

OPINION 6
POWER OF DIALOGUE IN
QUELLING A STORM

WORLD 8
RUSSIA AND UKRAINE TRADE
DRONE ATTACKS

MONEY 10
FTA TALKS LASER-FOCUSSED, SAYS
UK AS MINISTER HEADS TO INDIA

Published From
DELHI LUCKNOW BHOPAL BHUBANESWAR
RANCHI RAIPUR CHANDIGARH
DEHRADUN HYDERABAD VIJAYWADA

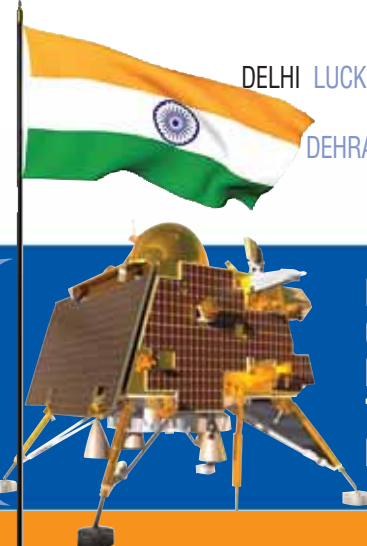
Late City Vol. 33 Issue 233
*Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

NEW DELHI, THURSDAY AUGUST 24, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3



the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com



**INDIA BECOMES FIRST
COUNTRY TO LAND A
ROVER ON THE
TREACHEROUS SOUTH
POLE OF THE MOON**

TIRANGA ON THE MOON

INDIA SCRIPTS HISTORY. JAI HIND!



People wave Tricolour during the celebration of the successful soft landing of ISRO's Chandrayaan-3 on the surface of the Moon, at the India Gate, in New Delhi on Wednesday



ISRO Chairman S. Somnath, former ISRO Chairman AS Kiran Kumar and others watch the final phases before Chandrayaan-3's soft landing on the Moon's surface, at the ISRO headquarters in Bengaluru on Wednesday



ISRO scientists watch the final phases before Chandrayaan-3's soft landing on the Moon's surface, at the ISRO headquarters

Scientists make India proud

PNS/PTI ■ BENGALURU

India has reached where no nation has gone before. In a giant leap for its space programme, India's Moon mission Chandrayaan-3 touched down on the lunar south pole at 6.04 pm on Wednesday, propelling the country to an exclusive club of four and making it the first country to land on the uncharted surface.

With this touchdown on Moon after a flawless 41-day voyage to script history and less than a week after a Russian lander headed to the lunar south pole crashed, India is the fourth country to master the technology of soft-landing on the Moon after the US, China and erstwhile Soviet Union.

But no country has ever landed on the treacherous south pole that scientists believe could hold important reserves of frozen water and precious elements. Russia's south pole-bound Luna-25 spacecraft crashed into the Moon on Sunday after spinning out of control.

Taking a billion dreams to the Moon in India's second attempt in four years, Chandrayaan-3's four-legged lander Vikram with the 26-kg rover Pragyan in its belly, made the soft landing near the south polar region of the Moon at 6.04 pm successfully negotiating what ISRO scientists described as the "20 minutes of terror" during the crucial powered descent initiated at 5.44 pm.

Shortly after the landing, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said on Wednesday night that a communication link was established between the lander and the space agency's Mission Operations Complex (MOX) in Bengaluru.

The space agency also released images from the Lander Horizontal Velocity Camera (LHVC) taken during the descent to the Moon's surface.

As scientists at the MOX broke into celebrations and flashed victory signs, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said India is now on the Moon and the success belongs to all humanity. Modi, who virtually joined from South Africa to witness the culmination of the space odyssey, lauded scientists for their efforts and said the success of the lunar mission has sounded the bugle for India to emerge as a developed nation.

President Droupadi Murmu,



MOST OF THE PEOPLE WHO WERE WITH CHANDRAYAAN-2 ARE WITH US, HELPING US TO DO CHANDRAYAAN-3. THEY ARE A PART OF THIS, THEY HAVE GONE THROUGH SUCH AN AGONY.
—ISRO CHAIRMAN S SOMNATH

Ministers, chief ministers, the scientific and film fraternity and leaders cutting across political spectrum also showered encomiums on the space scientists.

ISRO Chief S. Somnath said the success of Chandrayaan-3 gives Indian space scientists the confidence to undertake more challenging future missions. "We have achieved a soft landing on the Moon. India is on the Moon," he said minutes after ISRO achieved the feat.

Somnath acknowledged the contribution of a generation of leadership and scientists of the country's space agency for the Chandrayaan-3 mission's success, and said the achievement is an "incremental progress" and "a huge one."

"The honourable PM called me and conveyed his greetings to each one of you and your family for the wonderful work you did in ISRO. Thanks to him for the support he is giving to us for missions like Chandrayaan-3 and missions that are in the offing. That's the great word of comfort that we are receiving for pursuing the inspirational work that we are doing for the

nation," Somnath said addressing the ISRO team.

"We went through a lot of pain and agony". An entire nation held its collective breath as Chandrayaan-3 inched closer to the Moon, finally erupting with joy, as thousands of Indians also gathered in temples, dargahs and gurdwaras to pray for the mission's success.

People assembled in educational institutions, offices, city squares and religious places to watch ISRO's live telecast of Chandrayaan-3's final descent.

Chandrayaan-3 is a follow-on ₹600 crore mission to Chandrayaan-2 and its objectives after covering a distance of 384,000 km from Earth are to demonstrate safe and soft-landing on the lunar surface, roving on the moon, and to conduct in-situ scientific experiments.

The Chandrayaan-3 mission was launched on July 14 onboard Launch Vehicle Mark-III (LVM-3) rocket, embarking on a more complicated voyage. In all, there were 13 manoeuvres including two deboosting ones for the Vikram lander after entering the lunar orbit. The lander was separated from the Propulsion Module (PM) on August 17.

Chandrayaan-2 had failed in its lunar phase when its lander Vikram crashed into the surface of the moon minutes before the touch down following anomalies in the braking system in the lander while attempting a landing on September 7, 2019. Chandrayaan's maiden mission was in 2008.

Somnath had earlier said that the most critical part of the landing was the process of reducing the velocity of the lander from 30 km height to the final landing, and the ability to reorient the spacecraft from horizontal to vertical direction. "This is the trick we have to play here," he had said.

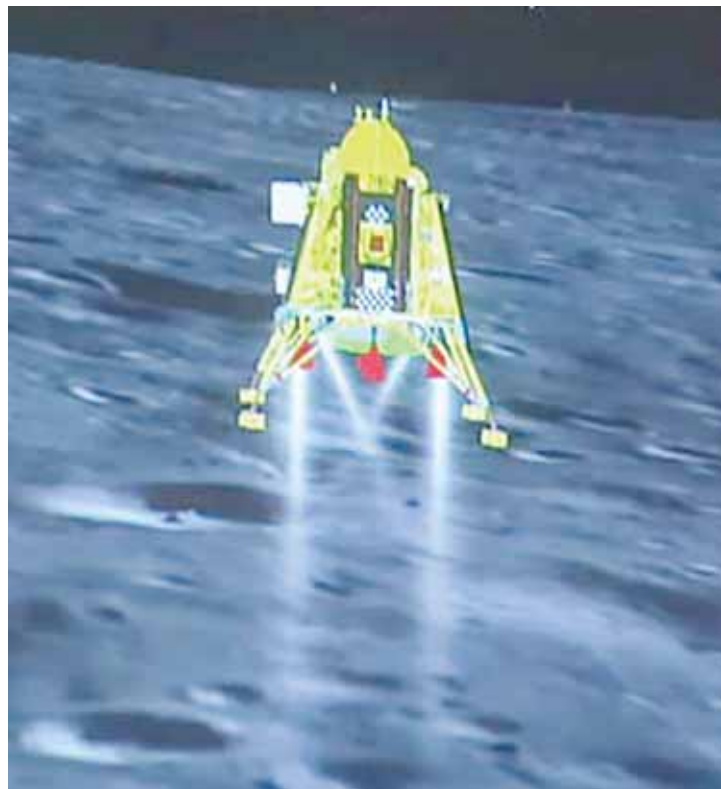
After the soft-landing, the rover is due to descend from the lander's belly, onto the Moon's surface, using one of its side panels, which will act as a ramp. Both have scientific payloads to carry out experiments on the lunar surface and are designed to operate for one lunar daylight period (about 14 Earth days).

There was no immediate word when the six-wheeled rover will be deployed.

The journey to the Moon so far

Chandrayaan-3

- Jul 14** LVM3 M4 vehicle successfully launches Chandrayaan-3 into orbit from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh. Chandrayaan-3 starts its journey into precise orbit
- Jul 15** 1st orbit-raising manoeuvre successfully performed from ISTRAC, Bengaluru. The spacecraft is in 41762 km x 173 km orbit
- Jul 17** 2nd orbit-raising manoeuvre performed. Spacecraft is in 41603 km x 226 km orbit
- Jul 22** Another orbit-raising manoeuvre completed using earth-bound perigee firing.
- Jul 25** ISRO performs one more orbit-raising manoeuvre. Spacecraft is in 71351 km x 233 km orbit
- Aug 1** ISRO performs Translunar Injection successfully and inserts the spacecraft into translunar orbit. Orbit achieved is 288 km x 369328 km
- Aug 5** Lunar Orbit Insertion performed successfully. Orbit achieved is 164 km x 18074 km, as intended
- Aug 6** ISRO performs second Lunar Bound Phase. With this, the spacecraft is in a 170 km x 4313 km orbit around the Moon and also releases video of the Moon as viewed by Chandrayaan-3 during lunar orbit insertion
- Aug 9** Orbit reduced to 174 km x 1437 km after a manoeuvre is performed
- Aug 14** Mission is in orbit circularisation phase after another manoeuvre. The spacecraft is in 151 km x 179 km orbit
- Aug 16** Spacecraft brought down to an orbit of 153 km x 163 km after firing is completed
- Aug 17** Lander module is successfully separated from the propulsion module.
- Aug 19** ISRO performs de-boosting the lander module to reduce its orbit. The lander module is in 113 km x 157 km orbit around the Moon
- Aug 20** One more de-boosting or orbit reduction manoeuvre on the lander module is performed. The lander module is in 25 km x 134 km orbit
- Aug 21** Chandrayaan-2 orbiter formally welcomes Chandrayaan-3 lander module saying "Welcome, buddy!". Two-way communication between the two is established. Mission Operations Complex (MOX) now has more ways to communicate with the lander module.
- Aug 22** ISRO releases images of the Moon captured by the Lander Position Detection Camera of the Chandrayaan-3 mission from an altitude of about 70 km. Systems are undergoing regular checks. Smooth sailing is continuing
- Aug 23 Chandrayaan-3 makes soft landing on lunar south pole**



A screenshot shows a representation of Chandrayaan-3's successful landing on the Moon's surface on Wednesday

India, Modi salute scientists ushering nation into new era



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday attributed India's successful moon mission to all humanity with its approach of "one earth, one family, one future", as he richly congratulated the scientific community for making India the first country to land on the south pole of the moon.

Addressing ISRO scientists virtually from Johannesburg, he said India made a resolve "on the Earth and fulfilled it on the Moon".

"This is a moment to cherish forever," Modi said, noting that India has reached the south pole of the moon, where no country had ventured so far. "India is now on the moon and now is the time to walk on the 'Chandra Path'," the PM said.

Holding Tiranga, the PM came on the screen immediately after ISRO chief S. Somnath announced the landing of space module Vikram on the surface of the Moon.

"Chanda Mama has been brought closer to the earth by this success," Modi said in a lighter vein and hoped that soon it would be much easier to tour the Moon changing the childhood lullaby which said "Chanda mama door ke."

As the space module started its crucial descent on the surface of the moon, Modi

joined the scientists gathered at ISRO's Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network (ISTRAC) near Bengaluru virtually.

The Prime Minister called the ISRO Chairman from Johannesburg to congratulate on Chandrayaan-3 landing on the Moon. He also told the ISRO chief that he will soon visit Bengaluru to greet the team on the successful Chandrayaan-3 mission.

In his address in Hindi and English, the Prime Minister said the momentous moment belonged not only to India but to the entire world.

"India's successful moon mission is not India's alone...Our approach of one earth, one family, one future is resonating across the globe...Moon mission is based on the same human centric approach. So, this success belongs to all of humanity," Modi said.

The Chandrayaan-3's landing on the moon is a historic moment and sounds the bugle for a developed India, Modi said. "We are witness to the new flight of new India. New history has been written," the Prime Minister said.

Modi waved the Tricolour the moment Chandrayaan-3 landed on the moon.

The Congress said it is a collective success of every Indian, and ISRO's achievement reflects a saga of continuity and is truly fantastic.

BRICS should be future ready: Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/JOHANNESBURG

Underlining the role of Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa (BRICS) combine in fast tracking development, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday stressed the need to keep pace with changing world and said the bloc has to be "future ready."

He also said India supports expansion of the BRICS grouping and hoped that the other members would support the proposal to make the African Union a permanent member of the G-20. India is hosting the G-20 summit on September 9 and 10. All the BRICS nations are permanent members of the G20.

Prime Minister Modi also pitched the idea of establishing a BRICS space exploration consortium. "We are already working on the BRICS satellite constellation, but to move a step further, we should think about establishing a BRICS space exploration consortium," Modi said.

The Prime Minister made these assertions at the annual summit of BRICS at Johannesburg. Chinese President Xi Jinping, Brazil President Luiz Inacio Lula da



Silva and South African President Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa took part in the high-profile event. Russian President Vladimir Putin attended the summit in virtual mode while Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov took part in person.

President Ramaphosa said the BRICS countries will continue to be supportive in ending the Ukraine conflict to an end through dialogue, mediation and negotiation. President Putin said his country wanted to end a war he said had been "unleashed by the West and its satellites" in Ukraine.

In his address, Prime Minister Modi said for a "future-ready" BRICS, the societies of these five countries will have to be "future-ready." He said

"to make BRICS a future-

ready organisation, we will need to make our respective societies also future-ready, and technology will play an important role in this..."

Welcoming the move to give special importance to countries of the Global South under the South African presidency of the BRICS, Modi said India has given the "highest priority" to the countries of the Global South under its G20 presidency as well. India fully supports the expansion of BRICS and welcomes the move to take forward the proposal based on consensus, he said.

"We have also proposed to give permanent membership of G20 to the African Union. I am sure all the BRICS partners are also together in the G20 and all will support our proposal," Modi said. The African Union (AU) is an influential organi-

sation consisting of the 55 member states that make up the countries of the African continent.

In June, Modi wrote to the leaders of the G20 countries pitching for giving the African Union full membership of the grouping at its upcoming summit in New Delhi.

The proposal was formally included in the draft leaders' declaration at the third G20 Sherpas' meeting that took place in Karnataka's Hampi from July 13 to 16.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Modi said the BRICS embarked on a long and amazing journey in the last two decades and highlighted how the New Development Bank of the grouping is playing an important role in carrying forward developmental activities in the Global South.

In his remarks, Modi also recalled that India's presidency of the BRICS in 2016, defined the grouping as "Building Responsive, Inclusive, and Collective Solutions."

"After seven years, we can say that, BRICS will be -- Breaking barriers, Revitalising economies, Inspiring Innovation, Creating opportunities, and Shaping the future. Together with all the BRICS partners, we will continue to contribute actively in

making this new definition meaningful," he said.

Citing examples of India's success in the digital domain such as the COVID-19 vaccination platform CoWIN, Modi said diversity is a great strength of the country and that the solution to any problem in India comes out of the test of this diversity. "That's why these solutions can be easily implemented in any corner of the world," he said.

India suggested measures in areas of Railway research networks, and cooperation among MSMEs and start-ups and there has been significant progress in these fields, Modi said.

In his address, Modi also referred to India's hosting of the Voice of Global South summit in January. "125 countries participated in the Voice of Global South summit held in January this year, sharing their concerns and priorities," he said.

The Prime Minister also complimented South Africa for giving special importance to countries of the Global South under its presidency of BRICS.

"The countries of the Global South under the chairmanship of South Africa have been given special importance in BRICS. We heartily welcome it," Modi said.

Cong seeks ₹10K cr package from Centre for Himachal

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Congress on Wednesday asked the Central Government to announce a Rs 10,000 crore special package for Himachal Pradesh and declare the devastation there due to rains a "national disaster."

Congress Rajya Sabha MP and in-charge for Himachal Pradesh, Rajeev Shukla also urged Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla and Rajya Sabha chairman Jagdeep Thakkar to allow all MPs, in both the Houses of Parliament, to provide relief to the hill state out of the MP Local Area Development Fund.

Termining the crisis in the state as unprecedented, he said the northern state is not getting the national attention required as it has never suffered so much devastation in its history. So far, 330 people have died and 35 are missing, while 12,000 houses have been destroyed, he said.

"The state has incurred a loss of Rs 13,000 crore. Highways have been swept away. The entire Himachal -- upper and lower reaches -- has suffered due to heavy rainfall," Shukla told reporters at AICC press conference.



As many as 75,000 tourists were stranded and 17,000 cars were safely taken out in 48 hours by the state government, he said, adding that rains hit the hill state between July 7 to 15, then from August 10 to 14, and now again.

"We demand that the central government should declare the devastation caused in Himachal Pradesh due to heavy rains as a national calamity and provide it a special package on the lines provided to Uttarakhand."

"We are demanding a package of Rs 10,000 crore. Nothing will happen with the Rs 200 crore announced so far by the Centre," the Congress leader said. "I urge both the Lok Sabha Speaker and the Rajya Sabha chairman to allow the MPs to give donations to the Himachal Pradesh government out of their MP Development Fund," he said.

Several foreign tourists come to the state and infrastructure should be revamped soon to help the state restore its lost assets, he noted.

The governments of Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan, Karnataka and Haryana have provided assistance to Himachal Pradesh, and other states should follow suit, he urged. Noting that it is an unprecedented situation as it has never happened in the history of Himachal Pradesh, the Congress MP said two central teams have already visited the state and made an assessment of the damage.

"We urge the prime minister and the home minister to come to the aid of the Himachal government by providing a special package to the state," he said, adding that Chief Minister Sukhvinder Sukhu has already visited Delhi and met the duo.

MVA gears up for two-day INDIA bloc meet in Mumbai

Deliberations to begin on Aug 31

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Opposition Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) leaders on Wednesday deliberated upon and fine-tuned the preparations for the INDIA bloc meeting scheduled to be held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in north Mumbai on August 31 and September 1.

Ahead of the crucial third crucial meeting of INDIA bloc, the MVA leaders -- led by NCP chief Sharad Pawar, Shiv Sena (UBT) president Uddhav Thackeray and newly nominated Congress Working Committee (CWC) member Ashok Chavan -- met at the Grand Hyatt Hotel where the August 31-September 1 meet will take place and discussed the preparations for the meeting.

The MVA -- which is playing host to the third INDIA bloc meeting -- are expecting at least 150 leaders from across the country for the crucial two-day meet being held after similar meetings held earlier in

Patna and Bengaluru.

Apart from senior Opposition leaders from Maharashtra, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge, his party leader Rahul Gandhi, Bihar chief minister Nitish Kumar, West Bengal chief minister Mamta Banerjee, Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal, his Punjab counterpart Bhagwant Mann, Tamil Nadu chief minister M K Stalin, RJD leader Lalu Prasad Yadav, National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah, Jharkhand chief minister Hemant Soren and CPM leader Sitaram Yechury.

Wednesday's was the second meeting held to discuss preparations for the third Opposition India alliance meeting. Earlier, the MVA had earlier met in the city on August 5.

