found that individuals with T2D and an unhealthy lifestyle were much more likely to develop dementia than people without T2D and a very healthy lifestyle.

To understand more, Jirapitcha Boonpor and Dr Carlos Celis-Morales, of the University of Glasgow, and colleagues tracked almost 4,50,000 participants of the UK Biobank study for the development of dementia.

The 4,45,364 participants (54.6% female) had an average age of 55.6 years and were followed-up for a median of 9.1 years. All were free of dementia at the start of this period. At least 24,735 (5.5%) reported

having T2D at the start of the study.

Participants filled in a questionnaire that covered television viewing time, sleep duration, physical activity, alcohol consumption, smoking status and dietary intake of processed and red meat, fruit and vegetables and oily fish. Their answers were used to divide them into three groups: most healthy, moderately healthy and least healthy.

An unhealthy lifestyle was even more strongly associated with dementia. The participants with the least healthy lifestyles were 65% more likely to develop dementia than those with the healthiest lifestyle.

IN SHORTS

VINOD NEW EX-SERVICEMEN WELFARE SECRETARY

New Delhi: Vijay Kumar Singh on Monday assumed charge as Secretary, Ex-Servicemen Welfare, Ministry of Defence. He is a 1990-batch IAS officer of Punjab cadre with an experience of more than 32 years in administration. Singh has served as Joint Secretary in DoPT and had extensive interactions with serving as well as retired Armed Forces personnel during his career in Punjab.

LANKA WORKING ON PLAN FOR COOPERATION

New Delhi: Sri Lanka High Commissioner Milinda Moragoda on Monday said his country was working on a framework for cooperation with India to avoid issues such as docking of the Chinese research ship at the island's southern port at Hambantota last month.

No action against my attackers since 2019, says Kerala Gov

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

Governor Arif Mohammad Khan alleged on Monday at a specially convened media meeting that there was an attempt on his life during the inaugural function of the 2019 Indian History Congress at Kannur and a senior member of the Chief Minister's Office prevented the police which rushed to the podium to save him from the pre-planned attack.

The Governor played back the video recording of the 2019 function in which it was seen KK Ragesh, the Private Secretary to the Chief Minister asking the police to stay away from the stage even as a group of delegates led by eminent historian Irfan Habib gesticulated and shouted at the Governor. "Though my ADC filed a report the same day to the Chief Minister's office no action has been taken against the perpetrators of the attack. In a State where people are



arrested for wearing black shirts, these things happen. The police personnel tried to control the situation and stopped the people from reaching me. A senior functionary, who is in the Chief Minister's Office, can be seen in the video preventing police from discharging their functions. Mr Ragesh stopped the police from doing their duty. Possibly that is why he has been rewarded," said the Governor.

The first ever media meet convened by a Governor in the State to disclose the role played by the chief minister in getting the extension for the vice-chancellor of the Kannur University

and plead with the Governor not to quit as Chancellor has taken the relation between the former and the CPI(M) to a point of no-return, according to P Rajan, chronicler of Kerala's political history and former editor of Mathrubhumi. "This is a controversy which should have been avoided," said Rajan.

The refusal by the Governor not to sign the legislation passed by the Legislative Assembly amending the constitution of the universities in the State and the former questioning the propriety behind the appointment of Priya Varghese, wife of Ragesh, as associate professor in Kannur University are the bones of contention between Arif Mohammed Khan.

The Governor said he was shocked over the backing out of chief minister Pinartayi Vijayan from his earlier commitment that he would not interfere in the governance of the universities in the State. He also released copies of three let-

ters sent by the chief minister to him on 2021 December 8 and 16, and 2022 January 16 in which he had pleaded with the Governor for re-appointing the vice chancellor of Kannur University even after his superannuation and asking the Governor not to resign as chancellor of the universities in the State.

Arif Mohammed Khan said that there was nothing wrong in his meeting the RSS chief Mohan Bhagawat at Thrissur on Saturday. "If situation demands that I should meet him again, I'll not hesitate to call on him," said the Governor. Meanwhile the CPI(M) leaders A K Balan, E P Jayarajan and M A Baby launched diatribes against the governor for his meeting with RSS chief. "The Governor has lost his mental balance and that is why he called on RSS chief. As a person holding a constitutional position, he is not expected to call on such persons," said Jayarajan, the convener of the LDF.

Cong reveals 'extended' plan of Bharat Jodo Yatra

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Monday announced the 'extended' part of Bharat Jodo Yatra with 2300 kms within Odisha from October 31 followed by 800 kms in Assam from November 1. The party also announced to share similar yatras within the limits of the States like Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh amongst others in due course.

The party has also indicated its plan to launch the second phase of Bharat Jodo Yatra by a bus from Arunachal Pradesh to Gujarat next year to be undertaken jointly by former Congress chief Rahul Gandhi and his sibling and party's general secretary Priyanka Gandhi.

Rahul, who is currently undertaking a padyatra in Kerala as part of its 3500 km Kanniyakumari to Kashmir Bharat Jodo Yatra, is likely to visit Odisha and address a massive rally on culmination of Bharat Jodo Yatra in Odisha by January next year. The Yatra will avoid a clash with BJD's yearly padyayatra, which starts from the Gandhi Jayanti day, October 2. The Congress



Yatra will continue for around three months in the State.

Congress chief spokesman Jairam Ramesh said that the party would launch the 'Assam Jodo Yatra', the Assam version of 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', on November 1 and Odisha version on October 31. He also said that Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma will not succeed in derailling the Congress' Bharat Jodo Yatra. The 800 km Assam Bharat Jodo Yatra will cover the stretch from Dhubri in the West to Sadiya in the east with several local and national leaders undertaking it.

"No matter how much Sarma tries to influence the party MLAs, Congress will

not stop. We don't care if any MLA leaves the party like Sarma had done in the past," Ramesh said. He added that Sarma should stop thinking about the Congress and concentrate on working for the welfare of Assam.

Sarma had earlier criticised Rahul Gandhi and advised him to launch the Bharat Jodo Yatra from Pakistan, stating that Congress was responsible for the Partition of the country. Congress accused the BJP of resorting to disinformation and falsehood on the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', and said it shows the "fear" and "frustration" of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the BJP leadership at the success of the yatra.

Cong seeks apology from Modi over TN IT head's conduct

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress Party on Monday sought an apology from Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the conduct of its BJP Information Technology Head in Tamil Nadu CTR Nirmal Kumar who had shared a picture of Rahul Gandhi with his niece and said that the Congress leader is "happy applying henna and playing with kids."

Congress alleged that when the BJP could not find a flaw against the intention and execution, senior leaders and cabinet ministers have "stooped as low as resorting to twisting facts and spreading blatant lies".

At the same time it sought attention of the Union Minister Smriti Irani and the party asked where she has been hiding on this unethical and ill cultured behavior of her party colleagues.

"When will Modi come out and apologise to Rahul Gandhi and the nation for the insensitive and toxic comments made by CTR Nirmal Kumar," Congress spokesperson Gourav Vallabh said at AICC Press conference in the national Capital.

J&K Waqf Board bans 'dastaar bandi' of people at mosques, shrines

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU



In order to prevent misuse of revered shrines and mosques across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the J&K Waqf Board has ordered a complete ban on the 'dastaar bandi' of people, especially political leaders, at the mosques and shrines managed by it.

However, the 'dastaar bandi' of people for religious achievements will be allowed with prior permission from the board.

In its order dated September 19, 2022 the J&K Waqf board said, "the board is in receipt of a number of complaints regarding unethical use

of platform of Ziyarats to appease influential people, particularly the political leaders, through Turban-tying (Dastaar Bandi) ceremony at Ziyarats / Khangaahs. The leaders continue to be invited to the shrines and their Dastaar Bandi is carried out on the basis of party affiliations to promote political agenda at sacred religious places."

The order further stated, the Chairperson, J&K Waqf Board has taken a serious view of the matter, and the Board is of the view that religious places, like, Ziyarats / Khanqahs/Masjids/Darul Uloom, can only be used to promote religious activities, and Dastaar Bandi at such places can only be carried out to felicitate people for their achievements in the religious field" "Now therefore, Dastaar Bandi of people at all religious places, governed by the provisions of the Waqf Act, 1995, is hereby completely banned.

However, Dastaar Bandi of people for religious achievements shall be allowed with prior permission of the Central

Office Waqf Board.

It added that all the administrators and Executive Officers are directed to ensure strict implementation of this order, and any violation shall immediately be brought to the notice of the Central Office for legal action in the matter.

Earlier, last month the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board had ordered a complete ban on collection of donations by trustees at shrines and mosques run by the Board.

Calling the collection by trustees — locally known as Muttawali — as an "unethical practice", the Waqf Board said the ban was imposed after complaints from people about purported corruption.

ema halls in every district of Jammu and Kashmir soon. Today, I dedicate such cinema halls to the youth of Pulwama and Shopian," Sinha told reporters in Pulwama. Sinha described the occasion as "historic".

These cinema halls have been established by the Government's Mission Youth Department in collaboration with the respective district administrations. Cinema halls in Anantnag, Srinagar, Baniptora, Ganderbal, Doda, Rajouri, Poonch, Kishtwar and Reasi will be inaugurated soon.

"The LG dedicated the cinema halls to the people, especially the youngsters, who have waited for a long time for this moment," he added.

Girl gangraped, set on fire in UP loses battle for life

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A minor Dalit girl, who was allegedly gang-raped and set on fire by two men in Pilibhit, succumbed to her injuries at the King George's Medical University hospital here on Monday morning.

The girl was hospitalised at KGMU hospital with serious burn injuries. Her body was handed over to her family after autopsy.

The incident took place at Pilibhit's Kunwarpur village where the girl was sexually

assaulted. The accused had later poured diesel on the girl and set her ablaze. She was battling for her life at the hospital but succumbed to her injuries after 12 days.

The two accused have been arrested by the police.

In view of the sensitivity of the incident, a heavy police force has been deployed in the village. After the death of the teenager, the condition of the family has become miserable.

The family has taken the girl's body to the native village and her last rites will be per-

formed there.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Sunday, held a meeting with officials regarding the law and order situation in the state via video conferencing. The chief minister reviewed the work of the officers who were negligent in incidents of murder of women in Lakhimpur, Pilibhit, Lucknow, Gonda, Budaun and Amroha.

Notably, two Dalit minor sisters were found hanging from a tree in Lakhimpur Khari district on Wednesday,

leading to outrage over law and order in the state. The post-mortem reports confirmed that both girls were raped and then strangled.

On September 7, a Dalit girl was allegedly gang-raped in Pilibhit district and the two rapists later tried to kill her by setting her ablaze but she managed to survive with severe burn injuries.

The two accused were arrested four days after the incident when the girl regained consciousness and revealed her trauma.

CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL FORUM – VII (SOUTH WEST DISTRICT) (Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi)		
1st Floor, Pandit Deep Chand Sharma Sahkhar Bhawan Plot No.127, Sec-20, Phase-1, Dwarka, New Delhi-110077		
In the matter of	Complaint Case No. DF-VII/102/2021	Complainant (s)
	Anju Singh	
	Versus	
	Dwarka Heights Co. Op. Society Ltd. & Ors.	Opposite Party (ies)
To		
1. Dwarka Heights Co-Operative Housing Society Ltd. 22-A, Pocket-1, Sec-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 also at Shaheen International School C, Sec-24, Chhawala, Dwarka, New Delhi-71		
2. Nivesh Global		
3. The Antriksh Sensing Tomorrow and Antriksh Real Estate C/o Nivesh Global		
4. Meghraj Rathore All addressee of Aganwal Square Plaza, 2nd Floor, Plot No.8, Pocket-7, Sec-12, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 Meghraj Rathore also at: D-970, New Friends Colony Ground Floor, Near Mata Mandir, South Delhi.		
NOTICE FOR APPEARANCE UNDER SECTION 13 OF THE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT 2019 READ WITH REGULATION 10 OF THE CONSUMER PROTECTION REGULATIONS, 2005		
Whereas the complainants (s) has/have instituted a consumer complaint under Section 12 of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 alleging deficiency/unfair or restrictive trade practices against you as provided under Section 2 (6) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, this notice is hereby served upon you for your appearance before this Forum on 27/10/2022 at 10.00 a.m. in person or through an authorized agent duly instructed and able to answer all material questions relating to the complaint. Copy of this Complaint is attached herewith.		
You are further directed to file your version of the case in writing (written statement) before this forum within 30 days of receipt of this notice with an advance copy to the complainant by posthand delivery well in time as provided under Section 38 of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019. Please note that in default of your appearance on the date mentioned above, the complainant will be heard ex-parte and determined in your absence. Given under my hand and the seal of the Forum, this 30/8/2022.		
	S.D.	President/Member
		CDRF-VII (SW), New Delhi

CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL FORUM – VII (SOUTH WEST DISTRICT) (Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi)		
1st Floor, Pandit Deep Chand Sharma Sahkhar Bhawan Plot No.127, Sec-20, Phase-1, Dwarka, New Delhi-110077		
In the matter of	Complaint Case No. DF-VII/42/2021	Complainant (s)
	Jaspreet Singh	
	Versus	
	Dwarka Heights Co. Op. Society Ltd. & Ors.	Opposite Party (ies)
To		
1. Dwarka Heights Co-Operative Housing Society Ltd. 22-A, Pocket-1, Sec-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 also at Shaheen International School C, Sec-24, Chhawala, Dwarka, New Delhi-71		
2. Nivesh Global		
3. The Antriksh Sensing Tomorrow and Antriksh Real Estate C/o Nivesh Global		
4. Meghraj Rathore All addressee of Aganwal Square Plaza, 2nd Floor, Plot No.8, Pocket-7, Sec-12, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 Meghraj Rathore also at: D-970, New Friends Colony Ground Floor, Near Mata Mandir, South Delhi.		
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	S.D.	President/Member
		CDRF-VII (SW), New Delhi

CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL FORUM – VII (SOUTH WEST DISTRICT) (Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi)		
1st Floor, Pandit Deep Chand Sharma Sahkhar Bhawan Plot No.127, Sec-20, Phase-1, Dwarka, New Delhi-110077		
In the matter of	Complaint Case No. DF-VII/83/2021	Complainant (s)
	Neeraj Kohli	
	Versus	
	Dwarka Heights Co. Op. Society Ltd. & Ors.	Opposite Party (ies)
To		
1. Dwarka Heights Co-Operative Housing Society Ltd. 22-A, Pocket-1, Sec-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 also at Shaheen International School C, Sec-24, Chhawala, Dwarka, New Delhi-71		
2. Nivesh Global		
3. The Antriksh Sensing Tomorrow and Antriksh Real Estate C/o Nivesh Global		
4. Meghraj Rathore All addressee of Aganwal Square Plaza, 2nd Floor, Plot No.8, Pocket-7, Sec-12, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 Meghraj Rathore also at: D-970, New Friends Colony Ground Floor, Near Mata Mandir, South Delhi.		
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Whereas the complainants (s) has/have instituted a consumer complaint under Section 12 of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986 alleging deficiency/unfair or restrictive trade practices against you as provided under Section 2 (6) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019, this notice is hereby served upon you for your appearance before this Forum on 27/10/2022 at 10.00 a.m. in person or through an authorized agent duly instructed and able to answer all material questions relating to the complaint. Copy of this Complaint is attached herewith.		
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	S.D.	President/Member
		CDRF-VII (SW), New Delhi

CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL FORUM – VII (SOUTH WEST DISTRICT) (Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi)		
1st Floor, Pandit Deep Chand Sharma Sahkhar Bhawan Plot No.127, Sec-20, Phase-1, Dwarka, New Delhi-110077		
In the matter of	Complaint Case No. DF-VII/101/2021	Complainant (s)
	Saumya Sharma	
	Versus	
	Dwarka Heights Co. Op. Society Ltd. & Ors.	Opposite Party (ies)
To		
1. Dwarka Heights Co-Operative Housing Society Ltd. 22-A, Pocket-1, Sec-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 also at Shaheen International School C, Sec-24, Chhawala, Dwarka, New Delhi-71		
2. Nivesh Global		
3. The Antriksh Sensing Tomorrow and Antriksh Real Estate C/o Nivesh Global		
4. Meghraj Rathore All addressee of Aganwal Square Plaza, 2nd Floor, Plot No.8, Pocket-7, Sec-12, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 Meghraj Rathore also at: D-970, New Friends Colony Ground Floor, Near Mata Mandir, South Delhi.		
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	S.D.	President/Member
		CDRF-VII (SW), New Delhi

CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL FORUM – VII (SOUTH WEST DISTRICT) (Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi)		
1st Floor, Pandit Deep Chand Sharma Sahkhar Bhawan Plot No.127, Sec-20, Phase-1, Dwarka, New Delhi-110077		
In the matter of	Complaint Case No. DF-VII/93/2021	Complainant (s)
	Suni Antony	
	Versus	
	Dwarka Heights Co. Op. Society Ltd. & Ors.	Opposite Party (ies)
To		
1. Dwarka Heights Co-Operative Housing Society Ltd. 22-A, Pocket-1, Sec-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 also at Shaheen International School C, Sec-24, Chhawala, Dwarka, New Delhi-71		
2. Nivesh Global		
3. The Antriksh Sensing Tomorrow and Antriksh Real Estate C/o Nivesh Global		
4. Meghraj Rathore All addressee of Aganwal Square Plaza, 2nd Floor, Plot No.8, Pocket-7, Sec-12, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 Meghraj Rathore also at: D-970, New Friends Colony Ground Floor, Near Mata Mandir, South Delhi.		
NOTICE FOR APPEARANCE UNDER SECTION 13 OF THE CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT 2019 READ WITH REGULATION 10 OF THE CONSUMER PROTECTION REGULATIONS, 2005		
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	S.D.	President/Member
		CDRF-VII (SW), New Delhi

CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL FORUM – VII (SOUTH WEST DISTRICT) (Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi)		
1st Floor, Pandit Deep Chand Sharma Sahkhar Bhawan Plot No.127, Sec-20, Phase-1, Dwarka, New Delhi-110077		
In the matter of	Complaint Case No. DF-VII/99/2021	Complainant (s)
	Atul Sharma	
	Versus	
	Dwarka Heights Co. Op. Society Ltd. & Ors.	Opposite Party (ies)
To		
1. Dwarka Heights Co-Operative Housing Society Ltd. 22-A, Pocket-1, Sec-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 also at Shaheen International School C, Sec-24, Chhawala, Dwarka, New Delhi-71		
2. Nivesh Global		
3. The Antriksh Sensing Tomorrow and Antriksh Real Estate C/o Nivesh Global		
4. Meghraj Rathore All addressee of Aganwal Square Plaza, 2nd Floor, Plot No.8, Pocket-7, Sec-12, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 Meghraj Rathore also at: D-970, New Friends Colony Ground Floor, Near Mata Mandir, South Delhi.		
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	S.D.	President/Member
		CDRF-VII (SW), New Delhi

CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL FORUM – VII (SOUTH WEST DISTRICT) (Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi)		
1st Floor, Pandit Deep Chand Sharma Sahkhar Bhawan Plot No.127, Sec-20, Phase-1, Dwarka, New Delhi-110077		
In the matter of	Complaint Case No. DF-VII/110/2021	Complainant (s)
	Nancy	
	Versus	
	Dwarka Heights Co. Op. Society Ltd. & Ors.	Opposite Party (ies)
To		
1. Dwarka Heights Co-Operative Housing Society Ltd. 22-A, Pocket-1, Sec-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 also at Shaheen International School C, Sec-24, Chhawala, Dwarka, New Delhi-71		
2. Nivesh Global		
3. The Antriksh Sensing Tomorrow and Antriksh Real Estate C/o Nivesh Global		
4. Meghraj Rathore All addressee of Aganwal Square Plaza, 2nd Floor, Plot No.8, Pocket-7, Sec-12, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 Meghraj Rathore also at: D-970, New Friends Colony Ground Floor, Near Mata Mandir, South Delhi.		
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		CDRF-VII (SW), New Delhi

CONSUMER DISPUTES REDRESSAL FORUM – VII (SOUTH WEST DISTRICT) (Govt. of National Capital Territory of Delhi)		
1st Floor, Pandit Deep Chand Sharma Sahkhar Bhawan Plot No.127, Sec-20, Phase-1, Dwarka, New Delhi-110077		
In the matter of	Complaint Case No. DF-VII/88/2021	Complainant (s)
	Ruchir Goyal	
	Versus	
	Dwarka Heights Co. Op. Society Ltd. & Ors.	Opposite Party (ies)
To		
1. Dwarka Heights Co-Operative Housing Society Ltd. 22-A, Pocket-1, Sec-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 also at Shaheen International School C, Sec-24, Chhawala, Dwarka, New Delhi-71		
2. Nivesh Global		
3. The Antriksh Sensing Tomorrow and Antriksh Real Estate C/o Nivesh Global		
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		CDRF-VII (SW), New Delhi

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1st Floor, Pandit Deep Chand Sharma Sahkhar Bhawan Plot No.127, Sec-20, Phase-1, Dwarka, New Delhi-110077		
In the matter of	Complaint Case No. DF-VII/100/2021	Complainant (s)
	Shivali Sethi	
	Versus	
To	Dwarka Heights Co. Op. Society Ltd. & Ors.	Opposite Party (ies)
1. Dwarka Heights Co-Operative Housing Society Ltd., 22-A, Pocket-1, Sec-10, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 also at Shaheen International School C, Sec-24, Chhawala, Dwarka, New Delhi-71 2. Nivesh Global 3. The Antriksh Sensational Tomorrow and Antriksh Real Estate C/o Nivesh Global 4. Meghraj Rathore All addressees of Agarwal Square Plaza, 2nd floor, Plot No.8, Pocket-7, Sec-12, Dwarka, New Delhi-75 Meghraj Rathore also at D-970, New Friends Colony Grounds, Near Mata Jodhi, Sector Delhi		
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		S.D.
		President/Member
		CDRF-VII (SW), New Delhi

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Shooting from the hip

AAP leaders’ statements played a role in the unrest at Mohali-based Chandigarh University

When politics is reduced to a gladiatorial spectacle, leaders don't want to be seen as slow and flat-footed. The top guns of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) are no exception. So, when there were reports, rather rumours, about a rampant sex-video scandal at the Mohali-based Chandigarh University, they were fast on the draw. But what could be a life-saving skill in the Wild West can be a liability in a democratic polity. This seems to be the root-cause of the protests and disruptions at the Chandigarh University. According to the university authorities and police, a student shared her video with her 23-year-old boyfriend. Apparently, the video was leaked, which opened the floodgates of rumours of about scores of “objectionable” videos of other girls and even of a suicide attempt. The girl students got so scared that they were reluctant to use washrooms in the university premises. What exacerbated the salacious stories and fears were the dialogue-baazi by AAP leaders. At 10.18 am on Sunday, AAP boss and Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal tweeted about the “objectionable videos of many girl students” which had become viral. There would be “stringent punishment” for the culprits, he promised. Fourteen minutes later, AAP Parliamentarian and chairman of advisory panel to the Punjab government Raghav Chadha tweeted that the “Punjab government will leave no stone unturned to bring the perpetrators of this crime to justice.” At 11.59 am, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann, who is in Germany, tweeted, “Our daughters are our pride... have ordered high-level inquiry into the incident... will take strict action against whoever is guilty.”



These three are the most powerful men—perhaps in that order—as far as Punjab is concerned. It looks like they were responding to the unconfirmed reports and/or social media stories without bothering to gather many inputs from the state officials, civil as well as police. When someone as important as Kejriwal talks about objectionable videos of many girl students, who would suspect the authenticity of, what now appear to be, baseless rumours. So, students alleged that a girl student shot 60 videos of her hostel mates and forwarded them to her boyfriend. There was also the allegation of some videos getting uploaded on social media and porn websites. Police have denied all this. Senior police officer Navneet Singh Virk told a news channel that the cops found only four videos in the girl's phone of herself, and all of them were her own. Further, she didn't send any video to anyone except her boyfriend. Police as well as Chandigarh University's Students Welfare Director Arvinder Kang made it clear that there were no suicide attempts. Meanwhile the Punjab Police has set up a three-member, all-woman special investigation team to look into the matter. Not just the AAP but the entire political class should learn a lesson from this episode: verify facts before making a statement.

PICTALK



The commandos of 2nd Battalion, Tripura State Rifles, march on their 32nd Raising Day, in Agartala

The madarsa wrangle

The UP Govt decision to scrutinise madarsas has raised some concerns, which it must clarify

The survey of unrecognised madarsas is underway in Uttar Pradesh. The UP Government had passed the order to this effect. The Government maintains that the survey would benefit madarsas and they would try to affiliate the eligible madarsas with the 'State Madarsa Board' for providing them with better facilities and also provide grants in aid etc. But the survey has already become a political issue. Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav has criticised the move, saying it would hurt religious sentiments and AIMIM chief Asaduddin Owaisi has gone as far as questioning the motives of the Government and said it is NRC on a mini scale. So far the survey exercise has been peaceful and the madarsas have been cooperating with the State. Nonetheless, some issues bring the rationale for conducting the survey suspect. *Per se*, there is nothing wrong with surveying unrecognised schools. The Government must have data on how the children are studying and under what conditions. It must have first-hand information about the salaries the teachers get and the quality of education provided to the students.



Moreover, the Government's contention that the survey would also help connect its schemes to these schools is also a welcome gesture. Most of the madarsas are run on community donations and often they run in pretty bad shape. Having said that, there are things that the Government is silent upon or has not cared to clarify. The first and foremost is why only madarsas? If the State wants to survey unrecognised schools, it should have added Hindu gurukuls, Christian missionary schools and other schools also which fall under the same category. That would make the exercise more transparent and its motives more benign. Secondly, if the Government is so keen to provide the madarsas with grant through its various schemes, it could have asked them to apply for them and those applying could have been inspected for their eligibility. That was not obviously the case. Moreover, the Muslim community has misgivings about the Government's intentions and feels that those madarsas that fail on the 12-point survey would be either closed or demolished. Despite the categorical assurance by Danish Ansari, the Minority Minister of UP, that no madrasa will be closed or bulldozers used on madrasas, the Muslim community is far from assured. What the UP Government would do with the survey remains to be seen.

Is ease of living past its expiry?

Vagaries of life get more pronounced in its fag end; it is the time when a person needs financial help from the Govt, but we are heading in the opposite direction

Several developmental themes have been in currency. They are supposed to generate hope and en-capsule the aspirations of progress and growth. One of them is "ease of doing business," another is "ease of living," yet another is, "go vocal for local" etc. In some cases, some version of the theme has been around for decades. Illustratively, the theme of 'ease of doing business' has been around for many decades. It emphasises how many, many rules and regulations are around, governing business. The concern has been that excessive regulation has sapped the pleasure of getting involved with an enterprise. Similarly, the number of regulatory items which govern individual lives has often been a subject matter of much grief to many.

Many things are accepted in life by many because there is no easy way of fighting them. Similarly, the theme of going 'vocal for local,' may echo the slogan that was given in the early 20th century, where the theme was about going 'swadeshi.' The above statements do not mean, in any way, reducing the worth and the thrust of the new slogans. They at least keep a concern alive.

It would be useful to look at the actual content and delivery of any of these slogans. As an illustration, one could consider 'ease of doing business. In this case, there is structured evidence to the effect that the number of rules and regulations in many cases has been reduced and the agony of running from pillar to post has been considerably alleviated, if not mitigated. That may be a subject matter of discussion in its own right.

As far as ease of living is concerned, perhaps it will be worthwhile reflecting, illustratively, on the life of a citizen beyond the age of 65. The senior citizens of the concerned generation, not so long ago, were able to plan their retirement on their savings at an assured rate of interest, which was at least 10%. It had a sovereign guarantee and one was



assured of the amount of income one would be having. The extent of one's earnings is assuredly an input to one's 'ease of living.' What one could have as 'income' has to be earned, has to be assured, because re-employment post-65 is always difficult. The energy level and agility start to reduce and the dependence syndrome increases.

This reality has to be one of the underpinnings of a proactive way of handling the financial scheme for the elderly. At one stage a 'generous' package of Rupees Fifteen Thousand was 'allowed' to them at 8% annual interest. They could do it twice. Frugal as that might have been, even that has been recently revised and the number of years for which this deposit could be taken out has been reviewed and reduced. The wisdom of this approach is open to question not just from the humanitarian point of view but also the usefulness of it all to overall financial prudence.

The irony becomes all the more poignant when, say, the railways nibble at the

THE IRONY BECOMES ALL THE MORE POIGNANT WHEN, SAY, THE RAILWAYS NIBBLE AT THE LIMITED CONCESSION THEY WERE MAKING TO AGE. THAT TOO IN AN ERA WHEN 'FREE' THIS AND 'FREE' THAT IS BEING DISTRIBUTED

limited concession they were making to age. That too in an era when 'free' this and 'free' that is being distributed to various politically useful, target groups. This is not to mention the waivers that the rich and the powerful are reported to attract. Equity and fair play has to be one of the basic assumptions of public policy and not just doing what is the 'simplest' way of handling financial pressures on governance.

The ease of living was, in an era, not so long ago, (in many cases), supported by the joint family network. Gradually, not only did the economic patterns change but so also did the sociological patterns. The joint family network is no longer available with its pervasiveness and ingenuousness. The system of pension in many cases still exists but the inflation level, being what it is, has made it increasingly less adequate. The change in times altered many things. Not only did the social networks alter in character, but the financial scenario also changed. This is not a value judgment but a simple

recognition of a fact of life. Concurrently as the rate of interest of banks started to reduce, the quantum of pensions became increasingly difficult to manage and live on. Sectoral batches of new entrants to the post-65 cut-off segment were entering it without any pension and had to live on their 'savings.' The savings were fragile and, as observed, the interest on the amounts got further inadequate.

So much for the ease of living in a so-called era of 'populism.' The pensioners over the age of 65 do not matter as a vote bank. Their worth is politically not significant, and, of course, it's been a long time since one even heard of the slogan of 'the welfare society. The time has come in the interest of common justice (if nothing more) to ask: is this a part of the content of 'ease of living in its comprehensiveness and pervasiveness?

(The writer is a well-known management consultant of international repute. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE MERGER OF PLC WITH THE BJP

Sir — The merger of Punjab Lok Congress (PLC) with BJP will be a morale booster for the party as Capt Amrinder Singh had certain pockets of influence which can pay dividends to the BJP in the coming parliament elections in 2024. Ex-servicemen are the backbone of the party of Captain Amrinder Singh which will help the party to increase the vote share in Punjab which is demoralised in Panjab due to the farmer's agitation. Due to these political developments, every political party had to change its political strategy in the political scenario. BJP already trying to include many Sikh leaders in the party and even the party had appointed recently a retired police officer Lalpura in the highest party decision body and that is parliament board of the party. The new role of Captain will be decided by the party's high command. Keeping in view his age factor and he is now 80 years old. The captain joined the BJP along with his son and daughter and also some ex-members of Lok Sabha and assembly which will pay dividends to the BJP in the future due to the nationalistic approach of captain Amrinder Singh. The social fabric of the state will be stronger after the merger of PLA with BJP.

