

OPINION 6

THE KEY TO WILD
LIFE CONSERVATION

WORLD 8

NATO BELIEVES BALTIC SEA
GAS LEAKS WERE SABOTAGE

MONEY 10

INDIA 'STAR' EMERGING
MARKET ECONOMY: S&P

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**BUMRAH OUT
OF ICC MEN'S
T20 WC 2022
12 SPORT**

'All women entitled to safe, legal abortion'

Now, SC extends provision of MTP at 24 weeks to single ladies too

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In a landmark order, the Supreme Court held on Thursday that all women are entitled to safe and legal abortion till 24 weeks of pregnancy under the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, and making any distinction on the basis of their marital status is "constitutionally unsustainable". The apex court also said that the meaning of offence of rape must include marital rape for the purpose of the MTP Act.

A Bench of Justices DY Chandrachud, JB Pardiwala and AS Bopanna said the rights of reproductive autonomy give similar rights to unmarried women as that to married women. The Bench, in its verdict, said the distinction between married and unmarried women under the abortion laws is "artificial and constitutionally unsustainable" and perpetuates the stereotype that only married women are sexually active.

Under the MTP Act provisions, the upper limit for the termination of pregnancy is 24 weeks for married women,



THE CATEGORIES OF WOMEN MENTIONED IN RULE 3B OF THE MTP RULES FRAMED BY THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

- Survivors of sexual assault or rape or incest
- Minors
- Change of marital status during the ongoing pregnancy (widowhood and divorce)
- Women with physical disabilities, major disability as per criteria laid down under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.
- Mentally-ill women including mental retardation;
- The foetal malformation that has substantial risk of being incompatible with life or if the child is born it may suffer from such physical or mental abnormalities to be seriously handicapped;
- Women with pregnancy in humanitarian settings or disaster or emergency situations as may be declared by the Government.

special categories including survivors of rape and other vulnerable women such as the differently-abled and minors. However, the time period is 20 weeks for widows and unmarried women, who are or were in consensual relationships, for allowing abortion under the statute.

The Bench delivered the verdict on the interpretation of the MTP Act and whether unmarried women or single women can be allowed like their married counterparts the benefit of abortion up to 24 weeks.

The Bench, on August 23, had reserved its verdict on interpretation of the MTP Act provisions which makes a distinction between married and unmarried women on the issue of abortion.

Observing there is a need to "fine-tune" the provisions in the MTP rules, the top court had also said it would like to add a category of women, who suffer desertion irrespective of marital status, to the seven categories of women eligible to seek abortion till 24 weeks of pregnancy.

Gift to women came just after Safe Abortion Day

The SC's decision was a gift to women on International Safe Abortion Day. After the judgment was pronounced, a lawyer informed the Bench that September 28 happens to be the international safe abortion day.

"I had no idea that this would coincide with safe abortion day. Thank you for informing us", Justice Chandrachud said.

Gehlot out of prez race, Digvijaya gets Cong nod

Rajasthan CM apologises to Sonia, but fate seems uncertain

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ending days of speculation ahead of the Congress' forthcoming presidential polls, former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Digvijaya Singh on Thursday reportedly got the nod from the party High Command to contest the election for the AICC's top post as the party's "official" candidate in place of Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot.

Gehlot, who met Congress interim president Sonia Gandhi on Thursday, has paid the price for failing the "loyalty" test and publically humiliating the party. The Congress High Command is unlikely to forgive him anytime soon for orchestrating a rebellion in Jaipur against the party's central leadership.

After meeting Sonia, the Rajasthan Chief Minister announced that he was out of the race for the presidential elections. Gehlot also said he apologised to the Congress chief for the developments on Sunday, when MLAs supporting him defied the central observers and thwarted their move to hold a meeting of party legislators. Gehlot may



Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot addressing media persons after a meeting with party interim President Sonia Gandhi, at 10 Janpath in New Delhi on Thursday

have apologised to Sonia, but his fate seems uncertain now. Congress general secretary KC Venugopal has said the party president will decide on the Rajasthan Chief Minister's post within a day or two.

Gehlot, a three-time Chief Minister, described himself as a disciplined soldier of the party and expressed his sadness over the turn of events in the State.

Asked if he will continue as Chief Minister, Gehlot said Gandhi will decide on the issue.

"For the last 50 years, I have worked as a loyal Congress soldier from the time

of Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi, Narasimha Rao, and Sonia ji, be it becoming a Central Minister or State unit chief, general secretary, or Chief Minister for the third time, I cannot forget that. The events that happened (on Sunday) have shaken all of us. Only I know how hurt I am because a message went out that I want to remain Chief Minister," Gehlot said.

"I have apologised to Sonia ji because a simple resolution, which is our tradition and which we always pass, could not be passed as a situation emerged. I, as a CLP leader, whatever the reasons, could not get the resolution passed," he said.

Meanwhile, talking to the media at the AICC headquarters Digvijaya Singh said he has collected the nomination papers and will most probably file them on Friday. Asked if he was acting at the behest of the party leadership, he said, "I am responsible for myself".

More than 10 Congress legislators from Madhya Pradesh will reach Delhi to be the proposers for Digvijaya Singh when he files his nomination. Singh, arrived in Delhi late Wednesday night leaving the Bharat Jodo Yatra midway.

₹5 cr fine on PFI for damage during Kerala strike: HC

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The Popular Front of India (PFI), which was banned for five years by the Union Home Ministry on Thursday, got another jolt in the form of an order by the Kerala High Court (HC) to deposit ₹5.2 crore with the Additional Chief Secretary (Government of Kerala), towards the damages estimated by the State Administration as well as the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation on account of its flash strike on September 23.

The PFI observed the strike across Kerala to protest arrests of its leaders from different places in the State on September 22.

A Division Bench of Justices AK Jayasankaran Nambiar and C P Mohammed Nias ruled that the PFI and its general secretary were "wholly and directly" respon-



Association for Protection of Democratic Rights (APDR) and Bandi Mukti Committee members being detained by police during a protest against the ban on PFI and its affiliate organisations, in Kolkata on Thursday

sible for the injuries inflicted by their supporters on the citizens as also for the damage caused to public and private properties.

The PFI activists had rioted across the State on

September 23 and forced shopkeepers to down their shutters and blocked roads.

They damaged commodities stored in the shops of traders who refused to oblige them.

Oracle fined \$23 mn for bribing officials in India, Turkey and UAE

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) on September 27 fined tech giant Oracle \$23 million for violating the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) for creating slush funds for bribing officials in India, Turkey and the UAE.

This is the second time Oracle has been accused of engaging in corrupt practices in India. In 2012, the SEC had fined Oracle for corrupt practices in India in relation to the contracts with the Ministry of Information Technology in 2006-2008.

As per the 10 page order by SEC, \$3,92,000 (₹2.8 crore) was the slush funds created by Oracle India to bribe an Indian Railway owned Transport firm

in 2019.

Detailing the company's India operations, the SEC said Oracle India's employees used "an excessive discount scheme" in connection with a transaction in 2019 with a transportation company owned by the Ministry of Railways.

However, the order by SEC did not specify the name of the transport company.

The page 6 of SEC's order details the Oracle operation in India with a headline "Improper Conduct at Oracle India". It said in 2019, Oracle India sales employees also used an excessive discount scheme in connection with a transaction with a transportation company, a majority of which was owned by the Indian Ministry of Railways (Indian SOE).

175 drug peddlers held after CBI raids on narco networks

Nationwide raids held to dismantle, disrupt networks with int'l linkages

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The CBI on Thursday carried out a massive nationwide crackdown on narcotics networks in coordination with the Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB), Interpol and police in multiple States. The searches led to the arrest of 175 alleged drug peddlers and seizure of narcotics.

The CBI carried out the raids as part of "Operation Garuda" which started earlier this week to "disrupt, degrade and dismantle" drug networks with international linkages, the CBI said in a statement.

The global operation was



planned through a "rapid exchange" of intelligence on narco-trafficking and coordinated actions with enforcement agencies across international jurisdictions through Interpol, it said.

The police of eight States and Union Territories, including Punjab, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, and Maharashtra, and the NCB

tracked around 6,600 suspects during the operation. The agencies filed 127 FIRs and arrested 175 people, including six absconders and proclaimed offenders, the CBI said.

The agencies targeted smuggling of illicit drugs and psychotropic substances, with a special focus on the Indian Ocean Region, the statement said.

CAPSULE

INTEREST RATES HIKED ON SMALL SAVING SCHEMES

New Delhi: The Government on Thursday raised rates on some small savings schemes by up to 30 basis points in line with the hardening interest rate in the economy.

SC ORDERS NAVLAKHA'S HOSPITALISATION

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday directed the Taloja Jail Superintendent to immediately shift activist Gautam Navlakha, jailed in connection with the Elgar Parishad-Maoist link case, to Mumbai's Jaslok Hospital for treatment. P-5

TWIN BLASTS RATTLE UDHAMPUR

Udhampur: The garrison city of Udhampur, housing Indian army's Northern command headquarters, was rattled by the twin bomb blasts inside passenger buses.

6 airbags in cars mandate put off by one year

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari on Friday announced that the implementation of "the proposal mandating a minimum of six airbags in passenger cars (M-1 category) would be from October 1, 2023." Earlier it was planned to be implemented from this October.

"Considering the global supply chain constraints being faced by the auto industry and its impact on the macroeconomic scenario, it has been decided to implement the proposal mandating

a minimum of six airbags in passenger cars (M-1 Category) w.e.f October 01, 2023," Gadkari said in a statement released by the Ministry.

The Road Ministry had earlier announced mandatory six airbags from October 1, 2022.

Earlier in September, MoRTH issued draft rules to make it mandatory for car makers to install an alarm system for rear seat belts.

Besides, there has to be a speed alert system to check over-speeding and manual override for the central locking system.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the inauguration of 36th National Games in Ahmedabad on Thursday

4 regions of Ukraine to be annexed by Russia today; Kyiv defiant

KYIV ■ AP

Russia confirmed on Thursday it will formally annex parts of Ukraine where occupied areas held Kremlin-orchestrated "referendums" on living under Moscow's rule that the Ukrainian Government and the West denounced as illegal and rigged. Russian President Vladimir Putin will attend a ceremony on Friday in the Kremlin when four regions of Ukraine will be officially folded into Russia, spokesmen Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

Peskov said the pro-Moscow administrators of the regions will sign treaties to join Russia during the cere-

mony at the Kremlin's St. George's Hall.

Administrations in the four regions of southern and eastern Ukraine claimed on Tuesday night that 93 per cent of the ballots cast in the Zaporizhzhia region supported annexation, as did 87 per cent in the Kherson region, 98 per cent in the Luhansk region and 99 per cent in Donetsk.

However, an adviser to Ukraine's President said that Ukraine was determined to reclaim territory that Russia will annex and takes seriously Moscow's threats to use nuclear weapons in the war with its neighbour.

Police warn over objectionable posts on social media

Issue helpline number

PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR

The administration has issued warnings against objectionable social media posts during the festive season.

Addressing the media, SSP Prabhat Kumar said that action will be taken against those who post objectionable comments and pictures on social media platforms. He said that the police are keeping a vigil on social media. The police have issued helpline numbers 7091091825 and 9508280796.

We have issued a circular against objectionable posts. We have put social media under the scanner. Those indulged in criminal



activities in the city refrain from committing crime and lead a peaceful life, otherwise action will be taken against them," said Kumar.

"I warn criminals not to take the police for granted. If any of them are also caught with fire-arms, then we will take stern action against the person involved.

Arms-checking will be intensified in the next few days and the offenders will have to face jail terms if

caught with the fire-arms," said the senior police officer.

An official said that social media will be under scanner due to recent spreading of rumours via various social media platforms on the occasion of Durga Puja.

He said that in the recent past several incidents took place in the city due to rumours spreading on networking sites. This time the police will ensure that such

messages are put under scanner and those found guilty are taken into task. A strict vigil will be kept on such sites.

He also released an appeal to the citizens requesting them not to give air to any such rumours.

In the circular Jamshedpur Police said: "All the district residents are appealed not to post any kind of factless, misleading, false and violent, objectionable, inflammatory messages and videos on social media platforms WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram. Check the facts before sharing any post.

Police are keeping a close watch on those posting such messages and videos and they are being identified, necessary legal action is

also being taken against them.

All group admins of groups created on social media should not have such posts in their respective groups. Otherwise legal action will be taken against them.

Do not pay attention to any kind of factless rumours. Information about those who posted inflammatory messages and videos or any other information or information, call the nearest police station or mobile / WhatsApp number 7091091825 / 9508280796 on WhatsApp or 100/112, so that necessary legal action will be taken against anti-social elements.

The identity of the person giving information will be kept confidential.

Scouts and guides to help Admin during Durga Puja

VINOD PRASAD ■ LOHARDAGA

The scouts and guides always need to be associated with social concern. DC Waghmare Prasad Krishna said while addressing the Scouts and Guides associated with Bharat Scout Guide in the police line located in the suburban area of Baksidipa in the city.

The DC said that in today's environment apart from academic work, other activities should also be done in student life. Self confidence is strengthened by doing service work. SPR

Ram Kumar said that it is a matter of great pride for the student who came to the training to remain in discipline. This is the basic mantra of Scouting Guiding. All of you will be given other responsibilities along with traffic control near the pandal during Durga Puja festival.

Scouts and guides doing commendable work will be rewarded with a citation. Sub-Divisional Officer Arvind Kumar Lal talked about assimilating the responsibility given in the training. The scout guide

was trained by Sergeant Major Suresh Chandra Ojha and traffic in-charge Santosh Yadav. The training program was started by the District Organization Commissioner Gautam Lenin with a scout prayer. The program was conducted by Shaileendra Kumar Suman, District Secretary, Bharat Scout Guide. On the spot, police station in-charge Lohardaga Anil Oraon, Ramanand Yadav of Police Line, District Joint Secretary Mumtaz Ahmed Paras Sahu, teachers Arun Ram, Vijay Kumar, Syed



Amanullah, Mahadev Tana Bhagat, Kanta Bada Rekha Kujur, Sandhya Singh, Anamika Bharti and representatives of schools were present.

Official Language Fortnight concludes at CTPS

PNS ■ BOKARO

Official Language Fortnight, which was organised by the Official Language Implementation Sub-Committee of Chandrapura Thermal Power Station (CTPS) a unit of Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) concluded on Thursday.

During the event, the Chief Engineer and Project Head Ajay Kumar Dutta stated that although we are all comfortable speaking and understanding Hindi, we



find it difficult to write in the language. Now is the time to overcome the hesitation to

write in Hindi and perform some work in Hindi every day. It is necessary to over-

come the reluctance to write in Hindi. At least we must sign in Hindi, he added.

Dutta said, sports commentators once solely spoke English, but today they also do it in Hindi. The Hindi Proclamation is well-known; it (Hindi) connects people.

Several events were organized during this fortnight and winners included Rajeev Ranjan Singha, Baldev Ram, Animesh Giri, Akshay Kumar, Nilesh Kumar, Basant Kumar Mohapatra, Laxmi Narayan Sahu, Pramod

Kumar Jha, Taran Kumar Pandey, Nilesh Nimbhorkar, Shritam Kumar Vishoyi, Pintu Kumar Mahato, Pradeep Kumar, Karthik Kumar Mahato, Prakash Kumar, Ramji Rajak, Shailesh Kumar and members of the jury Pradeep Kumar Srivastava, Ranjit Kumar Nirala, Poonam Kumari were felicitated by Ajay Kumar Dutta, Chief Engineer and Project Head, Chief Engineer Sunil Kumar Pandey, Pawan Kumar Mishra and Additional Director Dilip Kumar.



Tata Motors Hospital observes World Heart Day

PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR

Every year, on 29th September, World Heart Day is observed worldwide with a view to distributing knowledge about heart disease, its causes, preventive methods, etc. In line with the commitment and responsibility of the Tata group which seeks to improve the lives of the community and society as a whole, observing this day was thought to be important for one and all. At Tata Motors Hospital, Jamshedpur, this day is observed each year with the objective to spread community awareness among our patients, the general public, and citizens of the city of Jamshedpur. As in the earlier years, an early morning 4.2 km walk was undertaken by medical, administrative, and nursing staff of the hospital, Occupational Health Center as well as high-ranking officials of the Tata Motors Plant, Jamshedpur. The walk was preceded by a short introduction to the need to have knowledge about heart disease by Dr. Sanjay Kumar, FRCS, Head of Tata Motors Hospital. Thereafter, Plant Head of Tata Motors Plant, Jamshedpur, Mr. Ravindra

WORLD HEART DAY

Kulkarni gave his wise words of encouragement and flagged off the walk after releasing red balloons.

BNMH's mega walkathon on World Heart Day



PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR

A Mega Walkathon was organised by Brahmanand Narayan Multispeciality Hospital on World Heart Day. People in large numbers took part enthusiastically. The walkathon started from JRD Tata Sports Complex (near Modi Park) at 6.30 am and culminated back to Modi Park via Strait Mile Road, Sakshi Main Circle, Jubilee Park Road (Red Cross Society). The walkathon was inaugurated by renowned cardiac surgeon Dr Parvez Alam, Senior Cardiologist Dr Ajay Agarwal, Dr Abhay Krishna, Medical Superintendent Dr Mukesh Kumar, Clinical Director Dr ML Ali, First Indian Woman Boxing Coach Taruna Mishra and Hospital's Facility Director Vineet Raj. Dr Parvez Alam said that we should include walking in our lifestyle so that we can keep our heart healthy. On the other hand, Dr Ajay Agarwal told

that every year on World Heart Day, a symbolic walkathon is organized by the hospital, whose aim is to add walking (jogging) to our lifestyle. Dr. Abhay Krishna gave the message of leading an active lifestyle to keep the heart healthy.

Free mega heart checkup camp held at HZB Arogyam Hospital



AVINASH ANJAN ■ HAZARIBAG

HZB Arogyam Superspeciality Hospital organized a free mega heart check-up camp on the occasion of World Heart Day on Thursday. A total of 110 patients suffering from heart disease got their treatment in the camp. In the camp, the hospital's cardiologist Dr. DM Cardiologist Dr. Mrunal Kunj examined the patients and gave proper medical advice. In the camp, ECG, blood sugar, blood pressure, heart rate and proper medical consultation from an experienced cardiologist doctor were provided free of cost by the hospital and many important medicines were also provided free of cost. In the camp, many heart related problems were found in the patients at an early age who were advised by Dr. Mrunal Kunj to stay away from smoking and addictions by taking nutritious diet and regular exercise for better health and happy life with immediate better treatment.

Lumpy skin disease strikes in Latehar district

M F AHMAD ■ DALTONGANJ

Lumpy skin disease virus (LSDV) has struck in two blocks of Latehar. There is no report of any fatality. Latehar district animal husbandry officer Deonath Chourasia said one heifer is afflicted with LSDV in Balumath block.

The other case of LSDV is in Barvadeeh block where an ox is afflicted with LSDV said Chourasia.

These two cases were brought to the notice of the administration only this Saturday.

Chourasia said although there is no reason to panic but at the same time there is no room for complacency as well.

Owners of cattle should be wary of the LSDV as its symptoms are too glaring like nodules on the skin, fever, watery eyes, nasal discharge, reduction in milk

production, weight loss and loss of appetite, said Chourasia.

He said LSDV is no zoonotic disease nevertheless there is a caution to such people who handle lumpy skin disease suffering cattle.

The world organisation of animal health has categorised LSDV as a notifiable disease all over the world where a cattle farmer is duty bound to inform the

nearest animal husbandry personnel about any incident happening to his cattle.

Sources said the LSDV has not struck for the first time as it was seen in 2019 as well in Jharkhand.

Chourasia said "I was posted in Jamshedpur in 2019. There LSDV erupted. It was then controlled with antibiotics like amoxicillin etc. But this time it is showing resistance to this kind of the antibiotics and this is a

matter of concern."

There is no specific treatment for the LSDV but nevertheless goat pox vaccines are available and it has been found effective to some extent at least preventing it from becoming an outbreak.

Chourasia said we have received 15,000 rupees for the vaccination of the cattle where there is a dose of it for the infected one and non infected one.

REGION

Palamu police seize 320 kgs of marijuana, 2 arrested

PNS ■ DALTONGANJ

In the biggest ever haul of the marijuana Palamu police in the intervening night on September 28/29 seized 320 kgs on the NH 75. SDPO Surjit Kumar said police have arrested the driver and apprentice of the truck.

The two arrested belong to Odisha. They have been identified as Devender (driver) and Manoj Sethi apprentice.

The marijuana consignment was coming by road from Sambalpur in Orissa. It was a precise tip off about marijuana and the police team led by SDPO Surjit Kumar acted quite flawlessly. The SDPO said there was a secret box in the truck where there were



SP Palamu Chandan Kumar Sinha during a press conference in connection with seizure of marijuana in Daltonganj on Thursday. PNS containers for hiding these banned narcotic marijuana. Satbarwa police have registered the case.

Satija is new Chairman of Skill Council for Mining Sector

PNS ■ JAMSHEDPUR

Pankaj K Satija, Managing Director, Tata Steel Mining Ltd has been unanimously elected as Chairman of the Skill Council for Mining Sector (SCMS), during the 9th Annual General body meeting held at FIMI house, New Delhi. Satija is an alumni of IIT (ISM) Dhanbad and has been associated with Tata Steel where he has handled many roles in strategy, planning, operations and regulatory affairs. He has been a founder member in establishing SCMS and keeps contributing to SCMS as a very active board member. Expressing his gratitude to the board members for the opportunity given, Pankaj Satija has pledged to put all his efforts to make stakeholders more aware about the skilling ecosystem and strengthen the activities undertaken by SCMS. SCMS, promoted by Federation of Indian Mineral Industries (FIMI) and supported by Ministry of Mines, Government of India, was established in December 2013 as the apex body to train and meet the requirement of skilled workforce for the mining industry in Public-Private Partnership mode. It was set up by National Skill Development Corporation under the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE). MSDE has authorized SCMS as a non-statutory agency for certifying the mining workforce in India and is regulated by the National Council of Vocational Education and Training (NCVET) under the aegis of MSDE.