Though the MVA is hosting the August 31-September 1 India meeting, the Maharashtra Congress has taken the lead in making preparations for the forthcoming meet.

Chandrayaan-3 feat brings memories of India's first space odyssey

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

India achieving yet another feat with the soft landing of the Chandrayaan 3 on the uncharted South Pole of the Moon on Wednesday is akin to the space odyssey of the only Indian astronaut Rakesh Sharma way back in 1984.

Sharma, a Wing Commander of the Indian Air Force (IAF) scripted history on April 3, 1984 when he became the first Indian to undertake travel to space as part of the Soviet-Indian space programme. When Sharma, who flew aboard the Soyuz T-11 rocket as part of the Soviet Interkosmos Programme, was asked by then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, "Upar se Bharat kaisa dikhta hai aapko? (What does India look like from up there?)" he had replied, "I can say without any hesitation, saare jahaan se achha, (best in the world)." He took part in the historic mission that lasted seven days, 21 hours, and 40 minutes, boosting India's standing among a select club of nations undertaking such space travel.

With Sharma's voyage aboard the Soviet rocket, India became the 14th nation to send a man to outer space. Prior to the landing of Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO's)



Chandrayaan 3, Sharma had recently said, "Knowing the way ISRO functions, I can proudly say that Chandrayaan-3 will have a safe landing."

In the last 40 years, despite limited resources, ISRO has had a spectacular journey, the programmes we have conducted over the years have surprised the world," Sharma had reportedly said recently.

The successful soft landing of Chandrayaan 3 on the Moon catapulted India into the elite club of just three nations -- Russia, US and China -- that have achieved such a milestone. Chandrayaan 3's landing on the polar region of the Moon is a first in the world. The lander module and the rover are likely to unearth some major secrets of the Earth's natural satellite and add to the knowledge repository of the ISRO. Sharma played a significant

role in the National Advisory Council for the Gaganyaan mission of ISRO, which oversees the Astronaut Selection Programme for the planned mission.

After being selected in 1982 for the Soviet-Indian space programme Sharma underwent grueling training at the Yuri Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre in Moscow. He traveled to space aboard the Soyuz T-11 with two Soviet cosmonauts and received the prestigious Hero of the Soviet Union title for his accomplishments.

He joined Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) as its chief test pilot after retiring as a Wing Commander of the IAF in 1987. He gave up flying in 2001 and moved to Coonoor, Tamil Nadu. Now, he is leading a quiet life and his engagements include pursu-

ing interests like golf, gardening, yoga, reading and travel.

Born on 13 January 1949 in Patiala, Punjab, Sharma attended St. George's Grammar School, Hyderabad and graduated from Nizam College, Hyderabad. He joined the National Defence Academy as an air force cadet in July 1966 and was commissioned into the IAF as a pilot in 1970.

He also displayed his extraordinary abilities while flying the MiG-21 on 21 combat sorties during the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War.

During his nearly eight-day stay in space, Sharma along with his Russian counterparts conducted scientific and technical studies which included 43 experimental sessions. Sharma's work was mainly in the domains of bio-medicine and remote sensing.

The crew also held a joint television press conference with officials in Moscow and Indira Gandhi. When the Prime Minister asked Sharma how India looked from outer space, he replied, "Saare jahaan se achha (the best in the world)." Sare Jahan Se Achha is the title of a patriotic song penned by poet Iqbal before Independence. It continues to be popular till date and is played especially during Independence Day and Republic Day.

Maha Guv, political leaders hail ISRO for Chandrayaan 3 success

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Maharashtra's different political leaders of different hues on Wednesday hailed the success of Chandrayaan-3 mission and congratulated the scientists of ISRO for creating history by contributing to India becoming the first country to reach the lunar south pole.

While Maharashtra Governor Ramesh Bai led the state in congratulating the scientists involved in the Chandrayaan-3 mission, chief minister Eknath Shinde, NCP chief Sharad Pawar, deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar, Shiv Sena (UBT) chief Uddhav Thackeray, former chief ministers Ashok Chavan and Prithviraj Chavan of the Congress were among the prominent political leaders who hailed the stupendous achievement of the ISRO scientists.

"Congratulations to each and every Indian on the successful Chandrayaan-3 Mission... and to our scien-

tific community for scripting history in space," Governor Bai said.

"The success of Chandrayaan-3 is a tribute to the nation and proves that India is moving towards a Superpower status today. All Indians are filled with pride and it's the achievement of all the scientists, technicians and researchers in the country," chief minister Shinde said, as he celebrated the occasion by distributing sweets to those present at his official residence "Varsha" here in the evening.

Sharad Pawar said the Chandrayaan-3 was "India's most important attempt in space" and had made not just India but the entire world proud of the success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission.

"The success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission has given confidence to the scientific community... Best wishes to all the scientists and fellow Indians. May such innovative experiments of ISRO continue to fly into space!" Sr Pawar said.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Ruby, W/o. Ateeq Ahmed, R/o. O-11, Batla House, Jamia Nagar, Okhla, New Delhi-110025 have changed my son's name from Aarav Ahmed to Shifan Ahmed for all future purposes.

Pd(139)A

Govt panel to select, monitor development projects for NE

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With an aim to fast-track development projects in the Northeastern States, Empowered Inter-Ministerial Committee (EIMC) under the



Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), has been entrusted to oversee selection, approval and monitoring of projects of the Centre's fully-funded Prime Minister's Development Initiative for North Eastern Region (PM-DevINE).

This will be in consultation with the Ministry concerned, state government and North Eastern Council (NEC). A revised guidelines regarding project implementation were issued on Monday. The Centre also gave nod for continuation of the North East Special Infrastructure Development Scheme (NESIDS) with an approved outlay of Rs 8,139.50 crore for the period from

2022-23 to 2025-26 as it released new guidelines for implementing cabinet-approved Schemes during 15th Finance Commission's balance period (2022-2026).

Revised guidelines are essential due to restructuring the Ministry's schemes and centralising under PM-DevINE will avoid duplication of projects carried out by various agencies, as per the statement issued by the DoNER ministry.

The new guidelines mandates all infrastructure and social projects aligned with PM GatiShakti, generating youth and women's livelihoods all eight North Eastern Indian states -- Arunachal Pradesh,

Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura -- to be covered under PM-DevINE.

This scheme will complement existing government of India and State government initiatives, avoiding duplication by supporting projects not covered elsewhere, said the statement.

DoNER will oversee project selection, approval, and monitoring in consultation with State governments, NEC, and concerned central ministries, with implementation through NEC or central ministries/agencies.

The EIMC will be chaired by the secretary of DoNER and will include representatives from pertinent line ministries, NEC, and others.

The State governments will set up a SLEC led by the chief secretary and its functions encompass several aspects, including reviewing and prioritizing preliminary project proposals for PM-DevINE, ensuring alignment with guidelines, approving DPRs/techno-economic evaluations, and monitoring project implementation, among others.

BSP to go solo in LS elections: Mayawati

PNS ■ LUCKNOW

Setting aside all speculations of joining INDIA, Bahujan Samaj Party supremo Mayawati on Wednesday reiterated her earlier announcement that her party will go solo in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections scheduled for next year.

She claimed that the BSP has always suffered losses instead of gains while being a part of any alliance. The decision was taken in a party meeting held in Lucknow here on Thursday in view of the upcoming Parliamentary elections.

While announcing the reason behind going solo, the BSP supremo highlighted that after forging a political alliance, BSP's votes have transferred to alliance partners, which, in turn, has benefited them in elections.

She further alleged that the partners in the alliance neither have the intention nor the ability to transfer their votes to the BSP, which affects the morale of party workers.

Mayawati asked her party leaders to work to strengthen the organisation by organising small cadre-based meetings at villages to expand support base among the 'Sarv Samaj'.



The BSP had earlier entered into alliances with the Samajwadi Party and the Congress in the state and Lok Sabha elections in Uttar Pradesh. The BSP had fought the last general elections with the SP and has ten Member of Parliament in Lok Sabha from UP.

Speaking about the ruling National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the newly-formed opposition bloc INDIA, Mayawati said that both the blocs have done little for the welfare of the 'Bahujan Samaj' and they had mostly been busy in breaking and weakening the society by indulging in narrow politics...therefore it is better to maintain distance with them.

She also called for 'special caution' in the selection of candidates for the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

Mizoram first State to activate ABDM microsite

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Mizoram has become the first State in the Country to activate an ABDM (Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission) Microsite in its capital city, Aizawl.

This means, all medical establishments, including private clinics, small hospitals, and laboratories in the area, will integrate ABDM technology, providing patients with digital healthcare services.

In Aizawl, at the Microsite launch event Betsy Zothanpari Sailo, Additional Secretary, Mizoram Health and Family Welfare said "We firmly believe that digitization of health services can help us achieve our goal of universal health coverage."

With digital services at our health facilities and secure access to digital health records, the patients shall benefit the most.

Our teams made conscious efforts in closely studying the process of ABDM enablement and have selected an implementation partner to operationalize our first Microsite in Aizawl.

Delhiites over the Moon at ISRO's success

World recognises India as power in space tech, says Delhi BJP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP hailed ISRO scientists and lauded Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership for Chandrayaan-3's successful landing on the Moon, asserting the world now recognises India as a power in space technology.

Delhi BJP burst fireworks at party headquarters after successful landing of Chandrayaan 3 on the moon. Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva has said that Indian Scientists today fulfilled the resolve of vow to accomplishment of PM Modi by making Chandrayaan 3 successful.

The Leader of Opposition (LoP) in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri lauded PM Modi and ISRO scientists for this achievement. "No other government has done so much and the missions under the Modi dispensation were twice the numbers under the previous UPA regime, he said adding that the successful landing of Chandrayaan-3 is a testament to our collective progress towards space travel. It showcases the beauty of unity in diversity as we sail the cosmic seas together.

The nation is deeply indebted to the remarkable hard work, unparalleled ingenuity and unflinching dedication of our scientists, space engineers, researchers and everyone involved in making this mission a triumph for India," he said.

MPs Ramesh Bidhuri and Praveesh Sahib Singh were also present alongwith Delhi BJP Secretary Impreet Singh Bakshi, Media Head Praveen Shankar Kapoor, Spokesperson Vikram Bidhuri, Mahila Morcha General Secretary Priyanka Bhardwaj, Yuva Morcha President Shashi Yadav, General Secretary Sumeet Tyagi, Gaurav Prashar and hundreds of youth workers.



People rejoice waving Indian flags to celebrate landing of Chandrayaan-3 on Moon, in Nehru Planetarium, in New Delhi on Wednesday

Ranjana Dimri | Pioneer



School children make ISRO formation in New Delhi on Wednesday

PNS

Prayers held for Chandrayaan-3 Historic moment for ISRO, whole nation, says Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI/NOIDA

People in the Delhi-National Capital Region on Wednesday held special prayers at temples, churches, mosques and gurdwaras for the successful soft landing of ISRO's Chandrayaan-3.

Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri, along with others, joined a special "Ardas" (prayer) held at Gurdwara Bangla Sahib here to pray for the success of the mission.

The Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) organised a "Yajna" at Sant Nagar Burari, praying for the success of India's ambitious project.

Churches in NOIDA held special prayers for the Chandrayaan-3's success.

A delegation from an American university joined a 'havan' programme conducted



Union Minister Hardeep Singh Puri offers prayers at the Bangla Sahib Gurudwara for the successful landing of ISRO's 'Chandrayaan-3' on the surface of the Moon, in New Delhi on Wednesday

to our collective prayer done with pure mind and special mantras of Vedas," said Vimlesh Bansal, a vedic scholar at Arya Samaj temple.

Delhi Government school students also joined the nation in praying for the successful landing of the Chandrayaan-3 lunar lander by making special posters. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal shared pictures of the school children on social media platform X.

"Delighted to see the sincere interest and enthusiasm of the Delhi Government school kids as they await Chandrayaan-3's landing. Heartfelt wishes from these young minds add to the excitement of the evening. Our scientists are making us immensely proud," he wrote on X. In Noida, a delegation from an American university joined a 'havan' programme conducted by Amity University.

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal joined the country in congratulating the scientists of ISRO on the successful landing of Chandrayaan-3's lunar module on the moon's surface on Wednesday and called it a "historical" moment.

"This is historical. It is a big achievement for the country. It is a matter of pride for all of us. Many congratulations to all the countrymen, scientists, engineers and employees of ISRO for the success of Chandrayaan-3.

Bharat Mata Ki Jai," the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) national convener said in a post on X. Education Minister Atishi, accompanied by students from Government



Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal addresses on the successful landing of 'Chandrayaan-3' on the Moon's surface on Wednesday

Chandrayaan-3 and India's remarkable strides in the field of space exploration. During the live broadcast, students were filled with joy and excitement as the Vikram lander and Rover of Chandrayaan-3 touched the moon's surface.

Their exuberant cheers resonated through the school premises, encapsulating the collective pride of the nation. While interacting with the students, Atishi emphasized the importance of this accomplishment and its profound influence on India's scientific domain.

She said, "Today our students have witnessed the history being made. This achievement will ignite in them the aspiration to envision grand and inventive prospects for India's future.

Vigilance Dept writes to PWD Secy over flouting of norms for Type-VI bungalow

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Taking a note of illegal allotment of Type VI bungalow to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's aide Bibhav Kumar, the Delhi Government's Vigilance Department has written to Secretary, Public Works Department (PWD), saying this is a violation of the Delhi Allotment of Government Residential (General Pool Rules) Rules. It said that against the eligibility of Type-IV accommodation, Kumar was allotted Type-IV quarter after cancellation of the current bungalow allotted to him.

In the letter, the Vigilance Department said the competent authority has directed that the department may stick to the rules of allotment. "The allotment of Type-V accommoda-

tion at Rajpur Road is void ab initio as per the extant rules. The proposal of regularizing the Type-V accommodation was also not regularized by Hon'ble Lt. Governor as mentioned above.

Now therefore, the competent authority has directed that PWD may stick to the rules of allotment and allot only the entitled category of quarter i.e. Type-IV to Bibhav Kumar after cancelling the Type-VI bungalow allotted to him," Buniyad Singh, Assistant Director, Vigilance Department said.

The Vigilance Department further stated that it is established that the PWD has to follow the extant rules and in this case the allotment rules stipulates that Kumar is eligible

only for Type-IV accommodation since it is out of turn. Whereas, Kumar contrary to the extant rules occupying a Type-VI accommodation (bungalow) which was allotted from the Pool of Delhi Jal Board. The DJB had placed a Type-VI bungalow at Chanderawal Water Works-II, Civil Lines at the disposal of PWD in return for an exchange of quarter of Type-VI at 33, Shyamnath Marg. Kumar is not on the pay rolls of Delhi Jal Board.

Kumar was appointed on co-terminus basis as Private Secretary to Kejriwal in the pay band of Rs. 37400-67000 + GP 8700/- vide GAD order No. 269 on February 27, 2015. On March 16, 2015, flat No. 45/1, Type-V, Rajpur Road was proposed to Kumar.

Collision between two planes at IGIA averted by alert Vistara pilot

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport could have witnessed a major mishap on Wednesday morning as two Vistara airline planes were given permission to take-off and land at the same time. The mishap was averted after a woman pilot in command of the plane on taxiway informed the Air Traffic Control (ATC) and take off of the flight was aborted.

The flight (VTI725) UK725 from Delhi to Bagdogra was taking off from the newly inaugurated runway and the Vistara flight VTI1926 from Ahmedabad to Delhi had already landed and was on the taxiway. The Directorate



General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has ordered a probe into this runway incursion and the air traffic controller concerned has been derostered.

The aircraft landed on runway 29L and was instructed by the air traffic controller to cross runway 29R. At the same time, the controller also permitted take off of another Vistara plane VTI725 operating

the flight from runway 29R, the official said. "Momentarily, tower controller forgot this crossing and issued take off clearance to another Vistara flight VTI725 (Delhi-Bagdogra) from runway 29R." On realisation of the error based on input from VTI1926, the tower controller instructed VTI725 to cancel take off," the official said.

According to official, the pilot of the Ahmedabad-New Delhi flight noticed that an aircraft was about to take-off and promptly informed the ATC. The Delhi-Bagdogra flight returned to the parking bay after the take-off was aborted. It was refuelled to ensure that the aircraft had enough fuel to return to the national

capital if the pilot encountered bad weather conditions at Bagdogra. The braking system of the plane was also checked. The airport officials said if the flight take-off was not stopped at the right time, a major mishap could have occurred.

According to Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), no aircraft or vehicle movement is allowed during the process of take-off and landing. Sources said passengers became a little apprehensive when the pilot of the flight bound for Bagdogra announced that the plane will not take off due to instructions from ATC. Delhi Airport has started using its newest runway 29R-11L only for take offs from July 14, 2023.

Conductor, friends rape woman, blackmail her with obscene video

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A woman was allegedly sexually assaulted by a Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) bus conductor who also took her obscene photos and videos in north Delhi's Timarpur area, police said on Wednesday.

The accused then blackmailed her for more sexual favours, police said, adding he has been arrested. According to the police the main accused allegedly targeted the woman on the pretext of giving her work, while his friends raped her after promising to help her.

The woman earlier worked with the Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) as a typist from 2010 to 2017, and stopped going for the work after having a child, police said. In her complaint, the woman, a resident of Timarpur, said that she came to live in the area two years ago, where she met the accused.

"One day, the accused came to the woman's house with 'prasad' and told her that he can help her get job in the DTC. She offered him cold drink and went inside room to bring some documents. She came back and had cold drink and 'prasad'.

BJP stages dharna near Gahlot's residence, demands resignation

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi BJP leaders and workers staged a protest on Wednesday near Minister Kailash Gahlot's residence in Civil Lines, demanding his resignation for having an officer accused of rape with a minor as his OSD when he was the Women and Child Development portfolio.

Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva said the officer charged with raping a minor was serving as the Officer on Special Duty (OSD) to Gahlot when he was the Women and Child Development (WCD) minister.

Sachdeva said that DCW chief Swati Maliwal had got the news on 8th August, but till 21st August she kept silent and as soon as the FIR was registered and the police came forward to take the statement of the girl, from that time Maliwal started her dirty politics. Delhi



BJP workers attempt to cross a police barricade during a protest near the residence of Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot, in New Delhi on Wednesday

Ranjana Dimri | Pioneer

BJP President said that it is unfortunate that why Arvind Kejriwal, who speaks exaggeratedly in every matter, is silent in this matter. Not only this, Arvind Kejriwal should answer where he has hidden Naresh Balyan in his Sheeshmahal. He said that this turned out to

be such a case that even Kansa the uncle of Lord Krishna would get teary-eyed upon hearing his acts. The officer now arrested and suspended from the post of deputy director of WCD department was "handpicked" by Gahlot, the BJP leaders alleged.

Judicial custody of WCD officer accused of rape extended by court

New Delhi: A city court on Wednesday extended by 14 days the judicial custody of suspended Delhi government officer Premoday Khakha, who allegedly raped a minor several times and impregnated her. His wife Seema Rani's judicial custody, who is accused of giving the girl medicine to terminate her pregnancy, was also extended by 14 days. Both were produced before Additional Sessions Judge (POCSO) Richa Parihar.

Umashankar Gautam, the counsel for the accused, said the court has sought a report on the medical board's findings about the vasectomy procedure Khakha has claimed to have undergone, before his judicial custody ends on September 6. The advocate claimed as Khakha had undergone vasectomy in November 2005, he couldn't have impregnated the girl. Staff Reporter

NDMC OK's 7th CPC



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The New Delhi Municipal Council (NDMC) in a meeting on Wednesday approved various proposals, including restoration of the Main Gole Market building as a museum and grant of Seventh Central Pay Commission (CPC) pay scales to its employees.