Yash Pal Ralhan | Jalandhar

THE UGLY CREDIT WAR

Sir — The 'credit war' between the ruling BJP and the Congress for the success of 'Project Cheetah' paints an ugly and narrow picture. However, Congress leader Jairam Ramesh's letter in October 2009 - which he has released to the media now - asking the then Chairman, Wildlife Trust of India to go ahead with the plans for the reintroduction of Cheetahs, is proof enough that the Cheetah translocation project had started way back in 2009-10 during UPA regime. (editorial, "Distracted", Sep. 19).

Can Kejriwal keep his word?



With an eye on its national expansion plan ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, AAP convener Arvind Kejriwal is reported to have unveiled a six-point agenda to make India the number one country in the world. (Sep, 19). The six-point agenda includes better healthcare facilities for all, employment for every youth, security and equal opportunity for women, world-class infrastructure, and full prices for crops for farmers. It is good if every youth gets employment, poverty is banished in five years,

Bringing back cheetahs in India has been a long-drawn battle, and it hardly makes sense in seeking credit for the same now by any political party, trying to score brownie points. And the reintroduction of Cheetahs in India is certainly not the day's game, as there are a lot of other bigger and more important issues that require the Centre's attention. Meanwhile, let the nation welcome the Cheetahs.

Sivakumar Kumar | Chennai

GOVERNOR OR THE BJP MAN?

Sir — Kerala Governor Arif Mohammed Khan made a spectacle of himself at the press conference. He seemed to be under the delusion that the whole world revolves around him. He was so full of self-righteousness and bitterness that one gained the impression that he is unfit to be a Governor. His conduct of using the Raj Bhavan as a pulpit for politicking against the government at the RSS' behest was certainly not worthy of the office of the Governor. While leveling flimsy allegations against the LDF

better health care facilities are provided to the people. Let Kejriwal improve Delhi and Punjab as the number one state in India. Providing such facilities will require a huge amount of funds. False promises at the time of elections have now become common. The DMK in Tamil Nadu promised an Rs. 1000/- dole for every housewife, a gas subsidy of Rs100/- per cylinder, etc. but could not implement it for want of funds. On the other hand, it had increased the prices of electric consumption charges, increased property tax, and increased the prices of essentials. So false promises by any politician should not be believed and people should think twice before casting their votes as to how the election promises of the various political will be honoured. Parties making false promises should be boycotted by the people lock, stock, and barrel.

Sravana Ramachandran | Chennai

government, he came out as a politician fielded by the BJP to take on his "own government".

It is for the people of Kerala and not the Governor to rate the government for its successes and failures. Khan, for all his intellectual pretensions, should be less than sophisticated to denounce communism or Marxism as an 'ideology of violence. To his credit or discredit, he made no effort to disguise the fact that he towed the BJP line on a range of issues from triple talaq, CAA, and love jihad to abrogation of Article: 370. He was a bundle of gratitude to the Modi government for appointing him to the gubernatorial post. His spirited defence of the RSS was reflective of his politics. He espouses the cause of Hindutva so well that he deserves to be the RSS chief's deputy rather than a Governor.

G David Milton | Maruthancode

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUND BITE

Unfortunate that Hyderabad Liberation Day hasn't been celebrated officially all these years in Telangana.



Union Home Minister —Amit Shah

More than 440 graves have been found (in Izium) but the exact number of victims is not known.

Ukraine President —Volodymyr Zelenskyy

The truth is you can never go back to being the same person, once a character has happened to you.



Actor —Kangana Ranaut

The attackers' objective was to violently take my work tool by breaking my legs.

Paris Saint-Germain player —Kheira Hamraoui

Blood donation...is great donation! Donated blood under #RaktdaanAmrit Mahotsav. It's heartwarming to be involved.



Union Health Minister —Mansukh Mandavaya

FIRST COLUMN

BODY IS COSTUME OF THE SOUL

No one wants to die but then no one escapes death; it is the ultimate truth



RAJYOGI **BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI**

The word FEAR has two meanings – Forget Everything And Run or Face Everything And Rise. Now it depends on each one of us as to what we want to do. There is no doubt about the fact that today this four-letter word has taken possession of almost every-one's life and has become the biggest stress-producer. That is why Les Brown, a famous motivational speaker, rightly said: "Too many of us are not living our dreams, because we are living our fears".

According to behavioural psychologists, fear lies in the sub-conscious and surfaces as and when a situation arises, which could be related to a possible or imminent loss of life, property, loved ones or prestige. However, it has been found that the greatest fear of all is, of course, death, because all physical relationships and material possessions are lost with death. That is why it is said that the fear of death is worse than death itself.

People fear untimely death the most, because of increasing uncertainties in life. No one wants to die, but death is a certainty. Death evokes fear, avoidance, and superstition in people's minds. Despite scientific advances, people still feel vulnerable, for anything can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere. Our increasing tendency to vio-



lence and growing mechanization have created conditions in which death is just a careless moment away. One reason for this insecurity is that more and more innocent people are getting killed in human made situations, which may not even be of the victims making. While we do get reconciled to the death of innocents in natural calamities or accidents by telling ourselves that it was willed by fate or that it was beyond our control. But acts of wanton killing carried out by humans often leave a deep scar within us, because they shake our trust in fellow human beings.

Till date, no cure or formula has been found by scientists for fear. So, how does one get over it then? Simply, by understanding a fact that 'one only loses by giving in to fear' as it is just a 'false evidence appearing real'. Hence, one must understand that it is actually a malady of the soul and calls for a spiritual solution, rather than a scientific or medical one. It requires an attitudinal change, because fear paralyzes the mind.

The behaviour of pigeons illustrates this well. Frozen with fear when they see a cat, pigeons just shut their eyes instead of flying away. Hence, by practicing to stay calm will change the tendency to be frightened by unexpected or adverse circumstances.

Another change that is needed is in the way we look at adversity. We must realise that all the tests that we face in life, regardless of whether we pass them or not, make us stronger and equip us to face better similar tests in future. So, if we dodge these tests for fear of failure or loss, we will advance in life no more than a student who refuses to sit for examinations out of examination phobia.

Similarly, to overcome fear of death, we just need to realise the basic truth that we are souls and not body, and the soul is immortal. This is the first lesson of the Bhagavad Gita. The soul is an actor and the body is its costume. It takes rebirth, casting off one body to take birth in a new one. So, what we call death is nothing but the departure of the soul from the body after its role in the present body is over. Doesn't it sound Simple? While attitudinal change can help us overcome fear to some extent, complete freedom from it requires attention to our karma.

(The author is a spiritual educator)

PM's military vision is boosting armed forces



ANIL GUPTA

With a slew of bold decisions, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has turned the tide for defence forces to shed the baggage of the past

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the first post-Independence born Prime Minister of India, is working on a mission mode ever since he assumed the charge of the government in 2014. He has taken historic decisions to redefine the political, economic and military landscape of India, which was viewed globally as a weak nation not due to its potential and capabilities, but due to a lack of strong political leadership. India's voice was often unheard on global platforms, while internally we had a government that was running through remote control.

In 2013, the whole nation viewed with shock the ugly episode of an angry Rahul Gandhi tearing in public an ordinance brought in by the Manmohan Singh-led UPA government. Rahul Gandhi was not even the president of the ruling Congress Party. The UPA government was mired in rampant corruption at the highest level, while the Prime Minister was unable to control his ministers. It was also plagued with the disease of "decision paralysis." It had a natural impact at the international level and India's global image was badly hit.

But with the arrival of Narendra Modi things began to change globally. Today, India has regained its status as Global Guru and its views on all important issues are not only heard but respected. PM Modi has a firm belief in the professionalism and supremacy of the Indian Armed Forces. He is a firm believer in the fact that no nation can aspire to be a global power without strong and capable armed forces. In 2014, he inherited the armed forces which were suffering from "hollowness". The equipment held by the armed forces was not only critically low but also suffered from obsolescence. The armed forces were crying for modernisation but the UPA government paid no heed.

Many defence contracts signed by the then government were mired in the charges of corruption putting a halt to any new contracts that were needed for modernisation. At one stage, the then Defence Minister AK Antony had announced even lack of funds as one of the reasons. Modi understood that India can ill afford high import budgets to maintain the armed forces. When Modi took over as the Prime Minister, he had a clear vision for the Indian Armed Forces. To put it simply, he wanted to transform the Indian military from a mere "force" to a military "power", shedding its colonial legacy. He knew that it would not be easy for him to change the deep-rooted mindset of customs and traditions of the armed forces and carry them along with his vision of not only "Indigenisation" but "Indianisation" as well. He, therefore, will have to tread a very cautious path.

From "Agnipath" to "INS Vikrant", the various decisions taken by the government are a continuum of Modi's military vision. In his first address to the Combined Commanders Conference in 2014, he said, "the world was looking at India with



CONSTRUCTION OF A DEFENCE CORRIDOR, BAN ON IMPORT OF CERTAIN MILITARY EQUIPMENT, INDIGENOUS PRODUCTION OF 108 MILITARY EQUIPMENT, AND EXPORT OF MILITARY HARDWARE, INCLUDING BRAHMOS, ARE THE GIANT STEPS TAKEN BY THE MODI GOVERNMENT TOWARDS SELF-RELIANCE

(The author is a Jammu-based veteran and security and strategic analyst)



renewed interest, confidence and excitement and there was a universal current of expectation from India to emerge not only as one of the poles of the global economy but also as one of the anchors of global and regional security." While talking of future threats, the PM said, "The threats may be known but the enemy may be invisible. Domination of cyberspace will become increasingly important making its control as critical as that of land, sea and air." He touched upon the importance of the integration of the armed forces, reforms in procurement processes, domestic development and production of defence equipment, long-term threat assessment and "Digital Armed Forces."

He also wanted to transform the armed forces. Slowly, the PM's vision began to be given practical shape. Acquisition of Rafale fighter jets, rolling out of a new defence procurement policy, the delegation of financial powers to the Vice Chiefs of the three forces, the creation of a new Department of Military Affairs under the Ministry of Defence, appointment of the Chief of Defence Staff with powers of a secretary of the government of India, modernisation of armed forces and mandate for the-atratisation were few notable and welcome decisions.

The cross-border operations across the LOC and air strikes deep inside the enemy territory symbolised the growing strength and the confidence of Indian Armed Forces under the Modi government.

Aatmanirbhar Bharat and self-reliance in defence forces is another initiative of the Modi govern-

ment and part of Modi's military vision. Construction of a defence corridor, ban on import of certain military equipment, indigenous production of 108 military equipment, and export of military hardware, including Brahmos, are the giant steps taken by the Modi government towards self-reliance. The list of equipment to be produced indigenously include sensors, simulators, sonars, radars, assorted weapons, helicopters, next-generation corvettes, AWACS, tank engines, combat vehicles, fourth-generation anti-tank missile systems, medium-range surface-to-air missile system, artillery guns, including self-propelled guns.

Modi unfolded a major component of his military vision while addressing the Combined Commanders Conference at Kevadia in Gujarat in 2021. This conference was unique in the sense that it included the junior and non-commissioned officers for the first time. But the attendees were chosen with a purpose. Modi wanted his vision to flow right down to the rank and file. In his valedictory address, the Prime Minister stressed the importance of enhancing indigenisation in the national security system, not just in equipment and other military hardware but also in the doctrines, procedures, and customs practiced in the armed forces.

Modi revealed his vision of "Indianisation" in front of a very carefully chosen audience. He also revealed another issue very close to his heart and very vital for India to transform from a "force" to a "power". He emphasized the need to optimize manpower planning in

both military and civilian parts of the National security architecture. He advised the Services to rid themselves of legacy systems and practices that have outlived their utility and relevance.

No self-respecting nation can claim to be a world power while carrying colonial baggage. The armed forces have begun the process. Though, many people particularly the opposition parties, which find fault with every action of the government, are questioning the government's intent and terming it as the

"safronisation" of the armed forces. To my mind, such comments are the result of a myopic vision and an attempt at politicising the issues related to national security for electoral gains and appeasement.

Modi's military vision is fructifying. PM himself acknowledged the same when he acclaimed the armed forces from the rampart of the Red Fort during his address to the nation on 15th August this year. He said, "For the first time after 75 years, the Made in India cannon has saluted the Tiranga. Will there be any Indian who will not be inspired by this sound?" He also lauded and saluted the armed forces for voluntarily embracing Atmanirbhar Bharat Mission. On September 2, 2022 PM Modi witnessed the two pillars of his military vision, Indigenisation and Indianisation being implemented when he presided over the commissioning ceremony of the first indigenously made aircraft carrier INS Vikrant and unveiled the new Naval Ensign removing the red coloured St. Georges Cross, a legacy of the colonial past.

POINT COUNTERPOINT

IT'S UNFORTUNATE THAT WE DECLARED CHEETAHS EXTINCT IN 1952, BUT FOR DECADES NO MEANINGFUL EFFORT WAS MADE TO REHABILITATE THEM. —PRIME MINISTER NARENDRA MODI



EIGHT CHEETAHS HAVE COME, THAT'S OKAY; NOW PLEASE TELL WHERE ARE THE 16 CRORE PROMISED JOBS THAT DIDN'T COME IN EIGHT YEARS? —CONGRESS LEADER RAHUL GANDHI



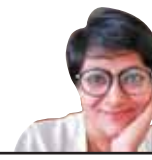
Worsening mental health of employees amid layoffs

Employment uncertainties are creating mental havoc with employees; those in their fifties are the worst sufferers

A 27-year-old laid off, went back home to prepare for UPSC to give one good shot at the examination that he always wanted to take. A 32-year-old woman tells herself she will now get more time with her toddler. A 40-year-old single man decides to get his Royal Enfield out and hits the road for a trip across the country.

Another single mother in her late thirties moves closer to her parents and takes up a job with night shifts that pays her less. A 49-year-old man, with kids in college, breaks down, as he knows his prospects of getting another job are bleak. His expenses are high. So is his BP.

While layoffs have steadily been taking place since the first wave of Covid-19 in



DEBASMITA SINHA

(The author is a psychologist & Clinical Director, Manah Wellness)

2020, causing immense anxiety and uncertainty among employees, the mass layoffs this year were as unexpected and much more devastating than the earlier ones. This was driven by a range of triggers, including a volatile international environment brought on by war, lack of funding, restructuring and modernisation of companies, who are also trying to cut costs to stay afloat, and an overall slow economy. And this has impacted the mental health and wellbeing of a vast number of people globally!

A survey by The7thFold had revealed that 36 per cent of Indian employees are suffering from mental health issues and 50 per cent are worried about an uncertain future due to the Covid-19

pandemic. Additionally, according to Assocham, nearly 43 per cent of employees in the private sector in India suffer from mental health issues at work. Also, up to 57 million people in India – 18 per cent of world population -- are affected by depression, thus calling for an urgent re-look at the mental health crisis.

The first step to addressing the crisis is to understand the process and the immediate impact of the trauma, for a varied set of employees.

When the news breaks, usually it's a flood. The organization is in collective shock. The ones retained and the ones fired all feel a sense of betrayal and anger. Especially in smaller organisations and start-ups, the narrative of this being a community, aligning

with the values and purpose, and the informal connections, further amplifies this sense of shock and betrayal.

Beyond the initial shock of being laid off, depending on one's age, gender, liabilities and financial status, slowly a sense of resilience and 'hustle quotient' sets in.