IINRG holds awareness drive, Field visit under MGMT Programme

PNS ■ RANCHI

A team of scientific and technical officers from ICAR-Indian Institute of Natural Resin and Gums, Ranchi visited Sildah village in Khunti district under the "Mera Gaon Mera Gaurav" programme on Thursday. The team contacted farmers engaged in lac production, self-



help women groups and local officials from the villages. During this programme, Dr. Achintya Pramanik, scientist, discussed the importance of lac host plant diversification for sustainable lac production. He also made the lac growers aware about the new bushy host plant Calliandra calothyrsus and emphasized about the proper and scientific management of pests and diseases of lac crop to get maximum benefit. Dr. Roy Chowdhury, scientist, discussed soil fertility management for raising healthy lac host plants and also advised the farmers to follow integrated nutrient management. Dr. C Jamkhokai Mate, scientist, discussed the different application areas of lac resin and also emphasized about the economic benefit of lac cultivation. Vidya-pati Vidyakar, Technical Assistant discussed the scientific lac cultivation in different lac host plants. More than 25 farmers from Sildah village participated in this program and showed their interest for lac cultivation on bushy lac host plant Calliandra calothyrsus. The team distributed 150 saplings of bushy lac host plant Calliandra calothyrsus among the farmers.

DPS Bokaro observes Higher Education, Guidance Day

PNS ■ BOKARO

An education fair was organised at DPS Bokaro in association with 'iEducationalize' to make the students aware of the courses available in various universities and provide them exposure to the opportunities available. This fair featured spot application availability under one roof for various universities. It also provided an opportunity for the students of classes XI and XII to get first-hand information about the career opportunities available. Students availed the opportunity to clarify their doubts.

A.S. Gangwar, Principal, DPS Bokaro, said that the best form of education is the one that employs a skilled and disciplined quest to explore ideas that result in improved understanding. He said this fair would generate many ideas to help students in their career prospects. Through this initiative, we look forward to bringing about holistic growth wherein children are able to think beyond the accepted notions. Around 12 universities across the country updated the students on career opportunities in Aviation, Management, Journalism, Mass Communication, Law, Designing and Multimedia apart from the basic Engineering, Medical and Civil Services.



Road safety standard must be maintained: DC

SHAILESH SHARMA ■ HAZARIBAG

Four and two wheelers drivers must maintain the standards of road safety. The license of irresponsible drivers must be cancelled by the District Transport Officer (DTO) of the district. The special monitoring committee members must visit the accident prone areas and submit the report to the district administration, said DC Nancy Sahay in the monthly review meeting with the core committee members of road safety. She further said that this is the basic duty of the members of the committee to check the speed of the vehicles. Those who will not follow the standard of road safety, they must be fined and in the serious cases sent to jail also. The members must check the driver who is driving under drink, and must check through a breathalyzer. If the driver is found guilty than must be fined. She said that the good coordination must be with the health, transport and road construction department. The DC further said that when the road safety team visits the accidental spot then public representative, circle officers and block development officers must be there. She has emphasized on the target of road safety. The core committee members must be alert to minimize the road accident in the district. The committee members must be instructed to the contractor to fix the safety board before the bridges and road constructions.



Cabinet nod to construction of highways, bus terminal

Flying Institute training centre to come up at Dumka

PNS ■ RANCHI

The Jharkhand Government's Cabinet meeting was held at Project Bhawan on Thursday, where 30 proposals were approved. Most of the Cabinet proposals were related to various departments such as construction of highways, government buildings and others. In one of the major policy decisions, the Jharkhand Mineral Development Corporation Limited was given the extension of operation of Category II sand ghats in the state for the next three years.

The cabinet also gave its nod to construction of four lanes Ranchi- Purulia Road from Namkom ROB to San-

gra, in which the government will spend Rs 181.73 crore. Similarly, Rs 111.35 crore plans have been approved for four lanes of Bargai Lem Bodeya Road in Bariatu. The construction of a four lane road will ease traffic congestion of these two routes.

The Cabinet has also approved the proposal to construct a 100-bed critical care block health hospital building at Lohardaga, Khunti, Seraikela Kharsawan.

Cabinet decision for setting up Jharkhand Flying Institute Committee was also taken up, the institute training centre will be established in Dumka. A proposal has also been approved for construction of 256 houses for leprosy patients at Mudma Mauja in Nagri block, at a cost of Rs 33.25 crore.

A plan of Rs 76.45 crore was approved to make the 7 km long Dumka bypass four lanes. In Bokaro Rehabilitation Area, 20.46 acres of land has been given for the establishment of the Technical Center. The post of 22 District Judges was extended for hearing pending cases of rape and POSCO Act. The benefits of the new pension were given to 180 madrasa teachers and pension gratuity to the deficiencies on the teacher. A post was created for the Principal Judge in the Family Court, Ramgarh. The principal and superintendent of Civil Surgeon Medical College have been given permission to take 44 vehicles from outsourcing, in which 34 vehicles are Bolero and 10 buses.

The cabinet has approved a scheme of Rs 70.40 crore

for interstate bus terminal on PPP mode in Jamshedpur. The proposal to merge the election cadre with the Jharkhand Administrative Service was given post-facto approval. Jharkhand Bijli Vitran Nigam Limited has been given approval to give 2632 crore loan under outstanding payment for electricity taxes. Jharkhand Industrial Park Logistics Policy 2022 has been approved. Approval was given to create one post of Audit Officer and one post of Finance Officer in Finance Department under Higher Technical Education Department. The Revised Rehabilitation Policy 2012 of the Water Resources Department was extended for the next 5 years till 31 March 2027.

An amendment has been made in the Jharkhand Staff Selection Examination Con-

ducting Rules 2021, in which the examination paper for the posts of Diploma Technical Service has been amended. ITIs run by industrial houses were allowed to operate on PPP mode. Gola Engineering College was approved to operate on PPP mode with the institution at Bangalore. Appointment and ceiling of competent authority was fixed for the expenditure of funds received from sources other than the plan budget. Land was given to M/s Rungta for 30 years on payment of 8 crores of 8 crores in Mauja Kujji of Rajnagar area of Seraikela. Approval was given to take loan from JCF 6.92 crore for papers etc. in High Court Ranchi. The post creation approval of four judicial officers at Barhi was also given nod to in today's cabinet meeting.

Official Language Fortnight concludes at ECR

Cultural programmes, felicitation ceremony organised

PNS ■ RANCHI

An award distribution function and cultural programme was organized at East Central Railway Headquarters, Hajipur on Thursday under the chairmanship of General Manager Anupam Sharma on the concluding day of the Official Language Fortnight. On this occasion, certificates and cash prizes were given to the winners of the competition and railwaymen and officers who did commendable work in the use and propagation of official language Hindi during the year 2021-22. Along with this, group award was given to the best library, best committee and collective award under Administration Department, ECR/Hajipur, operating branch of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Mandal and Mechanical Factory, ECR/Samastipur.

The function started with a splendid presentation of a cultural programme by the HQ Kala Samiti, in which railroad artists presented one-of-a-kind songs and dances. GM Anupam Sharma while congratulating the Department of Official Language for organizing the programme also congratulated all the award winners



for doing commendable work in Hindi and asked them to always be alert to give further impetus to the use of Official Language Hindi.

In his address on this special occasion, the GM said that the overall development of a country, society or individual is possible only through its own language. It is our responsibility that we do most of our work in Hindi, railways also has a big contribution in this because it binds the whole country in one thread. All the officers and employees of the railways should do maximum work in the official language while discharging their responsibilities.

On this occasion, AGM Tarun Prakash said that being situated in 'A' region, it is necessary that we do most of our work in Hindi. We are all Hindi speaking, so there is no problem in working in

Hindi. Today working in Hindi in computer has become very easy. He asked to make every effort to promote the use and spread of the official language.

It is noteworthy that Rajbhasha Pakhwada-2022 was organized by the Department of Official Language at East Central Railway Headquarters, Hajipur from 14th September to 29th September. It was inaugurated on 14.09.2022 under the chairmanship of General Manager Anupam Sharma. In the same sequence, Hindi workshop on 16.09.22, Hindi speech on 21.09.22, Hindi noting and draft writing on 20.09.22, Hindi speech on 21.09.22, Hindi note and draft writing on 22.09.22, Hindi quiz (for officers) on 22.09.22, Hindi quiz (for employees) on 23.09.22, Hindi quiz (for employees) on 26.09.21.

90% subsidy to women under the aegis of the Pashudhan Vikas Yojana

Amendments made in subsidies on the instructions of CM

PNS ■ RANCHI

By the order of the Chief Minister, work towards strengthening the economic conditions of the rural population, by extending them the benefits of the Mukhyamantri Pasudhan Vikas Yojana has begun within a week. Due Amendments have been made to the subsidies that are to be given to the beneficiaries under the sub-scheme run by the Directorate of Gayya Development with its set target to give thrust to Animal Husbandry in



the state. Under the umbrella of this scheme women belonging to families that are affected by disasters, fire or road accidents, abandonment or are Divyangs shall be given two milch animals namely cows and buffaloes at a subsidy of 90 percent. Prior to this the same was being provided to the beneficiaries at 50 percent subsidy.

Following the order of the

CM grants for various schemes run under the Directorate of Animal Husbandry such as for Goat Rearing, Swine Rearing, Backyard Poultry Rearing, Broiler Poultry Rearing, Duck-Chick Rearing besides Cow Rearing have been amended. Except for the Widows, Childless Couple and Divyangs all other beneficiaries are to get 75 per cent grant. Prior to this 50 per cent subsidy was being given. Under the sub-schemes of Kamdhenu Dairy Farming Scheme the subsidy being provided to the beneficiaries coming from the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes for procuring 5 milch animals

namely cows and buffaloes under Mini Dairy scheme, and 10 milch animals under the Midi Dairy Scheme has been increased from 33.33 per cent to 75 per cent. At the same time, the subsidy given to the beneficiaries coming from other categories except that of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes has been increased from 25 to 50 per cent.

Further, amendments have been made in subsidies that are to be given to the beneficiaries for chaff cutter distribution and progressive farming practices. The earlier set subsidy of 50 per cent for manual chaff cutters has been enhanced to 90 per cent for beneficiaries be-

longing to Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribes as well as the Milk Producers Society. At the same time, 75 percent grant has been earmarked for all other castes except the beneficiaries of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Whereas, 90 per cent subsidy is decided to be given to beneficiaries coming from the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes and Milk Producers Society to help them procure Milking Machines, Paneer-Khoya Machines, Cow mats and getting boring done, whereas a subsidy of 75 per cent is to be provided to others in order to encourage Progressive Farming Practices in the State.

IIM-R to support Govt in setting up Model Schools

PNS ■ RANCHI

Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ranchi signed a memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Jharkhand Education Project Council (JEPCC), Government of Jharkhand, on Thursday to support the state government in establishing 405 Adarsha Vidyalaya (Model Schools) across Jharkhand. The agreement will be for the next three years.

According to the MoU, IIM Ranchi will impart leadership training to the Head Masters of these iden-



IIM Ranchi Director Professor Deepak Kumar Srivastava and JEPCC Director Kiran Kumari Pasi exchange documents after signing of an MoU in Ranchi on Thursday. PNS

tified model schools. In the first phase of the training programme, headmasters of 80 model schools will be trained. The training pro-

gramme will be held at IIM Ranchi's campus and JEPCC facilities. This MoU also consists of an impact assessment by IIM Ranchi to eval-

uate the effectiveness of the training program. JEPCC roped in various institutes for this collaboration, among which IIM Ranchi was identified as the partner institute. On this occasion, the director of IIM Ranchi, Prof. Deepak Kumar Srivastava, said, "This collaboration with the Government of Jharkhand is further evidence of our philosophy of global excellence with locally-focused responsiveness. As an institute of national importance, we are not only preparing our students to be industry-ready,

but we are also contributing to society and nation development. We will continue working hard to achieve our target of making IIM Ranchi a premier institute globally and giving back to society simultaneously. We have larger responsibilities toward Jharkhand, it being our home state."

Prof. Srivastava led a team of IIM Ranchi professors, including Prof. Aditya Shankar Mishra, Prof. Saakshi, Prof. Ankur Jha, and Prof. Rojers. JEPCC was represented by its Project Director, Kiran Kumari Pasi, and Abhinav Kumar.

'Inform police about anti-social activities through WhatsApp'

PNS ■ RANCHI

Ranchi Police is on alert mode with upcoming Durga Puja and appealed people not to pay attention to rumours. The City police has also issued a whatsapp number urging people to make call in case of any anti-social activities during puja. Ranchi SSP Kishore Kaushal has issued the fresh directive after a youth was arrested from Sankat Mochan Mandir at Main road for vandalizing Lord Hanuman idol. The control room's WhatsApp number 6299423768 has been issued by the police.

Moreover, residents can also inform police by dialing 100 and also calling 112. People can also inform Ranchi Police through Twitter and Facebook. The Twitter account of Ranchi Police is @ranchipolice and the Facebook page is Ranchi police.

To handle the social media of Ranchi Police, the duty of five policemen in three consecutive shifts has been put in the control room. These policemen are reading the information coming on WhatsApp, Twitter and Facebook and passing it on to their senior officers. SSP Kishore Kaushal has assured the people that Ranchi Police will take immediate action on their every information.

Tension prevailed in the area after an idol of Lord Hanuman was allegedly vandalised by some anti-social elements



Security personnel conduct a flag march to maintain law and order amid the festive season in Ranchi on Thursday. Pix by Vinay Murnu

in Ranchi on Wednesday. The idol of the Hindu deity was kept inside a Hanuman temple located on the main road of Ranchi. However, the police were successful as the youth was arrested on Wednesday morning.

Today the youth was sent to Birsa Munda Central Jail after he was produced before the court of chief judicial magistrate Mithilesh Kumar Singh, and the court took him in judicial custody. The judicial remand is till October 13. The name is Rameez Ahmad, a resident of New Tiwari Tank Road under Hind-

piri police station area.

The incident, which occurred in the early hours on Wednesday, caused tension in the area as a few months' ago violence had erupted in Ranchi followed by police firing on an unruly procession protesting suspended BJP leader Nupur Sharma's controversial statement involving Prophet Mohammed.

In June this year, following the protests over Nupur Sharma's controversial remarks on Prophet Mohammed, a curfew was imposed in violence-hit areas in Ranchi.

Excise Dept issues toll free nos to control malpractices

PNS ■ RANCHI

Excise and Prohibition Department has issued a guideline against charging more prices than MRP at the liquor shops in the State. The department issued guidelines to control the wrongdoing by the shopkeepers to provide immediate help to the customers of the State. Through this, an appeal has been made to the consumers that if the liquor shops charge more money than the MRP, then the customer can call the toll free number and file a complaint.

To increase public participation in the number for product control, one must use this number every working day from 10 am to 6 pm and one can register a complaint by calling the number 18003457024, apart from this two whatsapp numbers 6200482331 and 6200459412. It is active 24 hours 7 days for help. By registering a complaint, the business of illegal liquor and recovery of high rates can be stopped. According to the Excise Commissioner, Jharkhand, toll free numbers and WhatsApp numbers can be used for complaints related to retail liquor shops operated by Jharkhand State Beverages Corporation Limited in the state. Customers being charged more than MRP and other complaints will be resolved on the basis of these numbers. These three numbers are also to be displayed on the display board in every retail liquor store.

JMM attacks Godda MP for spreading false information

PNS ■ RANCHI

Ruling party in the State Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), on Thursday, once again attacked the main opposition party in the State Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and its Godda MP, Nishikant Dubey for spreading false messages on social media platforms.

Addressing a press meet at the party headquarter in the State Capital JMM General Secretary and Spokesperson, Supriyo Bhattacharya once again severely criticized Dubey for circulating a message from social media platform Twitter, which pertains to a report of Hindi daily, which was published in 2018. He said Dubey tagged a Hindi daily's report in



JMM General Secretary Supriyo Bhattacharya addresses media persons at the party office in Ranchi on Thursday. Pix by Ratan Lal

which it said that during the Hemant Soren Government, banned religious outfit PFI members bought 10,000 acres of land acquired by Muslim boys by wedding with tribal girls.

Bhattacharya said that it was a report

of 2018 but Dubey tagged it now and blamed the incumbent Government. Why are they adding the former Government's wrongdoing with the present Government. They are adding every incident with PFI then with whom they will tag with the case of Pauri in Uttarakhand, in which a BJP leader's relative was arrested for killing a girl, he added.

"Leader of BJP are completely frustrated by the decisions of the State Government in public interest. During the season of festivals they are trying to circulate confusion in people's minds. They are saying Rs 1,000 crore scam in sand and ballast in one district in two years only then they should clarify the last 15 years of their tenure how much they

amassed through iron and coal ore. When ED is clearly saying that the minerals loot was started in the previous Raghubar Das Government then how they are blaming the incumbent Chief Minister for the loot," said Bhattacharya.

The party Spokesperson asked till 2019, how many cases were registered under mining loot and from 2020-23 how many cases registered under mining loot. "It is only to malign the image of the State Government, which is the Government of people and doing every work in the people's interest. The social platform should also take the matter seriously that such kinds of people only misusing it. Social media should boycott such kinds of people," he added.

IN BRIEF

RBI observes Hindi Pakhwara

Like every year, Hindi Pakhwada celebrations were celebrated from September 14th to September 29th in the office of Reserve Bank of India (RBI), Ranchi with full enthusiasm. During this various competitions were also organized for the staff members. Hindi Diwas main function was organized on September 29. The function was presided over by General Manager (Officer-in-Charge), Sanjeev Sinha. The Reserve Bank Integrated Ombudsman, Chandana Dasgupta was also present on the occasion. In his address, Sinha said that Hindi is a language which expresses the basic elements of our entire culture. It is now being easily adopted not only in India but all over the world.

XISS, CMPDI organise 'Go Green, Drink Clean'



Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS), Ranchi and CMPDI organised a 'Go Green, Drink Clean' event by its management students in the Balumath block of Latehar district on Thursday. Organised under the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav by the Rural Management Programme of XISS, the event was conducted in two Schools of Bhagea and Siram Village under the Bhagea Panchayat. The students of XISS performed a Nukkad Natak depicting the importance of ecological balance, planting trees and drinking clean water. Director XISS along with CMPDI officials, Faculty members and more than 30 students in each village shared with the school authorities, students, and villagers the importance of keeping their areas clean and green.

SCS celebrates World Heart Day



Surendra nath Centenary school celebrated world heart day. To mark the occasion Dr Ravi Premchand Kachhela a consultant cardiologist of Maa Ram Pyari hospital and father of a student of our school was invited to address the students of classes XI and XII. The main objective of the session was to create awareness of cardiovascular diseases and provide preventive measures to help reduce the casualties due to heart ailments. Dr Ravi discussed the warning signs of heart attack. He demonstrated the clinical procedure of CPR i.e. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation which is a lifesaving technique and an emergency support given in heart attack. The cardiologist also mentioned that the root cause of all diseases is stress. To be healthy, be planned, prepared and happy. The event was graced by the presence of the Vice Principal of the school, teachers and other staff members.

Mahila Samiti organized Navratri festival



Navratri festival was organized in Bokaro club premises by Mahila Samiti, Bokaro. In the program, the chairman of the committee, Anita Tiwari, the vice-chairmen of the committee and other members were present in large numbers. The members worshipped Maa Durga with great devotion and enthusiasm during the Navratri festival. Along with this dance and dandiya were also organized which was enjoyed by all the members. Chairman Anita wished the entire Bokaro family a happy Dussehra and Durga Utsav on behalf of the Mahila Samiti.

Durga Puja celebrations at OPS



Oxford Public School observed a special assembly on the auspicious occasion of Durga Puja to promote the learning of victory of good over evil. The school also applauded and felicitated the winners of the Badminton and Quiz competition. Students participated from varied categories and exhibited their agility, flair and sportive temperament in the Badminton Competition. Academic Director, Dr. Simi Mehta felicitated the winners with certificates and congratulated all on their splendid display of talent and love for sports.

WUIF prepares for litter free Durga Puja



The students of Ranchi, under the banner of Wake Up India Foundation (WUIF), have decided to make Durga Puja pandals litter free. As a part of the two-day campaign, the members of WUIF will install dustbins and create awareness. "Every pandal witnesses hundreds of devotees. However, most of us end up littering the area around the pandal with items such as food, plastic bottles and tissue papers," said Rishi, Vice President, Wake Up India Foundation, Ranchi Chapter. He added, "We have decided to do our bit in keeping the pandals clean this year." As part of the campaign, the members of WUIF will install dustbins and conduct an awareness drive to stop littering. The team will visit RR Sporting Club, Ratu Road, Satya Amar Lok, Marwari Bhawan, and Ranchi Railway Station, Pandal to donate and install dustbins.

Have procedure to punish officers for adultery: SC to Armed forces

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday said Armed forces must have some kind of mechanism for disciplinary proceedings against their officers for adultery as "this is a conduct that can shake up the life of officers".

The top court said adultery creates "pain" in a family and it should not be treated in a lighter manner. "In uniformed services, discipline is of paramount importance. This is conduct that can shake up the life of officers. Everybody is ultimately dependent on the family as a unit of society. The integrity of society is based on the faithfulness of one spouse to another."

"This (adultery) is going to shake the discipline in the Armed forces. Armed forces must have some kind of assurance that they will take action. How can you cite Joseph Shine (judgment) and say it cannot



be," said a five-judge Constitution bench headed by Justice KM Joseph. It said the apex court 2018 judgment, which declared penal provision on adultery as unconstitutional, cannot be referred to halt disciplinary proceedings against guilty. "Adultery creates pain in a family. We have held so many sessions as judges in the high courts and seen so families are torn. We are telling you that do not treat this in a lighter manner."