The council's meeting was attended by Union Minister Meenakashi Lekhi, NDMC chairperson Amit Yadav, vice chairperson Satish Upadhyay, council member Kuljeet Singh Chahal among others. Addressing a press conference after the meeting, Upadhyay said the redevelopment plan of the Gole Market has been approved and the main building there will be turned into a museum with an aim to make it a tourist site. "We passed the

redevelopment plan of the Gole Market after today's council meeting. We are also planning to turn the main building into a museum which can be a tourist attraction."

NATIONAL FERTILIZERS LIMITED
(A Govt. of India Undertaking)

A-11, Sector-24, Noida-201301
Ph.: 0120-2412294, 2412445 Fax: 0120-2412397

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Bids are invited for "Annual Rate Contract for Civil Works of NFL, Corporate Office, Noida" through tendering process from interested eligible parties, having sufficient experience in this field.

The last date of receipt of Bids is 13.09.2023 up to 3:30 PM.

For details, visit website: www.nationalfertilizers.com or <https://tenders.gov.in>. Amendments/Corrigendum/Addendum, if any will be hosted only on our website.

For any further details Please contact Mr. Anurag Rathi, CM (Tech.) - 9650350069
General Manager (Proj.)

@NFL_Kisan @nationalfertilizers National Fertilizer Limited

Forcing husband to live away from parents torturous for him: Court

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi High Court has said that a wife's "persistent insistence" on living separately from in-laws without a justifiable reason is "torturous" for the husband and is an act of cruelty.

A bench headed by Justice Suresh Kumar Kait, while granting divorce to an estranged couple, observed that unlike the West, in India, it is not usual for the son to get separated from his family and his wife becomes integral to it.

"Normally, without any justifiable strong reason, she should never insist that her husband should get separated from the family and live with her separately," the court said. The husband, in the present case, assailed a family court order refusing to grant divorce.

He sought dissolution of marriage on several grounds under the Hindu Marriage Act, including that wife was a "quarrelsome lady" who did not show respect to the elders at the matrimonial home and insisted that he reside separately from his parents.

"Normally, no husband would tolerate and would like to be separated from his parents and other family members."

Mizoram railway bridge collapse: 19 feared dead

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ AIZWAL/NEW DELHI

In a tragic incident at least 19 workers were feared dead (till the last filing of report) after an under-construction railway bridge collapsed near Aizawl in Mizoram on Wednesday.

The incident took place at Sairang in Aizawl district. Sources confirmed that nearly 35-40 workers were present at the site and the toll could be higher as 'missing' labours are yet to be traced during the massive rescue operations by railways and State Governments agencies.

While Mizoram State government referred to the incident as a bridge collapse, the Railways claimed that the part of the bridge which has already been constructed is still intact and the accident was due to the collapse of a gantry, which was being launched on the under-construction bridge over Kurung river.

President Draupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Mizoram Chief Minister Zoramthanga, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge and several state heads and leaders from across the party lines condoled the deaths.

"Distressed to know that a tragic bridge mishap in Mizoram caused loss of lives. I express my deepest condolences to the bereaved families and pray for the speedy recovery of the injured," Murmu said in a statement.

Most of the labourers killed



hailed from West Bengal and left many injured in the incident that occurred around 10 am in Sairang area, about 21 km from the state capital Aizawl. Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav has announced a compensation of Rs 10 lakh for the kin of the workers. He also announced an ex gratia compensation of Rs 50,000 for those who suffered minor injuries.

"Grieved by the unfortunate incident in Mizoram. NDRF, state administration and railway officials are at the site. Rescue operation on war footing. Ex-gratia compensation: ₹10 Lakh in case of death, ₹2 Lakh towards grievous and ₹20,000 for minor injuries," Vaishnav said in a post on X, formerly Twitter.

A high-level committee has been constituted to probe the incident involving the under-construction bridge, one of the 130 bridges in the Bhaivari-Sairang New Railway Line project.

"Sixteen bodies (till reports filed) have been recovered from the debris so far, while two others are yet to be retrieved. Five workers are reported missing," IGP (Law & Order) Lalbiakthanga Khiaeng said. Rescue and relief efforts are underway, he said.

The Bairabi-Sairang line is

Board exams to be held twice a year under NEP

Best score out of the two will be retained for students' benefit
DEEPAK JHA ■ NEW DELHI

Marking an important and transformative step towards the implementation of the National Education Policy (NEP), the Centre on Wednesday made a historic announcement regarding the Board examinations that are held across the country. According to the New Curriculum Framework (NCF), Board exams will now be conducted twice a year and students will get the option to retain the best score obtained from the choice of subjects they choose.

At present some of the competitive examinations like Joint Entrance Examinations (JEE) for admissions in engineering and technical institutions allow aspirants to take examinations twice and move ahead for admissions with the best score out of two.

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan said it is a momentous boost to implementation of NEP with release of National Curriculum Framework for School Education. "Full efforts would be made to make new textbooks available from next academic year. Textbooks for class 3-12 to be aligned with 21st Century requirements, making them both rooted and futuristic," he said announcing the much awaited NCF.

Earlier in the day Pradhan addressed the 1st Joint workshop of the National Curriculum Framework Oversight Committee and the National Syllabus and Teaching-Learning Material Commission on



Wednesday. Further the school board examinations like CBSE, ICSE, have also been asked to develop capacities to be able to conduct "on-demand" examinations in due course of time.

The NCF has also noted that there should be no hard separations between Arts and Sciences, curricular and extra-curricular activities, and vocational and academic streams. "Board examinations should be offered at least twice a year to ensure that students have enough time and opportunity to perform well. Students can then appear for a board examination in subjects they have completed and feel ready for. This process could be made possible through the creation of a comprehensive test item bank which can be used to create tests using suitable software. This will enable the move towards a system of on-demand examinations in the near future as described in NEP 2020," the NCF stated.

The Ministry of Education has noted that in the long term, all boards should change to semester or term-based systems. Through this students can test in a subject as soon as they have completed the subject, which would further reduce the content load being tested in any one examination.

This is not the first attempt at reforming board exams. The Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) was intro-

duced for class 10 in 2009, but was revoked in 2017 and the board reverted to the old model of year-end exams. The board exams for classes 10 and 12 were also split into two terms during the pandemic as a one-time measure, but the old format of year-end examination was resumed for the crucial exams this year.

The NCF prepared by the national steering committee, headed by former ISRO chief K Kasturirangan, suggests that the current practice of streaming into Science, Arts or Humanities, and Commerce will be replaced by a design that enables both breadth through engagement with a variety of courses across streams and depth in areas chosen by students.

"There should be no hard separations between Arts and Sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, and between vocational and academic streams. This will eliminate harmful hierarchies among, and silos between, different areas of learning," it said. The Kasturirangan panel has noted that in recent decades, there has been an unfortunate trend in India to see grades 11 and 12 as merely a means to gain admission into higher education.

The NCF noted that board examinations should assess the understanding and achievement of competencies rather than focusing on months of coaching and memorisation.

Variants of Tejas LCA to be used in bases next year: IAF chief

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to hasten self-reliance in Defence production, IAF chief VR Chaudhari reviewed the status of Tejas Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) programme and said some of the latest variants of the jet will be deployed in operational bases next year.

Giving details of the meeting, IAF officials said here on Wednesday the review took place on Tuesday at the Air Force Headquarters. Senior functionaries of the Defence Ministry, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) attended the meeting.

Chaudhari said the LCA has been the flag bearer of IAF efforts towards indigenisation of its aircraft fleet. He said given the nature of this project of national importance, it is required that all stakeholders adopt a collaborative approach towards its success. The programme has been the harbinger of Atmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India initiatives of the nation. More importantly, it is a flag bearer of India's self-reliance in the aerospace sector. During the review, it was brought out that all contracted fighter variants of the LCA Mk 1 have been delivered to the IAF. Representatives of the HAL assured IAF chief of the timely delivery of the contracted twin-seaters in the coming months, as well.

Further to the LCA Mk 1, 83 LCA Mk-1A aircraft have also been contracted by the IAF in 2021. The HAL assured the deliveries of this advanced variant of the LCA will commence by February next year.

Form No. 3 [See Regulation-15 (1)(a)]/16(3) DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL CHANDIGARH (DRT 2)

1st Floor, SCO 33-34-35, Sector-17 A, Chandigarh (Additional space allotted on 3rd & 4th Floor also)
Case No.: OA/1449/2022

ICICI BANK LIMITED VS GOPAL DASS
To, (1) GOPAL DASS D/W/S/O-JAGIR DASS GOPAL DASS SON OF SHRI JAGIR DASS, R/O B-5, BABA ARCADE HAROLA, GAUTAM BUDHA NAGAR, SECTOR 5, NOIDA, UTTAR PRADESH - 201301. PAN NO. AGHPD5758P. 2ND ADDRESS:- C/O GDS ELECTRONICS, R/O B-5, ARCADE HAROLA, GAUTAM BUDHA NAGAR, SECTOR 5, NOIDA, UTTAR PRADESH - 201301. GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR, UTTAR PRADESH

Also At: GDS ELECTRONICS, B5, BABA ARCADE HAROLA, GAUTAM BUDHA NAGAR, SECTOR 5, NOIDA, UTTAR PRADESH - 201301. GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR, UTTAR PRADESH

(3) SUJEET KUMAR DASS S/O SHRI GOPAL DASS B 5 BABA ARCADE HAROLA GAUTAM BUDH NAGAR SECTOR 5 NOIDA, GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR, UTTAR PRADESH

WHEREAS, OA/1449/2022 was listed before Hon'ble Presiding Officer/Registrar on 16/03/2023. WHEREAS this Hon'ble Tribunal is pleased to issue summons/notice on the said Application under section 19(4) of the Act, (OA) filed against you for recovery of debts of Rs. 3652811/- (application along with copies of documents etc. annexed).

In accordance with sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, you, the defendants are directed as under:- (i) to show cause within thirty days of the service of summons as to why relief prayed for should not be granted;

Signature of the Officer Authorised to issue summons.

Publication Form No. 3 [See Regulation-15 (1)(a)]/16(3) DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL CHANDIGARH (DRT 2)

1st Floor, SCO 33-34-35, Sector-17 A, Chandigarh (Additional space allotted on 3rd & 4th Floor also)
Case No.: OA/2159/2022

ICICI BANK LIMITED VS TARIQ JAMAL SIDDIQUI
To, (3) UNIVERSAL BUILDWELL PRIVATE LTD 102, ANRIKSH BHAWAN 22 KASTURBA GANDHI MARG NEW DELHI, DELHI

Also At: GDS ELECTRONICS, B5, BABA ARCADE HAROLA, GAUTAM BUDHA NAGAR, SECTOR 5, NOIDA, UTTAR PRADESH - 201301. GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR, UTTAR PRADESH

(3) SUJEET KUMAR DASS S/O SHRI GOPAL DASS B 5 BABA ARCADE HAROLA GAUTAM BUDH NAGAR SECTOR 5 NOIDA, GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR, UTTAR PRADESH

WHEREAS, OA/2159/2022 was listed before Hon'ble Presiding Officer/Registrar on 18/02/2023. WHEREAS this Hon'ble Tribunal is pleased to issue summons/notice on the said Application under section 19(4) of the Act, (OA) filed against you for recovery of debts of Rs. 3652811/- (application along with copies of documents etc. annexed).

In accordance with sub-section (4) of section 19 of the Act, you, the defendants are directed as under:- (i) to show cause within thirty days of the service of summons as to why relief prayed for should not be granted;

Signature of the Officer Authorised to issue summons.

Heart patients who don't take aspirin daily at risk of attack in future: ESC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Heart patients who do not take an aspirin daily are more likely to have a repeat myocardial infarction, stroke, or death than those who take the drug consistently, a new study presented at ESC (European Society of Cardiology) Congress 2023 said.

"Our findings suggest that not taking aspirin as prescribed after a heart attack is linked to a higher risk of having another heart attack, a stroke or dying," said study author Dr Anna Meta Kristensen of Bispebjerg and Frederiksberg Hospital, Denmark. The study used data from Danish nationwide health registries, including patients aged 40 years and over who had a first-time heart attack from 2004 through 2017, were treated with a coronary stent and took aspirin as prescribed during the first year after their heart attack. Adherence to aspirin was



evaluated at two, four, six and eight years after the heart attack. The proportion of days patients had their pills over the previous two years was used to calculate aspirin adherence at each of the four-time points.

According to the study, patients on aspirin for 80 per cent or less of the time were considered non-adherent (i.e., not taking aspirin as prescribed) while those on aspirin more than 80 per cent of the time were considered adherent (i.e., taking aspirin as prescribed). "We assessed the effects of long-term aspirin use in patients who were not receiving other medications for the prevention of heart attack or stroke," Kristensen said.

ED makes fresh arrest in ex-MP CM Nath's nephew's fraud case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) has made a fresh arrest in the Rs 354 crore bank fraud linked money laundering case involving Ratul Puri, the businessman nephew of senior Congress leader and former Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kamal Nath, and others.

The agency took into its custody Nitin Bhatnagar, a former relationship manager of the Bank of Singapore under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) on Tuesday. A designated court here has granted him to ED custody till August 31.

The money laundering case stems from an August, 2019 FIR of the CBI in which it was alleged that the company Moser Baer India Ltd. (MBIL) and its promoters allegedly cheated and defrauded the loan taken from the Central Bank of India to the tune of Rs 354.51 crore. The CBI registered the case on a reference from the bank.

Both the CBI and the ED had booked Ratul Puri, his



father Deepak Puri, mother Nita (Kamal Nath's sister), Ratul Puri was arrested by the ED in this case in 2019 and he is now out on bail.

The Puri family, other individuals like Sanjay Jain and Vineet Sharma were booked by the CBI and the ED for alleged criminal conspiracy, cheating, forgery and corruption. Ratul Puri was booked in this case in his capacity as the then Executive Director of MBIL, a firm promoted by his father Deepak Puri.

The company was involved in the manufacture of optical storage media like compact discs, DVDs, and solid state storage devices.

Ratul had resigned from the post of Executive Director in 2012, while his parents continue to be on the board, the bank had said in a statement and complaint to the CBI.

Seized incriminating documents from Abhishek's firm: ED

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday said it seized "incriminating" documents after it raided multiple premises of a company in Kolkata whose CEO is Abhishek Banerjee, TMC MP and the nephew of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee.

The agency conducted searches on August 21-22 at three premises of the company, Leaps and Bounds Pvt. Ltd., as part of its ongoing money laundering investigation into the West Bengal teachers' recruitment 'scam'. The action was undertaken against the arrested accused in this case, Sujay Krishna Bhadra, who was the chief operating officer (COO) of the company, the agency said in a statement.

Banerjee has always denied wrongdoing and had called ED action political vendetta.

Sachin appointed Election Commission's 'national icon'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As the Election Commission (EC) battles urban and youth apathy towards voting, cricketing legend and Bharat Ratna awardee Sachin Ramesh Tendulkar was on Wednesday appointed as a "national icon" of the poll panel to encourage greater voter participation in elections.

Tendulkar was made the national icon as the EC gears up to hold assembly polls in five states sometime in October-November and Lok Sabha elections in 2024. A memorandum of understanding was signed between Tendulkar and the poll panel. As part of the three-year agreement, the cricketer will spread voter awareness.

Addressing the gathering, Tendulkar said India is the biggest democracy in the world and it is our prime responsibility to exercise our voting right.



He reminded the gathering that he had said that in his second innings, he will continue to bat for India. "It is said that India is the youngest average age nation in the world. But when it comes to voting -- that responsibility -- can we say that we are a responsible nation when it comes to voting? The honest answer would be no. It is a little difficult to accept," he noted.

He said as an Indian he would like people to say that India is of course the youngest average age nation in the world, but along with that, the most

AI aids early detection of Parkinson's disease with eye scans: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Artificial Intelligence (AI) can help predict Parkinson's disease via eye scans with an average seven years of warning, according to a study published in the journal Neurology. This is the largest study to date on retinal imaging in Parkinson's disease.

Parkinson's disease is a progressive neurological disorder that primarily affects movement. Detecting Parkinson's disease involves a combination of clinical evaluation, medical history assessment, and specialized tests. However, scientists from University College London and Moorfields Eye Hospital have suggested that through eye scans, it might be possible to identify indications of Parkinson's disease up to seven years before an official diagnosis.



This is the first time anyone has shown these findings several years before diagnosis, and these results were made possible by the largest study to date on retinal imaging in Parkinson's disease.

The use of data from eye scans has previously revealed signs of other neurodegenerative conditions, including Alzheimer's, multiple sclerosis, and, most recently, schizophrenia, in an emerging and exciting field of research referred to as "oculomics".

Eye scans and eye data have also been able to reveal a propensity for high blood pressure; cardiovascular disease, including strokes; and diabetes.

Traditional welcome accorded to G20 guests

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Traditional warm welcome was accorded to the delegates from G20 member nations, invitee countries, and various international organisations at Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Babatpur here on Wednesday when they arrived here to attend the 4th G20 Culture Working Group (CWG) Meeting. The entire route from the airport to the venue was decorated and at many places, artistes also presented cultural programmes as they did during all previous G20 meetings organised in the city during the previous months. The important Culture Ministers' Meeting (CMM) will be held on August 26. To welcome the delegates and attend the CWG, top officials from the Union Cultural Ministry including Joint Secretary Lily Pandeya and others arrived here.



Warm welcome being accorded to G20 guests in Varanasi on Wednesday.

After the success of the previous three CWG meetings in Khajuraho, Bhubaneswar and Hampi, as well as the four Global Thematic webinars, this 4th CWG Meeting in Varanasi will continue till August 25 and the meeting aims to arrive at actionable outcomes while positioning culture at the heart of policy making. This CMM in Varanasi will be an opportunity to catalyse collective actions for accelerating progress on the four priority areas articulated by the Indian presidency- protection and restitution of cultural property, harnessing living heritage for a sustainable future, promotion

of cultural and creative industries and creative economy, and leveraging digital technologies for the protection and promotion of culture.

Under India's G20 presidency, the CMG had launched the 'Culture Unites All' campaign to highlight India's unwavering belief in multilateralism based on peaceful coexistence among diverse cultures and communities. The CWG will also release a special stamp to commemorate the campaign on August 26. The 'Culture Unites All' postage stamp has been crafted as a distinctive emblem combining the ideas of connectivity, communication,

and journey representing a cultural exchange and establishing cultural context.

In 2020, under the Saudi Arabian presidency, the Culture Ministers' met for the first time on the sidelines of the G20. In 2021, Culture was formalised as a working group during the Italian presidency, leading to the inaugural G20 CMM and the consequential Rome Culture Ministers' Declaration. The 'Bali Declaration' of 2022 under the Indonesian presidency further stressed the role of culture in sustainable development. In Varanasi, this would be the fourth time that the Culture

Ministers of the G20 members and invitee countries would be meeting. During their stay in this ancient holy city, the guests will have the opportunity to watch the world-renowned Ganga aarti and explore the beautiful history of the lion capital of Sarnath. The G20 Global Orchestra performance titled 'Sur Vasudha' celebrating the rich musical knowledge and heritage of G20 member nations and invitee countries will be presented in the city. The delegates will also witness cultural performances including Indian classical music and dance forms during their stay in the city.