The younger among those being laid off usually seem to bounce back and feel more hopeful after the initial shock. They focus on upskilling, switching career tracks, etc. Older ones try looking for more self-sustained or consultancy related opportunities, with the hope to leverage their experience. However, they do feel the financial strain, often having to seek support from parents, moving back to the home town often

causing shame or discomfort. The disruption of life, relationships, causes stress and uncertainty. For older professionals, with more dependents, feeling hopeful may not come that easily. And for the ones already experiencing anxiety or any other mental health issue, this can worsen their condition.

People in their 30s, often with low savings and growing liabilities, are the worst hit. They have EMIs, school fees, etc., to pay. The impact of the job loss affects the whole family, the children, causing a tremendous sense of anxiety, uncertainty, guilt, desperation and frustration.

People over in their late 40s or 50s are left in despair when they are laid off. It impacts their immediate

financial status, but also their retirement plans, higher education of children. Given the economic downturn and hiring trends, they are left with almost no hope to be re-employed. It can impact their wellbeing, health, sleep, and mood. People who are retained continue to operate from a state of fear and uncertainty.

Recent unicorns and well-funded start-ups have downsized, leading to distrust in the organisation and disengagement. Additionally, for some of the employees who are retained, try to find solace in the increased workflow that helps sublimates the uncertainty and fear to higher productivity. Some feel disengaged and their productivity drops over time.

Organisations can support both groups of people, laid off and people retained, by -- providing the necessary professional help and support; communicate the duration for which the help will be available, especially to people laid off; hold authentic conversations facilitated by experts to let people who have been laid off express their anger and process the change; support them with referrals, severance package, extended insurance and other possible benefits; leaders, management, to show up and own their decision; demonstrate genuine empathy; clear calendars, be approachable and willing to listen; assess the impact of the change and the risk that individuals who have been retained may have.

Russian missile struck close to nuclear plant, says Ukraine

AP ■ KYIV

Russian missile struck close to a nuclear power plant in southern Ukraine without damaging the three reactors but hit other industrial equipment in what Ukrainian authorities denounced Monday as an act of “nuclear terrorism”.

The strike followed warnings from Russian President Vladimir Putin of possible stepped-up attacks on key Ukrainian infrastructure after his forces suffered humiliating battlefield setbacks.

The missile struck 300 metres (328 yards) from the Pivdennoukrainsk nuclear plant, also known as the South Ukraine Nuclear Power Plant, according to Ukrainian nuclear operator Energoatom.

Black-and-white CCTV footage released by Ukraine’s Ministry of Defence showed two large fireballs erupting one after the other in the dark, followed by incandescent showers of sparks.

A time stamp on the video read 19 minutes after midnight.

The ministry and Energoatom both called the strike “nuclear terrorism”. The Russian Defence Ministry had no immediate comment.

The United Nations’ nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the attack.

The nuclear plant is Ukraine’s second-largest after the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, which is Europe’s largest



nuclear power station and has repeatedly come under fire during the war. The two plants have reactors of the same design.

Russian forces have occupied the Zaporizhzhia plant since the early days of Moscow’s nearly seven-month invasion.

Repeated shelling cut off its transmission lines, forcing operators to shut down its six reactors to avoid a radiation disaster. Russia and Ukraine have traded blame for the strikes.

The International Atomic Energy Agency said a main transmission line was reconnected on Friday, providing electricity that the the Zaporizhzhia plant needs to cool its reactors. The IAEA has monitors at the plant.

While warning Friday of possible ramped-up strikes on Ukrainian infrastructure, Putin claimed that his forces had so far acted with restraint in reacting to Ukrainian attempts to hit Russian facilities.

“If the situation develops this way, our response will be more serious,” Putin said.

“Just recently, the Russian armed forces have delivered a couple of impactful strikes,” he said, referring to attacks last week. “Let’s consider those as warning strikes.”

As well as infrastructure, Russian forces also continue to pound other sites. The latest shelling killed at least eight civilians and wounded 22 others, Ukraine’s presidential office said Monday.

Overnight, Russian forces struck a pair of cities located across the Dnieper River from the Zaporizhzhia plant, damaging dozens of buildings and cutting power supplies to some sections of Nikopol and Marhanets, the presidential office said.

In the village of Strilecha in the northeastern Kharkiv region, Russian shelling killed four medical workers who were trying to evacuate patients from a

psychiatric hospital, and wounded two patients, Kharkiv Gov. Oleh Syniehubov said.

Russian strikes also hit Kramatorsk and Toretsk in the eastern Donetsk region, according to the presidential office.

Energoatom said the blast from Monday’s missile strike broke more than 100 windows at the industrial complex that includes the Pivdennoukrainsk plant.

It also caused the temporary shutdown of a nearby hydropower plant, it said. Ukraine’s presidential office said the attack also severed three power transmission lines.

The plant sits along the Southern Bug River in the southern Mykolaiv region, about 300 kilometers (190 miles) south of the capital, Kyiv.

Patricia Lewis, the international security research director at the Chatham House think-tank in London, said the attacks at the Zaporizhzhia plant and

Monday’s strike point to a pattern of Russian military planners attempting to take Ukrainian nuclear plants offline before winter by targeting power supplies that keep them functioning safely.

“It’s a very, very dangerous and illegal act to be targeting a nuclear station,” Lewis said in an interview. “Only the generals will know the intent, but there’s clearly a pattern.”

“What they seem to be doing each time is to try to cut off the power to the reactor,” she said. “It’s a very clumsy way to do it, because how accurate are these missiles?”

Other recent Russian strikes on Ukrainian infrastructure targeted power plants in the north and a dam in the south.

They came in the wake of a sweeping Ukrainian counterattack in the east of the country that has pummelled Russian forces, reclaiming a large swath of previously occupied territory in the Kharkiv region and breaking what had largely become a stalemate in the war.

The Russian pullback marked the largest defeat for Moscow since it withdrew its forces from around Kyiv after a botched attempt to capture the capital in the invasion’s opening stage.

The setback has fuelled renewed discussion among Russian nationalist critics of the Kremlin who question why Moscow failed to plunge Ukraine into darkness at the outset of the invasion by hitting all of its major nuclear power plants.

Baltic states close borders to Russians over Ukraine war

AP ■ WARSAW

The three Baltic states neighbouring Russia closed their borders on Monday to most Russians in response to the wide public support in Russia for its war on Ukraine.

The decision was reached earlier this month by the prime ministers of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and of Poland, which borders Kaliningrad — a Russian exclave on the Baltic Sea, surrounded by Lithuania and Poland — saying the move would protect the security of the three European Union nations.

“Russia is an unpredictable and aggressive state. Three quarters of its citizens support the war. It is unacceptable that people who support the war can freely travel around the world, into Lithuania, the EU,” Lithuania’s Interior Minister Agne Bilotaite said Monday.

“These are also security aspects, because such support for hostilities can pose threats to the security of our country and the EU as a whole,” she said.

The ministry said that 11 Russian citizens were stopped from entering Lithuania starting at midnight. Most were trying to enter by land from the Kaliningrad region or from neighbouring Belarus. No incidents were reported.

Poland already has a number of restrictions on Russian



travellers, but there were no immediate indications of further restrictions starting on Monday, even though the agreement between the four nations said the measure should be introduced by Sept. 19.

Under the ban, Russians wishing to travel to the Baltic countries as tourists or for business, sports or culture purposes will not be allowed in, even if they have valid visas for the EU’s no-checks Schengen zone. There will be a few exceptions, for humanitarian reasons, for Russian dissidents, diplomats in office, transport employees, family members of EU citizens, as well as Russians

with residence permits or long-stay national visas from Schengen countries.

The countries cannot, however, stop Russian citizens from entering via another Schengen nation. They want similar measures to be taken by all 27 EU member states, but that has not been agreed so far, although some travel restrictions have been already introduced.

The Czech Republic, which does not share a border with Russia, was one of the first EU countries to stop issuing visas to Russian citizens. The government in Prague approved the measure the day after the Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine.

Russia, China agree to expand security ties

AP ■ MOSCOW

Top Russian security official declared Monday on a visit to China that the Kremlin considers beefing up ties with Beijing as a top policy goal.

Nikolai Patrushev, secretary of the national Security Council chaired by Russian President Vladimir Putin, described the “strengthening of comprehensive partnership and strategic cooperation with Beijing as an unconditional priority of Russia’s foreign policy.”

Patrushev is one of Putin’s closest associates. Speaking during a meeting with Guo Shengkun, a top official of China’s Communist Party, he said that “in the current

conditions, our countries must show even greater readiness for mutual support and development of cooperation.”

Patrushev’s office said in a statement after the talks in the city of Nanping that the parties agreed to “expand information exchanges on countering extremism and foreign attempts to undermine constitutional order of both countries.” The Chinese and Russian officials also emphasized a need to expand cooperation on cybersecurity.

Putin met with Chinese President Xi Jinping last week in Uzbekistan, their first encounter since the Russian leader sent troops into Ukraine in late February.

A Chinese government state-



ment issued after the meeting didn’t specifically mention Ukraine but said Xi promised “strong support” for Russia’s “core interests.” The statement did not give specifics, but Beijing uses “core interests” to describe issues such as national sovereignty and the ruling Communist Party’s claim to Taiwan, over which it is willing to go to war.

Xi’s government, which said it had a “no-limits” friendship with Moscow before the Feb. 24 invasion of Ukraine, has refused to criticize Russia’s military actions. China and India both have increased imports of Russian oil and gas, helping Moscow offset Western sanctions imposed over its actions in Ukraine.

During his meeting with Xi on Thursday, Putin praised China’s president for maintaining a “balanced” approach to the Ukrainian crisis and said he was ready to discuss Beijing’s “concerns” about Ukraine.

Putin’s rare mention of Chinese worries came as the impact of volatile oil prices and economic uncertainty due to almost seven months of fighting in Ukraine has caused anxiety in China.

Xi and Putin met on the sidelines of the eight-nation Shanghai Cooperation Organization, a security alliance created as a counterweight to U.S. Influence that also includes India, Pakistan and four ex-Soviet nations in Central Asia.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to all concern that WG. GDR. S.K. BHAIKUM (RETO.) S/O SHRI SONTOSH BHAIKUM, R/O B-65, SECTOR-31, NOIDA, U.P., who is the original allottee of Type-V Residential Flat bearing No. A-32, GROUND FLOOR, situated in BLOCK-A, Jalvayu Vihar, Sector-21, NOIDA, Distt. Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P., had sold the said property on Special Power of Attorney basis to MR. PRADEEP KUMAR DEB S/O HOW. RS. OFFICER, R.M. DEB (RETO.), R/O A-32, JALVAYU VIHAR, SECTOR-21, NOIDA, U.P., which is registered on dated 20-04-1991, and the Agreement to Sell was executed, which was not Registered. So it is informed to all concerned that the said flat in going to the transferred in favour of MRS. SONCHUR DEB W/O MR. PRADEEP KUMAR DEB R/O A-32, JALVAYU VIHAR, SECTOR-21, NOIDA, U.P., on basis of Special Power of attorney. If any one has have any objection he/she may file his/her objection along with the sufficient proof in the Group Housing Department of Noida authority within 15 days from the date of Publication of this Notice.

PRADEEP KUMAR DEB

PUBLIC NOTICE

My clients Sh. Naresh Khurana, Mukesh Khurana, Rajesh Khurana and Rajeev Khurana, who are Power of Attorney Holders of Sh. Sher Singh, Daier Singh, Chanan Singh and Amarjeet Singh (Original Allottees by DDA) vide GPA/SPA dated 24-5-2003 hereby inform that Original documents of Shop No. 6, Departmental Store, 1st floor, LSC Market, Saket, New Delhi-110017 had been lost by the original Allottees. Document not be misused. Finder Please contact Naresh Khurana S/o Late Sh. R.D.Khurana R/o L-86 C/D DDA Flats, Saket, New Delhi 110017 , Mob-7011991171

SANDEEP BHUTANI (Advocate)
Regd. No.: D-2629/2013
776 , Rishi Nagar, Shakur Basti , Delhi

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TENDER NOTICE-CTS-2010 Standard Saving Fund & Current A/C Cheque Books, DD Internal Books and DD PNB Books

Contact Details. 97, 29997350, 9466101255

Sealed Bids are invited from IBA approved Security Printers for work of printing and supply of CTS 2010 Standard Saving Fund & Current A/C Cheque Books (Personalized and Non-personalized), DD Internal Books and DD PNB Books pertaining to Bank. The printed CTS-2010 Standard Saving Fund & Current A/C Cheque Books (Personalized and Non-personalized), DD Internal Books and DD PNB Books shall be supplied at our Regional Offices, Ambala, Bhiwani, Fatehabad, Gurgaon, Hissar, Nuh, Kaithal, Panipat, Rewari and Rohtak (F.O.R.). Vendors may also visit our Head Office to see the sample and specifications of CTS-2010 Standard Saving Fund & Current A/C Cheque Books (Personalized and Non-personalized), DD Internal Books and DD PNB Books to be printed on any working day before submitting their proposals. All the interested parties are advised to go through the detailed Tender guidelines at Bank's Website before submitting their proposals in Sealed Bids. Bank reserves its right to reject any or all the proposals without citing any reason. Corrections/Corrigendum, if any, will be placed on Bank's Website only. For more details visit our website www.shgb.co.in/ Email: hogadshgb@shgbbank.co.in

Last Date of submission of Tenders : 05.10.2022 by 02.00 PM

Date of Opening of Tender : 05.10.2022 at 03.00 PM (Tentative)

GENERAL MANAGER

UJJV LIMITED

H.O. "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006

Phone: 0135-2763508, 2763808 Fax: 0135-2763507

CIN No. U401041UR2001SGC025866 Website: www.ujjvn.com

Tender Notice

Ref. 19.09.2022

Office of the Executive Engineer, Maintenance Chilla (Pauri- Garhwal), invites sealed tenders from experienced firms for following works/supply for Chilla Power House:-

- 1- T-28/EE/M/2022-23:-** Removal & Replacement work of S.S. broken studs of rotating shaft sleeve of Power House.
- 2- T-29/EE/M/2022-23:-** Repairing work of 48 No. strainer buckets at power house.
- 3- T-30/EE/M/2022-23:-** Providing& Fixing work of safety lock pin on pump section at Power House
- 4- T-31/EE/M/2022-23:-** Protective coating work over the surface of Penstock its structure and expansion joint of unit no.4 of Power House.
- 5- T-32/EE/M/2022-23:-**Hiring of Light diesel vehicle non AC (Mahindra & Bolero or equivalent) with driver for a period of 12 months for EE (Maintenance) Chilla.
- 6- Estimated Cost -** Rs 93,600.00 (Taxes Extra), Rs 91,008.00 (Taxes Extra), Rs 77,500.00 (Taxes Extra), Rs 9,00,625.00 (Taxes Extra), Rs 3,98,920.00 (Taxes Extra)
- 7- Date of availability of Tender document on website -** 20-09-2022 (17:00 Hrs)
- 8- Date of Receipt of the tender -** 11-10-2022 up to 16:00 Hrs

For all details, bidders are advised to visit our website www.ujjvn.com

Executive Engineer (M), Chilla Power House

"AVOID WASTEFUL USE OF ELECTRICITY"

Polyakov, took longest single trip to space, dies



AP ■ MOSCOW

Valery Polyakov, the Soviet cosmonaut who set the record for the longest single stay in space, has died at age 80, Russia’s space agency announced Monday.

Polyakov’s record of 437 days in space began January 8, 1994, when he and two others blasted off on a two-day flight to the Soviet space station Mir.

While aboard Mir, he orbited the Earth more than 7,000 times, before returning March 22, 1995.

Upon landing, Polyakov declined to be carried out of the Soyuz capsule, as is common practice to allow readjustment to the pull of gravity.

He was helped to climb out himself and he walked to a nearby transport vehicle. Polyakov had trained as a physician and wanted to demonstrate that the human body could endure extended periods in space.