There was one incident where the mother, who committed adultery filed a habeas

corpus plea seeking custody of her children. They (children) refused to talk to the mother. That's the kind of hate that happens," the bench observed.

The top court, on a plea filed by NRI Joseph Shine, in 2018 had struck down Section 497 of the Indian Penal Code, dealing with the offence of adultery while holding it unconstitutional.

The observations by the bench, also comprising Justices Ajay Rastogi, Aniruddha Bose, Hrishikesh Roy, and C T Ravikumar came after Additional Solicitor General Madhavi Divan, appearing for the Centre, submitted a plea seeking clarification of the 2018 judgment has been filed by her.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) had moved the apex court saying that the September 27, 2018 judgment striking down adultery as an offence could come in the way of armed forces personnel being convicted for adulterous acts.

She told the bench that disciplinary actions were taken against certain army personnel for adultery, however, the Armed Forces Tribunal (AFT) quashed such proceedings in many cases, citing the Joseph Shine judgement. "We are seeking that striking down of section 497 will not come in the way of armed forces taking action against officers for unbecoming conduct," Divan said.

The ASG informed the apex court that disciplinary actions taken in the Army are gender neutral and even if a female officer is found to be indulging in adulterous activities, she will also face action for misconduct.

The top court said there was nothing in the 2018 judgment which precludes the armed forces and it can challenge the individual orders of the AFT. The ASG sought time to go through the 2018 judgment in detail. The top court then posted the matter for hearing on December 6.

Def Min visits LAC, reviews security preparedness

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Thursday reviewed the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) facing China in Arunachal Pradesh and operational readiness of the Armed forces to meet any challenge.

He visited the forward areas of 3 Corps in Anini, a village in Dibang valley of Arunachal Pradesh and made an on-the-ground assessment of the country's defence preparedness along the LAC by taking stock of the entire gamut of security-related aspects, defence ministry officials said here.

Army Chief General Manoj Pande, Eastern Command chief R P Kalita and other senior officers accompanied the defence minister who also interacted with the troops posted in the area. After his visit to the forward areas, Rajnath had an interaction with armed Forces personnel in Tezpur, Assam. In his address, he commended the dedication and sacrifice of the soldiers posted at the borders, bravely protecting the sovereignty,



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh meets troops during his visit to Anini village, in Dibang valley, Arunachal Pradesh on Thursday PTI Photo

unity and integrity of the country. Strengthening India's military prowess has been the government's top priority ever since it came to power since 2014, with focus on equipping the Services with state-of-the-art weapons and equipment through an 'Aatmanirbhar' defence industry, he said. The defence minister appreciated the fact that the government's efforts have resulted in making a strong military which is fully capable of protecting the nation from all kinds of threats. As part of the day's engagements, Rajnath also interacted with the members of second religious expedition to Athu Popu, an annual trek of local Idu Mishmi

tribe, which is being facilitated by the Indian Army since 2021 as part of outreach and continued efforts towards supporting the locals and development of tourism.

On Wednesday, he had visited army formation in Dinjan, Assam. He is on a three-day visit to Assam and Arunachal Pradesh till September 30.

During the visit, the defence minister reviewed the operational readiness of the formation in the easternmost part of the country. He was briefed on infrastructure development along the LAC as well as capability development and operational preparedness.

'India strives to have relationship with China built on respect'

New Delhi/Washington: With most of the stand-offs ending at the border in Ladakh after two years, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said India strives to have a relationship with China that is built on mutual sensitivity, respect and interest.

His remarks late Wednesday in the US capital came on a day when Chinese envoy to New Delhi Sun Weidong said the situation at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) is moving towards being "normalised."

He also called for India and China to work more closely together to resolve differences, in a speech marking the 73rd anniversary of the People's Republic of China.

The Chinese Ambassador's statement comes weeks after the two sides agreed to disengage at Patrolling Point (PP) 15 at the LAC, one of several "friction points." **PNS/AGENCIES**

India, Australia agree to enhance Defence ties

New Delhi: India and Australia reviewed the entire gamut of their defence ties and agreed to further enhance collaboration during talks between Navy Chief Admiral R Hari Kumar and Royal Australian Navy (RAN) chief Vice Admiral Mark Hammond in Australia during his three-day visit there.

Giving details of his visit ending Wednesday, Navy officials said here on Thursday it was the first official visit of Admiral Kumar to Australia after he assumed charge as the Navy chief nearly 10 months back. Besides holding talks with his Navy counterpart,

Kumar also held parleys with Vice Chief of Australian Defence Forces Vice Admiral David Johnston, Secretary of Defence Greg Moriarty and Chief of Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Air Marshal Robert Chipman.

"During these meetings, the leaders expressed their commitment to pursue collaborative activities in several areas of bilateral convergence," the Navy said in a statement.

The discussions also highlighted the need for raising the level of synergy and focused efforts for overcoming the challenges of maritime environment, the Navy said.

'India has all along called for cessation of hostilities between Russia-Ukraine'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/WASHINGTON

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's message to Russian President Vladimir Putin that "today's era is not of war" do not reflect a change in India's position on the conflict, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said.

Clarifying this position, he also said late Wednesday in the US capital that India has all along called for early cessation of hostilities between the two countries.

ED raids Chinese firms, freezes ₹9.82cr

New Delhi: The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has conducted search operations and frozen account balances of Rs 9.82 crore of various Chinese-controlled entities maintained with payment gateways, in connection with an investigation relating to the misuse of App-based token named "HPZ" and other similar applications by several entities.

The searches under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) were conducted against Comein Network Technology Private Limited, Mobicred Technology Private Limited, Magic Data Technology Private Limited, Baitu Technology Private Limited, Aliyeye Network

Technology India Pvt Ltd, Wecash Technology Private Limited, Larting Private Limited, Magic Bird Technology Private Limited and Acepearl Services Private Limited.

The ED initiated money laundering investigation on the basis of an FIR dated October 8, 2021 filed under various IPC sections by Cyber Crime Police Station, Kohima, Nagaland, against HPZ token and others. "The HPZ Token was an 'App-Based Token', which promised users of large gains against investment by declaring the same as 'investing in mining machines for Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies'," the ED said in a statement.

Researchers develop algorithm to decode brain scans

New Delhi: Researchers at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), in collaboration with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), Rishikesh, have developed an algorithm that they said can help decode brain scans to identify the occurrence and type of epilepsy. In epilepsy, a neurological disease, the brain emits sudden bursts of electrical signals in a short amount of time, resulting in seizures, fits, and in extreme cases, death.

Based on the point of origin of the brain's erratic signals, epilepsy is classified as either focal or generalised epilepsy. Focal epilepsy occurs when the erratic signals are confined to a specific region in the brain.

If the signals are at random locations, then it is termed as generalised epilepsy. To identify whether a patient is epilep-

tic, neurophysiologists need to manually inspect EEGs (electroencephalograms), which can capture such erratic signals, an IISc statement said.

Visual inspection of EEG can become tiring after prolonged periods, and may occasionally lead to errors, says Hardik J Pandya, Assistant Professor at the Department of Electronic Systems Engineering (DESE) and the corresponding author of the study published in 'Biomedical Signal Processing and Control'.

In their study, the team reported a novel algorithm that can sift through EEG data and identify signatures of epilepsy from electrical signal patterns.

"The algorithm aims to differentiate EEG of normal subjects from epileptic EEGs. Additionally, the developed algorithm attempts to identify the types of seizures." **PNS**



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the inauguration and foundation stone laying ceremony of various projects, in Bhavnagar on Thursday PTI Photo

SCO delegation to visit Varanasi in January

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

A delegation of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) comprising representatives of eight member nations including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Russia, China, Pakistan and also India, will be visiting Varanasi on January 16, 2023 and these foreign guests will be introduced to the culture and history of Kashi during their visit.

Varanasi was nominated as the first cultural and tourism capital for 2022-2023 at the 22nd meeting of the SCO council held in Samarkand. Subsequently, the state government sent invitations to every SCO member to visit Kashi.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has issued directives to the top officials to prepare for the grand welcome of the foreign guests, ensuring cleanliness and finding a solution to the traffic congestion at all key intersections of the city. On their arrival, the visitors will be greeted by the schoolchildren. The SCO is primarily an economic and security alliance of eight member states to pursue economic integration. The members' visit to Varanasi is therefore viewed as being cru-



cial for business relations with these nations in addition to maintaining cultural identity.

Meanwhile, Principal Secretary (Tourism) Mukesh Meshram has issued an order for making necessary arrangements for the month-long Ramnagar Ramleela festival which will be held next month. The festival is a much awaited event in Kashi in October. This historic Ramleela starts from Anant Chaturdashi and lasts for a month.

Apart from this, Dev Deepawali, the festival of light, is to be celebrated from November 5 to November 8 in Kashi. It is believed that all the gods gather at the Varanasi ghat to celebrate this occasion. People celebrate this occasion by lighting diyas on the ghats and decorating them.

Tourists from all over the world gather in Kashi on this occasion. In this regard, the Tourism Department has already started making preparations.

Activists hail SC's verdict on abortion

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Soon after the Supreme Court's historic verdict allowing married and unmarried women to seek abortion at 24 weeks of pregnancy under the law, abortion right activists and advocates across India hailed it as a 'progressive' move, one that will let women make decisions regarding their own body.

Dr Chitra Ramamurthy, senior consultant and infertility specialist noted that the judgement addresses the challenges in situations where abortion is illegal or highly restricted, and women resort to unsafe means to end unwanted pregnancies.

"Safe abortion practice has been a concern in our country, and with this judgement we can expect a reduction in morbidity and mortality associated with unsafe abortion practice. Nonetheless, awareness on contraceptive measures and safe sexual practices need to be a

sustained and continued practice," she said. Ashutosh Kaushik, CEO, FRHS India and CAG member for Pratigya Campaign echoed similar views, saying, "The judgement has shown some light towards the safe abortion practice that a pregnant person wants to take, free of stigma, free of disrespect, free of abuse."

Dr Rinku, senior consultant Obstetrics & Gynaecologist from Rainbow Children's Hospital, Delhi, agreed with Kaushik. She said, "This means a lot for women emancipation and emphasizes the right to reproductive autonomy. When a woman goes for abortion she is already in a very vulnerable position. Abortion has many social and psychological implications for her."

"It's much-awaited move as girls were visiting unsafe and shady clinics at the cost of their health for abortion to avoid unnecessary questions, Dr Vaishali Sharma, a gynecologist, opined.

8 killed in separate road accidents in UP

Lucknow: Eight people died in separate mishaps during the last 24 hours in the state. Three people were killed and seven others were injured when the e-rickshaw they were travelling in was hit by a truck on Ayodhya-Prayagraj national highway in Amethi district, police said on Thursday.

The accident happened on Wednesday night when a troupe of musicians was returning to Sultanpur after performing a musical programme in Pratappgarh, Deputy Superintendent of Police Lallan Singh said. A government spokesman in Lucknow said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath

expressed grief over the deaths in the accident and directed officials to ensure proper treatment to the injured. The truck driver fled the spot after the accident, the DSP said, adding efforts were on to nab him. Two of the deceased belonged to Sultanpur and one to Ambedkar Nagar, the police said.

In another mishap reported from Mathura, a tractor-trolley full of villagers was returning from the dargah of Kamal Khan in Agra when it overturned in a ditch and two of its occupants were killed while about a dozen others were seriously injured. **PNS**



Union Minister for Culture, Tourism and Development of North Eastern Region G Kishan Reddy celebrating Bathukamma flower festival at Kartavya Path in New Delhi. Archana Jyoti/PNS

IN SHORTS

PFI TWITTER HANDLE TAKEN DOWN

New Delhi: The Twitter handle of the Popular Front of India (PFI) was taken down on Thursday, a day after the group was banned by the government for five years for allegedly having "links" with global terror organisations like the ISIS and trying to spread communal hatred in the country. "Account Withheld. @PFIOfficial's account has been withheld in India in response to a legal demand," a message in the page read.

DCGI ALLOWS MALARIA VACCINE EXPORT

New Delhi: India's drug regulator has allowed the export of the first produced-in-India vaccine against malaria, developed by scientists at the University of Oxford and manufactured by Serum Institute to the UK, official sources said on Thursday. The DCGI has granted permission to send two lakh doses of the vaccine.

EX-IAF CHIEF UP NODAL OFFICER FOR DEF

New Delhi: Former IAF Chief Air Chief Marshal RKS Bhaduria (Retired) has joined as Chief Nodal Officer of the Uttar Pradesh Defence Industrial Corridor.

D MURMU HOSTS IFS TRAINEES AT PREZ HOUSE

New Delhi: President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday said India's leadership in several fields has become unchallenged now and the country plays an important role as a frontline state in the fight against terrorism. She was addressing a group of IFS trainees who had called on her at the Rashtrapati Bhavan here.

MUKESH GETS Z PLUS SECURITY COVER

New Delhi: The Home Ministry has upgraded the security cover of Reliance Industries Limited Chairman Mukesh Ambani to 'Z plus' from the current 'Z category'. The cost of security will be borne by Ambani. Ever since the Antilla explosive incident, an upgrade was in the offing.

CJI RECOMMENDS ORISSA CJ TRANSFER

New Delhi: The Supreme Court Collegium headed by Chief Justice Uday Umesh Lalit is learnt to have recommended to the Centre the transfer of Chief Justice (CJ) of Orissa High Court, Justice S Muralidhar, as the CJ of the Madras High Court.

No efforts made for decades to develop Guj coastline, says Modi

PTI ■ BHAVNAGAR

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said although Gujarat has the longest coastline in the country, no attention was paid for its development for decades post-Independence, but "honest attempts" were made in the last 20 years by the BJP Government to turn it into the country's "door of prosperity".

He said the BJP Government in Gujarat implemented several big-ticket projects along the state's coastline without wasting money on publicity.

Modi also said the BJP always fulfils the promises it makes because it believes that



power is only a means to serve the people.

He was addressing a public rally at Jawahar Maidan in Bhavnagar city of Gujarat's Saurashtra region after inaugurating and performing the ground-breaking ceremony of projects worth more than Rs

6,000 crore meant for Bhavnagar, Botad and Amreli districts. Some of these projects in Bhavnagar included the world's first CNG terminal, development of a brownfield port and a cargo container manufacturing unit.

"Gujarat has the longest coastline in the country, but no attention was paid for its development for decades after India gained independence. As a result, the coastline created challenges for the people living along it," he said in a veiled attack on the Congress.

But honest attempts were made in the last 20 years to turn the State's coastline into India's door to prosperity, he said the massive gathering.

Modi was the Chief Minister of Gujarat from 2001 to 2014. Since May 2014, he has been serving as the Prime Minister of the country.

"We have developed many ports and modernised several others. Today, there are three LNG terminals and a petrochemical hub on the Gujarat coast. Apart from playing a crucial role for the export and import sector, Gujarat's coastline has created employment opportunities for lakhs of youths," the prime minister said.

According to him, the State's coastline has now become synonymous with the renewable energy sector and hydrocarbon ecosystem.

DREAM city project will make Surat safest, convenient diamond trading hub: PM

Surat: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday said once the Diamond Research and Mercantile (DREAM) city project is completed, Surat will emerge as the safest and convenient diamond trading hub in the world.

Addressing a rally after laying the foundation stone and inaugurating a host of projects here in Gujarat, Modi said in the last 20 years Surat has progressed by leaps and bounds. **PTI**

Twin blasts in 8 hours rock Udhampur

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

The garrison city of Udhampur, housing Indian Army's Northern command headquarters, was rattled by the twin bomb blasts inside passenger buses in a span of 8 hours in which two civilians received injuries in the last 24 hours.

According to Additional Director General of Police Mukesh Singh, "The first blast took place late Wednesday night around 10.30 p.m inside a bus parked near the petrol pump in Domel chowk of Udhampur while the second blast was reported early Thursday morning around 6.00 am at an old bus stand in Udhampur".

In both the cases the passenger buses were empty and



no loss of life was reported. Singh said, both the injured were out of danger. They have been identified as Sunil Singh and Vijay Kumar, both the cleaners. They were present inside the bus when the first blast was triggered. Due to the intensity of the blast several buses parked in the close vicinity also suffered major damages.

The fact that the blasts took place ahead of the three day long visit of the Union Home Minister Amit Shah to Jammu and Kashmir beginning October 3 is keeping the entire security apparatus on its tenterhooks across the region.

This is the third incident of a similar bomb blast in the Udhampur city this year. Earlier, a street vendor was killed when a blast ripped apart his cart leading to his death and injuries to at least 17 others present in the busy market area of Udhampur on March 9.

100 workers hospitalised after ammonia gas leak in Aligarh meat factory

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

In a shocking incident in Aligarh, about one hundred of workers, mostly women, fell ill after inhaling ammonia gas that leaked in a meat factory on Thursday morning.

The workers were rushed to a nearby hospital after they complained of breathing difficulties following leakage of ammonia gas.

DIG Range Aligarh Deepak Kumar said, "Around 60 female workers were admitted to hospital and all of them are stable currently."

The incident took place at the Al-Dua meat factory that falls under the jurisdiction of



Roravar police station. Several women are engaged in the factory for packaging-related work.

Sources, however, maintained that about 100 workers were rushed to different hospitals of Aligarh after they started fainting following ammonia gas leakage.

"Information was received about an ammonia gas leak in

a meat factory in the Roravar area where women workers are engaged in packaging work. Around 60 workers were admitted to a medical college hospital after they complained of breathing difficulties. Doctors confirmed that everyone is stable," DIG Range Aligarh Deepak Kumar said.

The doctors said that everyone who was in the factory was brought to the medical college hospital and they are being treated. "Everyone is out of danger and there is nothing to worry about as of now," they said.

The fire brigade personnel were also summoned to avert any eventuality.

The factory is reportedly owned by one Haji Zaheer and the local police so far managed to pick up one of the managers to grill him regarding the cause of the gas leakage.

It may be mentioned that in a similar incident in 2020, two senior officials working at the Pulpur plant of Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited (IFFCO) in Prayagraj died while 13 others fell sick following a gas leak. The PF-1 unit of the IFFCO plant located around 25 km from Sangam city in the trans-Ganga area of Prayagraj had developed an issue and ammonia gas began to leak. The leakage was later stopped by experts at the plant.

'Foreign ultras in Valley below 200'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Outgoing CRPF DG Kuldip Singh on Thursday said despite a slight upward trend in the number of foreign terrorists operating in Jammu and Kashmir post the Taliban takeover in Afghanistan last year, the overall strength of jihadis in the Valley is just below 200.

He said all the security forces operating in Kashmir are working in a coordinated manner and terrorist incidents have gone down post the abrogation of Article 370 from the erstwhile State in 2019.

"This is a challenge... After Afghanistan, this challenge has grown in many forms and you can see it... Also like the number of foreign terrorists



goes up and sometimes down. However, the total number of terrorists in J&K is less now... It is under 200 now as compared to the earlier times when it used to be 230-240," Singh said when asked during a Press conference about the killing of locals and Kashmiri Pandits by lone wolf terrorists.

The 1986-batch IPS officer of West Bengal cadre took charge as the CRPF DG last year in March. He will retire from service on Friday.

Farewell parade for outgoing CRPF DG stirs row

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The farewell parade for the outgoing CRPF DG Kuldip Singh has stirred a row with a section of officials pointing to the violation of the BPR&D manual for drafting out a battalion strength of the Force for his send off.

As a custom and tradition, outgoing chiefs of three services and also of the Paramilitary Forces such as BSF, CRPF, CISF etc are given ceremonial farewell on the day they demit office.

The instructions for such farewell parades have been given and institutionalised in BPR&D Drill manual 2012, which stipulates a designated strength of officers and jawans for such farewell parades.

However, through an order issued last month, the CRPF ordered its formations to pool "excessive" manpower including commanding rank officers from the field units to host this farewell parade against the norms, said personnel involved in the scheduled farewell function for Friday.



Last phase of Cong's Bharat Jodo Yatra in Kerala ends

PTI ■ MALAPPURAM

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday concluded his Kerala leg of the Bharat Jodo Yatra, which entered the State on September 10 and will resume the foot march from Tamil Nadu in the afternoon.

After the yatra ended its Kerala phase at Vazhikaddavu here, Gandhi and senior Congress leaders Jairam Ramesh and Digvijaya Singh thanked the KPCC and UDF leaders, party workers and everyone else who participated in the foot march during the over 18 days it spent in the state.

"Home is where you get love, and Kerala is home for me. No matter how much affection I give, I always get more in return from the people here. I am forever indebted. Thank you."

"I would also like to wholeheartedly thank the Congress & UDF leaders and workers, Kerala police, media personnel & every individual who has been part of the #BharatJodoYatra in this beautiful state. The support you have given us makes our resolve firmer & our strides stronger," Gandhi, who was accompanied by a huge crowd of sup-



porters in the morning phase of the yatra, tweeted.

Ramesh, the AICC general secretary in-charge communications, tweeted, "Day 22 of #BharatJodoYatra is last day in Kerala. Padayatri is walking from Nilambur to Vazhikaddavu this morning. From Vazhikaddavu we cross to Gudalur in Tamil Nadu by vehicle thro' Nilgiris hills. We are extremely grateful to people of Kerala for their goodwill and response."

Senior Congress leader and national coordinator of the yatra, Digvijaya Singh tweeted, "All PCCs in other States should come and learn the organisational work of Kerala PCC. Finally a Big Thank You to the People of Kerala and all Congressmen of Kerala for their tremendous support and response. #BharatJodoYatra @INC Kerala @INC India @Jairam_Ramesh."

He also said in his tweet that

"today we leave Kerala after 22 days of warm hospitality of PCC Kerala. The tremendous response of the people of Kerala was most encouraging."