Kashi hails soft landing of Chandrayaan-3

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

This holy city of Kashi where prayers were being organised at several places for the successful soft landing of Chandrayaan-3 on the lunar surface, hailed the achievements of the Indian scientists when the same landed there on Wednesday evening successfully. At several places in this parliamentary constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the students, teachers and others were watching the live telecast of the Chandrayaan-3 landing on the lunar surface.

In his quick reaction, the Vice-Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University (BHU) Prof Sudhir Kumar Jain said that the entire nation as well as BHU is proud of the golden achievement of the country and ISRO. "The landing of Chandrayaan-3 on the lunar surface is such a remarkable moment, which has not only overwhelmed every Indian with a sense of



Teachers of a school hailing soft landing of Chandrayaan-3 on lunar surface in Varanasi on Wednesday evening.

pride, but has once again proved India's superiority in the field of space technology. A large number of students have witnessed this event in BHU

during this memorable event. Seeing this scene in student life is a transformative encouragement for the students. The university family is proud of

this golden achievement of the country and ISRO and shares immense joy and excitement with all the countrymen experiencing," he said.

Sharma: India changing under leadership of PM Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Former deputy chief minister Dinesh Sharma exhorted party workers to ensure that lotus (BJP symbol) blooms in all the 80 Lok Sabha seats of the state in the upcoming parliamentary polls.

"The BJP workers should pull up their socks. We have to make Narendra Modi prime minister for the third consecutive term," said Sharma, who was in the city to address the second and the last day of BJP's two-day zila panchayat presidents and members training camp.

The former deputy CM said zila panchayat, apart from

being the main base of development of villages, is also the nursery of politics.

"Members of zila panchayat always play a major role in the development of villages. They work as bridges between people and the government," he said. Sharma further said: "We must take the achievements of BJP-led Union government to last person of the villages." He claimed India is changing under the leadership of PM Modi.

"The PM is working tirelessly to make our country a developed nation and self-reliant economic power. The income of farmers has increased manifold and digital

revolution is taking place in villages as well," Sharma said. He added: "We have the richest culture and tradition across the world and it's the responsibility of every citizen to maintain and protect it. Many foreigners are adopting Indian culture and tradition in search of peace."

TENSION: Tension gripped Nageshwar Dham Temple and adjoining areas in Lalganj block of Pratapgarh after a piece of meat along with cooked rice was found inside the temple premises, police said. Hundreds of devotees assembled at the spot and demanded action against the culprits. On being alerted a

team of Lalganj police rushed to the spot and registered an FIR under Section 295 of the Indian Penal Code against unidentified person regarding the incident. Temple priest Shyam Bihari Shastri told the police that some unidentified persons had thrown a piece of meat and rice into the temple campus at night with the intention of hurting the sentiments of the community. In the morning the police managed to clean the entire temple campus and deployed additional force. A senior cop said a police team has been formed to nab those behind the incident and legal action will be initiated accordingly.

Consignment of cranberries, hog plums sent to Dubai

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

After exporting a variety of vegetables and fruits to different countries, now the consignment of Indian cranberries and hog plums have been sent to Dubai (UAE) for the first time from this city. Besides, the popular vegetables from this belt of Purvanchal (eastern UP) including pointed gourd (parwal) and asparagus bean (bora) have also been exported to Dubai directly from Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, Babatpur on Tuesday.

However, the main attractions of this export were Indian cranberries (karonda) and hog plums (ambade) as both these products are very rich for their health benefits. Indian cranberries are high in nutrients and antioxidants while Indian hog plums are best-known for the sour tinge they add to prawn curry apart from their inner inedible fibrous part.

The hard work of the food providers and the efforts of Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) supported by the state government have brought a fruitful result when all these products have been exported



Cranberries, hog plums ready for export to Dubai from Integrated Pack House in Varanasi on Tuesday.

from here. Through APEDA, about 1,800 kg of vegetables have been sent by air cargo to Dubai with the help of Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) North Agro Farmer Producer Company Limited.

According to APEDA, there has been a 248 percent increase in exports of such agricultural products this year as compared to the first quarter of the last financial year.

About 157 metric ton farm

products (fruits and vegetables) have been exported in the financial year 2021-22 which increased to 561 ton in the financial year 2022-23.

With the formation of Integrated Pack House for Food and Vegetable Export in Varanasi, there is a possibility of further increase in exports, said APEDA's Deputy General Manager (DGM) Dr CB Singh. According to him, APEDA had sent green chillies to

Britain for the first time in April 2020 during the corona pandemic period. Later, farm products like green chillies, okra, parwal, green peas, mango, litchi, banana, kundru, guava, mango, arvi, drumstick, gourd, jackfruit, arvi, brinjal, amla, drumstick, melon etc have been exported continuously to different Gulf and European countries apart from Nepal and Bangladesh.

State govt committed to welfare of lawyers: Ajay Misra

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The advocate general of UP felicitated chairman and member secretary of Bar Council of UP, Shiv Kishor Gaur and Jay Narayan Pandey respectively in his camp office here and promised to extend all possible help and cooperation from the state government to the Bar Council for implementing various welfare schemes for lawyers.

On the occasion advocate general Ajay Kumar Misra said that the state government is committed to the welfare of lawyers of the state and the Bar Council, being the biggest body of the lawyers of state, will be extended full cooperation on behalf of the state so that welfare schemes for lawyers are carried out without any hindrance.

Chairman of Bar Council of UP Shiv Kishor Gaur welcomed the steps taken by the state government as well as

advocate general. He said that with the cooperation of state government and advocate general, the Bar Council will successfully implement all its welfare schemes for lawyers. Besides, member secretary of Bar Council, Jay Narayan Pandey also welcomed the initiatives taken by the state government through advocate general.

INCOME TAX: Income Tax is fast changing law of the nation as amongst the canons of taxation it is to remove inequality of income and everyone has to update in this regard, said senior chartered accountant Dr Naveen C Agrawal.

Every year union finance minister presents the Budget explaining the policies of the government, being ruling party at the Centre, for the development of the country and stating their priorities. It can very well said that there are changes in the Income Tax Act, 1961

every year and everyone has to update in this regard.

In recent years provisions relating to charitable institution have undergone tremendous changes, specially to curb tax evasion through them. Philosophy seems to be that these institutions are exempted from tax on fulfilment of specified conditions. Therefore, these must operate within legal framework. At the same time, scope of tax planning should be minimised, if not eliminated.

Consequently, besides the legal provisions as are applicable on such institutions, rules and forms have also been amended. The format of reports, namely, Form 10 B and 10 BB have also been completely changed w.e.f. 01.04.2023 by virtue of Income Tax (Third Amendment) Rules 2023. In other words, these are applicable on all reports issued from that date, that is, financial year 2022-23.

Statutorily ITR utilities for Form 10B and 10BB should be available on April 1, 2023, but have not yet been released. The last date for filing ITR is 31.10.2023 and audit report has to be uploaded one month prior to it. Form 9A/10 are required to be filed two months prior although a circular has been issued in this regard.

In such situation, CBDT must timely extend the due dates. As per the latest provisions, benefit of exemption is not available to the institution if ITR/reports are timely not filed. Such situation will result in taxability on their income. The due dates laid down for all ITR under the Income Tax Act are not practical/workable. Therefore, these should be suitably amended and proper working time to meet the present requirements based on Artificial Intelligence, should be allowed which require extension by one to three months, he said.

SSPG, DDU hospitals evaluated

VARANASI (PNS): For the Kayakalp Award for the year 2023-24, the state level team visited Shri Shiv Prasad Gupta (SSPG) Divisional Hospital and Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyay (DDU) District Hospital here on Tuesday and closely examined the quality of health services by doing peer assessment. Along with this, a state level evaluation of National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) of District Government Women's Hospital was done recently. Dr Paliwal, Dr Gyanendra Pandey and Dr Shreya Singh were included in the state level evaluation team.



State-level Kayakalp Award evaluation team holding a meeting with senior officers in Varanasi on Tuesday.

supervision of Divisional Quality Assurance Advisor Dr RP Solanki.

According to Dr Solanki, earlier in this financial year, internal evaluation of SSPG and DDU hospitals was done, in which SSPG got 92 per cent, while DDU 96 per cent marks. Apart from this, the District Women's Hospital got 82 per cent marks in the internal assessment done earlier under NQAS. Now on getting more than 70 per cent marks, the District Women's Hospital will be selected for NQAS. Apart from this, the final (external) evaluation for the Kayakalp Award will be done

soon for SSPG and DDU hospitals. On getting more than 70 per cent marks, both the hospitals will be honoured with Kayakalp Award. It is the endeavour of the department that all the government hospitals of the district get better marks. He said that last financial year DDU Hospital got the first place in the state for the Kayakalp Award. Dr Solanki said that the Kayakalp Award includes eight main points such as prevention of infection, cleanliness, external arrangement, biomedical disposal, convenience to patients, coordination of allied organisations etc. After verifying the

assessment on these points, if qualified in the peer, then external assessment will be done. In that, if this health centre comes first on all these points, then the award will be announced under the Kayakalp (rejuvenation) programme. For the selection of Kayakalp Award, an amount of Rs 3 lakh is given for getting marks above 70 per cent, Rs 5 lakh for getting above 85 per cent and more than Rs 10 lakh for getting marks above 90 per cent. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said that the objective of Kayakalp and NQAS is to encourage and identify public health facilities that do exemplary work by following standard protocols for cleanliness and infection control. Along with this, cleanliness, hygiene and infection control have to be promoted in public health facilities. Improvements in public health facilities linked to positive health outcomes lead to better consolidation, he added.

Joint receipt inspection of C-295 MW deliverables culminates

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A month-long Joint Receipt Inspection (JRI) of the first tranche of C-295 MW deliverables received from Airbus Defence and Space, successfully culminated on Tuesday. The occasion was marked with exchange of memorandum of inspection between Air Commodore Angshuk Pal, Air Officer Commanding 24 ED and Airbus Defence and Space representatives in the presence of Air Vice Marshal Venigalla Srinivas Choudary VM, Senior Air and Administrative Staff Officer, HQ Maintenance Command.

As many as 56 C-295 aircraft are being procured by IAF from Airbus Defence and Space and 40 out of these 56 aircraft will be manufactured in India



by TATA Advanced Systems Ltd (TASL), a TATA-Airbus consortium. These aircraft will gradually replace the AVRO and AN-32 fleet, the 'vintage workhorses' of IAF. TASL will

produce 40 fly-away C-295 aircraft from its facilities. As a part of Atmanirbhar Bharat, greenfield maintenance, repair and overhaul facilities will be created at Vadodra by end of

2025. This will be a first in terms of creation of indigenous infrastructure and life cycle sustenance of IAF aircraft, exclusively by Indian private aviation sector.

To ensure a robust supply chain management of C-295 fleet, which will operate from multiple airbases, IAF has designated 24 Equipment Depot (ED), Air Force Station Manauri as the nodal hub for storage, inventory management and distribution of spares pan-IAF. It has also considered the change in MRO philosophy while formulating its transportation and distribution plans.

Exclusive warehousing facilities for housing C-295MW assemblies and parts was inaugurated at Air Force Station Manauri on July 24 this year.



www.dailypioneer.com

facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/

PAPER WITH PASSION

A fudged state

The second tenure of Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan is marked by corruption and irregularities

When the "gold smuggling through green channel" scam rocked Kerala in 2019 and Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan asked the Central Government to launch an investigation into the affair by central agencies, the general belief was that it was one of its kind incidents. But subsequent events proved that the CPI-M-led Kerala Government is the epicentre of corruption and impropriety of all kinds. Smuggling of gold through the Holy Qurans, financial embezzlement in the State's Cooperative Banks which saw many investors resorting to suicides and irregularities in the appointment of vice-chancellors and teaching staff in the State's Universities are just the tip of the iceberg. No amount of perfumes imported from Arabia would be able to wash off and purify the scam-ridden Kerala. Tuesday's raid by sleuths of the Enforcement Directorate on the residence of A C Moideen, a CPI-M MLA who was a minister in the first Pinarayi Vijayan Government (2016-2021) has not surprised anyone as it was on expected lines.



Moideen, the then minister for cooperation, was the master brain behind the modus operandi of swindling Rs 126 crore from the branch of a Cooperative Bank in Thrissur district. The Bank scam across Kerala that took place during the tenure of Moideen as minister is Rs 75,000 crore according to financial experts familiar with the Cooperative Banks. There is a saying in Kerala that whoever controls the Cooperative Banks controls the State. No prize for guessing why the Marxists are fighting tooth and nail the efforts of the RBI to usher in some sort of transparency and accountability to cooperative institutions across India.

The Life Mission, a flagship project of the CPI-M led Government to provide houses to all those without a roof over their heads to is enmeshed in corruption and irregularities. The latest development is the monthly payment of Rs 1.72 crore allegedly received by Veena Mohammed Riyaz, daughter of Chief Minister Vijayan from one Sasidharan Kartha, who owns a mineral sand mining company. The disclosure was made by the Income Tax Interim Settlement Board which disallowed claims by Kartha's mining company that the amount was paid to Veena's company in return for Information Technology-related services. The Board disclosed that executives of Kartha's company have made it clear that Exalogic, an IT firm owned by Veena has not provided any kind of services to the company. The issue is getting murkier by the day as Congress legislator Mathew Kuzhalnadan has come out with facts that have put the CPI-M leadership in a quandary. The Marxists, instead of countering the charges made by Kuzhalnadan, have ordered a probe against him by the officials of the revenue department regarding his ancestral properties. The second tenure of Pinarayi Vijayan stands out because of corruption and misdeeds. Surprisingly, the opposition Congress which has been battling the Central Government's raid raj came out on Tuesday demanding the immediate resignation of Moideen as MLA. Strange are the ways of politicians.

PICTALK



School students look at a model of 'Chandrayaan-3' Lander Module (LM), in Jalandhar

Power of dialogue in quelling a storm

Dialogue, reconciliation, and understanding underscore the transformative potential of peaceful means in resolving conflicts and building a harmonious world



RAJDEEP PATHAK

August is a month that holds historical significance in various cultures and contexts. August was originally the sixth month in the ancient Roman calendar, named after the Roman Emperor Augustus (Gaius Octavius), who ruled from 27 BC to 14 AD. He named the month after himself to honour his victories and rise to power.

Cut to the early twentieth century. It was August 1914 that marked the beginning of World War I when Germany declared war on Russia. This event propelled the start of one of the most significant conflicts in modern history. A few years later the hunger for supremacy saw two major devastations. On August 6 and August 9, 1945, during World War II, the United States dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, respectively. These bombings had a profound impact on global geopolitics and the development of nuclear weapons. The aerial bombings together killed between 129,000 and 226,000 people, most of whom were civilians, and remain the only use of nuclear weapons in an armed conflict. The devastating impact of these bombings led to unparalleled human suffering and long-term effects due to radiation exposure.

The bombings not only ended World War II but also ushered in the nuclear age, raising concerns about the potential for global annihilation. It had significant implications on the geopolitics of the world with the United States emerging as a dominant superpower, while the Soviet Union, another nuclear-armed nation, became its rival during the Cold War era. The arms race that followed heightened tensions between nuclear-armed nations and brought the world to the brink of nuclear war on multiple occasions.

Mahatma Gandhi's words resonate deeply: "An eye for an eye only ends up making the whole world blind." The destruction and loss of life caused by the atomic bombings underscore the folly of pursuing violence as a means to an end. It highlighted the urgent need for diplomacy, dialogue, and nonviolence to



address conflicts and disputes.

After 'Little Boy' and 'Fat Man' snuffed out over 2,00,000 lives in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, the apostle of peace, Mahatma Gandhi, had commented that if the world had not adopted non-violence, it would lead mankind towards suicide. Gandhi also said that the world could be saved from an atomic bomb only by non-violence, not by another bomb. It was almost during this period of global turmoil, India's struggle for Independence was at its peak. The British had already started fearing the actions of the Indian National Army under Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose's leadership. Back home, taking forward his non-violent struggle on the path of 'Satyagraha', Mahatma Gandhi had given a clarion call to the Britishers to "Quit India" which he launched on August 9, 1942, three years before the atomic bombs were dropped by the United States on Japan. Gandhi's Quit India Movement called for the immediate withdrawal of British forces from India and mass civil disobedience against British authority.

The Quit India Movement had far-reaching implications not only for India but also for the global anti-colonial struggle.



THE QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT HAD FAR-REACHING IMPLICATIONS NOT ONLY FOR INDIA BUT ALSO FOR THE GLOBAL ANTI-COLONIAL STRUGGLE. IT SHOWCASED THE POWER OF NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE AS A POTENT WEAPON AGAINST OPPRESSIVE REGIMES

It showcased the power of nonviolent resistance as a potent weapon against oppressive regimes. In today's turbulent times, where conflicts persist and violence remains a common approach to address any form of differences, the lessons of peace and nonviolence from these historical incidents remain relevant. The rise of extremist ideologies, terrorism, and nuclear proliferation are constant reminders of the devastating consequences of violence. The world needs to embrace the power of non-violent dialogue and conflict resolution to address complex geopolitical issues.

In the contemporary context, the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war serves as a stark reminder of the consequences of escalating violence and the importance of dialogue for conflict resolution. The conflict, which began in 2014, has resulted in thousands of deaths and the displacement of millions of people. It has strained international relations and raised concerns about regional stability. While international sanctions and measures can exert pressure on aggressors, they fall short of addressing the root causes of the conflict. To achieve a lasting solution, dialogue and diplomacy must take precedence over military

actions.

The world must draw inspiration from historical events and visionary leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and other practitioners of peace and nonviolence. The power of dialogue for conflict resolution must be recognized and prioritized, even in the most challenging and turbulent times. Nelson Mandela (1918-2013), the South African anti-apartheid revolutionary and statesman, spent 27 years in prison for his activism before becoming the first president of South Africa. He strongly believed in peaceful means to bring about change and said, "If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy. Then he becomes your partner."

Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968), the American Civil Rights leader, championed nonviolent civil disobedience to combat racial injustice and segregation in the United States. He believed that love and understanding were key to overcoming hatred and violence. King famously said, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." (The writer is Programme Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Darshan Samiti)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE EXCITING WORLD OF AI

Sir — Similar to humans, various factors shape the world's perception of AI, including media portrayals, technological advancements, and real-world applications. AI bias refers to unfair or discriminatory outcomes that can arise when artificial intelligence systems are trained on biased data or developed using biased algorithms. To address AI bias, we require diverse perspectives and inclusive teams during AI system development. This bias can lead to unjust treatment or decisions based on factors such as race, gender, or other protected characteristics.

AI, or Artificial Intelligence, is a branch of computer science focused on creating systems or machines that can perform tasks that would typically require human intelligence. The aim of AI is to develop technologies that can mimic human cognitive functions, such as learning, reasoning, problem-solving, perception, language understanding, and decision-making.

AI encompasses a wide range of techniques, algorithms, and methodologies that allow machines to learn from data and adapt to different situations. Here are some key concepts and areas within AI

Anmol Porwal | Ujjain

UNFORTUNATE DEATH OF PILOTS

Sir — It is saddening that two Indian pilots recently lost their lives due to fatigue, raising significant concerns about stress levels among commercial pilots. The issue of fatigue among pilots has cast a shadow over the country's increasing air traffic and expanding aircraft fleet. A recent survey of over 500 pilots conducted by the Safety Matters Foundation, an NGO formed under the Indian Trust Act, revealed that a majority of them fell asleep without the consent or planning of the other crew.