Polyakov previously had spent 288 days in space on a mission in 1988-89.

The announcement by space agency Roscosmos did not state a cause of death.

Centre-right leader asked to form new Govt in Sweden

AP ■ COPENHAGEN

The leader of Sweden’s third largest party — the centre-right Moderates — on Monday was formally asked to attempt to form a government that could include the populist Sweden Democrats, either inside a governing coalition or outside to secure a majority.

In Sweden’s September 11 election, the country’s four centre-right parties won 176 seats while the centre-left coalition that included the ruling Social Democrats got 173 seats.

Following that, Andreas Norlen, the speaker of the 349-seat Swedish parliament, the Riksdagen, asked Ulf Kristersson, the leader of the Moderates, to see if he can form a governing coalition.

Norlen who has held talks with all party leaders about who could try to form a governing coalition, said he didn’t name a date before which Kristersson should come back with an answer because that could take time.

“My message to the speaker has been that everything is going well,” Kristersson told reporters after meeting with Norlen. “I want to form a government that unites, not divides.”

The leader of the Sweden Democrats, Jimmie Akesson, said after meeting Norlen on Monday added that “it would suit Sweden to have with a majority government. That is my take.”

The question is now what coalition can reach a majority. One of the centre-right parties



has said it does not want to be in a coalition with the right-wing Sweden Democrats, a party founded in the 1980s by far-right extremists that now is the country’s second-largest in parliament.

Different centre-right constellations are possible but it seems clear that the Sweden Democrats will have significant leverage in any centre-right government.

The populist party has tried to move toward the mainstream in recent years, standing this year on a platform of cracking down on crime and strictly limiting immigration.

Sweden in recent years has seen an increase in gang violence and this year there have been 273 shootings, 47 of them fatal, according to police statistics. The shootings also wounded 74 people, including innocent bystanders.

Last week, Sweden’s Social Democratic Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson acknowledged losing the election. She will continue in a caretaking capacity until a new government is formed.

Bill Clinton: ‘The world’s on fire,’ but teamwork can help

AP ■ NEW YORK

Former President Bill Clinton is calling on governments, businesses, philanthropies, and other prominent institutions to draw together and help a world that is “on fire” as he reconvenes the Clinton Global Initiative, the meeting of international leaders, for the first time since 2016.

Interest in the two-day meeting has been so intense that the Clinton Foundation had to turn away more than 1,000 potential attendees.

It is convening a spectrum of luminaries, including Jordan’s Queen Rania Al Abdullah, Barbados Prime Minister Mia Mottley, BlackRock CEO Larry Fink, Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai and actor and water access activist Matt Damon.

Clinton, president of the United States from 1993 to 2001, said he has been amazed by the massive response.

“The world’s on fire in a lot of different ways,” he told The Associated Press in an interview. “But there are a lot of things that businesses, non-governmental groups and governments working together can do to help with a lot of these problems.”

The Clinton Global Initiative, or CGI, has helped more than 435 million people in more than 180 countries since it was established in 2005.

It previously required attendees to create a Commitment to Action, a measurable project that addresses a global issue, though for this year that requirement has been waived.

Those commitments often unite new partners and encour-



age cooperation between the public and private sectors.

“I think there is a longing for people to get together and meet with an end in mind,” Clinton said. “Not just talk about it, but knowing that when they walk away, they will have committed to doing something.”

Clinton Foundation Vice Chair Chelsea Clinton calls that “a bias toward action,” which she says is part of what makes CGI special and a catalyst for global change.

She said the COVID-19 pandemic has engorged interest in public health and addressing health disparities because people outside of the field could see the impact.

“Health is interconnected to anything and everything that anyone may care about,” Chelsea Clinton said.

“There are a lot of people who now are mobilised to do something with what they have come to newly understand and which they now feel responsible for helping to solve.”

The panel discussions scheduled for the initiative focus

on potential solutions. Former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton will discuss approaches to creating gender equality with New York Gov. Kathy Hochul, actor and philanthropist Robin Wright and others.

All three Clintons will talk about partnerships that focus on common humanity. They will be joined in that by Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, director-general of the World Health Organisation, U2 singer Bono and “Hamilton” creator Lin-Manuel Miranda.

Peter Sands, executive director of The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, said CGI has always introduced his group to new potential partners, something even more valuable after two challenging pandemic years that made access to new donors difficult.

“There’s only so much you can do with PowerPoints and Zooms,” Sands said.

He is currently in the midst of a fundraising campaign of his own.

UK, world bid final farewell to Queen

PTI ■ LONDON

Kings and queens, world leaders, tearful mourners lining the streets and gathered around screens bid a final farewell to Queen Elizabeth II on Monday, as Britain's longest-serving monarch was laid to rest in a historic funeral ceremony conducted to military precision at a scale never seen before.

The UK observed a two-minute silence in a poignant nationwide tribute at the conclusion of a majestic state funeral ceremony at Westminster Abbey here, attended by thousands and witnessed by millions on screens worldwide.

In the congregation of around 2,000 made up of world leaders, royalty from the UK and overseas and community leaders, India was represented by President Droupadi Murmu and Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra.

The UK's National Anthem,

'God Save the King', rang out as the coffin was lifted out for the last leg of the journey to the late monarch's final resting place at St. George's Chapel in Windsor Castle, where a Committal Service concluded the public-facing aspect of the funeral before a private burial ceremony on Monday evening.

The Queen's coffin then lowered into the Royal Vault in preparation for her final resting place by the side of her late husband of 73 years, Prince Philip, in an enclave of the historic chapel on her south-east England estate of Windsor.

"We have come together to commit into the hands of God the soul of his servant Queen Elizabeth," said the Dean of Windsor, at the final service prepared in discussion with the late monarch "over a number of years".

The state funeral began as chimes of the Big Ben fell silent and hymns rang out as the cof-



fin of the late monarch was carried into Westminster Abbey on Monday morning.

The Big Ben, the iconic London landmark housed in the Elizabeth Tower named after the late Queen, tolled every minute 96 times to mark each year of

the late sovereign's life as a procession led by King Charles III entered the historic 11th century Abbey.

The coffin, draped with the Royal Standard, was adorned with flowers from the King's royal homes and a personal note

"in loving and devoted memory" from him and the Instruments of State – made up of the diamond-encrusted Imperial State Crown and the orb and sceptre which were gifted to the Queen at her coronation in the same Abbey in 1953.

"Here, where Queen Elizabeth was married and crowned, we gather from across the nation, from the Commonwealth, and from the nations of the world, to mourn our loss, to remember her long life of selfless service, and in sure confidence to commit her to the mercy of God our maker and redeemer," said Very Reverend Dr David Hoyle, the Dean of Westminster who led the service.

"With gratitude we remember her unwavering commitment to a high calling over so many years as Queen and Head of the Commonwealth," he said.

"With admiration we recall her life-long sense of duty and dedication to her people. With thanksgiving we praise God for her constant example of Christian faith and devotion. With affection we recall her love for her family and her commitment to the causes she held dear," Hoyle said.

China says invitation for Taiwan's representative to sign Queen's condolence book 'disgraceful'

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Monday termed as "disgraceful" the British government's permission for a Taiwan representative in the UK to sign the condolence book of Queen Elizabeth II, who passed away on September 8.

President Droupadi Murmu was among many leaders who visited Westminster Hall in London to offer their tributes to the late British monarch and signed a condolence book.

"Let me stress that the DPP (ruling Democratic Progressive Party of Taiwan) authorities make use of the

occasion to seek political manipulation," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told a media briefing here when asked about Taiwan representative in the UK Kelly Wu-Chiao Hsieh was specially invited by the British government to sign the condolence book.

"This is disgraceful. This doesn't change the fact that Taiwan is part of China. The political scheme of the Taiwan authorities is doomed to fail," Mao said. China, which claims Taiwan as part of its mainland, advocates One China policy and resents any official diplomatic protocol to Taiwan officials by foreign governments.

Biden, other VIPs lie low as spotlight stays on late Queen

AP ■ LONDON

American presidents usually make a splash when they travel abroad, holding the spotlight and quickly becoming the center of attention. Not this time.

For US President Joe Biden and other presidents, prime ministers and dignitaries, there were no red-carpet arrivals, no big speeches and no news conferences as they gathered for Monday's state funeral for Queen Elizabeth II.

Instead, world leaders used to people hanging on their every word checked their egos in the service of honouring the queen, Britain's longest-serving monarch, who died earlier this month at age 96 after 70 years on the throne.

"They know that they are there to honour the passing, honour the individual," said Capricia Marshall, who was the US State Department's protocol chief for a period during Barack Obama's administration. "They also are aware that they're representing their country."

The protocol office is a key player in US foreign policy and diplomatic affairs, working to make sure US officials don't say or do anything that will offend a foreign visitor or host.

The president and first lady are among some 2,000 people attending the funeral at Westminster Abbey.

They arrived late Saturday and paid respects to the queen on Sunday, viewing her coffin at Westminster Hall, signing condolence books at Lancaster House and attending a Buckingham Palace reception for funeral guests hosted by King Charles III.

But the president's public appearances in London have been limited and controlled, part of the choreography around the elaborate farewell to the only monarch most Britons have ever known.



He spoke only for just a few minutes Sunday about the queen, as he recalled how the woman he said reminded him of his mother kept feeding him crumpets when they had tea together last year at Windsor Castle.

When Biden spoke to the BBC, the only outlet broadcasting live as he signed the condolence book, the network kept up a split screen with Sir David Manning, a former British ambassador to the US, and did not air Biden's comments live.

Most other leaders in town have kept similarly low profiles, appearing only to sign the official book of condolence and silently pay respects at the queen's coffin in Westminster Hall.

A few have given interviews to share memories of Elizabeth, including New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, who told the BBC about the advice the queen gave her on balancing work and motherhood: "I remember she just said, Well, you just get on with it, and that was actually probably the best and most I think factual advice I could have."

Iranians protest in capital over woman's death in custody

AP ■ DUBAI

Iranians took to the streets of the capital on Monday to protest the death of a young woman who was detained for violating the country's conservative dress code.

The semiofficial Fars news agency said students in many Tehran universities gathered in protest, demanding an investigation into the death of Mahsa Amini and the dismantling of the morality police, who were holding her when she died.

Witnesses said demonstrators poured into Keshavarz Boulevard, a central thoroughfare, chanting "Death to the Dictator". They also chanted against the police and damaged a police vehicle. The witnesses spoke on condition of anonymity out of security concerns.

Videos circulating on social media showed a third day of demonstrations in Kurdish cities in western Iran as well as the northern city of Rasht and a university in the central city of Isfahan. The Associated Press could not independently verify the authenticity of the footage.

The morality police detained the 22-year-old Amini last Tuesday for not covering her hair with the Islamic headscarf, known as hijab, which is mandatory for Iranian women.

US aircraft carrier to visit S Korea amid N Korean threats

AP ■ SEOUL

A US aircraft carrier is to visit South Korea this week for its first joint training with South Korean warships in five years, officials said on Monday, in an apparent show of force against increasing North Korean nuclear threats.

The USS Ronald Reagan aircraft carrier and its battle group will arrive at a southeastern South Korean naval base on Friday for a combined training meant to boost the allies' military readiness and to show "the firm resolve by the Korea-US alliance for the sake of peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula," the South Korean navy said in a statement.

It would be the first such joint drills involving a US aircraft carrier near the peninsula since 2017, when the US sent three aircraft carriers including the Reagan for naval drills with South Korea in response to North Korean nuclear and missile tests, according to the South Korean Defence Ministry.

The carrier's arrival comes after North Korea recently passed a new law designed to authorise the preemptive use of nuclear weapons in certain conditions, in a move that apparently shows its increasingly aggressive nuclear doctrine. Earlier this year, the North test-launched a slew of nuclear-capable ballistic missiles capable of reaching both the US mainland and South Korea.

Some experts say the North Korean moves clearly suggest it's



not interested in returning to denuclearisation talks until the United States and others recognise it as a nuclear state.

They say North Korea needs such a recognition for arms control negotiations with its rivals and to get sanctions relief and other concessions while maintaining some of its nuclear weapons. After a meeting in Washington last week, senior US and South Korean officials said in a statement that that "any (North Korean) nuclear attack would be met with an overwhelming and decisive response."

The statement said the United States reiterated "its ironclad and unwavering commitment to draw on the full range of its military capabilities, including nuclear (one)" to provide extended deterrence to South Korea.

The US and South Korean

officials also highlighted that the upcoming deployment of the Reagan Carrier Strike Group in the region is a clear demonstration of US security commitment, according to the joint statement.

The meeting, which involved four US and South Korean undersecretaries or vice minister-level officials, was mainly about Washington's extended security commitments. It was the allies' first such gathering since early 2018.

To cope with North Korean nuclear threats, South Korea been building and purchasing an array of high-tech missiles, stealth jets and other conventional weapons. But it has no nuclear weapons and is under the protection of a US "nuclear umbrella," which guarantees a devastating American response in the event of an attack on its ally.

Stranded tourists safe, repairs begin after Taiwan quake

AP ■ TAIPEI

About 400 tourists who were stranded on a mountain-side when a strong earthquake hit Taiwan have descended safely, as the island on Monday repaired damage caused by the quake.

The 6.8 magnitude quake hit the island on Sunday afternoon, temporarily trapping four people inside a levelled three-storey building, knocking a train from its tracks and damaging a bridge. A worker in a cement factory was killed.

The quake was centred in eastern Hualien county, but was felt throughout Taiwan.

Smaller aftershocks continued to hit the island on Sunday night into Monday morning, although none was as severe.

The stranded tourists descended from the mountain throughout the night, with the last 90 making it down on Monday, local media reported.

Taiwan's transportation minister visited a train station in Hualien county and said parts of the tracks that buckled during the quake would take up to a month to repair.

Taiwan, which sits on a seismologically active arc known as the Pacific Ring of Fire, is frequently hit by earthquakes. The self-governing island lies 160 kilometres (100 miles) off the coast of mainland China.

Will not tolerate activities aimed to split China, Beijing hits back at Biden's Taiwan remarks

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Monday said it will strive with "utmost sincerity" for the peaceful reunification of Taiwan and not tolerate any activities aimed at splitting the country, in an angry response to President Joe Biden's remarks that the US forces would defend Taiwan if Beijing tries to invade the self-ruled island.

Biden said "yes" when asked during an interview broadcast on Sunday on CBS News's "60 Minutes" programme whether "US forces, US men and women, would defend Taiwan in the event of a Chinese invasion."

The White House has been quick to downplay Biden's previous comments on Taiwan, reiterating that the US policy hasn't changed.

This is the second time since May this year that Biden has replied affirmatively to questions on the US militarily intervening to defend Taiwan's independence, adding a military dimension to Washington's Taiwan policy much to the chagrin of Beijing.

While visiting Japan in May, Biden said America will stand with Japan and other nations to not let China forcibly take over Taiwan.

When asked at a press conference in Tokyo if the US is

willing to get involved militarily to defend Taiwan, Biden said "yes".

"That is the commitment we made. Here is the situation: we agree with the One China policy. We signed on to it and all the attendant agreements made from there.

"But the idea that it can be taken by force is just not appropriate, it will dislocate the entire region and be another action similar to what happened in Ukraine. So, it is a burden that is even stronger," he said, likening Taiwan's issue to that of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Reacting to Biden's interview with CBS News, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesper-



son Mao Ning on Monday said the US leader's remarks seriously violated the 'one China' policy and three joint communiques related to Taiwan.

Biden's remarks seriously breached the US commitment of not supporting Taiwan's

independence and sent an erroneous signal to Taiwan's independence forces, Mao said.