"All our Bharat Yatris loved the lovely green terrain and also enjoyed the Boat Race. Thank you PCC President K Sudhakaran ji and our most active State Coordinator K Suresh ji for responding to all our requests," he further said.

The foot march -- which resumed from Marthoma College Junction at Chungathara here -- took a break at CKHS Manimooly at Vazhikaddavu after covering around 8.6 km. According to the itinerary of the yatra, from Vazhikaddavu, Gandhi would travel to Government Arts and Science College at Gudalur in Tamil Nadu by car as the route goes through a forest reserve and it is not possible to go on foot there, Congress party sources said.

'Bharat Jodo Yatra' posters found torn a day before its K'taka entry

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Some posters put up to welcome leaders to the Congress' Bharat Jodo Yatra' were found to be torn at Gundlupet in Chamarajanagar district on Thursday, a day before it is set to enter Karnataka.

Reacting sharply, the Congress said, "The 40% Commission Bommai Govt is already getting the jitters".

The BJP's "Bharat Todo Team" of paid goons has been pressed into service to destruct, destroy and tear up posters, the Congress incharge of Karnataka Affairs, Randeep Singh Surjewala alleged.

"They'll never be able to stop the war cry against Price Rise, Unemployment, Disparity & Divisiveness," he tweeted.

Congress state president D K Shivakumar alleged that a few posters were torn and burnt by

the BJP. "Preparations are afoot to receive the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' but the BJP people have torn and burnt some banners. We will not be cowed down. We have faced enough of such things. They (BJP) should know this," Shivakumar told reporters in Chamarajanagar.

He demanded that the police initiate action against those who tore the banners.

"Let them (police) refuse to take action, then we will speak

rest of the things," Shivakumar said.

The Congress lodged a police complaint in this connection in the police station concerned, sources close to the Congress state president said.

Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said: "All know who is doing 'Bharat Jodo' and who's doing 'Thodo'. Addressing reporters in the district headquarters town of Haveri, Bommai said let Shivakumar

comment on the incident, permission must be obtained for putting up posters.

The BJP need not tear the posters of any political party. Since people knew "everything," there was no need for him to say much about it, the Chief Minister said. Sources close to Shivakumar said the Congress leaders lodged a complaint at the police station concerned against those who tore and burnt the banners.

BJP Govt running on lies, propaganda: Akhilesh

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav, on Thursday, launched a scathing attack on the Bharatiya Janata Party and said that the ruling party was running on the basis of "lies and propaganda".

Akhilesh Yadav, who was unanimously elected SP chief for the third consecutive time, alleged that the BJP and its machinery snatched power from the SP as it knew if it lost power in Uttar Pradesh it would also lose power in Delhi.

"This (BJP) government is not made by the people; even people don't know how it (BJP) formed the government again. The BJP and its machinery snatched away the government from the SP because it knew if it lost power in UP it would lose power in Delhi also," he said.

"Those who know about Hitler's

time would know that there used to be a propaganda minister in his government. There was only one propaganda minister, but here if we see the work of the BJP, it seems that the whole party is running on the basis of lies and propaganda," he said.

Akhilesh further targeted the BJP, saying that the party was against farmers. "By introducing black farm laws, the BJP has proved that it is against farmers. Hundreds of farmers lost their lives and farm loans were not waived. If you are bringing industries to Gujarat then why can't you bring them to states like UP and Bihar?" the SP chief questioned.

"Why is there so much bias against UP? This state has made your government and you are showing your bias against this state now," he said.

Akhilesh Yadav also alleged that the Election Commission "deliberately" reduced the votes of Yadavs and



Muslims by 20,000 in almost every assembly seat on the "diktat" of the BJP and its allies.

"If a probe is conducted, it will be found that the names of many people were removed (electoral rolls)," the SP chief said.

The SP chief called upon party cadre to be ready to fill up jails. Quoting Netaji (Mulayam Singh Yadav), Akhilesh said this was the only way out when someone was denied justice.

"Samajwadi people should be ready to fill up jails as the time has

come. Even Netaji had said that when you are not getting justice then this is the only way out," Akhilesh Yadav said as he addressed the party workers at the event.

Earlier, the decision to elect Akhilesh Yadav as national president of the SP was taken unanimously at the national convention of the party being held at Ramabai Ambedkar Maidan in Lucknow.

On getting re-elected for the third consecutive time, Akhilesh Yadav said, "This is not just a post, you have given me a huge responsibility. This responsibility has been given to me at a time when our constitution is in danger. I assure you that I will prove my worth for the post which you people have elected me to. Even if I have to work day and night for this responsibility, I will not hesitate. We samajwadi people have to work hard for the next five years to make a new history."

Shift Navlakha to hospital for treatment, SC tells Taloja jail superintendent

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Thursday directed the Taloja jail superintendent to immediately shift activist Gautam Navlakha, jailed in connection with the Elgar Parishad-Maoist link case, to Mumbai's Jaslok hospital for treatment. The top court said receiving medical treatment is a fundamental right of a prisoner.

A bench of Justices K M Joseph and Hrishikesh Roy also allowed Navlakha's partner Sabha Husain and sister to meet him in the hospital. "Having heard the counsel for parties, we are of the view that receiving medical treatment would be a fundamental right. We direct that the petitioner be taken immediately for thorough medical check-up.



"Accordingly, we direct Superintendent Taloja jail to take the petitioner to Jaslok hospital so that he is able to undergo requisite medical check-up and receive treatment. We make it clear that the petitioner will remain in police custody," the bench said.

The 70-year-old activist linked to Maoists has appealed the apex court against the April 26 order of the Bombay High Court dismissing his plea for house arrest over apprehensions of lack of adequate medical and other basic facilities in Taloja jail near Mumbai where he is lodged.

Bullet remarks: BJP leader moves court against TMC's number 2

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The political controversy over Trinamool Congress national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee's "bullet in the head" remarks have now spilled over to the court with Bengal BJP president Sukanta Majumdar on Thursday filing a petition against the top TMC leader for his "bullet" remarks.

Banerjee a TMC MP and nephew of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had recently said -- in reference to the free-for-all that ensued in Kolkata streets on BJP's Nabanna Abhiyan (Nabanna march) day and subsequent attack on a senior police officer who got a fractured hand -- that had he been a senior police officer he would have directed his men to shoot right through the heads of the rampaging BJP men.

"I met the injured officer who was badly beaten up by the

BJP goons and also saw how public properties including police vehicles were set ablaze ... I have to congratulate the top officers for the restraint they displayed in the face of saffron attack ...

"If I would have been there I would have asked my men to shoot through the heads of the mischief mongers," Banerjee had said a day after BJP's September 13 Nabanna Abhiyan. Majumdar said that he had earlier tried to file an FIR in the case but the police would not take his complaint following which he moved the court.

"Such statements of top politicians should stop ... this remark of Abhishek Banerjee will only provoke the police to fire at will ... what does he want to convey through such remarks ... does he want to make Bengal a police state ..." Majumdar who personally appeared before the court sub-

sequently said.

TMC spokesperson Kunal Ghosh reacted to Majumdar's action saying having failed to compete with the Bengal ruling outfit politically and electorally the BJP was taking help of the agencies and moving the court in order to "remain afloat" in the news channels.

"They have been rejected by the people in the elections ... they are losing their political relevance in the state and so they are rushing to the court to remain relevant in the state politics," Ghosh said adding Banerjee had never instigated the police "rather he had congratulated ACP Chatterjee for showing restraint."

Meanwhile, in a parallel development the Trinamool Congress leadership had a big relief with the Supreme Court on Thursday setting aside a Calcutta High Court order in a Disproportionate Asset case.



Devotees carry a Goddess Durga idol through wild sugarcane plants for Durga Puja festival, in Nadia on Thursday **PTI**

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PAPER WITH PASSION

Incongruity

The Govt slams freebies and yet extends the free ration scheme for three months

The Government's move to extend the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana (PM-GKAY) for a further period of three months, from October to December 2022, flies in the face of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's stand on freebies. The incongruity appears starker against the backdrop of resistance by the Finance Ministry to the extension. Under this scheme, 5 kg of food grain per person per month is provided free of cost for all the beneficiaries covered under the National Food Security Act (NFSA). The PM-GKAY came into being during the first wave of Covid-19 over two years ago to provide food security to the poor, needy, and the vulnerable households. Even after the pandemic subsided and normalcy restored, the Government kept extending the scheme. The Finance Ministry also said that since the pandemic has abated considerably, distress for which relief was given doesn't appear to be prevalent. Financial implications for the Central Government have been about Rs 3.45 lakh crore so far. The latest extension will cost about Rs 44,762 crore. The official press release announcing the latest extension called it a "welfare scheme." This may not be a very accurate description, for the economy is back on track with hardly any restrictions on people and businesses. The rationale offered by the Government for the extension is that major festivals like Navratri, Dussehra, Milad-un-nabi, Deepawali, Chhath pooja, Guru Nanak Dev Jayanti, Christmas, etc., are forthcoming. Another extension would help people "celebrate [these festivals] with great gaiety."



At best, this is a specious justification: the festive season arrives every year, but that doesn't mean that government, at the Centre or in states, should start distributing one thing or the other for free. The business of government is governance, not distributing freebies, especially when the fiscal situation is strained and when the economy is facing global and domestic headwinds. This is the reason that the Finance Ministry talked about the fiscal pressure due to the Russia-Ukraine War, effect on fuel prices, and rise in other subsidies. The Finance Ministry is also worried that the continuation of the scheme for a long period could give the impression of its permanent or indefinite continuation. FinMin bureaucrats seemed to be echoing great economist Milton Friedman's famous quote, "Nothing is so permanent as a temporary government programme." The Finance Ministry has made some very valid points, but are the powers that be listening? The answer may not be very comforting. It seems that all the fuss the Modi Government and the Bharatiya Janata Party have been making about freebies is politics; there may not be any genuine desire to restrain the evidence of freebies. Otherwise, the Government would not have continued with the scheme of free rations for another three months. What was a welfarist measure a couple of years ago has become a freebie. One can only hope that the PM-GKAY doesn't get another extension.

PICTALK



Commuters cross the Ganga river during sunset, in Patna

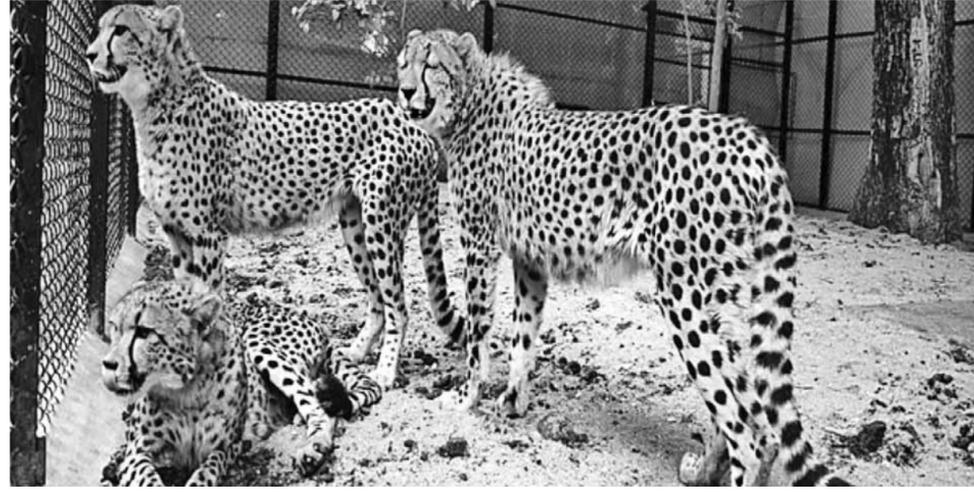
The key to wild life conservation

Wildlife conservation cannot be achieved by ad hoc measures, it should involve people and have a grounded policy framework



SWAPNA MAJUMDAR

The African cheetahs arrived in India earlier this month amid great fanfare and political hoopla. They have been kept in an enclosed area for now but will soon be released in the hope that they will boost efforts to conserve India's threatened and largely neglected grasslands. However, many wildlife conservationists believe that the introduction of these cheetahs not only goes against national conservation priorities but will also not have any impact on protecting grasslands and open forest ecosystems as has been claimed. Conservation scientists like Ravi Chellam contend that a quicker and more efficient way to conserve the grasslands would be to stop categorising them as wastelands and delete them from the Wasteland Atlas of India. This would enable a more focused conservation plan for them.



But has protecting habitats always been the prime consideration behind all decisions related to wildlife conservation? If yes, why was the Galathea National Park, an iconic nesting site of the leatherback sea turtle, located in the Great Nicobar Island, denotified in 2021? Entire sanctuaries have been denotified and erased off the map of India in the name of development, says Prerna Bindra, author and former member of, the National Board for Wildlife. The denotification of the Galathea National Park coincided with the development plans for Great Nicobar put forward by the NITI Aayog, the government's public policy think tank. Little thought was given to where the leatherbacks would nest once their site was destroyed for a shipping project and how this would accelerate the steep decline in their population, contends Bindra.

Securing the Wild
Protecting habitats for the leatherback turtles assumes critical importance as their numbers are decreasing sharply. These are the world's largest turtles and the only species without scales and a hard shell. Named after their tough rubbery skin, leatherback turtles have existed in their current form since the age of the dinosaurs. As leatherbacks are migratory, some of them swim over 10,000 miles a year between nesting and foraging grounds. The chances of survival for these turtles making this arduous journey and then finding their nesting grounds destroyed are bleak.

Shouldn't this project have been stopped by the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL), the government institution constituted to protect wildlife, sanctuaries, and parks? Bindra points out that instead of exercising its authority and taking corrective action, the NBWL allowed this to happen.

While denotification of the Galathea National Park could not be prevented, a move to denotify a wildlife sanctuary in Himachal Pradesh to set up a cement factory was scuttled thanks to a newspaper report by award-winning veteran journalist Usha Rai.

Why Stories Are Important
This was not the only time Rai used her pen to stop the destruction of wildlife in the name of development. It was Rai's story on how



IT IS A FACT THAT POLICIES ALONE CANNOT PROTECT WILDLIFE. AN INFORMED COMMUNITY IS PERHAPS THE BIGGEST CONSERVATION CHAMPION

the rich and powerful like industrialist Sameer Thapar, owner of JCT Mills, Phagwara, would fly in helicopters and shoot at wildlife in the Corbett National Park that sent shockwaves across the country with the issue even being raised in Parliament. A case was lodged against Thapar for flouting environmental norms by landing a helicopter inside the Corbett Tiger Reserve, a protected area.

These stories are part of an absorbing book that chronicles fifty years of the Wildlife Protection Act 1972. This is what makes the book, titled 'Wildlife India @50,' a great read. The book has been edited by Manoj Kumar Misra, a former Indian Forest Service officer, this 517-page Rupa publication.

Conservation Champions
It is a fact that policies alone cannot protect wildlife. An informed community is perhaps the biggest conservation champion. This has been seen over and over again across the country. In Arunachal Pradesh had it not been for the commitment of the community, the red panda, an endangered species, found only in the eastern Himalayas,

may have become extinct much like the cheetahs. Engaging the community constructively has worked not only in Arunachal Pradesh but also in Kerala. Realising the importance of tapping the potential of the community in planning and management of conservation of wildlife habitats paid rich dividends in Kerala's Parambikulam Tiger Reserve. Making forest management inclusive and participatory was key to sustaining the protection of wildlife habitats. For the first time, forestry students, local scientists, naturalists, photographers, and the local tribal community along with the staff of the Reserve were involved in planning which areas needed to be categorised as buffer zones.

The sixth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has underlined that India's human vulnerability. Climate change coupled with a 'development-at-any cost' attitude is a double whammy for India's fragile ecosystem and wildlife. (The author is a journalist writing on development and gender. The views expressed are personal.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

APPOINTMENT OF THE NEW CDS

Sir — The Appointment of New Chief of Defence Staff, Lt Gen Anil Chauhan (Retd), military adviser to the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS), is the most timely and most needed one, he will be the 2nd CDS of the country after the sad demise of 1st CDS Gen Bipin Singh Rawat in a helicopter crash. Lt Gen Anil Chauhan is a highly experienced army officer who has held significant positions like that of the GOC of the eastern command, Director Of Military Operation, and has extensive counter-insurgency experience in J and K and NE, he has wide experience in strategic and national security issues.

India's prevailing security environment is marked by regional instability with a nuclear overhang, on the western front is Pakistan and on the eastern sector is China and both have a common agenda of destabilizing India, they can't see India inching towards becoming a global economic power. The appointment of the 1st CDS was a significant step to carry out India's most significant military reform since Independence. The post of CDS is an institution that carries tremendous responsibility for modernizing the Indian military, hence more than ever before, it is now necessary for the national security decision-makers to be given 'single-point military advice that takes into account the operational strengths and weaknesses and the inter-dependence of each of the armed forces. New CDS Lt Gen Anil Chauhan has a Hercules task to carry forward the unfinished agenda of his predecessor Gen Rawat, who was pushing forward the agenda of the modernisation and reorganization of the armed forces into the integrated theatre commands.

Ramesh G Jethwani | Bengaluru

TOKENISATION IS SAFE AND SIMPLE

Sir — Tokenisation is a welcome mandate of RBI. Tokenisation is a safe, secure, simple, and fast method for online payment. It is the replacement of actual card details with a unique configurable token

Healthcare must be digitalised



The Covid-19 pandemic has made the healthcare industry worldwide realize the need for speeding up its infrastructure on digital transformation. The 2018 Digital Trends report from Econsultancy, a leading Digital Marketing organization in London, reveals that only seven percent of healthcare and pharmaceutical com-

panies have gone digital, compared with 15 percent of companies in other industries. ('Digitised healthcare depends on faster connectivity', Sep. 26). The pandemic has taught a lesson to the healthcare industry on the value and importance of digitalization of medical service, which provides dual benefits of lower costs and higher quality. In fact, in Austria, e-Medication has been successfully running for years, with Electronic Medical records allowing patients there to view all their e-Results anytime and anywhere. Similarly, doctors in Sweden and Denmark send e-prescriptions to pharmacies. Also, the National Health Service in the UK is working with Google to deploy Artificial Intelligence in the medical field. Digital transformation in medical services will allow patients to manage their treatment independently and share data with doctors. Medical history is critical in emergencies when a physical copy may not be available. In such a scenario, digitization helps by keeping the doctor informed about the patient's medical history in every situation.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

without exposing the sensitive card details of consumers.

With the help of this, our sensitive card details will be safe and cannot be stolen. It will have benefits such as two-factor authentication like OTP (One Time Password). It is simple to use with just three easy steps, First - Punch in your card number, Second - Agree to securely save your card one time, Third - Enter the OTP received via SMS. Like this merchants can't access consumers' data. Thanks to the RBI for a great mandate.

Somya Agrawal | Ujjain

MOONLIGHTING A BIG NO-NO

Sir — Bottom line is that the issue of moonlighting is simply a mess and a lack of authentic information spoils the show. If you pay all your employees well no one will moonlight. And it is quite common sense that no one wants to trade extra 4 hours of sleep and 48 hours of the week-

end if your primary employee takes good care of you and your family. Instead of sacking their employees, they need to stop exploiting them and thereby reduce the workload and provide them with the best way possible.

This raises the question of why their employees were forced to or even motivated to engage in such risky, work-life balance and ultimately a career in health-impacting behaviour. Same competency, double delivery, two different laptops, same WiFi and thereby catering to two different clients - all from the comfort of their own home, in their hometown. In the background, India is integrating all of its islands of excellence in the best way possible. Moonlighting should not fade the light at the end of the tunnel.

CK Subramaniam | Mumbai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

SOUNDBITE

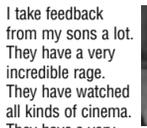
We have, we have never thought that it was an easy process. But we do believe that the need for reform cannot be denied forever."



External Affairs Minister —S Jaishankar



We will continue to work with allies and partners to bring even more pressure on Russia and the individuals that are helping support its attempted land grab. US State Dept spokesperson —Ned Price

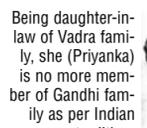


I take feedback from my sons a lot. They have a very incredible rage. They have watched all kinds of cinema. They have a very refined perspective. And think, that is the perspective we need.

Actor —Hrithik Roshan



While the pool matches might not have gone in the side's favour in the FIH Women's Hockey World Cup, the fact that the team was still alive in the competition is all that mattered right now. Indian women hockey team captain —Savita



Being daughter-in-law of Vadera family, she (Priyanka) is no more member of Gandhi family as per Indian tradition.

Congress MP —Abdul Khaleque

Real face of PFI

PFI is not as clean as it claims; the truth is that it hides behind a carefully constructed veil

Fans of psychological thrillers rate Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde as one of the best novellas ever written. The story published in 1886 by RL Stevenson is about Dr Jekyll, a gentleman, and Mr Hyde a murderous criminal, and a series of murders that shook society. It turns out that Jekyll and Hyde are the same person with Jekyll transforming into Hyde with the help of a chemical concoction. A real-life drama of the Jekyll and Hyde genre is being staged in India with the Popular Front of India and the Social Democratic Party of India (SDPI) as the main characters. The SDPI is the political face of PFI, a terrorist organisation that is responsible for murder and mayhem in the many States of India. Nobody was surprised when the National Investigation Agency and Enforcement Directorate swept down on the leaders of the PFI and SDPI across the country on Thursday and arrested nearly 100 prominent faces of these outfits. The PFI called for a hartal in Kerala last Friday to protest against the raids and arrests of its establishments and leaders respectively. Unlike the previous hartals, the one on Friday turned out to be the most violent.