While regulations on flight duty time limitations and specific rest periods are in place, adopting a more scientific

Tame the rogue tigers



The "paper tigers" can appear "rough and tough" when collectively confronting and fiercely attacking lone juniors, even leading to tragically literal outcomes, as witnessed in the heart-wrenching death of a minor boy. They also resemble "Royal Bengal Tigers" in their challenge to

authorities, advocating for the installation of CCTV cameras on the campus to preserve electronic evidence of their various nefarious activities over the years.

Nevertheless, the "timid cats," both within and outside the main hostel, ponder why the self-proclaimed "tigers," their big brothers, don't exercise their "immense might" against the significant issues plaguing Kolkata, West Bengal, and India. If a real-life tiger were aware of these spineless cowards from JU Main Hostel, who audaciously claim similarity to the "giant cat," even the mighty animal that hunts for survival would likely recoil in shame and disgust at their temerity. The urgency to imprison these rogue tigers for life would serve the student community and society at large.

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

approach and enhancing the fatigue reporting system will aid in addressing the silent danger of 'fatigue'. Furthermore, future high-quality intervention studies will play a pivotal role in identifying effective strategies to enhance pilot well-being, consequently improving flight safety and performance. A comprehensive approach to health and safety in the aviation sector is the need of the hour, ensuring that pilots remain in optimal condition, thereby contributing to safer skies for everyone.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

VIVID DISPLAY OF EMOTIONS

Sir — Vivid displays of emotions, symbolizing freedom of expression through gestures, body language, and beckoning, are permissible as long as they are carried out with dignity and without infringing upon the modesty of others. Fortunately, such unacceptable and unlawful behavior is tolerated in certain parts of India, but not in Uttar Pradesh (U.P.). The blame cannot be placed solely on U.P. Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath for openly expressing his identity.

He is correct in asserting that there is a time and place for revealing emotions, and car bumpers are certainly not the appropriate medium for broadcasting one's religion, caste, creed, or gender. In fact, such actions are prohibited under Section 179(1) of the Motor Vehicles Act of 1988, which deals with disobedience of lawful directions given by authorized individuals or entities under the Act. A fine of Rs 1000 is imposed for inscribing words indicating caste or religion on vehicles.

U.P. traffic police issued over 2300 fines to vehicle owners for violating such laws in less than a month. This positive development aims to impound vehicles that repeatedly commit violations. Instead of resorting to such practices, people should consider more practical and effective approaches, such as having a single bumper sticker across the city or other parts of India, saying "Mera Bharat Mahaan" or "Proud to be an Indian."

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Nainital

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Chandrayaan-3's safe moon landing is an extraordinary feat

India's moon landing is no mean achievement. It is the time to ensure that nations cooperate in space exploration and do not compete in outerspace

The success of the Chandrayaan-3 landing is a great achievement for our scientific community and the nation as a whole. Only three nations, namely the Soviet Union, the United States, and China have achieved successful soft landings on the Moon. But nobody has landed in the south pole, a region whose shadowed craters are thought to contain water ice that could support a future moon settlement. Our space scientists have made the country proud and Chandrayaan-3 success will be written in the annals of lunar soils in golden letters.



be fought in outer space as we visualize in science fiction movies?

When we start establishing ourselves as a multiplanetary species more such questions need to be debated. When more countries join the race to conquer the Moon we need to control the human activities there. Otherwise, it will damage its environment similar to what we have done to planet Earth. Controlling human activities on the Moon requires a combination of international cooperation, established guidelines, regulatory frameworks, and responsible practices. The United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA) plays a central role in facilitating global collaboration for the peaceful utilization and exploration of outer space. UNOOSA

serves as the Secretariat for the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), which is the primary international forum for discussing space-related issues and developing space law. COPUOS oversees the development of various space treaties and reviews and approves various space-related guidelines and recommendations.

Moon Agreement (1984): The Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies addresses the exploitation and use of the Moon's resources and other celestial bodies. It emphasizes the concept of the "common heritage of mankind" and sets out principles for the equitable sharing of benefits from lunar resources.

In addition to these endeavours, NASA has initiated the Artemis Accords in collaboration with numerous partner nations. Presently, 27 countries, including India, have become signatories to this accord. The Artemis Accords provide a pragmatic framework of principles intended to steer collaborative space exploration efforts



BIJU DHARMAPALAN

among nations involved in NASA's lunar exploration initiatives of the 21st century. Meanwhile, Russia and China are working together on the development of their forthcoming lunar outpost, referred to as the International Lunar Research Station.

It's sure that countries shall show their strength in space also that is not good for humanity. We need to consider the whole universe as a common property. Raising above the nationalistic feelings we need to consider ourselves as the children of a common ancestor and need to formulate regulations that support the cause of human survival.

Moon or for that matter any outer space planets we are looking for our establishment and survival should be considered as 'common heritage of humankind'. The benefits of activities carried out on the Moon by various countries should be equitably shared among the nations and no single power should be allowed to exploit its resources.

(The writer is a science communicator and an adjunct faculty at NIAS, Bangalore)



FIRST COLUMN

GOD IS VERY DIFFERENT FROM US

We have to take shelter in God because he is the giver. We must pray for his help



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

Yes, totally different. Meditate on these facts. We already know that God is omnipotent. How else does He create our universe, of which the earth planet is a small part. Not only that, God is omnipresent. He sees everything and hears all. He is situated in this world pervading all. (The Bhagavad-Geeta 13.13) But God does so in His unmanifest form. (9.4) Being all-powerful, He incarnates, when dharma has to be re-established. (4.7) This happens rarely but God is forever manifesting Himself in Deities, photos, etc. as decided by Him. How else do we get His 'kripa' when we visit a temple or do 'namaskar' to a photo of God? God is omniscient. He not only knows our present but past and future also. That is how He can guide perfectly, if we take His shelter. God is unlimited, He is the owner of everything.

God takes many forms, as chosen by Him. We are aware of his 'shakti' form as Durgaji, his 'vidya' form as 'Saraswatiiji', etc. Thus, we can worship God in many forms, as chosen by us. Don't we have different natures? Therefore, God has provided many options. Additionally, we can worship God in many ways also such as meditate on Him, chant His names, become His devotee, etc. (18.65) On His part, God is always engaged in action. Even though there is no compulsion of any duty, He chooses to remain engaged in action. (3.22) Dharma is very dear to God, as this is the bedrock upon which the creation rests. Dharma is required for continuation of the creation for a very very long time. God gives shelter, if sought. Only He can, being the only big; rest of us are all small, intrinsically small.



Let us see how we fare in comparison. How much shakti, which are of five kinds, namely atmbala, intellectual strength, mental strength, physical strength, and tolerance power do we possess? I don't have to say much about it, because we know where we stand. Our presence is very limited, which goes to almost zero while we sleep. How about our knowledge? We have no idea about our past lives. We are forever speculating about the future. Even the present is only known to a limited extent. Do we know what is going on inside our bodies? How about ownership? Most of us are quite keen to own a house, though we don't own anything on this planet; whatever we have is for our use only; ownership is God's. That is why all material possessions are taken away along with our bodies upon death.

Can we change our karmaphalas, i.e. stop bad ones from coming? Even God doesn't; He and only He alone can help us to tackle them successfully every time. This is the best possible scenario. What about our natures? How many New Year's resolutions have we made? What came out of them? The success rate is abysmally small in most cases. Why? Because generous help is needed from the one who can really help. If we could tame our obstinate natures, we would have done so long back. But we won't seek help, because we are too self-centred, even though mostly helpless. Why don't we realize this eternal truth and go where help is available?

(The author is a spiritual teacher)

The scourge of freebies is taking a heavy toll



UTTAM GUPTA

Freebies are denuding the budgets of many states. This practice must go before states' coffers run dry



Delivering his Independence Day address, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal promised 200 units of electricity a month for 'free' to the entire 1.4 billion people of India saying this will cost Rs 150,000 crore per annum. He went on to add 'When Modi - government can waive Rs 150,000 crore worth of loans given to four top industrialists of the country, why can't it provide free electricity to the people which would cost it the same amount?'

In Delhi, Kejriwal is already giving free electricity to all households (HHs) consuming 200 units a month and a flat subsidy of Rs 800 to HHs consuming 200 - 400 units a month. In Punjab too, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government is giving free power to each HH consuming up to 600 units per month. Having tasted the success of this brand of politics at the state level, it is no surprise that he is promising a supply of free electricity pan - India. This is bizarre. Let us look at the flaws in Kejriwal's approach.

First, the indicated cost of his offer is a gross understatement. Taking a HH to include five persons on average and a population of 1400 million, the number of HHs comes to 280 million. Further, take the cost of supplying a unit of electricity (purchase price plus wheeling and distribution cost) to be around Rs 5, the cost of supplying 200 units a month is Rs 1000 per HH. For 280 million HHs, this would be Rs 28,000 crore or Rs 336,000 crore annually. The estimate given by Kejriwal is less than half of this number. How has he arrived at Rs 150,000 crore? It appears he could have used a lower cost of Rs 3 per unit being the tariff applicable to HH whose consumption is less than 200 units. But, that is a subsidized rate that is paid for by charging more from HHs in higher consumption brackets. It is illogical to use it for calculating the subsidy impact of Kejriwal's proposal. That apart, even with Rs 3 per unit, the impact comes to Rs 201,600 crore. An attempt to suppress the figure is visible.



LAST YEAR, THE SUPREME COURT (SC) ASKED POLITICAL PARTIES TO COME UP WITH A LAW THAT PROHIBITS FREEBIES. LEFT TO THEMSELVES, THEY WON'T

(The writer is a policy analyst)

Second, by citing the waive-off (alleged) of Rs 150,000 crore loans of businessmen, he gives an impression that providing free power to all 1.4 billion people won't dent the exchequer as the money saved by avoiding waiver would pay for it. The argument is untenable as the banks haven't waived the loans.

When there is a delay in recovering a loan beyond a certain time limit, banks are required to 'write-off' - a jargon for making full provision for it in the balance sheet. This is a technical requirement as per prudential norms prescribed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). This is necessary to keep the bank's balance sheet (BS) clean. It can't be bandied as a loan waiver as the bank continues to make efforts to recover the loan from the defaulting borrower.

As and when the loan is recovered, the amount is written back into the BS. The savings assumed by Kejriwal (read: Rs 150,000 crore) which he wants to set off against the liability resulting from his proposal for free electricity simply don't exist. Third, as per the extant practice, states don't give subsidies directly to consumers. Instead, they ask power distribution companies (discoms) not to bill the consumers or bill for the amount (albeit subsidized) as directed by the former. The understanding is that the state will make timely reimbursement to the discoms for the subsidy amount. But, most states don't reimburse or do it partially. Even when they do, this is after considerable delay.

It is unlikely that the states will change their ways when it comes to implementing Kejriwal's pan - India proposal. Imagine if subsidy dues of mammoth amounts of over Rs 300,000 crore annually get

stuck even for a few months. This can push discoms into serious financial trouble posing a great risk to an uninterrupted supply of power. The CM who tom-toms about 'no power cuts in Delhi' should be aware of the fall-out of his idea.

Fourth, when a State intends to provide an essential good or service free or at a subsidized price, the target beneficiary necessarily has to be a poor person. She has to be one who with her meagre income, can't afford to pay for the good/service. But, Kejriwal talks of giving free power to all 1400 million persons. Under his plan, everyone including those with higher income, millionaires, billionaires in fact, even the 'richest' person in India is eligible. It makes a mockery of the cardinal principles of a welfare scheme.

It isn't as if the CM is not aware of the folly of his proposition. Indeed, he is or else, he would not have come up last year with a rejig of the free power scheme in Delhi. Citing that several HHs had informed him that they didn't want subsidy, he asked all Delhiites to give their choice in writing. Did he intend not to give subsidies to the better off? Certainly not. Who will say, 'I don't want a subsidy?'

The outcome of the exercise was that the majority of all HHs who were earlier enjoying free power continue to get it even now. Given his track record, it is not surprising that while talking about free electricity pan - India, Kejriwal doesn't differentiate between the poor and the rich. And, he as well as other political parties (sans Modi) do it because it is a saleable proposition.

Apart from Delhi, we have already seen this in Punjab and Karnataka. In a recent public rally,

Kejriwal promised 300 units of electricity free in Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh. He is going to reiterate this pledge in Rajasthan where elections are due towards the end of this year. The ball won't stop here; it will extend to many other areas; free education, free health, free LPG etc.

Freebies are already denuding the budgets of the concerned states. For instance, in Karnataka, the five guarantees promised by GOP make a hole of Rs 65,000 crore annually. The states' Dy CM says 'the government has no money left for development'. In Delhi, a surplus budget is a mirage as several of its agencies are in the red (Delhi Jal Board has a mammoth debt of Rs 70,000 crore). The finances of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh too are in dire straits.

Now, if Delhi CMs' misadventure starts playing out on a national scale, this will plunge the whole of India into 'mammoth' and 'unsustainable' debt. With a big slice of earnings used for freebies and servicing the debt, little will be left for financing development work. Besides, people will grapple with high-interest rates and high inflation. Above all, this will kill the urge to work thereby converting India's demographic dividend into a demographic disaster.

The scourge of freebies needs to be curbed before it is too late. Last year, the Supreme Court (SC) asked political parties to come up with a law that prohibits freebies. Left to themselves, they won't. They would instead let the matter rest in cold storage. What then is the way forward? The SC should pass an order prohibiting freebies that they will find difficult to nullify.

Saving vulnerable communities from malnutrition

A change is slowly but surely coming as the pregnant women in vulnerable communities are spending on nutritious food and getting antenatal checkups

There has been a 14.8% improvement in nutrition knowledge and an eight per cent increase in the number of women spending cash on nutritious food, informs Gohil. This data is based on the information collated by the team that follows up to check whether or not the money has been spent on food.



SWAPNA MAJUMDAR

Vulnerable Sahariyas

"A majority of the Sahariya tribe work as daily wagers. They lose wages when they have to stay in hospital for a couple of days. Cash transfers provide direct benefit and help them buy nutritious food," says Ravi Mittal, Child Development Project officer, Kishanganj block.

(The writer is a senior journalist)

Mittal contends this is bringing change in a place once known as the malnutrition area. "Sahariya women and their families are more aware now of the correlation between the mother's nutrition and the health of their babies, thanks to the partnership between our frontline workers and RajPushat PCs. Clearly, increased nutrition knowledge and, cash transfers helped Vimla improve her own nutrition and also prevent Tarush from becoming undernourished," says Mittal.

ANM Sunita Jungam, who works at the Khelwara CHC, Kishanganj block, reveals that the block is known as a 'pre-term area'. Jungam, who has been working at the CHC for the last 10 years, says that although there has been



a decrease in the number of pre-term and low-birth babies, it has not completely stopped. "Most of these are among women of the Sahariya community. Lack of awareness about their health and nutrition among pregnant women, early marriages and anaemia are the causes. Their babies require close monitoring and follow up," contends Jungam.

Poshan Champions Matter

This is done with the help of frontline workers and RajPushat PCs. Once the weight of the baby and the name of the mother are recorded on the digital weighing machine installed under this programme to ensure accurate recording of weight, it provides details of her village and its designated ASHA. Then, once the child returns home, the responsibility shifts to the ASHA, who also alerts the concerned PC working in the area.

So, after Tarush returned home he was visited by the ASHA. But it was the commitment and dedication shown by PC Rajendra Kushwah that ensured Vimla received focussed attention. Besides providing informa-

tion on the importance of nutritious food for herself and appropriate feeding practices for her newborn, constant monitoring and motivation helped to pull Tarush back from the brink of wasting.

"Seeing him healthy gives me immense satisfaction that all my hard work over the past two and half years has paid off. I feel happy that I was able to motivate her family members also to ensure Vimlaji was well nourished after giving birth. Her mother-in-law was very supportive. She understood the importance of mother's milk for Tarush and also learnt how to give kangaroo mother care. I made several visits to check and monitor the health of both mother and child. I also helped AWW

Sushila didi to facilitate cash transfer under IGMYP so that Vimlaji could buy nutritious food," says Kushwah.

It was only after becoming aware of its benefits that she began to pay greater attention to her diet, says Vimla. "I realised that I wouldn't be able to give Tarush the care he needed as a low birth baby if I remained undernourished. I received Rs 2000 as first IGMYP instalment and used it to buy ghee to roast dalia," she says.

Winds of Change

There has been a behavioural change among the Sahariya community now, says AWW Sushila Bai who has been working since 2001. "Vimla's mother-in-law gave gutti to her own children. But after interactions with

Rajendrabhai, she allowed her grandson to be exclusively breastfed," says Sushila.

In Baran, approximately 20,000 children are born every year. Four out of ten children are underweight, according to NFHS-5. But the good news is that more women, both pregnant and lactating, are spending on nutritious food, completing the necessary four antenatal checkups and practising exclusive breastfeeding till the child is six months old. Hopefully, the current glitches in ensuring timely cash transfers will be resolved quickly so that the critical window of opportunity to prevent malnutrition in the child's first 1,000 days doesn't slip out of hand.

Concluded.

Russia and Ukraine trade drone attacks

AP ■ KYIV

Russia and Ukraine traded drone attacks on early Wednesday, officials said, with Kyiv apparently targeting Moscow again and the Kremlin's forces launching another bombardment of Ukrainian grain storage depots in what have recently become signature tactics in the almost 18-month war.

A three-hour nighttime Russian drone attack in Ukraine's southern Odesa region overnight Tuesday caused a blaze at grain facilities, Odesa Regional Military Administration Head Oleh Kiper wrote on the Telegram messaging app.

Ukrainian air defence systems downed nine Shahed drones, Kiper said.

"Unfortunately, there are hits on production and transshipment complexes," he said, adding that no casualties had been reported.

Russia zeroed in on Odesa last month, crippling significant parts of the port city's grain facilities, days after President Vladimir Putin broke off Russia's participation in the Black Sea Grain Initiative.

That wartime deal enabled Ukraine's exports to reach many countries facing the threat of hunger.

Russian officials, meanwhile, claimed to have downed Ukrainian drones in Moscow and the surrounding region early Wednesday, the defence ministry and the mayor said.

No casualties were reported in the drone attack, which has become almost a daily occurrence in the Russian capital.

Moscow Mayor Sergey Sobyanin said one drone smashed into a building under construction in Moscow City, a prestigious business complex hit by drones twice before.

Several windows were broken in two buildings nearby and emergency services responded to the scene.

Russia's Ministry of



Police officers stand guard at the scene of the wreckage of a drone at Moscow City business district after a reported drone attack in Moscow, Russia, Wednesday.

Defence said the drone had been electronically jammed.

It blamed the attack on Ukraine and said two other drones were shot down by air defence systems in the Mozhaik and Khimki areas of the Moscow region.

Kyiv officials, as usual, neither confirmed nor denied Ukraine was behind the drone attacks.

Moscow airports briefly closed but have now reopened, according to Russian state media.

Neither side's claims could be independently verified.

Ukraine has since early this year sought to take the war into the heart of Russia. It has increasingly targeted Moscow's military assets behind the front lines in eastern and southern Ukraine and at the same time has launched drones against Moscow.

Kyiv is also trying to keep up the pressure on the Kremlin along multiple fronts, pursuing a counteroffensive at various points along the 1,500-kilometre (900-mile) front line, as well as diplomatically by obtaining pledges of more weaponry from its Western allies, including F-16 warplanes.

Meanwhile, three people were killed in the Belgorod

region of Russia on the Ukrainian border after repeated shelling of a sanatorium, according to Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov.

Gladkov said the sanatorium in the village of Lavy, about 40km (25 miles) from the border, was shelled and that "the enemy dropped two grenades from a drone while people were on the street."

The Belgorod region has witnessed sporadic fighting and shelling during the war, including a border incursion last May that prompted the Kremlin to introduce tighter security.