"China deplores and firmly opposes that and we have launched several representations," to the US, she said.

"There is only one China

and Taiwan is part of it and the People's Republic of China (PRC) government is the sole government representing the entire China," Mao said.

To achieve the complete unification of the motherland is the shared aspiration and sacred duty of all Chinese people, she said.

"We will strive for the prospect of a peaceful reunification with utmost sincerity and efforts. In the meantime, we will not tolerate any activities that are aimed to split China and we reserve all options of taking the necessary measures," Mao said.

"Nobody should understate our resolve, will and capa-

bility to defend our sovereignty and territorial integrity. They should not stand on the opposite side of the 1.4 billion Chinese people," she said.

"We urge the US to fully understand the extremely important and the highly sensitive nature of the Taiwan question and abide by the 'one China' principle and three joint communiques, earnestly implement the US leadership commitment of not supporting Taiwan's independence," she said.

The US should prudently and properly handle the Taiwan-related issues and refrain from sending an erroneous signal to Taiwan inde-

pendence forces so as to prevent further damage to China-US relations and peace and stability along the Taiwan Strait, she said.

The US-China differences over the Taiwan issue in recent months have escalated after US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taipei, becoming the first top American official to visit the self-ruled island in 25 years.

Besides the diplomatic protest, China went ballistic over her visit launching massive air, naval and missile drills close to Taiwan for over a week in August, sparking concerns that Beijing was preparing for an invasion of the island.

Taliban freed from Guantanamo claims exchanged for American

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

A senior Taliban detainee held for years at Guantanamo Bay said Monday he was released and handed over earlier in the day to the Taliban in Kabul, in exchange for an American prisoner held in Afghanistan.

Bashir Noorzai, a notorious drug lord and member of the Taliban, told reporters in Kabul that he spent 17 years and six months in the U.S. Detention center at Guantanamo Bay, and that he was the last Taliban prisoner there.

The Taliban-appointed Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi also spoke at the press conference alongside Noorzai and welcomed the exchange, saying it marked the start of a



"new era" in U.S.-Taliban relations.

Muttaqi said the released American was Mark Frerichs, a Navy veteran and civilian contractor kidnapped in Afghanistan on Jan. 31, 2020. He was last seen in a video earlier this year, pleading for his

release so that he can be reunited with his family, according to a recording posted by The New Yorker magazine at the time. In the video, Frerichs says it was filmed last November.

Frerichs, of Lombard, Illinois, was believed to be held by the Taliban-affiliated

Haqqani network, and U.S. Officials across two presidential administrations have tried unsuccessfully to get him home.

There was no independent confirmation or word from Washington on Frerichs' release.

Since their takeover of Afghanistan in August last year, the Taliban have demanded the United States release Noorzai in exchange for Frerichs amid expectations of such exchanges for U.S. Citizens held in Afghanistan.

However, Washington has not moved forward on any sort of prisoner trade or exchange.

The Taliban posted a brief video Monday on social media showing Noorzai's arrival at the Kabul airport where he was welcomed by top Taliban officials, including Muttaqi.

Iran President: No plan to meet Biden at UN General Assembly

AP ■ TEHRAN

Iran's president headed on Monday to New York, where he will be speaking to the UN General Assembly later this week, saying that he has no plans to meet with President Joe Biden on the sidelines of the U.N. Event.

President Ebrahim Raisi spoke at the Tehran airport before his departure as talks to revive Iran's tattered nuclear deal with world powers remain stalled.

"There is no plan for a meeting or negotiations with US leaders," Raisi said. "We have no plans whatsoever for meeting them."

The Iranian president called his appearance at the United Nations an opportunity to explain to the world about alleged "malice" that unspecified nations and world powers have toward Iran. He did not elaborate.

Raisi, who is accompanied by Iranian



Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian and nuclear negotiator Ali Bagheri Kani, is to address both the General Assembly and a UNESCO meeting on religions.

Talks between Iran and world powers over reviving a 2015 nuclear deal remained stalled though Tehran and Washington

have traded written responses in recent months on the finer points of the roadmap, which would see sanctions lifted against Iran in exchange for it restricting its rapidly advancing nuclear program.

Iran and the US have had no diplomatic relations since the 1979 US Embassy takeover by militant students in Tehran.

On Sunday, CBS' "60 Minutes" aired an interview with Raisi, who said the United States is not trustworthy and demanded guarantees that Washington would not withdraw again from a nuclear deal as President Donald Trump did in 2018.

Raisi also told CBS that Iran is willing to discuss prisoner exchanges with the US, defended his country's anti-Israel stance and said Tehran was committed to pursuing "justice" for the killing of a top Iranian Revolutionary Guard commander, Gen. Qassem Soleimani, in a US airstrike in Baghdad in January 2020.

Sensex snaps three-day losing run, climbs 300 pts



PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark indices found firmer ground on Monday after a three-session losing streak, propped up by buying in banking, finance, FMCG and auto counters despite a bearish trend overseas.

After a weak beginning, the 30-share BSE Sensex recovered the lost ground and ended 300.44 points or 0.51 per cent higher at 59,141.23.

On similar lines, the broader NSE Nifty jumped 91.40 points or 0.52 per cent to close at 17,622.25.

Mahindra & Mahindra was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, climbing 3.05 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finance, SBI, Nestle India, HUL, Bajaj Finserv and HDFC.

In contrast, Tata Steel, ICICI Bank, PowerGrid, NTPC, Asian Paints, L&T and UltraTech Cement were among the laggards, shedding up to 2.50 per cent.

The market breadth was

positive, with 22 of the 30 Sensex constituents closing in the green.

"The global market was expected to battle volatility as we approach the Fed policy announcement, while the latest inflation data remained above the estimates. The policy tone indicates hawkish measures, suggesting elevated hikes, leading to the pull-out of FIIs money from the Indian equities.

"However, this trend is expected to be short-lived, as future inflation trend forecasts a clampdown, bringing stability in policy stance by the end of this year," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research, Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said markets are likely to remain range-bound ahead of US Fed interest rate decision to be announced on September 21 (Wednesday).

"While it is widely expected that Fed will go for at least 75

basis points hike, however given the stubbornness of US inflation and robust numbers from US data points like retail sales and a strong labour market, there is a high chance that the aggressive stance towards rate hike is likely to continue for a prolonged time.

"Even the Bank of England is likely to announce a 50 bps rate hike to combat inflation and could keep global markets under pressure," he noted.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge declined 0.16 per cent and the smallcap index dipped 0.17 per cent.

The BSE FMCG index gained 0.98 per cent, while auto climbed 0.78 per cent, financial services 0.58 per cent, teck 0.43 per cent and energy 0.33 per cent.

However, metal fell by 1.25 per cent, followed by realty (0.99 per cent) and power (0.52 per cent).

Elsewhere in Asia, markets in Seoul, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower.

IBBI amends regulations to boost value of stressed cos

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

In a move that will provide better market-linked solutions for stressed companies, watchdog IBBI has amended its regulations to allow sale of one or more assets of an entity undergoing insolvency resolution process, besides other changes.

Also, the Committee of Creditors (CoC) can now examine whether a compromise or an arrangement can be explored for a corporate debtor during the liquidation period. The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has amended the regulations with the "objective to maximise value in resolution" and they came into effect from September 16.

As many as 1,703 Corporate Insolvency Resolution Processes (CIRPs) ended up in liquidation till the end of June this year.

The regulator has permitted



a resolution professional and the CoC to look for sale of one or more assets of the corporate debtor concerned in cases where there are no resolution plans for the whole business.

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) provides for a market-linked and time-bound resolution of stressed assets. The amended regulations will also enable a "resolution plan to include sale of one or more assets of CD (Corporate Debtor) to one or more successful resolution applicants submitting resolution plans for such assets and providing for appropriate treatment of the remaining assets."

India, Saudi Arabia discuss Rupee-Riyal trade, UPI system

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India and Saudi Arabia have held discussions on the feasibility of institutionalising Rupee-Riyal trade, and introduction of UPI and Rupaya cards in the kingdom, the commerce ministry said on Monday.

These issues, among others, were discussed during the visit of Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal to Riyadh during September 18-19.

He attended the ministerial meeting of the India-Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council.

Goyal and Saudi Minister for Energy Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman Al-Saud co-chaired the ministerial meeting of the Committee on Economy and Investments of the council.

"Diversification and expansion of trade and commerce,



removal of trade barriers... Automatic registration and marketing authorization of Indian pharma products in Saudi Arabia, feasibility of institutionalizing Rupee-Riyal trade, introduction of UPI and Rupaya cards in Saudi Arabia; were amongst the key points of discussion," it said.

Goyal also discussed various issues with Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman Al Saud.

"Discussed how energy security with climate change sensitivity can deliver economic growth and prosperity," the Indian minister has tweeted.

The ministerial meeting also endorsed the 41 areas of cooperation identified by the technical teams under the four broad domains of agriculture and food security; energy; technology and IT; and industry and infrastructure.

It also agreed to undertake implementation of priority projects in a time bound manner and re-affirmed continued cooperation in joint projects including the West coast refinery, LNG infrastructure investment and development of strategic petroleum storage facilities in India.

Union Bank, Federal Bank start offering Kisan Credit Card in digital manner

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

To make it easier for farmers to get a Kisan Credit Card (KCC), Union Bank of India and Federal Bank on Monday launched pilot projects, the lenders said.

Under the pilot projects, the lenders will do away with the need for physical documents such as land records and in-person visit to a bank branch to get KCCs.

Public sector lender Union Bank of India started the pilot from Harda district in Madhya Pradesh while private lender Federal Bank began the project

from Chennai.

The projects are part of the RBI initiative for the digitalization of rural finance wherein banks are collaborating with Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH).

Union Bank of India said it will gradually expand it to other states across India. A Manimekhalai, MD & CEO, Union Bank of India launched the project from Harda in presence of Rakesh Ranjan, Chief Product Manager, RBIH, senior management from the bank and more than 400 farmers from the district.

"It is aimed at overcoming



the challenges faced by farmers like in-person visit to a bank branch, submission of land ownership and other documents, and high turn-around time in getting the KCC. Based on the learnings from the pilot, it is

planned to expand the digitalization of KCC lending to other districts of Madhya Pradesh and gradually across the country," Union Bank of India said in a release.

The bank said it offers end-

to-end digitalization of Kisan Credit Card product as part of flagship Digital Transformation project 'Sambhav'. Manimekhalai said digitalization of KCC will help transform rural financing.

One can apply for a KCC with the help of a mobile handset only and there is no need to visit a branch, she said, adding the process needs no document submission as farmland verification will be done online.

"The Turn Around Time (TAT) reduces as the entire sanction and disbursement process gets completed in a couple of hours," Manimekhalai said.



CAD seen hitting 36-quarter high at 3.4% in Apr-June

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India Ratings expects the current account deficit to hit a 36-quarter high of 3.4 per cent of GDP or USD 28.4 billion in the June quarter, against a 0.9 per cent surplus a year ago.

In the March 2022 quarter, the deficit was a moderate 1.5 per cent or USD 13.4 billion, while in Q1FY22 the current account surplus was USD 6.6 billion or 0.9 per cent of GDP when the country was hit by the second wave of the pandemic, according to the agency.

As a share of GDP, the current account deficit is expected to jump to a 36-quarter high after the 1QFY14 when it was 4.7 per cent. In absolute terms, it will be at a 38-quarter high after 3QFY13 when the deficit was USD 31.8 billion, India Ratings said in a note on Monday.

Although merchandise exports touched a record high of USD 121.2 billion in Q1FY23, outward shipments are likely to slow down and come in at USD104.2 billion in Q2FY23, growing by a meagre 1.4 per cent in Q2 due to global headwinds.

The International Monetary Fund in July slashed the forecast for global GDP growth to 3.2 per cent in 2022 from the earlier 3.6 per cent. Also, GDP forecasts of some of India's key exporting destinations such as the US, Eurozone and China also revised downwards, which may put the country's export target of USD 750 billion (goods and services) for FY23 in jeopardy, the report noted.

On the other hand, the agency expects imports to remain robust due to elevated global commodity prices (Brent crude averaged USD 100.7/barrel) in August and a weak rupee, which it sees averaging at 79.6 to a dollar in Q2.

Sebi puts Fairfax Group-backed Go Digit's IPO in 'abeyance'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi has kept in "abeyance" the proposed initial share sale of Canada-based Fairfax Group-backed Go Digit General Insurance Ltd.

However, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) did not clarify further.

Go Digit had filed preliminary IPO papers with the capital markets regulator on August 17.

Cricketer Virat Kohli and his wife Anushka Sharma are among the investors in the firm.

Going by the draft papers, the company's proposed initial



public offering (IPO) comprised fresh issuance of equity shares worth Rs 1,250 crore and an offer for sale of 10.94 crore equity shares by a promoter and existing shareholders.

Proceeds from the fresh issuance were to be utilised for the augmentation of the company's capital base and maintenance of solvency levels and general corporate purposes.

Rupee falls 2 paise to close at 79.80 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee pared its initial gains and settled 2 paise lower at 79.80 (provisional) against the US dollar on Monday, weighed down by the strength of the greenback in the overseas market.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 79.70 against the greenback. It witnessed an intra-day high of 79.59 and a low of 79.80 during the session.

It finally ended at 79.80, down 2 paise from its previous close of 79.78.

The dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.26 per cent to 110.05.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, declined 1.52 per cent to USD 89.96 per barrel.

"King Dollar has been on a rampage against the Chinese yuan and further weakening of the yuan will be a dangerous sign for risk markets and Asian currencies," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities.

Along with the weak regional currencies, the rupee depreciated against the US dollar for the fourth day in a row. However, the momentum remained lacklustre in the rupee as the economy is better placed among Asian countries.

On the overseas front, risk assets extended their decline and the dollar rallied against major trading partners ahead of a busy week for global central banks, Parmar said, adding that in the near-term, spot USD-INR is expected to trade in the range of 79.05 to 79.90.

Oil Min seeks review of windfall tax, wants certain fields exempt

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The oil ministry has sought a review of the two-and-a-half-month old windfall profit tax on domestically produced crude oil saying it goes against the principle of fiscal stability provided in contracts for finding and producing oil.

The ministry in the August 12 letter, reviewed by PTI, sought exemption for fields or blocks, which were bid out to companies under Production Sharing Contract (PSC) and Revenue Sharing Contract (RSC), from the new levy.

It stated that companies have been since the 1990s awarded blocks or areas for exploration and production of oil and natural gas under different contractual regimes, wherein a royalty and cess is levied and the government gets a pre-determined percentage of profits.

The ministry, according to the letter, was of the opinion that

the contracts have an in-built mechanism to factor in high prices as incremental gains get transferred in form of higher profit share for the government.

Emails sent to the oil ministry as well as the finance ministry for comments remained unanswered.

India first imposed windfall profit tax on July 1, joining a growing number of nations that tax super normal profits of energy companies. While duties were slapped on the export of petrol, diesel and jet fuel (ATF), a Special Additional Excise Duty (SAED) was levied on locally produced crude oil.

The SAED on domestic crude oil initially was Rs 23,250 per tonne (USD 40 per barrel) and in fortnightly revisions brought down to Rs 10,500 per tonne.

The government levies a 10-20 per cent royalty on the price of oil and gas as also an oil cess of 20 per cent on production



from areas given to state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd (OIL) on a nomination basis.

Other than them, fields were awarded under the PSC regime where the government gets around 50-60 per cent of the profit made after deducting costs. RSC regime specifically has a clause to capture windfall gains for the government.

According to oil ministry calculations, the letter said, the

new levy in the case of PSC and RSC results in a situation where the operator ends up paying much more than the windfall gain itself.