Police looked the other way when the Popular Front of India workers damaged the Karnataka SRTC buses and made shopkeepers down the shutters. Shop owners who refused to heed the hartal call saw their shops and establishments getting destroyed. Policemen were attacked and there were a couple of attempts on the lives of policemen who were on patrol. It was the suomot intervention of

the Kerala High Court which made the police take action against the hartal mongers. Strangely, neither chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan nor the Opposition Congress were heard condemning the widespread rioting by the PFI activists. The recent rallies staged by the PFI and which were attended by lakhs of activists stand out for the kind of slogans raised by the participants. All one could say is that they were despicable of the highest order. The SDPI, the political arm of the PFI plays a double game by washing its hands off the words and deeds of the latter. This is a ploy to facilitate the growth of the PFI, an organisation known for its religious bigotry. There is no space in Indian society for organisations that promote religious hatred and communal divide. It is time we identified real cancer that is eating up the aged-old Indian psyche.

FIRST COLUMN

INDIA HEADS G20
AMID FLUX

Multilateralism is pushed to the wall as world order looks fluid



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has been a busy man in the last few months, more so, last week when he managed marathon meetings at the United Nations General Assembly. The meeting participants suggest India's new foreign policy stance of finding allies and strategic partners around the globe. India met with its QUAD (US, Australia, and Japan) partners, also Libya, Syria, Cuba, renewed its commitment to France, India, Australia trilateral and France, India UAE strategic partnership.

France, Australia, UAE trilaterals with India are relatively new, born out of the need to find allies post pandemic and keep a check on China in the Indo Pacific region. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on a short visit to Japan this week to attend the funeral of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. The focus was Indo Pacific, shared interests and building on the India Japan bilateral.

Clearly, the world order has undergone a significant shift since 2020 with two course altering events, the Covid pandemic and Russia's military attack in Ukraine, thereby shattering the myth of no war in the Eurozone.

If the Covid pandemic and the subsequent disruption in global supply chains (mostly concentrated in China) hadn't dented the existing order, Russia's invasion of Ukraine and subsequent push to annex territories has created a shock in energy and food prices around the globe. There are multiple streams of evolving partnerships which will forever shape the way planet earth emerges in the 21st century.



First, faced by a clear danger of nuclear-powered Russia in the backyard, the larger European countries are rethinking their nuclear strategies. Most of them except for France had given up the nuclear shield to be under US-led NATO providing them umbrella cover. Meanwhile in the eastern hemisphere, Japan faced by a belligerent neighbour, China, is also rethinking its nuclear celibacy strategy.

The US and the UK have already come together to provide Australia with nuclear capabilities in the Indian Ocean region to prevent China from being adventurous. The headwinds are a clear indication of a world again looking at nuclear weapons as a go to deterrent/safety net in case of full-fledged war.

Second, global energy prices, threatening to put almost all of Europe through a very cold and dark winter of 2022, will shape the way the hastily glued western alliance against Russia will behave in 2023.

A clear and present danger in Russia is forcing ideological shifts in Europe. Meanwhile, the energy and food prices have pushed a couple of nations (including two in India's neighbourhood) in Asia and Africa on the verge of economic breakdown and are looking at institutions such as the IMF for bailouts.

Third, there is a huge drop in acceptance for multilateral institutions as platforms for sorting global common problems. China has been persistently denying India and a couple of other large economies from taking their rightful positions as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council.

There is a huge lack of consensus globally on ways to reap the dividends of a digital economy and therefore effectively tax the technology companies.

This leads to India's presidency of the G20 beginning towards the end of the year. The current Indonesia presidency ends in November and depending on the outcome the baton will be passed on to New Delhi to shape the global narrative. This will be at a time when India would be the most populous democracy, besides being the fifth largest economy in the world. It must find innovative ways of negotiating a consensus on most pressing world issues.

(The author is a foreign affairs commentator)

Freebie powers the
AAP Govt in Delhi

The State of Delhi stands out for all the ills plaguing the politics of freebies across the country, for many people have been deprived of basic amenities



ASHWANI MAHAJAN

To speak against distribution of freebies, of course, will attract the wrath of those who benefit from them. That is, if we say that electricity, water, travel should not be made free or that television sets or other types of temptations by political parties are wrong and they should end, then it is possible that people unaware of the possible consequences of announcements of such freebies may not like it.

After Independence, the emphasis has generally been on development, poverty alleviation, better social services, drinking water, road, rail, etc. But now some political parties have started making promises to provide electricity, water, transport, television sets and even mangalsutra, all for free, despite poor economic conditions of the states.

Result of such freebies is that states are coming under huge debts and the quality of public services is the major victim. Significantly, Delhi is a prosperous region of the country. The per capita income here is second highest in the country, after Goa. Due to this, the revenue of Delhi is also very high.

A large number of migrants also live in Delhi, who have migrated from other states in search of employment. Their economic conditions are not so good, which can be gauged from the fact that a large number of people had to leave for their villages, as soon as the lockdown was imposed due to the pandemic. The sight of a large number of migrants going on foot, on bicycle or in buses, with just one bag, still haunts us. Most of the migrant labourers are daily wage earners, or engaged in micro businesses. A large number of them live in horrible conditions, where even basic facilities are lacking.

In such a situation, there is usually no question of their families joining them. The number of such migrant labourers in Delhi is not less than 50 lakhs. The labourers who bring their families with them are living in very pathetic conditions in Delhi. Schools, colleges and other educational institutions are needed for them and their families.

There is also a need for a better sewerage system and good health facilities. Roads, flyovers, etc., are also needed for their movements. But all these works require huge expenditure. It is seen that due to lack of funds, Arvind Kejriwal's Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in Delhi is not able to provide a budget for development and maintenance.

After assuming power in 2015, till date the AAP-led Delhi government has not been able to build any new school, college, hospital, flyover, etc. In such a situation, the plight of the poor can be easily imagined. The roads, water and sewage system are also not being taken care of properly. Lack of finances is the main reason for this. It is not that the



THE TOTAL REVENUE OF DELHI FOR 2021-22 IS ESTIMATED AT ₹53,070 CRORE, WHICH IS 3 PER CENT OF THE REVENUE OF ALL STATES. IN 2019-20, IT WAS ₹47,136 CRORE AND, IN 2014-15, IT WAS ONLY ₹29,584 CRORE

(The author is Professor, Department of Economics, DAV College)



revenue of Delhi is deficient. The fact is that the per capita revenue in Delhi is much higher than the rest of India and is increasing continuously.

The total revenue of Delhi for 2021-22 is estimated at ₹53,070 crore, which is 3 per cent of the revenue of all the states. In 2019-20 it was ₹47,136 crore and in 2014-15, it was only ₹29,584 crore.

But along with this increasing revenue, the expenditure on free electricity, water, and transport of the Delhi government is increasing. The expenditure on free electricity was ₹1639 crore in 2015-16, which increased to ₹2968 crore in 2021-22. The Power Department has demanded ₹3200 crore from the Delhi government for this power subsidy for 2022-23. That is, it can be understood that the burden on the budget is increasing in the name of making electricity free by the Delhi government and it has almost doubled between 2015-16 and 2022-23. By huge spending on free electricity, water and transport, there is always a shortage of funds for essential civic amenities.

As a result of the exercise of Delhi Government towards reducing water bills to zero, both the deficit and debt of the Delhi Jal Board are mounting. In the first three years of the Kejriwal government, the loss of Delhi Jal Board tripled from ₹220.19 crores in 2015-16 to ₹663 crores in 2018-19.

According to the CAG report, in 1998-99, ₹26,620 crore was lent to the Delhi Jal Board, out of

which only ₹351 crore was returned and till March 31, 2018, ₹26,269 crore was outstanding. Meanwhile, the Delhi government has given ₹41,000 crore as loan to Delhi Jal Board in the last five years. The deteriorating conditions of Delhi Jal Board can be gauged from the slow pace of its development works and poor water system. It is believed that the financial conditions of the Delhi Jal Board have become very bad due to the Delhi government and the free water policy.

Slow pace in water connection in unregulated colonies by Delhi Jal Board and poor conditions of sewer system is primarily because of poor financial health of Delhi Jal Board. The opposition parties have also been making allegations of alleged corruption in Delhi Jal Board.

Apart from this, free travel for women in Delhi Transport Corporation buses is yet another freebies scheme run by the Delhi government. Thousands of crores of rupees are lost by the government through freebies. It is natural that due to the limited resources, this freebies policy puts pressure on the government finances and many essential expenditures are sacrificed.

At present, the AAP, which is in power, promised in its election manifesto in the year 2015, about opening 20 new colleges in Delhi, providing free Wi-Fi, building 20,000 public toilets, constituting women security force, installation of three lakh CCTV cameras,

expansion of health facilities, among others.

There were 69 such promises, including creation of eight lakh jobs, skill training of one lakh youth every year by Delhi Skill Mission, which either remained mere promises or in which progress was very slow. It may be noted that prior to AAP government, 15 years between 1999-2000 and 2014-15, growth in capital expenditure was 19.6 per cent per annum (increase from ₹510.5 crores to ₹7430 crores), which declined to hardly 9.2 per cent in the first five years of the AAP government (increase from ₹7430 crores to hardly ₹11549 crores). It can be easily understood that the main reason behind the stalling of Delhi's development was lack of resources, as more and more resources are being used for giving freebies.

If it is said that these freebies schemes are targeted at the poor, then it will not be right. In 2021-22, in Delhi, where per capita income at current prices was ₹401,982 per year, out of 54.5 lakh electricity consumers, 43.2 lakh people are being provided electricity either free of cost or at half price. A big chunk of those, who can easily pay for electricity, are also being given electricity free. The facilities are being badly affected and the debt on the government is increasing, so it cannot be justified.

Not only this, 20,000 liters of water per month is also being provided free of cost to 5.3 lakh households.

POINTCOUNTERPOINT

THERE IS ALWAYS DISCIPLINE INSIDE THE CONGRESS... SONIA GANDHI IS OUR PRESIDENT. I HAVE APOLOGISED TO HER.

—RAJASTHAN CHIEF MINISTER

ASHOK GEHLOT



MAXIM OF ONE 'ONE PARTY, ONE POST' WOULD BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO.

—CONGRESS LEADER

JAIRAM RAMESH

BJP will play up the question of Modi-versus-who?

The Opposition dreams of unity but has a decisive disadvantage as it is still searching for a challenger to Narendra Modi

Political parties in India have begun advance planning for the 2024 Lok Sabha polls. However, it is early yet; the ruling National Democratic Alliance and the Opposition parties have been vying with each other in their preparations. They are making and remarking strategies according to the political climate. The stage is set for the next general elections in 2024.

The regional parties might threaten the Bharatiya Janata Party. While the ruling BJP plans a hat-trick for Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Opposition is trying to unseat him. Both sides are strengthening with a 350-plus target in a Modi-versus-all scenario.

The Opposition dreams



KALYANI SHANKAR

of unity but has a decisive disadvantage as it is still searching for a challenger to Modi. This lack of a prime ministerial candidate may hurt the Opposition—and the BJP will play up the question of Modi-versus-who.

With Mamata Banerjee in West Bengal, Nitish Kumar in Bihar, K Chandrasekhar Rao, MK Stalin in the south, and Arvind Kejriwal in the north, the BJP has formidable contests from different regions. There are more than 200 seats in the Opposition strongholds. Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat vote later this year, and next year six key states—Karnataka, Tripura, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Chhattisgarh—go to the polls.

The BJP is yet to con-

quer the southern states (129 seats).

While Aam Aadmi Party chief Kejriwal takes on the PM on the corruption issue, others plan to corner the BJP on price rise and unemployment.

Secondly, right or wrong, the BJP is clear about its ideology, has a compelling narrative and poll preparedness, active cadres, and huge finances to fight the poll. Modi has the Government machinery and welfare schemes and works to show while the regional satraps are pretty strong in their states.

Modi has not only kept his flock together but, despite criticism, has also broken other parties and lured them into the BJP. More importantly, he has fulfilled the

core agenda of the Sangh Parivar, like Ram mandir, removal of Article 370 in Kashmir, and triple talaq. He is likely to take up the issue of a uniform civil code soon. All these will keep his committed voters intact.

However, the recent Parliamentary Board revamp and JD(U) exit in Bihar last month triggered some unrest within the BJP. Still, leaders bank on the BJP's ability to make course corrections. The BJP also needs to get more allies.

The party has begun aggressive preparations for the general elections. It held a meeting recently in Delhi to draw a blueprint for strengthening its position in 144 Lok Sabha weak constituencies. The party also proposes to

focus on the 70 Lok Sabha seats it never won.

On the other hand, the Opposition is not coherent and is a mixture of different ideologies. They all must adopt a give-and-take posture. While regional leaders have performed well in their respective states, they must work out a common minimum programme acceptable to all partners.

Despite their indifferent health, Deve Gowda, Lalu Yadav, Nitish Kumar, and Sharad Pawar may collaborate to unite the former Janata constituents. With the Congress, they could consolidate across multi-party states such as Haryana, Karnataka, Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh. That's nearly 200 Lok Sabha seats. Rahul

Gandhi's current Bharat Jodo Yatra might help the Congress if it clicks.

The Samajwadi Party, a solid regional party in UP, focuses on strengthening its organisational structure. On the other hand, UP Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has targeted 75 seats for the BJP, which has 80 Lok Sabha seats.

The BSP has launched a massive membership drive with a target of making 75,000 members from each assembly segment as the first step. BSP chief Mayawati has been facing defeat after defeat in the past decade but has a solid Dalit vote bank.

Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy has warned his MLAs to perform or perish. He has

also launched a door-to-door visit of his legislators. Telangana chief minister K.Chandrashekhara Rao also plans to launch a national party, seeking a national role.

It will be a thrilling ride until 2024 for all players. Modi will have ten years of anti-incumbency behind him, but the BJP depends on his magic. But there are many questions, like will Modi perform a hat-trick? Will the Opposition unite? Will Rahul emerge as a successful challenger?

In politics, one week is said to be a long time. We have 18 months to go before the 2024 polls. The picture will become clear when we get near the elections. Till then, political pundits will whistle in the dark.

(The author is a senior journalist)

North Korea fires missiles after Harris leaves South Korea

AP ■ PANMUNJOM, KOREA

In a show of defiance, North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles into the sea on Thursday, hours after U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris flew home from a visit to South Korea during which she emphasized the "ironclad" U.S. commitment to the security of its Asian allies.

It was the third round of missile launches by North Korea this week, extending a record pace in weapons testing as it accelerates a push to expand its arsenal and pressure Washington to accept it as a nuclear power.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said the North Korean missiles were fired nine minutes apart from an area near the city of Suncheon, just north of the capital, Pyongyang, and flew toward waters between the Korean Peninsula and Japan. It didn't immediately release more details.

Japan's military said it also detected a launch. North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles on Wednesday, while Harris was in Japan, and fired one before she left Washington on Sunday.

Harris earlier capped her four-day trip to Asia with a meeting with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol and a stop at the Demilitarized Zone dividing the Korean Peninsula, where she addressed the threat posed by the increasingly hostile North.



There are also concerns that North Korea may conduct a nuclear test, which would move the country closer to being acknowledged as a full-fledged nuclear power. Visiting the DMZ has become something of a ritual for American leaders hoping to show their resolve to stand firm against aggression.

At the DMZ, Harris went to the top of a ridge, near guard towers and security cameras. She looked through bulky binoculars as a South Korean officer pointed out military installations on the southern side. Then an American officer pointed out some of the defenses along the

military demarcation line, including barbed-wire fences and claymore mines. He said American soldiers regularly walk patrols along a path.

"It's so close," Harris said.

Harris then visited one of a row of blue buildings that straddle the demarcation line, where an American officer explained how the buildings are still used to conduct negotiations with North Korea. Sometimes they pass messages back and forth and sometimes they use a megaphone, he said.

"That's high tech," Harris joked, before adding, "We've stepped into history."

"It's still going," the colonel said.

Harris agreed. "The past and present are happening every day." She then walked out of the building and up to the demarcation line. On the North Korean side, two figures dressed in what appeared to be hazmat suits peeked out from behind a curtain in a second-floor window. Then they disappeared back inside.

Harris described the North Korean missile launches as provocations meant to "destabilize the region" and said the United States and South Korea remain committed to the "complete denuclearization" of the North. "I cannot state enough that commitment of the United States to the defense of the Republic of Korea is ironclad," she said.

"In the South, we see a thriving democracy. In the North, we see a brutal dictatorship," she said before flying out of the border on a U.S. military helicopter.

Earlier, Harris met with President Yoon at his office in Seoul and reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to defend the South with a full range of its military capabilities in the event of war, Yoon's office said.

They expressed concern over North Korea's threats of nuclear conflict and pledged an unspecified stronger response to major North Korean provocations, including a nuclear test.

India can play stabilising, bridging role: Jaishankar

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/WASHINGTON

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said India can play a stabilising and a bridging role at a time when in the world it is not an "optimistic picture" and there is a "worried international community." Underlining the country's growing global stature, he also said late Wednesday in the US capital India can also contribute towards de-risking of the global economy and in political terms, in some way, help depolarise the world.

He said there are more than opportunities for India, because it is a very difficult situation. "I think there are contributions that India can make. I think we have today, a stabilising role today. We have a bridging role. We have a diplomatic role. We have to really see in economic terms, how can we contribute to the de-risking of the global economy? I think in political terms, how can we in some way help depolarise the world?" he said. "I think those are really expectations that a lot of other countries, especially countries of the global south have of us. Obviously, we will try and do what we can, and we remain in touch with all the bottom countries of the world," he said. During his just-concluded trip to New York to attend the annual session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), Jaishankar had nearly 100 meetings with world leaders and his counterparts from across the world.

"Today, there is an expectation and here I go back to my UNGA discussion. One of the reasons why there were so many meetings this time. Frankly, there was a lot of demand for meetings. Countries wanted to talk to us," he said.

US: China's overreaction to Taiwan spells danger to peace in Southeast Asia

PTI ■ BEIJING

China is endangering peace in Southeast Asia with its "overreaction" to US House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan, America's envoy Nicholas Burns said on Thursday, while reiterating that there is no shift in America's 'one-China policy' as alleged by Beijing. Pelosi visited Taiwan on August 2, becoming the highest-ranking American official in 25 years to visit the self-ruled island claimed by China, which conducted a series of provocative military maneuvers in retaliation for her presence.

The US has not shifted its stance on Taiwan and remains committed to the 'one-China policy', but Beijing's "overreaction" to Pelosi's visit to Taipei risks a peaceful resolution, Burns said. Burns, who was appointed US Ambassador to China in March, said countries in Southeast Asia should also be concerned about China's aggression in the Taiwan Strait, given its importance as a major shipping route.

"If anyone has changed policy here, it's really the People's Republic of China, with their overreaction, for nearly two months now since Speaker Pelosi's visit," he said speaking at



the Milken Institute Asia Summit in Singapore.

"We've had a median line in the Taiwan Strait (separating between China and Taiwan) for 68 years; it has really kept the peace. [China] tries to erase that: they fired missiles over Taiwan into the Japanese economic zone, they simulated a naval blockade and air blockade," Burns was quoted as saying by the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post. For days, China has launched massive military drills encircling Taiwan, which it regards as a breakthrough province after Pelosi defied Beijing's warnings and visited the self-ruled island in early August.

It later suspended dialogue with the US on military and climate change matters. For its part, China earlier angrily responded to US remarks that the US forces would defend Taiwan if Beijing tries to invade the self-ruled island, saying it will "strive" for the peaceful reunification of Taiwan with "utmost sincerity" but "reserve all options."

Japan's army issues rare apology over sexual harassment case

AP ■ TOKYO

In a rare admission of sexual harassment in Japan's military, its army chief apologised Thursday to a former soldier for suffering caused by a group of servicemen.

Yoshihide Yoshida, head of Japan's Ground Self-Defence Force, said an internal investigation found evidence that several servicemen were involved in the case brought by former soldier Rina Gonoji last month.

"Representing the Ground-Self Defence Force, I deeply apologise to Ms. Gonoji for the pain she had to suffer for a long time," Yoshida told a news conference.

"We offer a sincere apology." The investigation was ongoing and further details, including the assailants and their punishment, were not yet released Thursday.

Japan's Defence Minister Yasukazu Hamada earlier this month ordered a ministry-wide investigation into growing reports of sexual assault after Gonoji brought allegations of harassment of her and others.

Gonoji came forward in late August to request a reinvestigation of an alleged assault on her in 2021 by former male colleagues.

She also said she had received information from 146 servicemen who said they had been harassed while on duty.



The ministry said the number of various types of harassment complaints rose from 256 in 2016 to 2,311 last year.

In a country where gender inequality remains high, sexual harassment is often disregarded and the #MeToo movement has been slow to catch on. But Japanese women have started to speak up.

Earlier this month, Gonoji submitted a petition to the Defense Ministry signed by more than 100,000 people seeking a reinvestigation of her case by a third party.

She said three senior male colleagues in August 2021 in a dorm at a training ground pressed the lower part of their bodies against her, forcing her to spread her legs, as more than 10 other male colleagues watched and laughed, but none tried to stop them.

Sri Lanka's Parliament to debate 22nd Constitutional amendment next week

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan lawmakers will debate next week on the 22nd Amendment to the Constitution aimed at empowering Parliament over the executive president.

Party leaders agreed to take up the debate on the 22nd Amendment in Parliament on October 6 and 7, Communications Department of Parliament said on Thursday.

The decision was taken at the Business Committee meeting held at Parliament Complex on Thursday morning chaired by Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena.

If enacted, the amendment would come to be known as the 21st Amendment to the Constitution of Sri Lanka which was first adopted in 1978.

Earlier this month, the Supreme Court ruled that the bill seeking the 22nd Amendment to the Constitution can be adopted with a two-thirds majority in the House but some clauses will require a nationwide referendum unless some of the



clauses inconsistent with the Constitution are left out of the Bill.

The government responded then saying that debatable clauses would be left out for its adoption in Parliament.

The draft bill on the 22nd Amendment was approved by the Cabinet and gazetted last month. The amendment was formulated amid the ongoing economic turmoil in the country which also caused a political crisis.