A handful of foreign dignitaries, including the presidents of Portugal, Finland and Lithuania, visited Ukraine on Wednesday.

Their presence coincided with the Day of the National Flag of Ukraine, which precedes Ukrainian Independence Day on Thursday.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, along with Ukrainian Armed Forces Commander in Chief Valerii Zaluzhnyi and other top officials, attended the unfurling in Kyiv of a giant Ukrainian flag with numerous signatures of soldiers, volunteers, doctors and rescuers.

Russia's military op pursues goal of ending war 'unleashed' by West in Ukraine: Putin

PTI ■ JOHANNESBURG

President Vladimir Putin on Wednesday accused the Western countries of "unleashing a war" in Ukraine against the people living in Donbass region and said Russia's special military operation pursues the goal of ending that war. President Putin, who is attending the 15th BRICS summit virtually as he could face possible arrest in terms of an International Criminal Court warrant if he lands in South Africa, also stressed that it was the wish of a number of Western countries to preserve their hegemony in the world that "has led to the grave crisis in Ukraine."

"Russia has decided to support the people who are fighting for their culture, for their traditions, for their language and for their future. Our actions in Ukraine have only one reason - to put an end to the war that was unleashed by the West and their satellites in Ukraine against the people living in Donbass," Putin said while vir-

tually addressing the annual summit of leaders of BRICS.

The BRICS bloc - comprising Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - brings together five of the largest developing countries of the world, representing 41 per cent of the global population, 24 per cent of the global GDP and 16 per cent of the global trade. Over 20 heads of state from Africa and the Middle East have also been invited to attend the summit. A number of them have applied to become members of BRICS, which is one of the matters on the agenda for the Summit.

Putin recalled that "first, with the help of the Western countries, an unconstitutional coup d'état was carried out in that country, and then a war was unleashed against those people who did not agree with that coup," the state-run Tass

news agency reported.

"This brutal war, a war of extermination, had lasted for eight years," Putin emphasised.

The US and European nations have imposed heavy sanctions on Russia since Moscow sent troops into Ukraine on February 24, 2022.

Putin said that the BRICS countries are against any hegemony and exclusiveness of countries, as well as the policy of neo-colonialism.

"Our quintet has rightly established itself in the global arena as an authoritative structure, whose influence in world affairs is strengthening steadily. The strategic course of this association extends well into the future and meets the aspirations of the international community — the world's majority," Putin said. He stressed that the BRICS countries were acting in con-

cert, on the principles of equality, partnership, support and due regard for each other's interests to address "the most pressing issues" on the global and regional agendas.

"The main thing is that we are all unanimous in the striving for the emergence of a multipolar world order, a truly fair one and based on international law and compliance with the key principles of the UN Charter, including the sovereign right and respect for the right of every nation to its own model of development," Putin added.

Putin said that cultural and civilizational diversity is one of the supporting pillars of the new multipolar world order as it implies establishing an integral and free space for cultural exchanges, arts and creative activity. He said Russia is ready to share with BRICS partners its accumulated experience and best practices, including in the field of digital transformation and the use of artificial intelligence.



'New wave of protectionism undermine global growth'

PTI ■ JOHANNESBURG

The new wave of protectionism and the subsequent impact of unilateral measures that are incompatible with WTO rules undermine global economic growth and development, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said as he opened the 15th BRICS Summit on Tuesday. Ramaphosa joined Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Brazilian President Lula Da Silva and China's Commerce Minister Wang Wentao — who spoke on behalf of his President Xi Jinping — on stage. Russian President Vladimir Putin delivered his address virtually after the leaders met for the BRICS Business Forum Leaders Dialogue.

"The changes that have taken place in BRICS economies over the past decade have done much to transform the shape of the global economy. However, the new wave of protectionism and the subsequent impact of unilateral measures that are

incompatible with WTO rules undermine global economic growth and development," Ramaphosa said.

The President said BRICS needed to reaffirm its position that economic growth must be underpinned by transparency and inclusiveness.

"It must be compatible with a multilateral trading system that supports a developmental agenda. We require a fundamental reform of the global financial institutions so that they can be more agile and responsive to the challenges facing developing economies," Ramaphosa said, citing the New Development Bank (NDB), established by BRICS countries in 2015, as leading the way in this regard.

"Since its formation, (the NDB) has demonstrated its ability to mobilise resources for infrastructure and sustainable development in emerging economies without conditionalities," he added. Ramaphosa said BRICS economies have emerged

as powerful engines of global growth.

"Yet the rapid economic, technological and social changes underway create new risks for employment, equality and poverty in many BRICS countries. We, therefore, call on the business community to join hands with us to identify solutions to these and other challenges affecting our respective economies," he told the gathering of several hundred captains of industry attending the Summit. The president also highlighted the opportunities that BRICS countries have to contribute to and participate in Africa's growth story.

"This can be achieved through greater cooperation in areas such as infrastructure, agriculture, manufacturing, new energy and the digital economy," Ramaphosa said. Da Silva promised huge increases in infrastructure development opportunities in Brazil, which he said would be of interest to investors from BRICS countries.

Shooting at Alabama A&M campus hurts 2

AP ■ HUNTSVILLE

A shooting outside a residence hall at an Alabama college campus that stemmed from a fight has left two people injured, police said. Tuesday's shooting occurred at Alabama A&M University, Huntsville Police Department spokesperson Sydney Martin wrote in an email.

Investigators said the shooting was an isolated occurrence, Martin said. Both people had minor injuries, police said. Police do not think anyone else was involved. "This was not an active shooter incident," Martin wrote in the emailed statement.

Martin said that investigators were obtaining arrest warrants on assault charges for both people involved. Both will be booked into the county jail when they are released from the hospital, Martin said.

The north Alabama campus was briefly placed on a lock-



down, according to local news outlets. WAFF reported that students were sent an alert warning that there was a report of an armed person on campus and to go inside and lock their doors.

The university posted an announcement about a "developing public safety emergency near the Knight Center" residence hall and asked students to stay away from the area. The school later posted a notice that the situation was all clear.

Alabama A&M University is in north Alabama and has an enrollment of about 6,100 students.

Polls open in Zimbabwe as prez seeks 2nd term

AP ■ HARARE

Polls opened in Zimbabwe on Wednesday as President Emmerson Mnangagwa seeks a second and final term in a country with a history of violent and disputed votes. These are the second general elections since the ouster of longtime repressive ruler Robert Mugabe in a coup in 2017.

Twelve presidential candidates are on the ballot, but the main contest is expected to be between the 80-year-old Mnangagwa, known as the "crocodile", and 45-year-old opposition leader Nelson Chamisa.

Mnangagwa narrowly beat Chamisa in a disputed election in 2018. Chamisa hopes to break the ruling ZANU-PF party's 43-year hold on power. Zimbabwe has known only two leaders since gaining independence from white minority rule in 1980.

A runoff election will be held on October 2, if no candidate wins a clear majority in the first round. This election will



also determine the makeup of the 350-seat parliament and close to 2,000 local council positions.

In several poor townships of the capital, Harare, some people were at polling stations two hours before voting opened, fearing long lines.

"It's becoming tougher to survive in this country," said Basil Chendambuya, 50, an early voter in the working-class township of Kuwadzana in Harare. "I am hoping for change. This is my third time to vote and I am praying hard that this time my vote counts. I am getting desperate, so God has to intervene this time round." The father of

three said his two adult children are working menial jobs and surviving "hand to mouth."

The southern African nation of 15 million people has vast mineral resources, including Africa's largest reserves of lithium, a key component in making electric car batteries. But watchdogs have long alleged that widespread corruption and mismanagement have gutted much of the country's potential.

Ahead of the election, the opposition and human rights groups including Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International accused Mnangagwa of seeking to silence dissent amid rising tensions due to a currency crisis, a sharp hike in food prices, a weakening public health system and a lack of formal jobs. Mnangagwa was a close ally of Mugabe and served as vice president before a fallout ahead of the 2017 coup.

He has sought to portray himself as a reformer, but many accuse him of being even more repressive than the man he helped remove from power.

Zimbabwe has been under United States and European Union sanctions for the past two decades over allegations of human rights abuses, charges denied by the ruling party. Mnangagwa has in recent years repeated much of Mugabe's rhetoric against the West, accusing it of seeking to topple his regime.

Ahead of elections, observers from the EU and the US have come under criticism from officials and state-run media for allegedly being biased against the ruling party.

The Carter Centre, invited by the government to observe the polls, has said 30 members of its 48-member observer team were yet to be accredited on the eve of the elections and any further delay will "hinder its ability to observe polling, counting, and tabulation in many locations."

Several local human rights activists, including lawyers and a clergyman viewed as critical of the government, have been denied accreditation to observe the vote.

'Franklin' dumps heavy rain on Haiti, Dominican Republic

PTI ■ SANTO DOMINGO

Tropical Storm Franklin made landfall on Wednesday on the island of Hispaniola shared by the Dominican Republic and Haiti, bringing fears it would trigger deadly landslides and heavy flooding in both countries.

Franklin was expected to swirl above the island for most of Wednesday, with forecasters warning the storm could dump up to 10 inches (25 centimeters) of rain, with a maximum of 15 inches (38 centimeters) for the central region of Hispaniola.

On Wednesday morning, the storm was centered about 105 miles (170 kilometers) west-southwest of Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic, according to the National Hurricane Center in Miami. It had maximum winds of 50 mph (85 kph) with higher gusts and was moving northward at 10 mph

(17 kph). It made landfall along the country's southern coast near Bahahona.

Meanwhile, Tropical Storm Harold weakened into a tropical depression Tuesday night after making landfall in South Texas, bringing strong winds, rain and leaving thousands of homes without power.

In the Caribbean, officials were most concerned about Franklin's impact in Haiti, which is vulnerable to catastrophic flooding given the country's severe erosion.

Prime Minister Ariel Henry had urged Haitians on Tuesday to stock up on water, food and medication as authorities checked on some of the more than 200,000 people displaced by gang violence, with some living on the street or in makeshift shelters. Some recalled how a powerful thunderstorm that unleashed heavy rains one day in June left more than 40 people dead across Haiti. In the Dominican

Republic, officials shuttered schools, government agencies and several airports with at least 24 of the country's 31 provinces under red alert. By early Wednesday, more than 40 aqueducts were out of service because of heavy rains, affecting more than 830,000 customers. Flooding already had been reported on Tuesday in the capital of Santo Domingo and beyond, where residents prepared for heavy rainfall.

"We're scared of the river," said Doralisa Sanchez, a government employee who lives near the Ozama River that divides the capital and has had to flee her home three times during previous storms. She hoped Franklin wouldn't force her to seek shelter and temporarily abandon her home because she said people steal belongings left behind. Others, like businesswoman Albina Achange, worried they had nowhere to go if the waters start rising.

Tsai pledges to strengthen Taiwan's self-defence

Taipei: Taiwan's President Tsai Ing-wen renewed her pledge to strengthen Taiwan's self-defence on Wednesday as she visited a war memorial from the last time Taiwan and China battled. Tsai, visiting the outlying islands of Kinmen where the conflict was fought 65 years ago, commemorated those who died. She was accompanied by Minister of Defence Chiu Kuo-cheng and the head of the National Security Council, Wellington Koo. "In order to keep the peace, we need to strengthen ourselves," said Tsai.

"As such, we need to continue to reform the national defence, push for self-reliance, strengthen our defence capabilities and resilience."

Taiwan's government on Monday revealed plans for the 2024 budget that had a 3.5 per cent increase in the defence budget, a record USD 606.8 billion New Taiwan Dollars (USD 19 billion), according to the semi-official Central News Agency. The proposed budget must be submitted to the Legislature for approval.

In recent years, China has stepped up its military activity in the waters and skies around Taiwan, sending fighter jets and navy vessels near the island or to encircle it.

On Wednesday, China's Fujian Maritime Safety Administration issued a warning for ships to stay out of an area called Xinghua Bay just off the coast of southern Fujian province as it would hold live-fire drills there starting Thursday and ending on Friday. Tsai's words have particular resonance as Kinmen sits in the Taiwan Strait, the narrow strip of ocean that divides Taiwan and China. At its closest points, the southern Chinese city of Xiamen is visible to the naked eye from Kinmen. In 1958, China began shelling Taiwan's outlying islands of Kinmen and Matsu, which sit geographically closer to China's southern coast than they do Taiwan. AP

2 tankers collide in Suez Canal

AP ■ CAIRO

Two tankers carrying oil products and liquefied natural gas collided in the Suez Canal, disrupting traffic through the global waterway, Egyptian authorities said Wednesday. The Suez Canal authority said in a statement that the BW Lesmes, a Singapore-flagged tanker that carries liquefied natural gas, suffered a mechanical malfunction on Tuesday night and ran aground while transiting through the canal. The Burri, a Cayman Island-flagged oil products tanker, collided with the broken vessel.

The collision disrupted traffic, the statement said. The two tankers were part of a convoy transiting through from the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea. "We've immediately handled the breakdowns...and traffic will go back to normal in both directions within the coming hours," said Adm. Ossama Rabei, the head of the



canal authority, in the statement.

The canal services firm Leth Agencies said Wednesday the incident delayed the transit of 21 southbound vessels.

About 10% of world trade flows through the canal, a major source of foreign currency for the Egyptian government. In March 2021, the Panama-flagged Ever Given, a colossal container ship, crashed into a bank on a single-lane stretch of the canal, blocking the waterway for six days and disrupting global trade.

MarineTraffic, a vessel tracking service provider,

released a time-lapse video for the incident that showed the Burri turning to port and colliding with the BW Lesmes which was already grounding across the waterway.

Built in 2018, the Burri is 250 metres (820 feet) long and 44 metres (144 feet) wide. The BW Lesmes was built three years later and is 295 metres (968 feet) long and 46.43 metres (152 feet) wide, according to MarineTraffic.

The canal authorities said they managed to refloat and tow away the BW Lesmes, while efforts were underway to remove the Burri from the waterway.

German Cabinet approves easier plan to legally change name, gender

AP ■ BERLIN

Germany's Cabinet on Wednesday approved a plan to make it easier for transgender, intersex and non-binary people to change their name and gender in official documents, legislation that the justice minister said aims to make life easier for "a small group for which it has great significance."

The legislation still needs approval by parliament. It is one of several reform plans that Chancellor Olaf Scholz's coalition of three socially liberal parties has embarked on, and has been criticised by the conservative opposition.

Under the planned "self-determination law", which has been in the works for over a year, adults would be able to change their first name and legal gender at registry offices

without further formalities. They would have to notify the registry office three months before making the change.

The existing "transsexual law", which dates back four decades, currently requires individuals who want to change gender on official documents to first obtain assessments from two experts "sufficiently familiar with the particular problems of transsexualism" and then a court decision.

Over the years, Germany's top court has struck down other provisions that required transgender people to get divorced and sterilized, and to undergo gender-transition surgery.

"Imagine that you...simply want to live your life and you don't wish anyone anything bad, and then you're questioned about what your

sexual fantasies are, what underwear you wear and similar things," Justice Minister Marco Buschmann told ZDF television. "Those affected have found this questioning very degrading."

"Now we simply want to make life a bit easier for a small group for which it has great significance," he added.

The proposed legislation focuses on individuals' legal identities. It does not involve any revisions to Germany's rules for gender-transition surgery. The new rules allow minors 14 years and older to change their name and legal gender with approval from their parents or guardians; if they don't agree, teenagers could ask a family court to overrule them.

In the case of children under 14, parents or guardians would have to make registry

office applications on their behalf. Asked about concerns that young people could make premature decisions, Buschmann said he is "firmly convinced that the overwhelming majority of parents will ask themselves very seriously and carefully: what is the best thing for my child?"

After a formal change of name and gender takes effect, no further changes would be allowed for a year.

Under the new legislation, operators of, for example, gyms and changing rooms for women would continue to decide who has access, Buschmann said.

He added experiences elsewhere have shown that "as a rule, this is not a practical problem; nonetheless, we have resolved it to address the concerns of those who were concerned about it."

'Pak will not surrender to radicalism, intolerance'

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistan's caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar on Wednesday said the war on terror will continue and it will not surrender to radicalism, extremism and intolerance, a day after outlawed TTP militants killed six soldiers. Addressing a press conference in Karachi, he said, "Those who have misconceptions that such attacks will tire us should know that we will never forget our martyrs or their sacrifices and won't refrain from such sacrifices in future," the Dawn newspaper quoted him as saying.

Kakar's statement comes a day after six Pakistani soldiers were killed during an attack by Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) terrorists on a convoy of security forces in the restive Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

The attacks on security forces have seen a rise in the country after the truce between the Pakistan government and TTP ended in November last year.

"Pakistan will not surrender in front of radicalism, extremism and intolerance ... this is our home and we will run



the country on our terms," Kakar stressed. The first-time Senator from Balochistan province pointed out that Pakistan was spending its own money, collected through taxes on the country's law enforcement agencies. "We are not fighting on donations," the premier said. Referring to the suicide bombers as "the dogs of hell," Kakar said, "Do they think that my soldiers sitting in Waziristan, Balochistan or any other corner of the country don't know what God has in store for them?"

He said that all the law enforcement personnel, whether they were combatting external aggression or were playing their role for internal security, were honoured and

60 more held in connection with mob attack on Pakistan churches

PTI ■ LAHORE

Pakistani authorities have arrested 60 more people in connection with the unprecedented mob attack on 21 churches in Punjab province, taking the total number of suspects under detention to more than 200, a top police official said on Wednesday.

A mob ransacked and torched 21 churches and several houses of Christians last week over blasphemy allegations in Jaranwala town of Faisalabad district, 130 km from Punjab's provincial capital Lahore. A Christian cemetery and the office of the local assistant commissioner were also vandalised.

Police had arrested 145 suspects subsequently.

"We have arrested some 60 more suspects after which the number of total arrested crossed 200 in the Jaranwala incident. The arrests have been made through video footage," Punjab Inspector General Police (IGP) Dr Usman Anwar said on Wednesday.

Talking to reporters, he said the police would present all kinds of evidence before the

Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) to get them convicted. "We will set an example through this case," he said.

Meanwhile, the caretaker Punjab government could not live up to its promise to restore all damaged churches by early this week.

"No restoration work at the damaged churches has begun as yet," Pakistan Centre for Law and Justice Napoleon Qayyum told PTI on Wednesday. He further complained that only a handful of Christians whose homes were damaged in the violence have got the cheques of compensation amount.

"A good number of Christian families are waiting to get the compensation amount which the government had promised. Besides, the government has also not made arrangements for food and lodging of the affected Christians," he said, adding that the Christian organizations are helping their fellow brethren.

The Punjab government had announced a compensation amount of Rs 2 million each to 94 Christian families to rebuild their houses.

Alvi invites top election official for meeting to set date for elections

Islamabad (PTI): Pakistan President Arif Alvi on Wednesday invited the top election official of the country for a meeting to set a date for the upcoming general elections. Alvi wrote a letter to Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja, citing the constitutional requirement for the president to decide a date for general elections within 90 days of the dissolution of the National Assembly (NA).

The National Assembly was dissolved on August 9 which makes it mandatory for the Election Commission of Pakistan to hold polls within 90 days after the dissolution. However, the ECP is set to delay the election in order to carry out delimitation in the light of the new census, which

is also a constitutional requirement. The president wrote a letter to CEC for a meeting to be held "today or tomorrow to fix an appropriate date" for general elections, according to the letter posted on platform X through the President's account. Alvi wrote that "by virtue of Article 48(5) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the president is obliged to appoint a date not later than 90 days from the date of dissolution for the holding of general elections of [the] assembly".