Besides, the contracts specifically provide for fiscal stability for the contracting parties, it said, adding any change of law or rule or regulation that adversely changes expected economic benefits to parties can lead to seeking revision and adjustments to the terms of the contracts.

OYO reports revenue at ₹1,459 crore in April-June

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Hospitality and travel-tech firm OYO has reported a revenue of Rs 1,459.32 crore in the three-month period ended June 30, 2022, according to a regulatory filing.

The IPO-bound company, which had last year in October filed preliminary papers with Sebi to raise Rs 8,430 crore through an initial share sale, also posted an "adjusted EBITDA" of Rs 7.27 crore in the quarter ended June 30, 2022.

"Our revenue from contracts with customers for the three-month period ended June 30, 2022 was Rs 14,593.17 million," Parmar said, adding that in the near-term, spot USD-INR is expected to trade in the range of 79.05 to 79.90.

For FY22, revenue from contract with customers was at Rs 4,781.4 crore. In FY21 it was at Rs



3,961.65 crore; Rs 13,168.15 crore in FY20 and Rs 6,329.74 crore in FY19, it added.

In the quarter ended June 30, 2022, adjusted EBITDA stood at Rs 7.27 crore, improving from adjusted EBITDA loss of Rs 471.72 crore in FY22, the filing added.

According to the filing, OYO's

restated loss for the three-month period ended June 30, 2022 stood at Rs 413.87 crore. In the fiscal ended March 31, 2022 it had posted a loss of Rs 1,939.8 crore.

OYO said its total number of 'storefronts' was down at 1,68,012 in the quarter ended June 30, 2022 from 1,68,639 as on March 31, 2022 due to a decrease in the

number of hotels to 12,668, sequentially down from 17,994 in the fiscal ended March 31, 2022.

"The decrease in the number of storefronts for our hotels business was largely due to measures that we took to improve our GBV (Gross Booking Value) per storefront per month, including temporarily pausing operations for storefronts that were operating at subpar GBV per storefront per month levels and delivering an unsatisfactory customer experience," the filing said.

On the other hand, there was an increase in the number of homes at 77,898 in the quarter ended June 30, 2022, sequentially up from 73,177 in FY22, it added.

The hospitality firm said its gross booking value (GBV) for the quarter ended June 30, 2022 was at Rs 2,487.09 crore.

INBRIEF

ANTIBIOTICS RESISTANCE MAJOR PROBLEMS IN MEDICINE: YONATH

Chennai: The usage of certain antibiotics nearly doubled from 2010 to 2014, and the resistance has resulted in over 30,000 deaths annually in the USA and Europe," said Nobel Laureate, Professor Ada E Yonath at a lecture at SRM Institute of Science and Technology (SRMIST), Kattankulathur on Monday. Stating that antibiotic resistance is growing to be a concern in India, Yonath, who secured the Nobel Prize in Chemistry in 2009, said that the citizens in the USA and Europe across the world spent 1.6 billion Euro on various diseases caused by antibiotic resistance in this period (2010 and 2014).

RAILWAYS' RIVERFRONT JETTY INAUGURATED AT BOGIBEE

Maligaon: Giving a major boost to development of the north-eastern region, Union Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, on Monday inaugurated a Riverfront Passenger Jetty near the Bogibee Rail cum Road Bridge, constructed by Railways in Dibrugarh. Sonowal requested railways for similar facilities at Pandu, Joghichopa and Dhubri while praising the successful development of the passenger jetty by N F Railway. The project to develop river site near the Bogibee bridge is a major step towards integrated connectivity between railways and waterways under mission 'Gati Shakti' launched by PM Narendra Modi

OLECTRA-EVEY BAGS ORDERS FOR 123 ELECTRIC BUSES

Mumbai: Olectra Greentech and Evey Trans consortium has bagged orders for 123 electric buses worth Rs 185 crore from Thane Municipal Transport Undertaking in Maharashtra, a statement said. Both Olectra Greentech and Evey Trans are part of the Hyderabad-based Megha Engineering and Infrastructures Ltd. EVEY Trans will procure these e-buses, which comprises both air-conditioned and non-air-conditioned, from Olectra Genentech and will deliver to the entity in nine months, it said. The company is already operating its e-buses in Pune, Mumbai and Nagpur in the state.

Inox Green Energy gets Sebi's go ahead to launch ₹740-cr IPO

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Inox Green Energy Services, a subsidiary of Inox Wind, has received capital markets regulator Sebi's go ahead to raise up to Rs 740 crore through an initial public offering (IPO).

The IPO will comprise fresh issuance of equity shares worth Rs 370 crore and an offer-for-sale of equity stocks aggregating to Rs 370 crore by promoter Inox Wind, according to the Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP).

Besides, the company may consider a pre-IPO placement. If such a placement is completed, the fresh issue size will be reduced.

Inox Green Energy Services, which had filed draft IPO papers with Sebi on June 20,



obtained the observation letter from the regulator on September 13, an update with the capital markets watchdog showed on Monday.

The issuance of an observation letter by Sebi implies its go ahead to float the initial share sale.

Going by the draft papers, proceeds from the fresh issue will be used for payment of debt and general corporate purposes.

Napoli make title statement in Milan

2nd half goals from Politano & Simeone seal 2-1 win

AP ■ MILAN

Napoli announced their bid for the Serie A title with Sunday's 2-1 win at AC Milan which maintained their league lead.

Second half goals from Matteo Politano and Giovanni Simeone gave Napoli a statement win at the San Siro, one managed without injured star striker Victor Osimhen and suspended coach Luciano Spalletti not on the bench.

Spalletti's team sit top of the pile on goal difference from Atalanta, 1-0 winners at Roma, and three points ahead of Milan who drop down to fifth after their first defeat of the season.

Milan were the more threatening team in the first half and would have taken a 13th minute lead had Alex Meret not brilliantly tipped Olivier Giroud's shot onto the bar.

However shorn of the suspended Rafael Leao, Milan lacked their usual cutting edge, and combined with a couple of unfortunate incidents of players getting in the way of each other's chances denied Milan a deserved advantage at the break.

They were punished 10 minutes after the break following a decision which enraged Milan, Maurizio Mariani pointing to the spot for a foul on Khvicha Kvaratskhelia by Sergino Dest and Politano pushing the penalty under Mike Maignan.

Giroud gave the angry crowd what they wanted but his fourth league strike of the sea-

son was all his France teammate Theo Hernandez's work, a superb burst down the left flank and cut back making it easy for the veteran strike to level the scores.

However while Milan pushed for a winner Simeone hit them with a sucker punch, meeting Mario Rui's flighted pass with a perfect header.

Milan responded again but after Pierre Kalulu somehow hit the bar from Giroud's flick on with four minutes remaining Napoli held out for a potentially huge three points.

ATALANTA RECLAIM LEAD

Atalanta are level with Napoli after Giorgio Scalvini's beautifully hit low strike 10 minutes before the break at the Stadio Olimpico earned them the three points.

Gian Piero Gasperini's side are a point ahead of Udinese, who beat Inter Milan 3-1 in Sunday's early match to win their fifth match on the bounce.

Roma, who lost Paulo Dybala to injury in the pre-match warm up and were wasteful in front of goal, were livid 10 minutes after the break when referee Daniele Chiffi didn't give the hosts a penalty for Caleb Okoli yanking at Nicolo Zaniolo's shorts to the point that his underwear was visible.

"I need to change what I tell me players, I have to tell them to not to stay on your feet... be a clown like many who dive like they're in a swimming pool do in this league," said Mourinho to DAZN after being sent off for his protests.



Brighton appoint De Zerbi as new boss

AP ■ HOVE

Brighton appointed Roberto De Zerbi as the club's new manager on Sunday, with the Italian handed a four-year contract.

De Zerbi replaces Graham Potter, who left to take charge of Chelsea last week, with the Seagulls fourth in the Premier League.

The 43-year-old former Sassuolo and Shakhtar Donetsk boss agreed final

contractual terms late on Sunday afternoon.

De Zerbi made his name during three years in charge of Sassuolo, where he married an attractive style of football with finishing eighth in Serie A two seasons in a row in 2020 and 2021.

He joined Shakhtar in May 2021, but his time with the Ukrainians was cut short by Russia's invasion which saw the 2021/22 season suspended.



Brighton's deputy chairman and chief executive Paul Barber said: "We looked at a range of excellent candidates but Roberto was our number

one choice from the start and the only person we spoke to.

"We feel Roberto is the ideal cultural and technical fit for Brighton and Hove Albion, and the right person to continue the club's progress and work with this outstanding group of players."

Subject to the approval of a work permit, De Zerbi and his coaching staff will take charge for the first time when Brighton visit Liverpool on October 1.

Former World No.1 Osaka aiming to break slump



AP ■ TOKYO

Struggling Naomi Osaka on Monday admitted that she had gone through "more down than up" this year as she tries to break out of her slump at her home Pan Pacific Open this week.

The former world number one and four-time Grand Slam champion has plummeted to 48 in the women's tennis world rankings after a wretched run that has seen her crash out in the first round of her last three tournaments.

The Japanese 24-year-old has not won a title since last year's Australian Open and has been hampered this season with injury.

But Osaka is hoping to right the ship at the WTA event in Tokyo where she is defending champion, albeit

from three years ago as the tournament returns for the first time since the coronavirus pandemic.

She will face stiff competition from a field that includes US Open semi-finalist Caroline Garcia of France, Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan and Spain's world number four Paula Badosa.

"This year has been not the best year for me but I've learned a lot about myself," Osaka said, adding that she was "happy to be healthy".

"Life is ups and downs, and this year was more down than up, but overall I'm pretty happy with where I am now."

Osaka has been outside the top 10 all year and endured first-round defeats at both the French and US Opens.

She withdrew from Wimbledon with an Achilles injury, after originally considering skipping the tournament because ranking points would not be awarded.

Osaka admitted that her fall from the sport's summit had been difficult to handle.

"It was kind of hard at first, just because I feel like I should be somewhere where I'm obviously currently not," she said.

"I think for me it's more about being at peace with myself. I know that I'm here for a reason."

Osaka said she was looking forward to playing in front of Japanese fans again after taking part in last year's Tokyo Olympics behind closed doors, but would have to "trust in my forehand more" to rebuild her confidence after her poor season.

She will begin her campaign against Australia's world number 55 Daria Saville in the first round.

Lloris, Hernandez join France's UEFA Nations League injury list

PARIS: Captain Hugo Lloris and defender Theo Hernandez have joined France's growing injury list ahead of this week's Nations League games against Austria and Denmark, the French Football Federation (FFF) said on Monday.

Nantes goalkeeper Alban Lafont and Aston Villa defender Lucas Digne have both been called in as replacements for the matches against Austria on Thursday and Denmark.

Lloris suffered a right thigh injury while Hernandez has a torn right adductor, further weakening the world champions who have been hit by a wave of injuries. In addition to the absence of Paul Pogba, recovering after a knee operation, coach Didier Deschamps is without Presnel Kimpembe, Lucas Hernandez, N'Golo Kante, Kingsley Coman and Karim Benzema. AP

Real win Madrid derby

AP ■ MADRID

Rodrygo and Federico Valverde scored to earn Real Madrid a 2-1 win over neighbours Atletico Madrid in a heated derby on Sunday a return to the top of La Liga.

Carlo Ancelotti's side have started their title defence in perfect fashion, with a 100 per cent record from six games. This victory took Real two points above Barcelona, who had leapfrogged into first on Saturday.

The game was marred by racist chants aimed at Real Madrid's Brazilian forward Vinicius Junior outside the stadium before the game, sparked by criticism of his dancing goal celebrations and a subsequent debate over whether that criticism was racist.

Fans also threw objects at Vinicius after a Real goal and aimed racist chants at him in the closing stages.

After another Brazilian, Rodrygo, broke the deadlock in

the 18th minute, he danced in celebration with Vinicius, to the chagrin of Atletico's enraged supporters. Some threw objects, including lighters, at the duo.

Madrid were missing the injured Karim Benzema while the hosts picked Antoine Griezmann in the starting line-up for the first time this season, and they were on top in the opening stages.

Spurred on by the rowdy atmosphere, Diego Simeone's side pressed high up the pitch and put Los Blancos on the back foot, with Felipe heading over and Dani Carvajal deflecting a Yannick Carrasco shot into the side netting.

Geoffrey Kondogbia launched an effort at goal which missed narrowly, but with Atletico dominant, Madrid landed a sucker-punch.

Aurelien Tchouameni scooped a delightful pass over the defence and Rodrygo smartly dispatched it past Jan Oblak.

Atletico tried to fight back, with a fierce drive from



Griezmann flying past the post and Thibault Courtois denying Carrasco, before Madrid struck another killer blow.

Vinicius, whistled by Atletico fans, combined with



Messi keeps PSG top in Ligue 1

AP ■ PARIS

Lionel Messi struck after five minutes as Paris Saint-Germain edged Lyon 1-0 to regain top spot in the Ligue 1 table ahead of Marseille on Sunday.

Neymar set up the Argentinian with his seventh assist in eight Ligue 1 games.

The victory pulled PSG two points clear of Marseille who had taken top spot earlier with a 1-1 draw at home against Rennes.

Lorient, 3-1 winners over Auxerre, are three points adrift of the leaders.

Lens dropped to fourth after being held to a goalless draw in Nantes.

PSG were imperious in the first half but did not finish off their opponent who woke up after the break with Johann Lepenant coming on in place of a tired Corentin Tolisso.

But Christophe Galtier's side held on to inflict Lyon's third defeat of the season.

Galtier's "MNM" attack is firing on all cylinders, with

eight goals in Ligue 1 for Neymar, seven for Kylian Mbappe and four for Messi.

Earlier, Marseille midfielder Matteo Guendouzi scored both goals in a 1-1 draw at home against Rennes.

Guendouzi bundled past home keeper Pau Lopez to give Rennes the advantage after 26 minutes but the former Arsenal player redeemed himself with a header past ex-Marseille goalkeeper Steve Mandanda seven minutes after the break.

Mandanda returned to a warm welcome for his first match back at the Velodrome where the former Marseille skipper spent 15 years before leaving for Brittany in the summer.

Nice fell 1-0 at home against Angers in a match in which defender Jean-Clair Todibo earned a red card after five seconds and both teams finished with 10 men.

Todibo was sent off after just nine seconds, and that includes the four seconds it took referee Bastien Dechepy to pull the card out of his pocket.

Anurag Thakur inaugurates 7th All India Police Judo Cluster-2022 at IG Stadium

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Sports Minister Anurag Singh Thakur on Monday inaugurated 7th All India Police Judo Cluster-2022 organized by CISF at Indira Gandhi Stadium in New Delhi.

41 teams consisting of about 1580 players & 270 officials from Central Police Forces and State Police will participate in the Cluster.

Thakur applauded the role being played by CISF in arrang-



ing National level sporting event. Such pan-Indian sport-

ing events promote inter police force camaraderie and coordi-

nation. He also laid emphasis on the importance of sports and said that the players participating in the Cluster are playing for their respective police forces and tomorrow they will play for India. He also appreciated the duties being performed by CISF at Airports and Delhi Metro Rail. He said that the CISF personnel are performing duties at airports with dedication and their behaviour is courteous with the passengers.

Will appoint a neutral person to run administration of IOA: SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday said it will appoint a neutral person to run the administration of the Indian Olympic Association and directed the secretary in the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports to interact with the International Olympic Committee on the issue.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) on September 8 issued a final warning to IOA to "resolve its governance issues" and hold elections by December, failing which the world sports body will ban India.