It is meant to replace the 20A adopted in 2020 that had given unfettered powers to ex-President



UN envoy: Israel defies UN resolution on halting settlements

AP ■ UNITED NATIONS

Israel continued its defiance of a 2016 UN Security Council resolution demanding an immediate halt to all settlement activity in lands the Palestinians want for their future state, advancing plans for construction of nearly 2,000 housing units in the last three months, the UN Mideast envoy said Wednesday.

Tor Wennesland told the council that no progress was made by Israelis and Palestinians on other demands in the resolution -- preventing all violence against civilians, refraining from acts of provocation, incitement and inflammatory rhetoric, distinguishing between Israeli territory and territories occupied since the 1967 war, and exerting "collective efforts to launch credible negotiations."

He did cite several positive steps during the three-month period ending Sept. 20 -- two contacts between Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas and high-level Israeli officials in July, Israel's issuance of some 16,000 permits for workers and businesses for Palestinians in Gaza, and a 1.5 per cent increase in imports and 54% increase in exports through the main Kerem Shalom crossing from Israel to Gaza compared to the monthly average for the first two quarters of 2022. But Wennesland said "We continue to see little progress" in implementing the resolution since its adoption in December 2016.

The resolution was approved by the Security Council when the United States, in the final weeks of the Obama administration, abstained rather than using its veto to support longtime ally Israel as it had done many times previously. The Trump administration strongly opposed the resolution. U.S. Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield told the council Wednesday that from day one the Biden administration has supported a two-state solution, a position President Joe Biden reiterated to world leaders at last week's high-level meeting at the General Assembly.

At least 6 people wounded in shooting at school in Oakland

AP ■ OAKLAND

At least six people were wounded in a shooting at a school in Oakland on Wednesday, officials said.

The scene of the shooting was "no longer active," according to Alameda County Sheriff spokesperson Lt. Ray Kelly. Paramedics had transported six patients to hospitals, all with gunshot wounds, according to Oakland Fire Department spokesperson Michael Hunt.

Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf tweeted that all of the



wounded were adults and the shooting happened at Sojourner Truth Independent Study, an alternative K-12 school that is located on the same block as three other

schools. Officials didn't say if any of the victims might be students age 18 or older.

Three of the wounded were in critical condition at Highland Hospital in Oakland, the other three were taken to Eden Medical Center in Castro Valley and their conditions were not known, officials said.

John Sasaki, a spokesperson for Oakland Unified School District, said in a statement that district officials "do not have any information beyond what Oakland Police are reporting." He said the

Sojourner Truth Independent Study headquarters has no students. Television footage showed dozens of police cars and yellow tape on the street outside the schools and students leaving the campus.

City Council Member Treva Reid said investigators told her the shooting may be tied to rising "group and gang violence."

Oakland Police Capt. Casey Johnson confirmed in a brief news conference that six people were shot, and didn't answer any questions.

Iraq summons Iranian Ambassador after drone bombing campaign

AP ■ BAGHDAD

Iraq summoned the Iranian ambassador on Thursday to deliver a diplomatic complaint following a deadly drone bombing campaign, the Iraqi Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The Iranian drones targeted an Iranian-Kurdish opposition group in northern Iraq on Wednesday, killing at least nine people and wounding 32 others.

The strikes took place as demonstrations continued to engulf the Islamic Republic after the death of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old Iranian Kurdish woman who died while in the custody of the Iranian morality police.

Iran's attacks targeted positions of the Democratic Party of Iranian Kurdistan in Koya, some 65 kilometres (35 miles) east of Irbil.

The group, known by the acronym KDPI, is a leftist armed opposition force banned in Iran.

The Foreign Ministry said in its statement that civilians were among those killed. It added that the Iraqi government condemned "this crime, which represented the continuation of Iranian forces' encroachment on Iraq's sovereignty."

The ministry also warned of repercussions on "the societal peace of both countries and on regional security and stability."

APPENDIX IV A
[See proviso to Rule 8(6)]
Sale Notice for sale of Immovable Properties
E-Auction sale notice for sale of immovable assets under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with proviso to Rule 8(6) of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.
Notice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower(s) and Guarantor(s) that the below described immovable Property mortgaged to Indiabulls Commercial Credit Ltd. [CIN: U65923DL2006PLC150632] ("Secured Creditor"), the constructive possession of which has been taken by the Authorised Officer of the Secured Creditor, will be sold on "as is where is", "as is what is" and "whatever there is" basis on 31.10.2022 from 02.00 P.M. to 04.00 P.M., for recovery of Rs. 3,44,74,257/- (Rupees Three Crore Forty Four Lakh Seventy Four Thousand Two Hundred Fifty Seven only) pending towards Loan Account No. HLLADM700318649, by way of outstanding principal, arrears (including accrued late charges) and interest till 20.09.2022 with applicable future interest in terms of the Loan Agreement and other related loan document(s) w.e.f. 21.09.2022 along with legal expenses and other charges due to the Secured Creditor from Avinash Kumar Punjani, Mukesh Punjani and Saroj Bala Punjani with Punjani Chits Pvt. Ltd. (Corporate Guarantor).
The Reserve Price of the Immovable Property will be Rs. 4,06,00,000/- (Rupees Four Crore Six Lakh only) and the Earnest Money Deposit ("EMD") will be Rs. 40,60,000/- (Rupees Forty Lakh Sixty Thousand only) i.e. equivalent to 10% of the Reserve Price.
DESCRIPTION OF THE IMMOVABLE PROPERTY
Plot bearing Number S-10 admeasuring area of 180.5 Square Yards in Block-S out of Khanna Number 301/1 situated in the Revenue Estate of Village Tehar in Colony known as Ajay Enclave, Delhi-110018, within the Limits of Delhi Municipal Corporation and the Plot is bounded as under:
North : Service Lane, South : Road 15',
East : Plot Number S-9 West : Plot Number S-11
For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer to the link provided on the website of the Secured Creditor i.e. www.indiabullscorporatecredit.com ; For bidding, log on to www.auctionfocus.in. Sd/
Date : 26.09.2022 Authorized Officer
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People trapped, 2.5M without power as Ian drenches Florida

AP ■ ST PETERSBURG (US)

Hurricane Ian left a path of destruction in southwest Florida, trapping people in flooded homes, cutting off the only bridge to a barrier island, damaging the roof of a hospital intensive care unit and knocking out power to 2.5 million people as it dumped rain across the peninsula on Thursday. One of the strongest hurricanes to ever hit the United States threatened catastrophic flooding around the state.

Ian's tropical-storm-force winds extended outward up to 415 miles (665 km), drenching much of Florida and the southeastern Atlantic coast.

Authorities confirmed at least one storm death in Florida. A 72-year-old man was found dead early on Thursday in water in a canal behind his home in Deltona near Daytona Beach, the Volusia County Sheriff's Office said in a statement.

It said he appeared to be using a hose to drain his pool into the wide canal and fell down an incline that was "extremely soft and slippery due to the heavy rain." Another Florida sheriff said he believed the death toll would be "in the



hundreds." Lee County Sheriff Carmine Marceno told ABC's "Good Morning America" that his office was receiving thousands of 911 calls from people needing rescue in the county that includes Fort Myers, but roadways were still impassable and bridges are compromised.

"It crushed us," Marceno said. "We still cannot access many of the people that are in need." Emergency crews saw through toppled trees to reach people in flooded homes, but with no electricity and virtually no cell service, it was impossible for many people to call for help from the hardest hit coastal areas where the surge came in.

As Japan and China mark 50-year ties, moods are mixed

AP ■ TOKYO

Japan and China marked the 50th anniversary of normalization of their ties Thursday as their leaders Fumio Kishida and Xi Jinping stressed the importance of their strengthened relationship over the decades, though they still face difficulties.

On Sept. 29, 1972, then-Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka and Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai signed a communique normalizing their ties and pledging peace and friendship. In the communique, Japan expressed remorse over wartime damage on China and acknowledged Beijing as the country's only legitimate government.

Despite the milestone, the ceremony lacks a celebratory mood as the two countries remain at odds over disputed East China Sea islands and China's growing military and economic influence in the region.



Japan considers China a security threat and is promoting security and trade frameworks with the United States and other democracies as a counter to Beijing's growing influence. China's escalating tension around Taiwan is also a growing concern. While Japan-China relations today have a variety of possibilities, they face a number of issues and concerns, Kishida said in a message to Xi, which was shown on a big screen at a ceremony sponsored by Japanese influential business organisations and

friendship groups and held at a Tokyo hotel.

Kishida said he hoped to develop "constructive and stable relations" with China to fulfil a responsibility they share as major powers in contributing to regional and global peace and stability, looking ahead the next 50 years of their ties.

He said it is important to remember their starting point 50 years ago when the normalization was achieved. Xi, in his message sent to Kishida, said normalization of their ties in 1972 opened "a new chapter" in bilateral relations and the two countries have since deepened exchanges and cooperation, bringing welfare to both peoples and peace and development to the region and the world.

He said he attaches "great importance" to the development of their ties and is willing to work with Kishida "to build a China-Japan relationship that meets the requirements of the new era."

Hundreds of children from east Ukraine stranded in Russian camps

AP ■ IZIU, UKRAINE The Russian occupation radio and newspaper ads promoted the camps as a summer break from the war for Ukrainian children under their control, free of charge. Hundreds of families agreed in the occupied east and the south, Ukrainian officials and parents say. One bus convoy left Izium at the end of August, with the promise that the children would return home in time for the school year. Instead, Ukrainian forces swept through in early September, driving the Russians into a disorganized retreat and liberating territory that had been in enemy hands for months. Fifty-two children from Izium and around 250 more from other towns in the Kharkiv region, all between the ages of 9 and 16, are now scattered in camps, according to a Ukrainian intelligence official and a mother who hitchhiked into Russia to retrieve her daughter. Both, like nearly everyone involved in the issue, spoke on condition of



anonymity to describe a sensitive and fraught situation. "Our main goal was to give the children a break from everything that was happening here, from all the horrors that were here," said Valeriya Kolesnyk, an Izium teacher whose 9-year-old is now in

retrieve their kids. They are afraid they are seen as collaborators, willing participants in handing their children over to the enemy. "We are simple people. We could never afford a seaside holiday for our children and we saw this as a chance," said one Izium father who has a 9-year-old child among the group. No town official was present at Wednesday's gathering. The Washington Post first reported on the stranded children last week, but AP was able to learn the magnitude of the issue after speaking with 20 parents and officials in both Russia and Ukraine. Families of the missing children said the Izium couple who organized the trip now tell them Ukraine is too dangerous for children. The couple are planning a permanent future in Russia. "I'm not going back," said the husband, Valeriya Polyvoda, reached by phone in Russia. Polyvoda blamed the children's plight on local authorities in Russia. He refused to say how many children were with him.

US: Focus on new Russia sanctions on oil revenue, arms supplies

AP ■ WASHINGTON Future sanctions over President Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine must focus on depriving Putin of what he needs to fund and fight the war: revenue from Russia's oil and gas sales and access to global supply networks to replenish his military, two architects of the Biden administration's sanctions campaign told lawmakers on Wednesday. While calling for stronger action against Russia, the State and Treasury department officials appearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee faced complaints from both Democrats and Republicans that the first rounds of sanctions did not hit Moscow as hard or fast as the administration had forecast. "What we were told was these were going to be the toughest sanctions ever on a country. That they were going to have certain impacts," said



Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, a New Hampshire Democrat, recounting early predictions from administration officials that the sanctions would plunge the country into recession, send the value of the ruble plunging, and trigger unrest among Russians. "And we have not seen the full impact that was described to us. "The frustration is we know that while we're playing the long game, Ukrainians are dying," Shaheen added. Putin has vowed to press his offensive in Ukraine despite battlefield losses to motivated and NATO-supplied Ukrainian

Moscow tries to draft fleeing Russian men at borders

AP ■ LARSI, GEORGIA Long lines of Russians trying to escape being called up to fight in Ukraine continued to clog highways out of the country on Wednesday, and Moscow reportedly set up draft offices at borders to intercept some of them. North Ossetia, a Russian region that borders Georgia, declared a state of "high alert" and said that food, water, warming stations and other aid should be brought in for those who have spent days in queues. Volunteers

on the Georgian side of the border also have brought water, blankets and other assistance. North Ossetia restricted many passenger cars from entering its territory, and set up a draft office at the Verkhny Lars border crossing, Russian news agencies said. Some media outlets released photos at the crossing showing a black van with "military enlistment office" written on it. Another such draft checkpoint was set up in Russia along the Finnish border, according to the independent Russian news outlet Meduza. Tens of thousands of Russian men have fled in the week since President Vladimir Putin announced a mobilization to bolster struggling Russian forces in Ukraine. Although Putin said the callup was "partial," aimed at calling up about 300,000 men with past military service, many Russians fear it will be much broader and more arbitrary than that. There are numerous reports of men with no military training and of all ages receiving draft notices. Alexander Kamisentsev,



who left his home in Saratov for Georgia, described the scene on the Russian side of the border. "It's all very scary — tears, screams, a huge number of people. There is a feeling that the government does not know how to organize it. It seems that they want to close the border, but at the same time they are afraid that protests may follow, and they let people leave," he told the AP. He said he decided at the last moment to leave "because I am not going to kill my Ukrainian brothers or go to prison." Protesters carrying Georgian and Ukrainian flags and signs like "Russia Kills" greeted Russians at the border Wednesday. Giga Lemonjva of the political party Droa, which organized the protest, said the evacuees threaten Georgia's security and economy. One protester, Helen Khoshtaria, tweeted: "We organized a protest at the border today so that the incoming Russians know how we feel about their 'Russian world.'" Russians have been crossing by car, bicycle, scooter and foot. According to Yandex Maps, the traffic jam leading to Verkhny Lars, a town near the border between Georgia and North Ossetia, stretched for about 15 kilometers (over 9 miles) on Tuesday. Georgia's Interior Ministry said over 53,000 Russians had entered the country since last week. There also are long lines at the border with Kazakhstan, which has taken in more than 98,000 Russians in the past week.

NATO believes Baltic Sea gas leaks were sabotage

AP ■ COPENHAGEN, DENMARK NATO said Thursday it would retaliate for any attacks on the critical infrastructure of the 30-member-countries organization as it suggested that damage to two gas pipelines off Denmark and would-be member Sweden in international waters in the Baltic Sea is the result of sabotage. "Any deliberate attack against Allies' critical infrastructure would be met with a united and determined response," NATO ambassadors

guard spokesperson Mattias Lindholm. There are two more off Denmark, he said. Two of the leaks are on the Nord Stream 1 pipeline that recently stopped supplying gas, while the other two are on Nord Stream 2 that never started operating. Although they weren't running, both pipelines were filled with gas, which has escaped and bubbled to the surface. The Nord Stream pipelines run through the Baltic to transport gas from Russia to Germany. The Danish and Swedish governments believe that the leaks off their countries were "deliberate actions." Before the leaks were reported, explosions were recorded. A first explosion was recorded by seismologists early Monday southeast of the Danish island of Bornholm. A second, stronger blast northeast of the island that night was equivalent to a magnitude-2.3 earthquake. Seismic stations in Denmark, Norway and Finland also registered the explosions. said in a statement. They said that the damage to the pipelines between Russia and Germany "is of deep concern." The alliance also said that "all currently available information indicates that this is the result of deliberate, reckless, and irresponsible acts of sabotage. These leaks are causing risks to shipping and substantial environmental damage." The Swedish coast guard on Thursday confirmed a fourth leak on the Nord Stream pipelines off southern Sweden. "We have leakage at two positions" off Sweden, coast

Another top Chinese official indicted on bribery charges ahead of CPC's key meeting

PTI ■ BEIJING The purge of top Chinese officials of the ruling Communist Party ahead of its key Congress next month in which President Xi Jinping is widely expected to get endorsed for an unprecedented third term, continued on Thursday with another top official being indicted over corruption charges. Zhang Yongze, former vice chairman of the provincial government of Tibet Autonomous Region, has been indicted on charges of taking bribes, state-run Xinhua news agency reported. According to his indictment, Zhang took advantage of

his former positions and power to seek benefits for others in areas, including project contracting and personnel promotion, and illegally accepted a large amount of money and valuables in return. The National Commission of Supervision had concluded its probe into Zhang's case and initiated a public prosecution against him at the Intermediate People's Court of Xi'an. THAT IT BE KNOWN TO ALL... that M/s Sterling Motor Co., having its erstwhile workshops at 14/2 Mathura Road, Faridabad (HR) and GP-11, Sector-16, HSIDC Industrial Estate, Gurugram (HR) and carried on vehicle repair and body job work of the vehicles. Under mentioned vehicles are lying as scrap within the premises/workshop as unclaimed & abandoned since very long inspite of regular collection notices to owners. Now M/s Sterling Motor Co. are unable to take care & spend their time and money to look after such unclaimed vehicles/scrap. Hence through this public notice, owners of the under mentioned vehicle are finally called upon to collect their vehicle from the workshop/premises after showing proof of ownership, job card order form of their respective vehicle and after making full payment of all the outstanding repair bills etc. along with parking charges from the workshop/premises latest with 7 days from date of this notice, and thereafter M/s Sterling Motor Co., will not be responsible for any liability of any type whatsoever and will be free to dispose the unclaimed vehicles/scrap to recover its dues. DETAILS OF VEHICLES & OWNERS: 1. REGN NO.: HR26BX2428 | OWNER NAME: SAGPLAN CONSULTING PVT LTD 2. REGN NO.: DL12C5996 | OWNER NAME: Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd For Sterling Motor Co Admin Manager (9910697060) Dated: 30 Sep, 2022

Finland to ban entry to Russian tourists starting midnight

AP ■ HELSINKI Pekka Haavisto said during a news conference. The government justified its decision by saying that continued arrivals of Russian tourists in Finland is endangering the country's international relations. It said it had discussed the issue with Ukraine's leadership, among others, ahead of the decision. The Finnish government said Thursday it would significantly limit passenger traffic on Finland's border with Russia, banning Russian citizens travelling with tourist visas from entering the Nordic country effective Friday. "The decision in principle aims to completely prevent Russian tourism to Finland and the related transit through Finland," Foreign Minister

Public notices and advertisements including 'STATE INFRASTRUCTURE & INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF UTTARAKHAND LTD.' and 'UJVN LIMITED'.

US candidate to lead UN telecoms agency after US-Russia race

AP ■ BUCHAREST (ROMANIA) Doreen Bogdan-Martin of the United States was elected on Thursday to head the UN's telecommunications agency, winning a US-Russia face-off for the leadership of a key global agency that sets guideposts for radio, internet and television communications — ending a race that has been overshadowed by geopolitics in the wake of Russia's war in Ukraine. Envoy from the 193 mem-

ber states of the Geneva-based International Telecommunications Union, selected Bogdan-Martin over lone rival Rashid Ismailov of Russia at the latest meeting in the Romanian capital of its policy-making body — which meets every four years. Bogdan-Martin, who will begin her four-year term as ITU secretary-general on January 1, is a 29-year ITU veteran and the current director of its telecommunication development bureau. Her career began in the US Commerce Department. She won the position in a 139-25 vote in which there were also a number of abstentions. Speaking in the plenary hall in Bucharest after she was elected on Thursday, Bogdan-Martin described the leadership position as "an immensely important position" and said it will be an "honour for me and my country" to lead the organisation. She is the first woman to head the ITU, and the first American in charge since the 1960s.

Ukrainian activist among winners of Alternative Nobel

AP ■ STOCKHOLM The Right Livelihood Award — known as the "Alternative Nobel" — was awarded on Thursday to community activists and organisations working on three continents, including a Ukrainian civil rights activist. Oleksandra Matviichuk and the Center for Civil Liberties that she heads were honoured "for building sustainable democratic institutions in Ukraine and modeling a path to international accountability for war crimes." In a statement released by the award committee, Matviichuk said that "now we are going through a very dramatic time of Ukrainian history... This award is a gesture of support for our struggle in general, and for my work, in particular." The Africa Institute for Energy Governance (AFIEGO) won "for their courageous work for climate justice and community rights violated by extractivist energy projects in Uganda."



"for promoting peace, demilitarisation and human rights in Somalia and the face of terrorism and gender-based violence." Two organisations were also honoured. Cecoseola, a Venezuelan association of cooperatives, was cited "for establishing an equitable and cooperative economic model as a robust alternative to profit-driven economies."

Advertisement for 'कार्यालय नगर निगम, हरिद्वार' (City Municipal Corporation, Haridwar) with details on public notices and recruitment.

India 'star' emerging market economy: S&P

'Estimated 7.3% growth in FY-2023'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
S&P Global Ratings said rising rates and increased



ing markets.

"For the 16 emerging economies that we cover, excluding China, 2022 GDP growth will hit 5.2 per cent this year, in our view. This forecast is up 30 basis points from our previous round. India is the star of this group with growth of 7.3 per cent this fiscal year (ending in March 2023)," S&P said. The US-based agency said as central banks aggressively raise rates to fight inflation, our confidence is waning that they can avoid generating a sharp downturn.

"We are now expecting a mild recession in the US," it said, adding that rising rates, increased European energy insecurity, and the lingering effects of Covid-19 are hitting growth almost everywhere.

"This may be the most anticipated economic slowdown on record, but the data have yet to fully fall in line," S&P said.

Current account deficit widens to 2.8% of GDP in Q1 of FY23



PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's current account deficit, a key indicator of the balance of payment position, widened to 2.8 per cent of GDP at USD 23.9 billion in the first quarter of the current financial year, mainly on account of a higher trade deficit.

As per the data released by the Reserve Bank of India's Balance of Payments during the First Quarter (April-June) of 2022-23, the current account balance recorded a deficit of USD 23.9 billion (2.8 per cent of GDP) in the first quarter, up from USD 13.4 billion (1.5 per cent of GDP) in January-March

period of the last fiscal. India's current account surplus stood at USD 6.6 billion, equivalent to 0.9 per cent of GDP in the first quarter (April-June) of 2021-22.