The invitation for the meeting comes in the wake of the ECP announcing a new delimitation process which would be completed by December 14 and after that the election schedule would be announced.

'Thaksin moved from prison to hospital in less than a day'

Bangkok (AP): Thailand's divisive former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra was transferred from prison to a hospital early Wednesday, less than a day after he returned from an extended exile and started serving an 8-year sentence.

He had returned to Thailand after 15 years abroad on the same day a party linked to him won a parliamentary vote to form a new government. Thaksin was then sent to prison to serve sentences from several criminal convictions made in absentia that he had defied as politically motivated.

The prison reported Thaksin had high blood pressure and low oxygen, he could not sleep and felt tightness in his chest, according to a statement from Sithi Sutivong, deputy director-general of the Corrections Department.

Doctors at the prison's hospital said he should be transferred to prevent life-threatening risks, the statement said. Corrections officials previously had said Thaksin, 74, was considered vulnerable due to his age and chronic conditions of his heart and lungs, high blood pressure, and back problems.

Hours after Thaksin's return to Thailand, Pheu Thai party candidate Srettha Thavisin secured enough votes to become prime minister, ending over three months of suspense, legal wrangling and horse trading that followed May elections. The party had entered a coalition with military parties linked to a coup that removed it from power in 2014, and excluded the progressive Move Forward Party that won the most votes in the elections.

There were 'shortcomings' in trial court's judgement against Imran Khan: Pak CJ

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial on Wednesday said there were "shortcomings" in the Toshiakhana corruption case judgment convicting former premier Imran Khan and the Supreme Court would give its verdict after seeing the outcome of the hearing in the high court.

The Islamabad High Court is set to hear on Thursday a petition challenging the conviction of 70-year-old Khan, who was sentenced to three years in jail on August 5 by a session court.

The chief justice's observation came as a three-member special bench of the apex court headed by him and comprising Justices Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi and Jamal Khan

Mandokhail heard the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief's pleas filed against the trial court's proceedings of the Toshiakhana corruption case.

The bench observed that the verdict was given in haste and without giving the right of defence to the accused. "Prima facie, there are shortcomings in the trial court verdict," the chief justice said.

However, the top court refused to give an order and said it would wait for the hearing of the case by the IHC and after that would hear the case.

"We will not interfere in the Toshiakhana case today ... we will look at the IHC hearing tomorrow and then resume the proceedings," the court observed.

The proceedings in the apex court and the observation

by the judges showed that Khan may get a big relief if his sentence was suspended by the IHC on Thursday.

During the hearing, the top court heard arguments by PTI lawyer Latif Khosa and Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) counsel Amjad Pervaiz.

Khan's party in its reaction to the hearing in the Supreme Court said that the court has adjourned the hearing till 2 pm Thursday and the three-member bench will resume hearing after the proceedings at IHC.

"In remarks Hon'ble Judges noticed that the decision to impede by not allowing witnesses & conviction seems to have been reached at haste, prima facie," the party said.

It further stated that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf is

European firefighters, planes join battle against Greece wildfires

AP ■ ATHENS

Water-dropping planes from several European countries joined hundreds of firefighters on Wednesday battling wildfires raging for days across Greece that left 20 people dead, while major blazes also burned in Spain's Tenerife and in northwestern Turkey near the Greek border.

Greece's largest active forest fire was burning out of control for the fifth day near the city of Alexandroupolis in the country's northeast, while authorities were trying to prevent a blaze on the northwestern fringe of Athens from scorching homes and reaching the Parnitha national park, one of the last green areas near the Greek capital.

Over the last three days, 209 wildfires have broken out across Greece, fire department spokesman, Ioannis Artopios, said Wednesday morning.

The blazes, fanned by gale-force winds and hot, dry summer conditions, have led authorities to order the evac-

uations of dozens of villages and the main hospital in Alexandroupolis.

Although gale-force winds were gradually abating in many parts of the country, the risk of new fires remained high. "Conditions remain difficult and in many cases extreme," Artopios said.

Thousands of migrants stranded in Niger

AP ■ NIAMEY (NIGER)

After three months of crossing the desert and then watching other migrants die at sea in his failed attempt to reach Europe, Sahr John Yambasu gave up on getting across the Mediterranean and decided to go back home.

The 29-year-old from Sierra Leone reached Niger in June on his return journey, but United Nations officials said he had to wait for packed migrant centers to empty before he could be repatriated.

Then mutinous soldiers toppled Niger's president a few weeks later, bringing regional tensions and the shuttering of the borders. Yambasu was trapped.

He is one of nearly 7,000 discouraged migrants trying to get home elsewhere in Africa that the UN estimates have been stranded in Niger since late July when members of the



presidential guard overthrew the country's democratically elected president, Mohamad Bazoum.

Niger's junta closed its airspace and regional countries closed border crossings as part of economic and travel sanctions, making it hard for people to leave.

Niger is an important route both for Africans trying to

reach Libya as a jumping off spot to cross the Mediterranean to Europe and those who are returning to their homes with help from the United Nations.

Yambasu and others like him are unsure when they will be able to leave.

"I feel sad because it's a country that I don't belong to. It's not easy," Yambasu said. Recounting his story, he

said he left Sierra Leone in June because of political unrest and was hoping to reach Germany. He got rides across the region until arriving in Libya, where he boarded a boat with some 200 other migrants. The boat spent days at sea, with some people dying onboard before it was intercepted by Libya's coast guard and taken back to Libya.

That was enough for him and he headed for home. Helped by aid groups, he made it as far as Niger but has been unable to go farther.

UN officials estimate about 1,800 in Yambasu's predicament are living on Niger's streets because centers run by the International Organisation for Migration are too crowded to take in more. The centers hold about 5,000 people trying to get home.

The UN agency had been assisting approximately 1,250 people a month return to their countries this year. But the closure of borders and airspace has

forced it to temporarily suspend returns and its centers are now jammed at 14 per cent over capacity, said Paola Pace, acting interim chief of mission for the agency in Niger. "This situation poses challenges for migrants as migrants staying in these centers may experience heightened stress and uncertainty with limited prospects for voluntary return and already crowded facilities," she said.

Pace worries the stall in the transiting of Africans seeking to get home could increase exploitation of vulnerable people by traffickers and smugglers who normally focus on individuals trying to migrate to Europe. The shelters are helping people who are making their way home, rather than would-be migrants heading to Europe — a northern flow that has seen more than 100,000 cross the central Mediterranean to Italy so far this year, according to Italy's interior ministry.

Chinese coast guard blocks Philippine vessels near disputed shoal

AP ■ ABOARD BRP CABRA

As a US Navy plane circled overhead, two Philippine boats breached a Chinese coast guard blockade in a dangerous confrontation in the disputed South China Sea to deliver food and other supplies to Filipino forces guarding a contested shoal.

Two Philippine coast guard vessels escorting the supply boats, however, were blocked by at least four Chinese coast guard ships for about five hours Tuesday in a tense standoff off Second Thomas Shoal. The dangerous encounter is the latest flare-up from the long-seething territorial disputes in the busy sea that involve China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei. It's regarded as an Asian flash-point and has become a delicate fault line in the US-China

rivalry. The Philippine coast guard invited a small group of journalists, including two from The Associated Press, to join its ships that secured the supply boats as part of a new strategy aimed at exposing China's increasingly aggressive actions in the South China Sea, which Beijing claims virtually in its entirety.

The Cabra and another coast guard ship, the BRP Sindangan, were forced to stop, surrounded by four Chinese coast guard ships and four suspected militia vessels, as the two boats delivered supplies to the Filipino forces at Second Thomas Shoal, more than 7 kilometers (4 miles) away.

All the Philippine vessels sailed away without further incident after the supplies and a fresh crew of Filipino sailors were delivered to the military outpost on a long-marooned

'Taliban prevents scores of Afghan women from studying abroad'

Islamabad (AP): The Taliban have prevented scores of female Afghan students from traveling to the United Arab Emirates for education, according to the chairman of a group that offered them scholarships.

"I am unable to express the disappointment I feel now as the Afghan female students, whom I had provided an educational scholarship... were unfortunately unable to reach Dubai airport," Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor, chairman of the Al Habtoor group, said Wednesday on X, formerly known as Twitter.

Al Habtoor said he had provided an opportunity for the women to study in collaboration with the University of Dubai. But despite securing "university admissions, accommodations, transportation,

health insurance, and an array of comprehensive services aimed at ensuring the utmost comfort and safety for the female students, our aspirations were crushed."

Although the Taliban promised a more moderate rule than during their previous period in power in the 1990s, they have imposed harsh measures since seizing Afghanistan in August 2021 as US and NATO forces were pulling out after two decades of war.

They have barred women from most areas of public life and work and cracked down on media freedoms. They have banned girls from going to school beyond the sixth grade, and prohibited Afghan women from working at local and non-governmental organizations.

PUBLIC NOTICE
General public is hereby informed that Mrs. Kamlesh Goyal is the owner of House No. D-384/C-545 built on Plot No. 93 measuring 200 sq. yds. out of Kharsa No. 15/26/271 situated in New Waka Majra Saran, Tehsil Ballabhgarh, Distt. Gurgaon, Haryana, to be lapsed & mortgaged by my client i.e. Anil Kumar Khatri known as The Original Debtor dated 11.12.1972, as Doc. No. 4620, & Sale Deed dated 01.01.1979, as Doc. No. 5822, pertaining to the aforesaid property have been lost and complaint bearing ICR No. 8125/2023 was registered on 23.08.2023, with Delhi Police. Any person(s) found in possession of aforesaid original documents, then kindly contact the undersigned along with original property documents & Consulars date of this notice on below address, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid sale deed shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.

Rajesh Tiwari, Advocate
Ch. 83/1, 2nd Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, West Nagar, N. Delhi-15
New Delhi - 110001. Mob.: +91-807818828

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client that Mrs. Priyanka Gupta is the owner of Property Bearing No. C-39 (Old Plot No. 6), area measuring 200 Sq.Yds., i.e. 167.26 Sq.Mtrs., out of Kharsa No. 317, Situated at the Capital Highway, Village Jharoda Majra, Burari, Delhi vide Sale Deed dated 09.02.2021, Doc. No. 1899. All persons are hereby informed that M/S D S Enterprises / Mrs. Priyanka Gupta want to mortgage the said property & intend to obtain a loan from our client against the said property. If anybody has any objection/s upon the ownership of above owner over the said property, its mortgage/litigation, and any other objections, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
206, 1st Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, West Nagar, N. Delhi-15
Ph: 011-41112527-28. legal@knallegal.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client that Mrs. Kamlesh Bhatia is the owner of Property Bearing No. Plot Bearing No. K-61, land measuring 7 Bawas (350 sq. yards) comprised in Kharsa No. 178/151 & 160/151 area (6-7), situated in the above Echa Lal Dora of Village Madanpur Khadar Tehsil Kalkaji New Delhi vide Sale Deed dated 25.11.2005, Doc. No. 18483 read with Rectification Deed dated 14.01.2008, Doc. No. 326. All persons are hereby informed that M/S D S Enterprises / Mr. Kamlesh Bhatia want to mortgage the said property & intend to obtain a loan from our client against the said property. If anybody has any objection/s upon the ownership of above client & intend to obtain a loan from our client against the said property, its mortgage/litigation, & any other objections, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
206, 1st Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, West Nagar, N. Delhi-15
Ph: 011-41112527-28. legal@knallegal.com

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Smt. Pramila Teron W/o Sukdeswar Teran presently staying at DDA Flat No.111, Block-A, Bindapur, New Delhi 110059 and permanent residence of Bataghulji, Panjabari, Guwahati, Assam-781037 that my name in the Birth Certificate of my daughter Ipsin Teran have been wrongly written as "PRANILA TERAN" instead of "PRAMILA TERON" (now rectified). *My correct name is "Pramila Teron".

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client that Mrs. Raj Gera is the owner of Property bearing No. 17-A, New No. WZ-283/17-A, area measuring 100 Sq. Yds., out of Kharsa No. 182, Situated in the area of Village Khyala and the colony known as West Block, Vishnu Garden Extn., Gali No. 4, New Delhi, vide Relinquishment Deed dated 08.06.2023, Bearing Doc. No.7517. All persons are hereby informed that above mentioned owner wants to sell the said property to a person who intends to obtain loan from our client against the said property, if anybody has any objection/s upon the ownership of above owner over the said floor, its sale/mortgage/litigation, & any other objections, kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below mentioned address within 07 days of the present.

Kumar & Associates (Advocates & Consultants)
206, 1st Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, West Nagar, N. Delhi-15
Ph: 011-41112527-28. legal@knallegal.com

M.P. MADHYA KSHETRA VIDYUT VITARAN CO. LTD.
(Govt. of M.P. Undertaking)
Nishtha Parisar, Bijlaee Nagar, Bhopal-23
Phone No. : 0755-2602033-36, Fax : 2589821, 2586636
Bhopal, Dated : 23.08.2023

TENDER NOTICE
MPPKVVCL, Bhopal, invites following bids through e-tendering :

Tender specification Number	Particulars	Approx. Value (Rs. Lakh)	Tender Fee (in Rs.)	Date of Pre-Bid Conference	Date of Opening of Tender
MD/MK/04/1972	Rate Contract for Execution of Works involving Construction/Laying of 11KV Line, Single Pole cut point, DTR S/s and other associated works on Semi-Turnkey Basis	48618.13	23600.00	31.08.2023 3:30 PM	12.09.2023 3:30 PM

Other details are available on Company website <https://portal.mpcz.in> & <https://mptenders.gov.in>
M.P. Madhyam/111584/2023
CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (PROC.)

Chandrayaan-3: Aerospace, defence stocks in limelight

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shares of companies related to aerospace and defence sectors were in the limelight on Wednesday with Chandrayaan-3 set to touch down on the lunar surface.

The stock of Centum Electronics zoomed 14.91 per cent, Paras Defence and Space Technologies Ltd jumped 5.47 per cent, MTAR Technologies rallied 4.84 per cent and Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd climbed 3.57 per cent on the BSE.

Centum delivered more than 200 mission critical modules to the Chandrayaan-3 mission, according to the company's website.

Shares of Bharat Forge climbed 2.82 per cent, Astra Microwave Products gained 1.72 per cent and Larsen & Toubro (1.42 per cent).

Many of these firms also hit their 52-week high levels during



the day.

Earlier in the day, the ISRO said it was all set to initiate the automatic landing sequence for its ambitious third Moon mission Chandrayaan-3's lander module to touch down on the lunar surface this evening.

"Several defence companies which have supplied parts used in Chandrayaan-3 rallied on expectation of a successful landing," Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Research at Motilal

Oswal Financial Services Ltd, said.

In the equity market, the BSE Sensex climbed 213.27 points or 0.33 per cent to settle at 65,433.30. The NSE Nifty gained 47.55 points or 0.25 per cent to end at 19,444.

"Market participants rushed to board on defence companies like L&T, MTAR Technologies and HAL ahead of the Chandrayaan-3 landing," Riches Vanara, Technical And

Derivatives Analyst at StoxBox, said.

Chandrayaan-3 has made a soft landing on the lunar south pole.

In a giant leap for its space programme, India's Moon mission Chandrayaan-3 touched down on the lunar south pole at 6.04 pm on Wednesday, propelling the country to an exclusive club of four and making it the first country to land on the uncharted surface.

FTA talks laser-focussed, say UK officials as trade minister heads to India

PTI ■ LONDON

India and the UK have made good progress in closing chapters and the free trade agreement (FTA) negotiations are now "laser-focussed" on goods, services and investment, UK officials said on Wednesday ahead of Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch's visit to India to attend a G20 trade meet.

After the G20 Trade and Investment Ministerial Meeting in Jaipur, which is scheduled for Thursday and Friday, the minister is expected to head to New Delhi for bilateral talks with her Indian counterpart, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal. Their discussions will coincide with the ongoing twelfth round of FTA negotiations that are underway in Delhi since last week.

"The UK and India are committed to working towards the best deal possible for both sides. We've made good progress in closing chapters, and are now laser-focused on goods, services, and investment," said a UK



Department for Business and Trade (DBT) spokesperson.

"While we cannot comment on ongoing negotiations, we are clear that we will only sign when we have a deal that is fair, balanced, and ultimately in the best interests of the British people and the economy," the spokesperson said. Official estimates peg bilateral trade between the two countries at around GBP 36 billion in 2022, a figure expected to significantly benefit from an FTA.

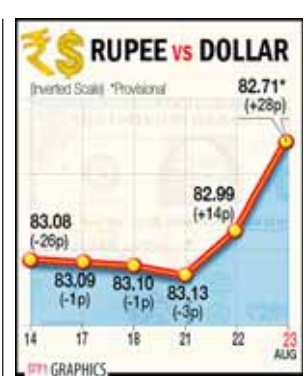
According to a joint outcome statement issued at the end of Round 11 of the negotiations last month, technical discussions were held across nine policy areas over 42 separate sessions and covered detailed draft treaty text discussions. Goyal had flown into London to meet

Badenoch during the last round and UK government sources said their interaction proved "helpful".

However, they are also keen to underplay expectations of a deal being clinched any time soon, given Rishi Sunak's first visit to India as British Prime Minister next month for the G20 Leaders' Summit. There are still "complex" talks ahead on areas such as goods, services and investment, which will take time to land a deal that works for both sides, the sources indicated.

They reiterated the UK government stance around "it's the deal not the date", which has been the mantra to distance the Sunak-led government from former prime minister Boris Johnson's proposed Diwali 2022 deadline which was missed amid political turmoil in the country.

"We want an ambitious deal that benefits us in the years and decades to come. We won't sign until we get a deal which is right," UK government sources said.



Rupee rises 28 paise to close at 82.71 against US dollar

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The rupee strengthened for the second consecutive session and appreciated by 28 paise, registering the highest single-day gain in nearly two months, to close at 82.71 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday. Forex traders said IPO-driven inflows and positive tone in the domestic markets supported the upward move. Softening of crude oil prices also supported the domestic unit.

However, FII outflows and a strong US dollar capped sharp gains. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.02 against the US dollar and moved in a range of 82.68 to 83.02 in the day trade.

The rupee finally settled 28 paise higher at 82.71 (provisional) against the previous close. Earlier, the Indian currency had witnessed the highest single-day gain of 35 paise on June 16 this year. On Tuesday, the rupee had recovered from its all-time low levels and settled higher by 14 paise at 82.99 against the US dollar.

"We do not see any sharp appreciation in the rupee as dismal economic data from Europe may lead to a risk averse market which may weigh on riskier currencies," said Anuj Choudhary - Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

In that case, the US dollar would gain. Any further inflows due to the upcoming IPOs may also support rupee. However, a strong dollar and hawkish comments from US Federal officials may support the greenback which may put downside pressure on rupee, Choudhary said.

Sensex, Nifty rise for 3rd day on buying in banks, firm trends in European indices

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark Sensex rose by 213 points while Nifty settled above the 19,400 level in a volatile trade on Wednesday following buying in banking counters and early gains in European stocks.

Rising for a third straight day, the BSE Sensex climbed 213.27 points or 0.33 per cent to settle at 65,433.30. During the day, it jumped 284.68 points or 0.43 per cent to 65,504.71.

The NSE Nifty gained 47.55 points or 0.25 per cent to end at 19,444 as 29 of its components ended in the green while 22 declined.

In the three days of gains, Sensex has rebounded 484.64 points while Nifty advanced by 133.85 points. From the Sensex pack, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Larsen & Toubro, Maruti, Tata Steel, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bajaj Finance, Nestle, Power Grid and HDFC Bank were the major gainers.