The executive board of the IOC, which met in Lausanne, Switzerland had also decided not to recognise any "acting/interim president" after Narinder Batra's ouster as Indian Olympic Association president and said it will deal with secretary general Rajeev Mehta as the main point of contact.

A bench of Justices D Y Chandrachud and Hima Kohli asked the secretary in the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports to interact with the Director of Olympic Solidarity and NOC Relations in the International Olympic Committee.

During the hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, suggested that a former judge of the Supreme Court may be appointed for amending the Constitution of the Indian

Olympic Committee, prepare an electoral college, and conduct elections.

"The second suggestion is that the governance of administration may be entrusted to a neutral person who shall coordinate with the International Olympic Committee in terms of the letter dated September 8, 2022, of IOC.

"The IOC has proposed a joint meeting on September 27, 2022, in Lausanne and it is necessary that a person shall coordinate with IOC in close consultation. To facilitate this exercise, we have requested the Solicitor General and indicated that the secretary in the Ministry of Youth Affairs And Sports interact with the Director of Olympic Solidarity and NOC Relations in the International Olympic Committee and revert to this court on the next date of listing," the bench said.

The top court will now hear the matter on September 22.

The IOC letter sent by James McLeod, Director of Olympic Solidarity and NOC Relations, said: "During this transition period, and given that the IOC does not currently recognise any interim/acting president of the NOC of India, the NOC Secretary General will serve as the main point of contact to coordinate the next steps with the IOC, in close consultation and in agreement with the NOC Executive Council and General Assembly."

Take team to Asian Cup quarters or face axe: Igor Stimac 'accepts' AIFF's new contract

PTI ■ KOLKATA

The All India Football Federation (AIFF) has offered a fresh contract to head coach Igor Stimac with a rider -- guide the men's team to Asian Cup quarter-final or face the axe.

The former Croatian World Cupper is currently in Kolkata, where the national team is camping for its Vietnam trip and the AIFF bigwigs are expected to discuss the modalities of the contract with him once the trip is over.

However, when contacted Stimac informed that he had

said "yes" to the contract extension.

The decision was taken here during the second Executive Committee (EC) meeting of the AIFF's new dispensation headed by Kalyan Chaubey and secretary general Shaji Prabhakaran.

"The technical committee headed by IM Vijayan yesterday decided to renew his contract till the Asian Cup and it was approved by the EC today," Prabhakaran told reporters here on Monday.

"The performance target is to be top-eight in the competition. If that target is achieved, then automatically



INDIA LOOK TO LOCK MIDDLE-ORDER, SIXTH BOWLER AHEAD OF T20 WC

PTI ■ MOHALI

India will look to sort out their combinations, especially in the middle-order, while giving a final shape to their plans and preparations for the T20 World Cup when a three-match home series against Australia begins here Tuesday.

Though a few fast bowlers will be rested over the course of six games before the World Cup -- three matches against South Africa to follow after the Australia series -- India have a full strength squad at their disposal to finalise combinations.

The T20 format is a lot about being flexible but as he mentioned ahead of the first T20, India skipper Rohit Sharma would like to get 'all the answers' from his players before the flagship ICC event in Australia.

Though India did bat well in the Asia Cup, they did resort to a lot of changes during the tournament. Their lack of depth in the bowling department was also exposed but Harshal Patel and Jasprit Bumrah are now back to bolster the attack.

Rohit has made it clear that K L Rahul will be his opening partner in Australia but there is a possibility that Virat Kohli gets to open alongside him. With the star batter scoring a memorable hundred in his last T20 innings, there will always be a temptation to make him bat at the top.

The top-four are pretty much sorted but the jury is still out on the role of wicketkeepers Rishabh Pant and Dinesh Karthik in the playing eleven.

With Ravindra Jadeja injured, will India keep the left-handed Pant over Karthik who is a designated finisher in the squad?

Karthik, who hardly got to bat in the Asia Cup, would be hoping for substantial game time over the next two weeks.

Deepak Hooda played all the Super 4 games in the UAE but lack of clarity remains over his role in the side.



Jadeja's injury during the Asia Cup upset the bowling balance of the team. From six bowling options, India were forced to play with five bowlers.

If India play both Hardik Pandya and Jadeja's like-for-like replacement, Axar Patel, the team will have the extra bowling option.

Axar and Yuzvendra Chahal can be the two spinners with Bumrah, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Harshal and Hardik forming the pace attack.

The conditions in Australia will be vastly different from here and the man-

agement will go about its business keeping that in mind.

Australia, on the other hand, have come to India without few of their main players including David Warner (rested).

Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis and Mitchell Marsh, who are nursing minor injuries ahead of the World Cup, have also stayed back in Australia.

The focus will be on skipper Aaron Finch, who recently retired from ODIs after a prolonged lean patch. He will be aiming for a bagful for runs

ahead of the World Cup at home.

Another player who has attracted a lot of attention is power-hitter Tim David who is set to make his Australia debut after playing international cricket for Singapore.

David has made a name for himself with his performances in the T20 leagues around the world and he would be looking to replicate that at the highest level.

SQUADS

Australia: Sean Abbott, Ashton Agar,

Pat Cummins, Tim David, Nathan Ellis, Aaron Finch (c), Cameron Green, Josh Hazlewood, Josh Inglis, Glenn Maxwell, Kane Richardson, Daniel Sams, Steve Smith, Matthew Wade, Adam Zampa.

India: Rohit Sharma (c), KL Rahul (vc), Virat Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav, Deepak Hooda, Rishabh Pant, Dinesh Karthik, Hardik Pandya, Ravichandran Ashwin, Yuzvendra Chahal, Axar Patel, Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Harshal Patel, Deepak Chahar, Jasprit Bumrah, Umesh Yadav.

Will take a very brave man to write Kohli off: Finch

PTI ■ MOHALI

Australia skipper Aaron Finch on Monday said it will take a very brave man to write Virat Kohli off and what the former India captain has achieved in the last 15 years is just "ridiculous".

Kohli overcame a prolonged lean patch at the Asia Cup earlier this month and also scored his 71st international century.

"It will be a very brave man to write Virat Kohli off. At any stage, he has shown for 15 years now that he is one of the greatest players of all time," Finch said on the eve of the series-opener against India.

"Particularly in T20 cricket, he's someone who has developed and grown his game over such a long period that you always plan and prepare the best when you're coming up against him.

"He is super and has 71 international centuries. That's just ridiculous," Finch said in a virtual media interaction.

Finch will be in focus during the series after he announced his retirement from ODIs following his struggles with the bat.

He will be expected to be at his best ahead of the T20 World Cup at home.

"Over a long period of time, you get pretty comfortable with criticism but in T20 cricket, I feel my form has been really good for quite a while now. I think if you separate the ODI form and the T20 form, then they're totally different, they're two different formats of the game," said Finch.

Australia will go about their plans here with one eye on the World Cup at home where the conditions will be very different. The Finch led side go into the ICC event as defending champions.

T20 globetrotter Tim David, who has played international cricket for Singapore, is set to make his Australia debut. He is being seen as the 'X' factor in the squad.

"Every decision that we make, I think, has one eye towards the World Cup and seeing the wicket yesterday, it looked like there was quite a bit of grass on it," Finch said.

"And we know in Mohali, the ball can swing around and it can carry through quite a bit, so I think we will be mindful of not being too narrow-minded in terms of our focus.

"What we've tried to do over the last sort of six-eight months is make sure that everything that we're doing in T20 space ties back into the



World Cup and, for us, it's about making sure that once we get there we've had plenty of different combinations of teams that we can play."

Australia have rested a lot of senior players, including David Warner, Marcus Stoinis and Mitchell Marsh for the India series. Finch confirmed that Steve Smith will bat at number three on Tuesday.

"Most likely he (Smith) will bat at three in this series with Mitch Marsh being out. We know the quality that Steve's got. He's one of the best players that has ever played the game over all formats of the game. So we know the skill that he's got and the game sense and the tactical nous that he's got.

"So we're really confident that regardless of what role he has to play within the structure of the squad, that he can do that very, very well," he said.

The captain also spoke highly of all-rounder Cameron Green who is nicely developing as an all format player.

"I think his ability to bat at five, six, seven in the one-day team has been really impressive.

"The fact that such a young guy was able to guide us home in a really tricky run chase, in a great partnership with Alex Carey in the recent series against New Zealand, shows that he's got all the tricks and the game sense for such a young guy to be super successful in all three formats for Australia.

"He's just such a great kid, someone who continues to impress with everything that he does," Finch added.

No one is perfect but I'm working on my S/R: KL

PTI ■ MOHALI

Numbers can be deceptive and not always tell the whole story, feels Indian vice-captain KL Rahul, whose endeavour ahead of the T20 World Cup is to improve his strike-rate in the powerplay overs.

Rahul has copped a fair bit of criticism of late for his strike rate and the stylish batter believes that it is difficult to maintain the same tempo throughout an innings.

"It is something that every player works towards (strike-rate). No one is perfect. Everyone is working towards something," said Rahul, who batted at a strike-rate of 122.22 during the Asia Cup in UAE.

However, Rahul's career T20I strike-rate is 140 plus across 61 games but it is primarily because he makes it up during the back-10 of an innings.

"Strike-rates are taken on an overall basis," he said and gave his rationale behind the argument.

"You never see that a batter has played at a certain strike-rate (throughout). Whether it was important for him to play at a strike-rate of 200 or whether the team could have still won with the batter playing at 100 or 120, these things are not always analysed. So when you look at (overall), it looks slow," Rahul said.

But Rahul is working on his strike-rate.

"It is something I am work-



ing on. Obviously, the goals have been defined to each player in the last 10-12 months. Everyone has a clear understanding as to

what is expected out of him. I am just working towards how can I better myself as an opening batter," said the India vice-

captain ahead of first T20 against Australia.

Rahul is happy to be a part of a dressing room that allows players to learn from their mistakes. "The most important thing for the player in the room is what captain and coach and teammates think of him and we know what is expected out of each person. Everyone is trying to give best not every time a player will succeed.

"We have created an environment where players are not afraid to fail or not afraid to make mistakes. Even if mistakes happen this is what we do. We work the hardest for this."

Criticism will be there but what this Indian team believes is self criticism. "Criticism everyone does

but we criticise ourselves the most. We are playing for the country and when we don't do well it hurts us the most," he said.

'DIFFERENT MISTAKES'

India will be looking to finalise their combinations for the T20 World Cup in the six home games against Australia and South Africa. Rahul said the team is yet to play to its full potential.

"Skill wise our performance was only 80-85 percent. We are still not very good in terms of batting or excellent in bowling or fielding. There are a few things we need to fix.

"You can only win big events if all these are done well and the team comes together to win championship."

We are athletes, not robots: Vinesh lashes out at critics



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Firing a salvo at the "so called fans and experts" on social media, star Indian wrestler Vinesh Phogat denounced the negative criticism hurled at her during the World Championship, saying the 'athletes are not robots.'

Vinesh also exhorted fellow athletes to keep working hard so that this uncalled for criticism culture ends.

On a road to redemption, Vinesh became the first Indian woman wrestler to win two World Championship medals when she grabbed a 53kg bronze in Belgrade last week. However, her manner of

defeat against Mongolia's Khulan Batkhuyag (0-7) in the Qualification round, evoked sharp criticism on social media platforms.

Vinesh, though, made a strong come back as she won her two repechage rounds and then the bronze play-off without conceding a single point.

The 28-year-old is not someone who holds back and she came out with a long statement, that gave a sense of how hurt she was by the criticism.

"Athletes are humans and while being an athlete is a huge part of who we are, it doesn't mean we work like robots every time a tournament is announced. Not sure if this

culture is in every country or this is just India where we have so many experts sitting at home," Vinesh wrote in her post.

"Every individual, professional or not, has chased hardships, struggles and challenges through their journey.

"Difference is the world does not comment and criticise them, thinking they are experts on those professionals and their careers. But we have many who consider themselves as experts on sports who think they know the efforts, the hardships and what goes into training an athlete."

Vinesh questioned the unrelenting scrutiny on athletes.

"Why are we as athletes answerable to them about every detail when all athletes get back is comments on how they should train, what they should do instead of support and encouragement when times are tough.

"It is very discouraging when people assume they can comment on when athletes should stop or end their career, when they should play and not play.

"A win always does not mean that an athlete has done anything extra extraordinary and a loss does not mean that the athlete has not tried during that game. Winning and losing is a part of every athlete's journey and the athletes try hard each time."

Trying to be as adaptable as possible: Sam Curran

IAN S ■ KARACHI

Back in the T20I mix for England and in their squad for Men's T20 World Cup in Australia next month, all-rounder Sam Curran has said he is trying to adapt to different roles to what extent he can do during the T20I series against Pakistan, starting from Tuesday.

In white-ball matches of home summer, Curran batted at top of the order by Surrey in the T20 Blast and then by Oval Invincibles in the Hundred. But with England having a settled top-order, it means that Curran may have to be the finisher or be a floater till the Men's T20 World Cup.

"I'm trying to be as adaptable as possible. I'm sure there's going to be a lot of rotation: guys coming back from injury, newer guys coming in. My role might vary as guys come back or guys come in. The role I'm given is just to contribute with the ball when I bowl and when I'm batting."

"That may be lower down the order here but I guess it's about adapting to conditions. I don't think about it too much at Surrey or in the Hundred because I had pretty set roles but with England, naturally I do because we've got so many all-rounders who can be adaptable."

"I might get sent up as a floater to take on different types of bowlers. Whenever I do play for England, I play with an open mind. You don't just want to be a cricketer whose set for one role which I think is one of my strengths: to be as adaptable (as possible) for the captain and for guys in the team," said Curran in the press conference ahead of first T20I.

Curran couldn't play for England in last year's Men's T20 World Cup held in the UAE as he was ruled out with a lower back stress fracture which he sustained during the second half of IPL 2021, where he was playing for Chennai Super Kings.



Ali returns to roots as England face Pakistan in T20I series

AP ■ KARACHI

Moeen Ali returns to his roots in Pakistan to lead England in a seven-match series as both nations fine-tune for next month's T20 World Cup.

Ali will captain England because T20 skipper Jos Buttler is recovering from a calf injury and is expected to play in only one or two games toward the end of the series, which begins Tuesday.

"Captaining England in any game, anywhere in the world, is a huge honor," Ali said.

"Obviously, with my roots being from here and to lead England ... it's huge and it's (a) very proud moment for me and my family, my mum and dad and everybody."

England's first tour to Pakistan since 2005 starts in Karachi, which will host four games. The remaining three will be played in Lahore from Sept. 28-Oct. 2.

Buttler is with the squad and has been undergoing rehabilitation, but Ali said the recurring of the injury during the Hundred back home has forced the England captain to be extra careful.

"Maybe in the back end of the tour he will play one or two games, but we're not sure yet," Ali said.

"Obviously with the World Cup in Australia, it's huge for



us and we want him fully fit for the whole competition there."

The T20 World Cup begins in mid-October.

At least eight members of the England squad like Ali himself, Harry Brook, Alex Hales and Phil Salt have experience playing in Pakistan for various franchises in the Pakistan Super League.

That experience could come in handy for an England team that is without its key T20 World Cup player Ben Stokes.

Fast bowlers Mark Wood and Chris Woakes are returning to the team after being sidelined for most of the summer

because of injuries. Jonny Bairstow was ruled out of the T20 World Cup due to freak injury while playing golf while out-of-form Jason Roy was dropped both for the tour of Pakistan and the T20 World Cup.

Despite so many injury problems, Ali still believes England has enough firepower to challenge a strong Pakistan team that recently lost to Sri Lanka in the final of the Asia Cup.

"The only person I think that's not here is Ben Stokes from the guys who could be here," Ali said.