"Underlying the current account deficit in Q1:2022-23 was the widening of the merchandise trade deficit to USD 68.6 billion from USD 54.5 billion in Q4:2021-22 and an increase in net outflow of investment income payments," the RBI said.

It also said net services receipts increased, both sequentially and on a year-on-year (y-o-y) basis, on the back of rising exports of computer and business services.

Govt lowers borrowing target for FY-2023

To borrow just ₹5.92 lakh crore in second half

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

A day after doling out Rs 44,762 crore for free ration to the poor, the Government on Thursday cut its market borrowing target for the current fiscal by Rs 10,000 crore in signs of buoyant tax collections.

In a statement, the finance ministry said the government will do total borrowing of Rs 5.92 lakh crore during October-March period of the current fiscal, including from issuance of its maiden Sovereign Green Bonds of Rs 16,000 crore.

The government had in Budget for 2022-23 projected a gross market borrowing of Rs 14.31 lakh crore.

Of this, the government decided to borrow Rs 14.21 lakh crore during 2022-23.



"Accordingly, the balance amount of Rs 5.92 lakh crore (41.7 per cent of Rs 14.21 lakh crore) is planned to be borrowed in the second half of the fiscal year 2022-23 through dated securities, including Rs 16,000 crore through issuance of Sovereign Green Bonds (SGRBs) as per the announcement made in the Union Budget 2022-23," it said.

The government will continue to exercise greenshoe option to

retain an additional subscription of up to Rs 2,000 crore against each of the securities indicated in the auction notification.

The amount raised through this option will be limited to 3 to 5 per cent of the gross issuance for second half and within the gross borrowing limit for the 2022-23. The gross direct tax collections till September 17 grew 30 per cent to over Rs 8.36 lakh crore.

Sensex slips for 7th day amid F&O expiry

RBI policy in focus

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark indices failed to hold on to early gains and closed in the red for the seventh straight session on Thursday, with participants remaining in wait-and-watch mode ahead of the RBI's interest rate decision.

Unabated selling by foreign funds added to the pressure, though a modest recovery in the rupee cushioned the fall, traders said.

After rallying in early trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex came under selling pressure in the afternoon session and closed 188.32 points or 0.33 per cent lower at 56,409.96.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty dipped 40.50 points or 0.24 per cent to end at 16,818.10.

Asian Paints was the biggest laggard in the Sensex pack, tumbling 5.22 per cent, followed by Tech Mahindra, Titan, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bajaj Finance, TCS, Wipro and Bajaj Finserv.

In contrast, ITC, Dr Reddy's, Tata Steel, Sun Pharma, Nestle India, M&M and NTPC were among the major winners, climbing as much as 2.51 per cent.

The Reserve Bank of India



(RBI) may take cues from its global counterparts, including the US Federal Reserve, to raise interest rate for the fourth time in a row on Friday to tame stubborn inflation.

The RBI, which has since May raised the short-term lending rate (repo) by 140 basis points (bps), may again go for a 50-bps increase to take it to a three-year high of 5.9 per cent, say experts.

"The initial uptick in the domestic market was short-lived due to its weak global peers and declining rupee. As the yield differential between India and the US fell to a multi-year low of 348 bps, foreign investors are still departing from the Indian market."

"Amid the ongoing global trend of aggressive rate hikes, markets are braced for a 50 bps increase by RBI.

'Retirement planning not topmost priority for urban India'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Retirement planning is not the topmost priority for urban India but they worry that savings will not be enough to cover for old age life, with only one in three actively working to meet retirement goals, according to a study.

Max Life Insurance in partnership with marketing data firm Kantar conducted a survey to assess the urban salaried class' readiness for content and financially independent retired life. About 90 per cent of people above the age of 50 years in the survey regretted not starting early enough in life to save for retired life.

In its second edition, the survey finds the India Retirement Index Study (IRIS) remaining at 44, pointing there is a lag in preparedness over the last one year among the urban salaried class for retired life planning.

Conducted through a self-administered digital manner, the survey involved 3,220 male as well as female respondents across 28 cities, of which 6 were metro cities and 12 tier I and 12 tier II cities.

Life expectancy is consistently rising over the years.

"The objective here is to create a barometer or mirror through which we can keep observing how we are making progress. I think there are several questions when you start to consider about retirement," Prashant Tripathy, Managing Director and CEO, Max Life Insurance said.

Gold gains ₹460; silver rallies by ₹1,035



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold rose by Rs 460 to Rs 49,960 per 10 gram in the national capital on Thursday amid a rally in prices of the precious metal in international market, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the yellow metal settled at Rs 49,500 per 10 gram.

Silver also rallied by Rs 1,035 to Rs 56,230 per kg.

"In the physical market of Delhi, Gold prices traded higher in the morning trade after spot COMEX Gold witnessed a rally in US trading sessions," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst at HDFC Securities.

In the international market, gold was trading higher at USD 1,642 per ounce while silver was up at USD 18.57 per ounce.

Flyers to get 5G services at IGIA

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi is ready to support 5G services and passengers will be able to utilise the high-speed mobile service inside Terminal-3 (T-3) and its surrounding areas as soon as it is rolled out.

Flyers having a 5G-enabled mobile phone and sim card can experience a better signal strength, seamless connectivity, negligible latency, and faster data speed at the Domestic Departure pier and International Arrival Baggage area at Terminal 3, and between T3 Arrivals and Multi-Level Car Parking (MLCP).

According to the GMR group, passengers can avail these services once 5G is rolled out in the country. Apart from these, people visiting GMR Aerocity Delhi can also get a feel of the 5G network at GMR Square.

"The 5G network offers a faster speed and lower latency. At the airport, this feature of the next-generation mobile technology will help improve



connection density and will also lead to greater efficiencies and aid in faster decision-making," Videh Kumar Jaipuria, CEO at DIAL in a statement.

Wi-Fi relies on the unlicensed spectrum which is free for anyone to use, as per the Delhi International Airport Ltd (DIAL). With the rise in passenger footfall, the airports have witnessed a rise in demand for more bandwidth and faster speed for using gadgets like smartphones and laptops, among others.

Airlines and other airport stakeholders are also seeking fast, seamless and secure connectivity for their essential technologies to meet the demand, DIAL said, adding with 5G network passengers will be able to enjoy a 20 times faster data speed over the available Wi-Fi system, it said.

Rupee rises 13 paise to close at 81.80 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled 13 paise higher at 81.80 against US dollar on Thursday, ahead of the RBI monetary policy decision scheduled to come out on Friday.

At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 81.60 against the greenback. It witnessed an intra-day high of 81.58 and a low of 81.94 during the session.

It finally ended at 81.80, up 13 paise from its previous close.

On Wednesday, the rupee plunged below the 82-mark for the first time in intraday trade before settling 40 paise down at 81.93 against the dollar.

"In the last hour of trade, the Indian rupee strengthened along with the Chinese Yuan which appreciated after a report of China state bank may stock up for Yuan intervention. However, the month-end rebalancing, foreign fund outflows and dollar demand from the importers limited the gains in



the rupee," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities.

Traders remained cautious ahead of the RBI's monetary policy decision.

"In the near-term, spot USD-INR is having resistance near 82.40 and support at 81.30. A recent, parabolic up move in USD-INR in the last seven days warrants some retracement in the coming days but the directional trend remains up as long as it trades above 80.10," Parmar added.

The dollar index, which measures the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.55 per cent to 113.22.

'Merger between LIC Mutual Fund, IDBI MF at an advanced stage'

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Merger between LIC Mutual Fund and IDBI Mutual Fund is at a "fairly advanced stage", a top official said on Thursday.

"The process is on, it is at a fairly advanced stage," LIC MF's managing director and chief executive T S Ramakrishnan told reporters, when asked about reports of the merger.

Recent media reports have said that LIC Mutual Fund plans to absorb IDBI Mutual Fund following a regulatory diktat barring a single promoter from owning more than 10 per cent stake in two asset management companies. IDBI Bank, the parent of IDBI MF, is majority owned by LIC for the last few years.

Ramakrishnan added that as and when LIC MF, the 22nd largest MF in the country with over Rs 18,000 crore in assets under management, is in a firm comment on the merger process, it will inform everybody.



According to reports, there were two attempts to sell IDBI Mutual Fund that could not be successful, and it resulted in the merger with a company owned by the same parent.

Meanwhile, Ramakrishnan said the fund house is targeting to be among the top 10 by AUM (Assets Under Management) in the next five years, and will be taking specific steps like pushing its distribution efforts and investing in the brand.

It is aiming to increase the share of equity investments to the industry average of 45 per cent of the AUM by FY24 from the present level which is about 12-13 per cent lower, Ramakrishnan said.

The fund house will play to its core strength of reach in the tier-II and tier-III cities which present the biggest opportunity of growth for the industry, he said, adding that focus on high net-worth individuals will also continue.

Adani Enterprises' subsidiaries secure ₹10 K cr fund for Ganga Expressway Project in UP

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Adani Enterprises Ltd on Thursday said its three wholly-owned subsidiaries have achieved financial closure for the access-controlled six-lane greenfield Ganga Expressway Project in Uttar Pradesh under public-private partnership mode.

The company in a statement said it has secured finances of Rs 10,238 crore from lenders, and the concession period of the project shall be 30 years with traffic link extension provision of six years, including three years of construction period.

"Budaun Hardoi Road Private Ltd (BHRPL), Hardoi Unnao Road Private Ltd (HURPL) and Unnao Prayagraj Road Private Ltd (UPRPL) — wholly-owned subsidiaries of Adani Enterprises Ltd (AEL) — have achieved financial closure for the access-controlled six-lane (expandable to eight lane) greenfield Ganga Expressway Project (Group-II, III & IV) in Uttar Pradesh (UP) respectively on DBFOT (toll) basis under PPP mode," it said.

The Ganga Expressway in Uttar Pradesh, which will connect Meerut with Prayagraj, will be India's longest express-

way to be implemented on Design, Build, Finance, Operate and Transfer (DBFOT) model.

Adani Enterprises' road business CEO K P Maheshwari said the State Bank of India has underwritten the entire debt requirement of Rs 10,238 crore for the project.

AEL's road portfolio has grown to 18 projects with more than 6,400 lane kilometres and an asset value exceeding Rs 44,000 crore spread over ten states — Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Gujarat, West Bengal and Odisha.

Ford India loss widens to ₹4,229 cr in FY-22

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian arm of US car-maker Ford, which had last year decided to exit from the country, saw widening of its loss after tax to Rs 4,229 crore in fiscal 2021-22, according to data provided by business intelligence platform Tofler.

Ford India Pvt Ltd had posted a loss after tax of Rs 188 crore in 2020-21.

The widening of loss was



primarily driven by restructuring and included exceptional items outflow of Rs 4,226 crore. Revenue from operations in FY22 stood at Rs 10,202 crore as against Rs

12,057 crore in FY21, down 15 per cent. The total revenue from operations included domestic sale of Rs 2,399 crore, which was 49 per cent lower than the prior year's figure of Rs 4,742 crore, as per regulatory filings by Ford India Pvt Ltd.

"Financial performance for the current year is largely impacted by restructuring decision announced in September 2021. The decision resulted in

exit from vehicle and engine manufacturing operations at Chennai and vehicle manufacturing operations at Sanand," the company said.

In terms of volume, Ford India sold 69,223 cars during 2021-22 as compared to 94,112 cars in the prior financial year, down 26 per cent. This included domestic sales of 15,870 cars, as compared to 48,042 units in the previous year, down 67 per cent.

TVS Motor signs MoU with FCDO to offer scholarships to aspiring individuals

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Two and three-wheeler major TVS Motor Company has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to offer Chevening TVS Motor Company Scholarships to candidates who show great potential to become decision-makers,

the company said on Thursday. The Chevening Programme, is a scholarship programme that aims to attract select students around the world who demonstrate great potential to become leaders, decision-makers in their own country. The United Kingdom government's global scholarship programme is awarded to those individuals with strong



academic backgrounds who can also demonstrate their leadership potential, a company statement said here.

"At TVS Motor Company it has been our endeavour to create future leaders and sup-

port them in their journey. Our collaboration with FCDO and the Government of United Kingdom is a testimony to this commitment," TVS Motor Company MD, Sudarshan Venu said. "This partnership is an unique opportunity for the talented and dynamic minds in the country and we are excited to be a part of their growth," he said.

Qatar says WC fans do not need Covid vaccination



AP ■ DOHA

Coronavirus vaccinations will not be mandatory for the million-plus fans going to the World Cup in Qatar this year, the Gulf state said Thursday.

But players and match officials may be forced into a secure "bio-bubble" if Covid-19 cases take off again, with the threat of expulsion from the tournament for those who breach the secure environment, the health ministry said.

The 29-day tournament will be the first major global sporting event with fans since the eruption in December 2019 of the Covid pandemic, which has since killed more than six million people.

Qatari organisers, who have predicted that more than one million people will pack Doha for the matches, and football's governing body, FIFA, have said they want the event to be a sign the world is getting over the devastating pandemic.

But Qatar's health ministry warned in its World Cup guidelines that special measures would be ordered "in the event of a worsening pandemic situation in the country", such as the emergence of a threatening new variant.

With Covid-19 currently considered under control, "there will be no vaccination requirement for participants and visit-

ing spectators," the ministry said.

All visitors aged over six will have to produce negative Covid-19 tests before taking flights to Qatar for the tournament that starts November 20.

Fans will have to wear masks in public transport but authorities are only recommending the use of masks at the eight stadiums in the Doha region where matches will be played.

Anyone who tests positive for Covid-19 in Qatar will have to isolate for five days, the guidelines added.

BIO-BUBBLE READY

Organisers and FIFA are most worried about the first two weeks of the tournament when four matches a day are planned and the peak number of supporters from the 32 competing nations will be packing stadiums, fan zones and tourist spots.

Some estimates say there could be up to 350,000 visiting fans in Doha at the same time during the weekend of November 26-27.

Officials say Doha airport and the city's roads will be facing peak pressure that weekend.

Because of the pressure on accommodation, only fans with tickets can enter Qatar from November 1, though each person with a ticket is allowed to invite three guests.

Each person entering the country must download a special fan pass, a Hayya card, and Qatar's anti-Covid health application, Ehteraz.

The app has to be shown at the entrance to metro stations and most shopping malls. "If metro stations and malls want to check the app, then people need to be ready for some queues," said one tourism consultant who is advising a major chain of hotels in Qatar.

Other measures may also be difficult to enforce because of the sheer numbers, experts said.

The ministry is recommending a one metre (three feet) space between diners in cafes and restaurants.

MAX: I DON'T REALLY THINK ABOUT C'SHIP



AP ■ SINGAPORE

Max Verstappen on Thursday said he thinks he is "quite a long shot" to retain his Formula One world championship at this weekend's Singapore Grand Prix, even though it is mathematically possible.

Red Bull driver Verstappen, who will celebrate his 25th birthday on Friday, is running away with the title battle but must win Sunday's race and then depend on his closest rivals faltering, or the fight will move on to Japan the following week.

"I don't really think about the championship," said the dominant Dutchman, who has won 11 of 16 races in 2022 and the last five in a row.

"It's quite a long shot and I just want to enjoy the weekend and of course try to win it," he told

reporters.

"I need a lot of luck for it to happen here so I don't really count on it."

Verstappen admitted he knew the scenario required for him to secure back-to-back championships.

"I need to win and Checo (Red Bull teammate Sergio Perez) needs to finish fourth or lower and (Ferrari's) Charles (Leclerc) eighth or lower."

"So I mean it's a bit unrealistic for it to happen, so I don't really think about it," he said.

Verstappen said he was more concerned about the single-lap pace of the Red Bull at Singapore, where qualifying in pole position is crucial on a track where it is almost impossible to overtake.

"We really need to focus over one lap. This year we've never really been incredible over one lap," he said.

"We've always been good in the race but around here we know that

one-lap performance is very important."

Verstappen has never won Singapore's spectacular night race, which is returning to the calendar for the first time since 2019 because of Covid.

The nature of the city centre circuit and Singapore's tropical heat and humidity means it is the most demanding venue on the calendar, both physically and mentally.

Every running of the Singapore Grand Prix has featured a safety car and the race requires huge powers of concentration.

There are no long straights to give drivers a breather and concrete walls line the bumpy tarmac ready to punish the slightest error.

"We haven't been to Singapore for a while so it will be interesting to see how the track has evolved," said Verstappen, who has a 116-point lead

Hamilton 'feels for fans' as Verstappen runs away with title

AP ■ SINGAPORE

Seven-time world champion Lewis Hamilton on Thursday said that he feels for the fans with Max Verstappen on the cusp of wrapping up the world championship early at this weekend's Singapore Grand Prix.

Last year's title chase saw Verstappen pip Hamilton on the very last lap of a controversial final race of 2021 in Abu Dhabi.

But Verstappen can clinch his second successive world championship for Red Bull on Sunday night with five races to spare if he claims a sixth consecutive win and his rivals finish down the field.

After some patchy results in the first three races of 2022, after which Verstappen found himself 46 points behind Ferrari driver Charles Leclerc, the Dutchman has dominated.

Verstappen has won 11 of 17 races and now has an almost unassailable 116-point lead over Leclerc with just six grands prix to go.

"I definitely feel for the fans because, even for us, last year going right down to the wire was intense for everybody," said Hamilton, who has struggled all season in his Mercedes and is himself out of the championship running.

"So it's never great when the season finishes early," he said.

The 37-year-old Briton said he was "grateful" to have his 2008 season -- when he won his first world title -- right down to the last 17 seconds.

"And obviously last year, pretty much much the same thing. Let's

hope for the future, it's a bit better," he said.

Hamilton has grappled all season with a car that has suffered from instability over bumps and bouncing at high speed.

But he said the team now understands the new 2022 car "100 percent" better than at the season's previous street races at Monaco and Baku, and that gives him hope for this weekend.

"We've learned a huge amount about the car," he said.

"I think we're very fortunate that we're in a much better place than I think we have ever been. So I hope we are not that far away."

"We hope that the car works better here but it really depends how bumpy it is. The bumps often set the car off and upset the car in a lot of instances. We do know it will be bumpy."

"They have resurfaced some parts of the circuit so hopefully it is not as bouncy as before. Maybe the car will be fine, maybe it won't."

Hamilton is looking to keep his proud record of winning at least one race in every season since his debut for McLaren in 2007.

"For me, we've still got six races, I'm still enjoying the challenge and proud of the strength and the growth in our team," he said.

"Just seeing how hard everyone works is for me the most inspiring thing. Trying to come up with solutions, trying to crack the code. That's really impressive because it's just relentless."

"I have no expectations at all, just going to try and have the best weekend with whatever we are faced with."

to equal the single-season mark of 13 jointly held by Schumacher (2004) and Sebastian Vettel (2013).

"It will be nice if we get it," said Verstappen. "But for me personally it's not something. It's nice what we've done the last few races but I don't think about it any more."

"I'm just focusing on what we have to do here."

UWW gives 18 World C'ship quotas for Paris Olympics to World Qualifiers

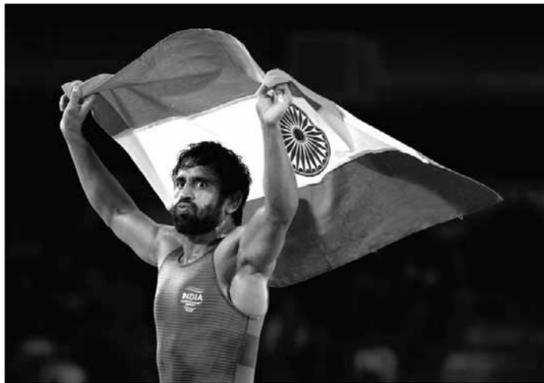
PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The top-five and not top-six wrestlers at the World Championships will earn quota places for the 2024 Paris Games in each of the 18 weight categories, as the world governing body UWW has announced changes to the qualification process for the Olympics.

The 18 quota places taken away from the 2023 World Championships, the first event offering quotas, have been added to the World Qualifiers, which will be the last chance for wrestlers to secure spots for the Paris Games.

United World Wrestling (UWW) President Nenad Lalovic was quoted as saying by the official website of the world governing body on Wednesday that the changes are aimed at creating "further fairness in the distribution between the World Championships and the World Qualifiers."

The World Championships is set to be held in Russia from September 16-24. Apart from the 2023 World Championships, the continental qualifiers (Asia, Africa, Pan-America, European) in 2024, and the 2024 World Olympics Qualifiers will also



offer quota for the Games.

Earlier, 108 quotas were awarded at the World Championships (six per Olympic weight) but now 90 quota places will be on offer.

From India Bajrang Punia (65kg), Ravi Dahiya (57kg), Deepak Punia (86kg) and Vinesh Phogat (53kg) had qualified for the Tokyo Games through the 2019 World Championships in Nur Sultan while Anshu Malik (57kg), Sonam Malik

(62kg) had qualified through the Asian event in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

Heavyweight wrestler Sumit Malik (125kg) had qualified through the World Qualifiers in Sofia, Bulgaria.

In Russia next year, all four medalists (gold, silver and two bronze winners) will secure the quotas for their respective nations and the two bronze medal play-offs losers will contest for the fifth spot.

A total of 144 wrestlers will qualify for the Paris Games through the continental qualifying events (Asian, African, Pan-American and European). The top two wrestlers in each Olympic weight class will get one spot each for their NOCs.

The quota winners at the 2023 World Championships will not be eligible to participate in the continental qualifiers unless they participate in a different style.

At the World Olympic Qualifiers, three quotas in each Olympic weight class instead of the two previously will be at stake.

Not just the gold and silver medal winners will secure quotas but the bronze medal winners will also get a chance to qualify for the Olympics.

The bronze winners will fight it out for the quota in each of the 18 categories.

Unused quotas due to withdrawal, doping offence, or non-participation, will be transferred to the next best wrestler of that weight category of the tournament.

The deadline for the Olympic Games entries will be July 8, 2024. The wrestling competition will be held from August 4-11.

PM Modi declares 36th National Games open

PTI ■ AHMEDABAD

The 36th National Games was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a glittering opening ceremony here on Thursday evening in the presence of over 100,000 ecstatic spectators.

In keeping with the Olympic convention, but with a modern twist, Gujarat's swimming star Maana Patel brought in the symbolic Torch of Unity into the arena and handed it over to the Prime Minister.

Watched and applauded by several current and past sports icons, including Olympic champion Neeraj Chopra, Olympic medalists PV Sindhu, Ravi Dahiya, Mirabai Chanu, Gagan Narang, former national hockey captain and new HI chief Dilip Tirke along with World Championship medalist Anju Bobby George, the Prime Minister placed the Torch on the podium for it to be lit by augmented reality.

When the PM rose to speak, a roar as loud as thousand lions echoed in the stadium, underlining his continued popularity in the state.

"This sight, this ambience can't be described in words. In the world's biggest stadium, one of the world's youngest countries is witnessing India's biggest sports festival," he said.

Injury-hit Barca visit Mallorca with hole in defence

AP ■ BARCELONA

When Xavi Hernández oversaw the remodeling of Barcelona's squad this summer, the coach made sure he was so well covered at right-back that his club could afford to loan out United States defender Sergiño Dest to AC Milan.

But after a spate of injuries that has decimated Barcelona over the international break, Xavi may have a huge hole in his defense ahead of Sunday's game at Mallorca.

Jules Koundé, Ronald Araújo and Héctor Bellerín, who have played at right back this season, are all out for an undetermined period of time. Koundé and Araújo, who can play at center back as well, were hurt while playing for France and Uruguay, respectively, in games to prepare for the World

Cup in November. Bellerín hurt his left leg while training for Barcelona.

That leaves Barcelona waiting to see if veteran Sergi Roberto can recover from a muscle problem that has sidelined him for three weeks in time for the trip to the Balearic Islands.

If not, Xavi may be forced to shoehorn a player with little or no experience at right back into the position, draft a player from Barcelona's youth team, or opt to play with three center-backs and two wing backs.

Barcelona will also be without midfielder Frankie de Jong and forward Memphis Depay after they were both hurt while playing for the Netherlands. Neither has been a first-choice player for Xavi this season.

Of the injuries, Araújo's appears to be the most serious. The 23-year-old defender



underwent surgery this week in Finland to repair an abductor muscle in his right thigh that he damaged in Uruguay's 1-0 loss to Iran on Friday.

Over the next three weeks, Barcelona faces two Champions League group games against Inter Milan and a clásico against

Real Madrid on October 16.

The only good news for Xavi is that Robert Lewandowski returned in perfect shape from his stint with Poland. The striker leads the Spanish league with eight goals in six games.

Mallorca, coached by

Mexican Javier Aguirre, has lost 12 of the last 13 visits by Barcelona to its stadium. Its only win during that stretch came in 2009 with Barcelona already crowned the league champion.

BENZEMA BACK

Karim Benzema is back for Real Madrid after recovering from a tendon injury and a strained muscle in his right thigh that had kept him off the field for over three weeks.

Benzema led Madrid to the Champions League and Spanish league double last season after scoring 44 goals in all competitions.

But his team has not missed him much and has kept up its perfect record this season of nine wins in as many games in all competitions.

Carlo Ancelotti's side leads the league by two points ahead

of Barcelona before it hosts fifth-placed Osasuna on Sunday.

"I'm feeling very good, comfortable. I'm looking forward to the game on Sunday," Benzema said.

"We've got a great team, although it could be said that we've got two teams. There's no difference between those who start the game and those who come on."

A struggling Sevilla faces a tough test when it visits Atlético Madrid on Saturday. Pressure is growing on coach Julen Lopetegui and the club's leadership, which sold off talented players this summer, after the team has won just once in eight games overall.

Third-place Real Betis plays at Celta Vigo on Sunday, while fourth-place Athletic Bilbao hosts Almería on Friday.



Messi's form gives Nice defenders reason to fear PSG trip

AP ■ PARIS

Nice's defenders must be hoping their former coach Christophe Galtier is kind enough to rest Lionel Messi for Saturday's game at Paris Saint-Germain.

Messi's two goals for Argentina against Jamaica on Wednesday — a typical solo goal followed by a free kick — made it nine goals in his past three games for the national team, taking his international tally to 90.

So far this season Messi has four goals and a league-high seven assists for league leader PSG and his partnership with Neymar is looking much like their Barcelona days from 2013-17.

"We have known each other for a long time, by heart, since Barcelona," Messi told sports channel TUDN in an interview this week.

"We are happy to be together. I love playing with him."

With Messi serving up scoring chances galore thanks to his rare vision of the game and exquisite passing, it is perhaps no surprise that Neymar is leading the league with eight goals and that France star Kylian Mbappé is next with seven.

None of which is good news for a Nice side languishing in 13th place, weakened during the offseason by the sale of key forward Amine Gouiri to Rennes and by Galtier's departure to PSG after Mauricio Pochettino was fired.

A rash of late summer signings seemed like a quick fix and created an imbalance to the side that Nice coach Lucien Favre has yet to resolve.

Losing Galtier after just one season in charge was a big blow.

His arrival at PSG surprised some observers, as it marked a significant shift away from the club's habit of chasing big-name, fan-pleasing coaches. Galtier's credentials were etched in fact rather than any illustrious reputation. After all, he is a three-time French league manager of the year.

He knocked PSG off its perch when he led Lille to the league title against the odds in 2021, before joining Nice and sending PSG out of the French Cup in Paris.

In a combined five games as Lille and Nice coach, Galtier's sides were unbeaten against PSG without conceding a goal. A remarkable statistic considering the firepower PSG has, and proof of Galtier's shrewd tactical sense.

The fact Galtier's made such a fine start to this campaign, with seven wins and a draw, is also because he knew just how to eliminate the same PSG weaknesses he had exploited.

"I worked a lot on PSG's last season and previous seasons. I also had a lot of my own analysis on PSG," Galtier said. "I worked to find the best system possible to really bring out the incredible qualities of the players."

That has certainly worked with Messi and also with Neymar, who is fitter, leaner and hungrier than for many years.

BUMRAH RULED OUT OF T20 WC

Jasprit will be forced out of action for six months due to a back injury

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah was on Thursday ruled out of the T20 World Cup due to a back stress fracture, dealing a massive blow to team's chances at the ICC flagship event starting next month in Australia.

A BCCI official told PTI that Bumrah will be forced out of action for six months due to the back injury.

"Bumrah is not going to play the T20 World Cup for sure. He has a serious back condition. It's a stress fracture and he could be out for a period of six months," a senior BCCI official told PTI on conditions of anonymity.

Stress fracture is a tiny crack in the bone, caused by overuse and is common in sports persons. When stress reaction (bone bruise) goes undetected for a considerable time, it develops into stress fracture.

Almost 50 per cent of sports injuries are caused by stress fractures. Back stress fractures do not require surgery but a lot of time to heal. Rest is best solution to treat stress fractures.

It is understood that either Deepak Chahar or Mohammed Shami could replace Bumrah in the main squad. Both were named as stand-by players for the prestigious tournament by the BCCI.

Bumrah, who played the second and third T20 against Australia, had travelled with the team to Thiruvananthapuram for the series-opener against South Africa but left for Bengaluru to be at National Cricket Academy (NCA) for rehabilitation.

The 28-year-old fast bowler is the second senior star player to be ruled out after Ravindra Jadeja, who is recovering from a knee surgery.

The Indian team is already looking unsettled at the moment and



Bumrah's injury has only compounded the woes for skipper Rohit Sharma and coach Rahul Dravid.

"Losing Bumrah and Jadeja will be huge for India. We didn't expect that things will pan out as they have. He was rested for the Asia Cup precisely to manage his workload management. Now it remains a question if he was

even fit enough to play the Australia series," the senior official said.

Many senior players have been given adequate rest, keeping in mind their workload.

What is more interesting is the fact that Bumrah has played only five Tests, five ODIs and as many T20s in 2022 apart from IPL games for

Mumbai Indians.

"That's not a lot of cricket, considering that he was rested for Asia Cup, West Indies tour and also some of the bilateral cricket played in India. That's a lot of rest.

"As of now he is at the NCA and the rehab will be a long and arduous one. Yes, World T20 is important but

he is still young and India's biggest bowling asset. You can't take risk with him," the official said.

Bumrah, who has a slinging action, puts a lot of pressure on his back during loading. Former West Indies pace bowler great Michael Holding had assessed that Bumrah was always a candidate for back injuries.



Arshdeep's focus is on adaptability ahead of T20 World Cup

PTI ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Young India left-arm pacer Arshdeep Singh said "adaptability" is the main focus of the team ahead of the T20 World Cup, starting next month in Australia.

The T20 World Cup will be held in Australia from October 16 to November 13, and Arshdeep said the Indian bowlers are geared up for the tough challenge that awaits them.

"Adaptability is the big motive of our team. The main motive is adapting to the situations and demands of the team, whatever the situations and conditions are," said the 23-year-old pacer, who made a sensational comeback after a disappointing outing in the Asia Cup recently.

"When we go there (Australia) we will see how the conditions are. I'm looking forward to doing well."

Arshdeep (3/32) and Deepak Chahar (2/24) broke South Africa's backbone to help India register an easy eight-wicket win over the Proteas in the low-scoring first T20.

"We are trying to tick all the boxes in the practice sessions and trying to execute all our plans on the field. Today (Wednesday) was really a good example of showing a good power play bowling and we are looking forward to do amazing things in the coming days, Arshdeep said at the post-match presentation.

The left-arm pacer, a key arsenal in India's death bowling scheme of things for the ICC showpiece next month, missed the preceding three T20s against Australia after he was sent to the NCA for conditioning.

"The purpose of the last 10 days was to get refreshed and come back stronger and fitter that will help me in my bowling. I feel really refreshed and look-

ing forward to doing good things on the field," Arshdeep said after his exploits with the ball.

Bowling with the new ball in the absence of Jasprit Bumrah and Bhuvneshwar Kumar, Arshdeep came back with a bang, grabbing three wickets in five balls to reduce South Africa to 8 for 4 inside the second over.

Arshdeep, who made his debut in the tour of England in July this year, said he always strives to give his best on the field without bothering about selection.

"They told me you're in the plan' back end of the IPL, that I'm in the scene... I guess the main motive was to keep doing well whatever opportunities I get, that's my job and I don't think much about the selection part," he said.

Arshdeep had a forgettable Asia Cup campaign in the UAE, where he struggled to get wickets in the power-play and also made headlines for dropping a sitter in their loss to Pakistan in the 'Super 4' stage.

But with some assistance from the Greenfield track, he dismissed Quinton de Kock, Rilee Rossouw and David Miller in the second over to silence his critics.

"Getting the wickets early on was always a great feeling. The plan was really simple, the ball was swinging. I had to pitch it in the right places and it worked well. It was about hitting the right areas and making sure the line was good."

He also credited his senior teammate Chahar for holding up the pressure from the other end.

"We practice in every type of situation, our job is to adapt to the situations and do well for the team. Today (Wednesday) it was more about the new ball and we worked really well as a pair, a lot of credit goes to DC bhai as well," he signed off.



Rauf sends warning to India ahead of T20 WC opener

PTI ■ LAHORE

Pakistan pacer Haris Rauf is banking on his knowledge gained from the Big Bash League to outsmart Indian batters in the marquee clash of the T20 World Cup at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on October 23.

The arch-rivals, who don't play bilateral series due to geopolitical tensions, will clash for a fourth time in one year at the MCG.

"If I give my best, they won't be able to play me easily. For the upcoming World Cup match, I'm very happy because it is at the Melbourne Cricket Ground," Rauf, who plays for Melbourne Stars in the BBL, said in the post-match interaction after their six-run win over England.

"It is my home ground because I play for the Melbourne Stars, and I have an idea of how the conditions play out there. I've already started planning on how I would bowl against India," he said.

Pakistan took a 3-2 series lead in the seven-match T20

series here on Wednesday.

Pakistan defeated India by 10 wickets — for the first time in a world tournament — in the last edition of the T20 World Cup in UAE. But recently in the Asia Cup, India secured a clinical five-wicket win before losing to Pakistan in the 'Super 4' stage.

The 28-year-old fed the Indian batters with short-pitch deliveries as he returned wicketless in their first match of the Asia Cup. But in the Super 4 stage, he accounted for the key wicket of India skipper Rohit Sharma.

The 28-year-old ended the Asia Cup with eight wickets from six matches. But in the ongoing series he's been at his best, leading the tally with eight wickets from five matches.

"The match between India and Pakistan is always a high-pressure game. In the World Cup last year, I was feeling so much pressure. But in the past two matches in the Asia Cup, I didn't feel much of it because I knew I just had to give my best," Rauf added.

SKY is now India's highest run-scorer in T20s in single calendar year

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Suryakumar Yadav's status as India's best T20I batter in recent times has been reaffirmed as he became the highest scorer in a single calendar year with 732 runs, surpassing Shikhar Dhawan's 689 back in 2018.

Suryakumar, who scored one of his finest T20I half-centuries against South Africa on a seaming track in Thiruvananthapuram on Wednesday, is only 24 runs short of completing 1000 runs in the format.

His strike-rate in 2022 is a whopping 180.29, while his career strike-rate is a stagger-

ing 173.35 across 32 games. He has already hit 57 sixes and 88 boundaries in his career so far.

Coming onto bat at No.4 position in the first T20I against South Africa with India being reduced to 17/2 in the seventh over, Suryakumar hit two sixes off his first three balls to give the innings a change in momentum after a slow start.

He remained unbeaten on 50 off 33 balls as India scaled the target with more than three overs to spare and eight wickets in hand.

With the two sixes early in the innings, Suryakumar also went past Pakistan's Mohammad Rizwan to record the most sixes in any calendar



year in T20Is. Rizwan held the record for his 42 sixes in 2021 with Martin Guptill also smashing 41 sixes in the same year.

Suryakumar has taken his tally of sixes to 45 in 2022 already, a record in all T20Is, with three more months to widen the gap with Rizwan.

While Rizwan took 26 innings to hit 42 sixes, Suryakumar has broken the record batting five times fewer.

Suryakumar is up to second position in the latest MRF Tyres ICC Men's T20I Player Rankings with 801 rating points after his half-century in the third and final T20I against Australia in Hyderabad.

SA need to find ways to combat new ball: Maharaj

PTI ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

South Africa left-arm spinner Keshav Maharaj feels the Proteas need to re-assess how to combat the new ball which swung "prodigiously" in the first few overs of the series opener against India.

South Africa's batting unit crumbled as Indian seamers Arshdeep Singh (3/32) and Deepak Chahar (2/24) swung the ball both ways to set up an eight-wicket win for the hosts in the first T20I here on Wednesday night.

"I don't think it's a chapter we need to dwell too much on. However, we do need to chat about how we started," Maharaj said at the post-match press conference.



"The application we saw upfront, we need to re-assess that and find ways to combat the swing. The ball did swing prodigiously in the first couple of overs.

Maharaj, who top-scored for the visitors with a 35-ball 41, feels some adjustment and a change in mindset could help them combat the swing.

"Something that we need to address is the new ball, the way

we are playing it, there is a lot of swing in it. So maybe just adjust our plan and mindset and take it from there," he added.

South Africa were reeling at 9/5 within the first three overs before Aiden Markram (25) and Wayne Parnell (24) steadied the ship before Maharaj took them over the 100-run mark.

"We didn't expect the ball to swing so prodigiously. It wasn't an easy wicket to bat on, it was two paced, the odd balls skidded through, a lot of tennis ball bounce at various points," Maharaj said.

"I don't think we want to dwell too much on what has transpired, but it is something that we can address going forward and hopefully we can rectify that," he added.

Wicket was tricky, it was nice to play a game like that: Rohit

PTI ■ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Skipper Rohit Sharma said the Indian team got to "learn a lot" while chasing a meagre target on a "tricky track" in the series-opener against South Africa.

Suryakumar Yadav's unbeaten 50 off 33 balls got India over the line despite KL Rahul's struggles on a track where South Africa were left tottering at 9/5 at the start of the game on Wednesday.

"The wicket was tricky. You learn a lot playing such a game. You understand what the team needs to do in tough conditions. It was nice to play a game like that," Rohit said at the post-match presentation ceremony. "We knew the bowlers will get something seeing grass on the pitch, but we didn't expect help for the full 20 overs."

Rohit admitted that the pitch was a bit damp and that kept South Africa in the hunt despite a paltry score of 106/8.

"It was damp. Both teams were in the contest and the team that played better won

the game. We started well, got five wickets in quick time and that was the turning point. It was a perfect showcase of how to bowl when

there is help for the pacers." While Rahul scored a half-century (51) off 56 balls, Rohit said conditions need to be respected.

Buttler & Moeen Ali not in favour of running out batters at non-striker's end

PTI ■ LONDON

England white ball captain Jos Buttler and his deputy Moeen Ali said that running out a non-striker for backing too is not "their thing" and that they would rather call the player back if any of their teammates used it as a mode of dismissal.

Custodians of the laws of cricket MCC have re-affirmed that a non-striker's run out while backing up is within the laws of the game but there has been no end to the debate in the aftermath of the third and final women's ODI between India and England where Deepti Sharma ran out Charlie Dean to complete clean sweep for visitors.

"No, I am calling the batsman back," the 32-year-old Buttler, who is recovering from a calf injury ahead of the World Cup, told *TalkSPORT*.



Incidentally, in IPL 2019, Buttler was at the receiving end as Rajasthan Royals' opener when he was dismissed in a similar fashion by veteran Indian off-spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, who was back then playing for Kings XI Punjab.

"No one wants to see them (mode of dismissal) in the game because they always create such a talking point when it should be about the battle between bat and

ball and watching great games of cricket. They always seem to happen at unsavoury times."

Moeen, the stand-in captain in their current T20I series against Pakistan, echoed similar sentiments: "No, it's not my thing."

"I don't think I'll ever do it unless I was really angry with someone. It's in the laws and there's nothing illegal so people that do it have the right, but I just

hope it doesn't become a common thing, or something that's regularly done," Moeen told the *Telegraph*.

"You are not really working to get a wicket. At least with a run-out, there's a bit of work that has to be done, and with all the other dismissals. This is just waiting for the guy and taking the balls off. Even when I played cricket as a kid in the garden, it's not my thing to do."

The mode of dismissal currently listed in the MCC's 'Unfair Play' section of the laws (41.16.1) is to be moved to the 'Run Out' section from October 1, when an update to the ICC Playing Conditions comes into effect.

"Whilst (the dismissal) was indeed an unusual end to an exciting match, it was properly officiated and should not be considered as anything more," a statement from the MCC has said earlier.

Naseem Shah tests positive for Covid

AP ■ LAHORE

Pakistan fast bowler Naseem Shah has tested positive for COVID-19 and will miss the remaining two T20s against England, the Pakistan Cricket Board said on Thursday.

Shah was discharged from hospital on Thursday after being diagnosed with pneumonia and the PCB said the fast bowler was feeling "much better."

"Shah is back in the team hotel where he will follow all COVID-19 protocols," the PCB said in a statement.

Pakistan is due to leave for New Zealand next Monday to participate in a triangular T20 series also featuring Bangladesh. The PCB didn't clarify whether the fast bowler will accompany the team to New Zealand.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL COMMISSIONER
CGST & CENTRAL EXCISE, RANCHI
5A, Central Revenue Building, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Ranchi-834001
Ph.No.: 0651-2330218, Fax: 0651-2332420
Email: commr-cexranchi@nic.in/comm.ranchi@cegate.gov.in

TRADE NOTICE NO. 01/2022-23 DATED: 12.09.2022
It is hereby informed to all concerned (i.e. members of Trade including Public at large that the Office of the Additional / Joint Commissioner, CGST & Central Excise Sub-Commissionerate, Dhanbad which is under CGST & CX Commissionerate, Ranchi has been hereby shifted from its erstwhile location to new location as following:

Old address of the office.	New address of the office.
O/o the Additional/ Joint Commissioner, CGST & CX Sub-Commissionerate, Dhanbad, Central 8th Floor Ozone Centre, Ashok Nagar, Dhansar, Dhanbad - 828108.	O/o the Additional/ Joint Commissioner, CGST & CX Sub-Commissionerate, Dhanbad, Central GST Office (Old Central Excise & Service Tax Building), H.E. School Road, Vistipara, Hirapur, Dhanbad - 826001.

All Trade Associations/Chamber of Commerce, Members of RAC (Organized and SSI) falling within the jurisdiction of Central GST & CX Commissionerate, Ranchi are requested to bring the content of this Trade Notice to the knowledge of their constituent members and other concerns for wider dissemination.
Sd/-, (Dr. Balbir Singh) Principal Commissioner

e-PROCUREMENT CELL, DIRECTORATE OF WORKS & PLANT, BIRSA AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY, KANKE, RANCHI.
Tender Reference No BAU/W&P/274/Kanke Dated 29.09.2022
e-Procurement Tender Notice
The tenders are invited for different works, whose date of publication on website will be 01.10.2022, availability of tender online for bidding is 01.10.2022 to 21.10.2022 upto 3.00 PM, date and time for opening the tender is 22.10.2022 at 3.30 PM, place of opening tender is e-procurement Cell, Directorate of Works & Plant, Birsa Agricultural University, Kanke, Ranchi. The details of estimated cost, earnest money, Cost of B.O.Q. and time of completion of the concerned works and other terms and conditions may kindly be seen on [website http://bauranchi.org](http://bauranchi.org) and notice board of the office of the undersigned.
Sd/-
Nodal Officer
e-Procurement Cell, Directorate of Works & Plant
Birsa Agricultural University, Kanke, Ranchi
Memo No.BAU/W&P/274/Kanke, Dated : 29.09.2022