Jio Financial Services, Bharti Airtel, Tata Motors, Tech Mahindra, ITC, UltraTech Cement and Mahindra & Mahindra were among the laggards. "On the domestic front, sentiments remained positive, backed by strong demand in the banking sector, though IT and pharma limited the gains," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

Global markets have restrained from making significant moves as they await the outcome of the central bankers' gathering at Jackson Hole scheduled for Friday, Nair added.

Ajit Mishra, SVP (Technical Research) of Religare Broking Ltd, said that markets traded volatile and ended in the green in the absence of any major trigger. In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.60 per cent and mid-cap index gained 0.42 per cent.

Among the indices, bankex jumped 1.20 per cent, capital goods climbed 1.16 per cent, indus-



tries (1.08 per cent), metal (1.05 per cent) and financial services (0.86 per cent).

Utilities, auto, oil & gas, power and services were the laggards. In Asian markets, Tokyo and Hong Kong settled in the green while Seoul and Shanghai ended lower. European markets were trading with gains. The US markets ended on a mixed note on Tuesday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.83 per cent to USD 83.33 a barrel.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth Rs 495.17 crore on Tuesday, according to exchange data.

Top 11 states' social welfare spends to hit 10-year-high of ₹4 lakh crore in FY24: Crisil

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Top Indian states' spending on social welfare is set to touch a 10-year high of Rs 4 lakh crore, or 1.7 per cent of their combined GDP, in the ongoing fiscal, a domestic rating agency said in a report on Wednesday.

After analysing budgets of top 11 states, which account for over three-fourths of the aggregate Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP), Crisil Ratings said the growth in social welfare schemes is expected to clock a 16 per cent jump in compounded annual growth rate between 2017-18 and 2023-24. The revenue receipts grew by 11 per cent during the same period, Crisil said.

Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala were the 11 states accounted for in the Crisil report.

"While allocation towards social welfare schemes is seen essential considering India's demography, a steady increase in the same without commensurate increase in revenues may have an impact the credit profiles of the states in the longer run," the agency warned.



The agency said these spends were 1.2-1.3 per cent of GSDP on an average before FY18, which has now gone up to 1.7 per cent.

"The higher growth on social welfare schemes is due to states prioritising financial assistance to certain target demographics in the form of direct transfers, pensions and cash incentives, and, in some instances, to honour election commitments," Crisil Senior Director Anuj Sethi said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi last year slammed freebies, terming it as the "revdi culture", and underlined the need to end the same.

Crisil said "social welfare" spending does not include expenditure on education, agri-

culture, public health and other key sectors, which are budgeted separately.

Among the non-committed expenditure items, social welfare schemes have the highest share at 13 per cent of the overall amount, the agency said, adding that such spending is higher than education (10-11 per cent), power (6-7 per cent), agriculture (6-7 per cent) and public health (4-5 per cent). It said the share of social welfare schemes in the non-committed expenditure stood at 10 per cent in FY18.

The growth in expenditure on social welfare schemes at 16 per cent per annum is higher than the 12-13 per cent growth in expenditure on healthcare between FY18 and FY24, which witnessed the Covid-19 pandemic, the agency said.

Revenue receipts have grown at a moderate 10-11 per cent per annum between FY18 and FY24, resulting in continuing revenue deficits for the states, the agency said.

Crisil Director Aditya Jhaver advocated for higher capex allocation towards education and health, saying it has a relatively higher impact on uplifting revenue and productivity for states in the near- to medium-term.

CCI issues draft regulations for commitment, settlement provisions

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Fair trade regulator CCI on Wednesday issued the draft regulations for commitment and settlement provisions under the competition law.

The provisions, introduced in the Competition Act through the amendments made earlier this year, are aimed at ensuring quicker market correction, according to the Competition Commission of India (CCI).

Stakeholders can submit their comments on the draft regulations from August 24 to September 13, according to communications issued by the regulator. The commitment mechanism will enable an enterprise against whom an inquiry is on for alleged contravention of the competition law to offer commitments before CCI. Similarly, the settlement mechanism will allow such enterprises to apply for settlement before the regulator.

"The intent of creating a procedure for commitment is driven by the need to ensure quicker market correction," the watchdog said.

The regulations for commitment and settlement provisions would cover the procedures, the factors to consider and period during which commitment and settlement can be offered.

QIA to acquire around 1pc stake in Reliance Retail for ₹8,278 cr



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) will acquire around 1 per cent stake in Reliance Retail Ventures Ltd (RRVL), the retail arm of billionaire Mukesh Ambani-led Reliance Industries, by investing Rs 8,278 crore (USD 1 billion).

A QIA's wholly-owned subsidiary will make the investment in India's largest retailer at a valuation of Rs 8,278 lakh crore (USD 100 billion). Updating about the development, Reliance Industries in a regulatory filing said: "QIA's investment will translate into a minority equity stake of 0.99 per cent in RRVL on a fully-diluted basis."

RRVL is the holding company for all retail businesses of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL). Through its subsidiaries and associates, RRVL operates India's largest, fastest-growing, and most profitable retail business with an integrated omnichannel network of over 18,500 stores and digital commerce platforms. Commenting over the development, RRVL Director Isha Mukesh Ambani said investment by QIA is a

strong endorsement of a positive outlook towards Indian economy and Reliance's retail business model, strategy and execution capabilities. "We are delighted to welcome QIA as an investor in RRVL. We look forward to benefiting from QIA's global experience and strong track record of value creation as we further develop Reliance Retail Ventures Limited into a world-class institution, driving transformation of the Indian retail sector."

QIA CEO Mansoor Ebrahim Al-Mahmoud said: "QIA is committed to supporting innovative companies with high-growth potential in India's fast-growing retail market. We are looking forward to Reliance Retail Ventures Limited, with its strong vision and impressive growth trajectory, joining our growing and diverse portfolio of investments in India."

Earlier in 2020, RRVL had raised Rs 47,265 crore (around USD 6.4 billion) from global private equity funds for a 10.09 per cent stake, valuing the company at more than Rs 4.2 lakh crore. This was the largest fundraising exercise in the sector at that time.

Ampverse to set up gaming studio in India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Singapore-based gaming start-up Ampverse plans to set up a gaming studio in India and scale up its local team, a senior company official said.

Ampverse Co-founder and Chief Strategy Officer Charlie Baillie told PTI that the company will operate through a joint venture formed with DMI Finance.

"Content is a big part of our business. We will be investing in the studio and other capabilities as the month goes by. It will be set-up before the end of season 1 (of College Rivals esports tournament) which is in February. College Rival is the first IP. Beyond that we are looking at original content IPs and other esports format IPs while we will continue to grow College

Rival," Baillie said. He was speaking on the sidelines of the launch of esports tournament College Rivals. "We expect over 80,000 students to participate in season 1 of College Rival. The platform will also work as a talent search platform. It will help us screen the best gamers," Baillie said.

Ampverse DMI will have a gaming truck that will travel through Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Pune, and Hyderabad. He said that the company will develop several products and merchandise in collaboration with DMI for e-commerce etc.

Ampverse DMI has started operations in India with 8-10 employees which it plans to increase to 50 employees in the next 12-18 months, Baillie said.

SRMIST founder chancellor 84th birthday celebrated

Chennai: TP Ganesan auditorium at SRMIST premises at Kattankulathur was filled with thunderous applause as 84th birthday celebrations of T R Paarivendhar, founder chancellor of SRMIST were conducted here today.

Members from Department of Student Affairs of SRMIST enthralled the audience with cultural performances. Birthday souvenir of T R Paarivendhar who is also Member of Parliament from Perambalur constituency was released on the occasion by eminent spiritualist Kundrakuudi Ponnambala Adigalar and the first copy was received by Dr.Madhuri Satyanarayanan. Enclosing the press release with photos. Kindly support us.

Conclave on 'Energy Transition towards Net Zero'

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

International Solar Alliance (ISA) Director General Ajay Mathur on Tuesday called for more global collaborations for energy security and hoped that the 'Solar Facility', a payment guarantee mechanism approved last year may help pull private sector investors into solar and other renewable sectors to meet the clean energy needs. He suggested that the World Bank can play a key role in guaranteeing funding.

Mathur was speaking at the 16th Edition of BCC&I Environment & Energy Conclave on "Energy Transition towards Net Zero" organized by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCC&I). The meeting is part of the series of deliberations and capacity building efforts to achieve Net Zero carbon emission goal by 2070 as announced by India at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP27).

At the event, Ghanshyam Prasad, Chairperson, Central Electricity Authority in his address on Powering India's Growth said, "We have been facing shortages in the power sector. In the global scenario we have no option but to transit from where we are right now to start the framework. The journey has already started, initially there were certain hassles. Right now, we just have the capacity of just four thousand seven hundred megawatts in the country, out of which around 12-13 hundred devices are not operating. We have to start developing the process of the solar system."

UK Bhattacharya, Co-Chairperson, Energy Environment Water Committee, BCC&I Director - Projects, NTPC Ltd stressed on new action plans for synchronizing energy security and develop-

Highways catalyst for economic progress, says Gen VK Singh

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Roads and highways play vital role in the socio-economic development of the nation, said Minister of State for Road Transport & Highways General (retd) VK Singh. While delivering the inaugural address at the 'CII Conference on Roads & Highways', the Minister said infrastructure sector has a multiplier effect ranging between 1.5 and 3 on the GDP of a nation.

NHAI Chairman Santosh Kumar Yadav highlighted how Gati Shakti Scheme launched by the Prime Minister has emerged as a key driver for the progress of various sectors including roads and highways.

ment that will not only facilitate growth but also enhance it. "The share of carbon space of the country has to be created towards that. The business quadrilemma should include sustainability, affordability, ability and security. Energy security is next to food security."

Gautam Ray, President Designate and Chairperson, Energy Environment Water Committee, BCC&I shared that the Conclave which has been Eastern Region's largest forum on sustainability, corporate climate action will soon be held in the NCR and other important cities going forward.

"We can set ambitious sustainability targets, adopt green business practices, and invest in sustainable supply chains. In conclusion, the path towards a net-zero future is challenging, but it is also a path filled with promise. It is a path that will not only safeguard our environment but also drive economic growth and prosperity. It is a path that will define our legacy for generations to come."

Dr Kiran Bedi, Former Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry and Vivek Kumar Dewangan, Chairman & Managing Director, REC Limited were among those who graced the occasion.

Al Nassr leave it late to snatch Asian Champions League spot

AFP ■ RIYADH

Cristiano Ronaldo's Al Nassr qualified for the Asian Champions League group stage after they secured an injury-time victory against Shabab Al Ahli in Riyadh on Tuesday.

The Saudi Pro League side came from behind to triumph 4-2 in the play-off at Mrsool Park, with Brazilian Anderson Talisca scoring twice and Croatia international Marcelo Brozovic rounding off the win. Nassr had been two minutes from exiting the tournament.

The result means Nassr, runners-up domestically last season, move into the group phase, which begins next month. Ronaldo, a five-time UEFA Champions League winner, was making his debut in Asian football's top club competition after signing for the Riyadh club last December.

Nassr opened the scoring on 11 minutes, when Talisca headed home a Brozovic corner. However, Yahya Al Ghassani levelled for UAE champions Shabab Al Ahli seven minutes later, the winger slotting the ball into the Nassr net after the Dubai side countered.

Ronaldo, 38, left the pitch at half-time clearly frustrated and could be seen arguing with the referee. The Portuguese star, the Nassr captain, believed he should have had two penalties in the first half.

Then, one minute after half-time, Al Ghassani raced clear of the Nassr defence to flick the ball over Nawaf Al Aqidi and put Shabab Al Ahli in front.

However, Nassr equalised with two minutes of normal time remaining, when full-back Sultan Al Ghannam's



header was diverted into his own goal by Walid Abbas.

Nassr's comeback was complete five minutes into the allotted seven minutes of injury time, with Talisca nodding home from close range. Moments later, as

Shabab Al Ahli chased the equaliser, Ronaldo teed up Brozovic to drill his shot into the net and make safe the game.

Elsewhere in the west zone, UAE side Sharjah qualified for the tournament proper with a 3-1 victory away to Iran's

Tractor FC, while Uzbekistan's Navbahor Namangan defeated Al Wakrah of Qatar 1-0 after extra time.

In Tuesday's other play-off, Uzbek side AGMK Olmaliq defeated Qatar's Al Arabi 1-0.

PGA Tour chief confident of Saudi deal by December deadline

AFP ■ MIAMI

PGA Tour chief executive Jay Monahan said Tuesday he is confident of meeting a December 31 deadline to hammer out details of the tour's merger with Saudi-backed LIV Golf.

Speaking ahead of this week's Tour Championship playoff finale in Atlanta, Monahan said he expected a deal for the new circuit to be in place by January 1.

The PGA Tour stunned world golf in June after announcing a shock agreement with the Saudi backers of LIV Golf aimed at ending the sport's two-year civil war.

However firm details of how the "new collectively owned, for-profit entity" that will see the PGA Tour, Europe's DP World Tour and LIV Golf merge have yet to be divulged.

Under the agreement signed by all sides in June, a December 31 deadline was set to finalise the details for the new circuit.

Despite ongoing scepticism, Monahan told reporters on Tuesday there was no reason to believe the deadline would not be met.

"As I sit here today, I'm confident we will reach an agreement that achieves a positive outcome for the PGA Tour and our fans - I see it and I'm certain of it," Monahan said.

"We have put an end to the divisive and distracting litigation, we have safeguards that are in place to put the PGA Tour in a position to control our future."

Asked if he believed a deal would be in place by January 1,



Monahan replied: "We're confident that we're going to reach a positive outcome for the PGA Tour...I don't have any reason to think that we won't be successful."

Monahan refused to be drawn on whether he believed the rebel LIV Golf circuit had a viable long-term future.

"I think there are a lot of questions that are going to come ... as it relates to elements of what is in the framework agreement and elements of what we're talking about," Monahan said.

"I'm not going to talk publicly about them until we've completed those discussions and I can answer that question specifically and directly."

Monahan meanwhile said he expects the PGA Tour to open 2024 with its traditional Sentry Tournament of Champions on Maui, despite devastating wildfires on the island that

have left more than 100 people dead.

The Sentry tournament takes place at the Kapalua Golf Club's Plantation Course on Maui each year, around 11 miles from Lahaina, the ocean-side town left in ruins during the fires.

However Monahan cautioned that any decision to play the tournament would be dependent on the good will of local authorities.

"At this point there's so many unknowns, and we want to be respectful of the challenges," Monahan said.

"We want to help be a part of the revitalization. There are a lot of considerations. If we're allowed to, if we're invited, if we're embraced - given all that needs to be accomplished, we will be there 100 percent."

"But I think at this point right now that's outside of our hands."



Treesa-Gayatri enter pre-quarters of World Championships

PTI ■ COPENHAGEN

Indian women's doubles pair of Treesa Jolly and Gayatri Gopichand produced a solid performance to advance to the pre-quarterfinals of the World Championships with a straight-game win over Chang Ching Hui and Yang Ching Tun of Chinese Taipei here on Wednesday.

World number 19 Gayatri and Treesa, who reached the semifinals of the All England Championships in the last two editions, beat Chang and Yang, ranked 37th, 21-18 21-10 in 38 minutes.

The Commonwealth Games bronze winners, who had received a bye in the first round, will face an uphill task against top seed Chinese Chen Qing Chen and Jia Yi Fan in their next round.

Treesa and Gayatri lagged 2-5 early on but soon started rotating the strike and extending the rallies to draw out errors from their opponent to turn it around, reaching 8-6.

Chang and Yang clawed back at 8-8 but the Indian pair managed an 11-9 lead at the break with the Taiwanese duo spraying the net thrice.

Gayatri stepped up after the resumption, showing great anticipation at the front court as India led 14-11.

Treesa committed a few errors but the Indian duo still managed to keep its nose ahead, despite the fighting Taiwanese pair.

A service error from Chang and Yang gave the Indian pair four game points. Treesa sent one wide and then hit the net to squander two of them before sealing it when Yang sprayed into the net.

After the change of sides, Gayatri and Treesa continued the momentum, leading 8-5 at one stage. A powerful return to serve handed the Indians a three-point cushion at the interval.

Gayatri and Treesa stepped up the pace after resumption to move to 14-8.

The Indian pair was called for a service fault due to height but it had absolutely no affect as the two rode on their rival's series of errors to soon move to 19-10.

A good rally ended with Yang's forehead at the net as India had 10 match points and they sealed the deal after their rivals went wide again.



Liverpool's Mac Allister has red card overturned

AFP ■ LONDON

Liverpool midfielder Alexis Mac Allister had his red card against Bournemouth overturned on Tuesday after the Reds appealed against the controversial dismissal.

Mac Allister was dismissed by referee Thomas Bramall after catching Bournemouth midfielder Ryan Christie on the foot in the 58th minute of Liverpool's 3-1 win in the Premier League on Saturday.

Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp was furious with the decision and claimed Mac Allister's absence for much of the second half should be the only punishment the Argentine World Cup winner face.

"After the game I saw it back. I think if you have a list of points, what we need to give a red card, besides contact there's nothing else, no other boxes ticked," Klopp said on Saturday.

"It's a decision we all agree if he gives a yellow card VAR would not overturn it and if he gives a red card VAR will not overturn it because contact means it's not a clear and obvious mistake." Mac Allister would have been suspended for three games if the ban had been upheld, but now he is free to return to the team.

"An independent regulatory commission has removed Alexis Mac Allister's three-match suspension following a claim of wrongful dismissal," a Football Association spokesperson said.

"The Liverpool midfielder was sent off for serious foul play during their Premier League game against Bournemouth on Saturday, 19 August."

Liverpool responded to the FA decision by saying: "A club appeal against the suspension has now been upheld by an independent regulatory commission, meaning Mac Allister is eligible for selection when the Reds travel to Newcastle United on Sunday."

Man United's Premier League games against Nottingham Forest and Arsenal after suffering a "small" injury, the club said on Tuesday.

United revealed that Mount had sustained the "small complaint" during Saturday's 2-0 defeat at Tottenham.

The England midfielder is expected to be "out until the international break next month", United said.

Mount moved to Old Trafford from Chelsea in the close-season for £60 million (\$76 million).

After winning the Champions League in 2021, Mount

Mount ruled out of Man Utd's next two games



AFP ■ LONDON

Mason Mount will miss Manchester United's Premier League games against Nottingham Forest and Arsenal after suffering a "small" injury, the club said on Tuesday.

United revealed that Mount had sustained the "small complaint" during Saturday's 2-0 defeat at Tottenham.

The England midfielder is expected to be "out until the international break next month", United said.

Mount moved to Old Trafford from Chelsea in the close-season for £60 million (\$76 million).

After winning the Champions League in 2021, Mount

struggling to find his peak form towards the end of his Chelsea career. He also delivered below-par performances in both of United's Premier League games this season, raising concerns about how he would fit into boss Erik ten Hag's plans.

Mount is not the only United close-season signing to be hit with injury issues already this term.

Danish striker Rasmus Hojlund, signed from Serie A Atalanta, has not featured for United due to a back injury.

Ten Hag's men host Forest at Old Trafford on Saturday before travelling to Arsenal the following weekend in their final fixture before the international break.

Serena Williams gives birth to second child

AFP ■ MIAMI

Serena Williams has given birth to her second daughter, her husband announced Tuesday, adding that both were "happy & healthy" after the difficult birth of the tennis star's first child left her fighting for her life.

"I'm grateful to report that our house is teaming with love: a happy & healthy newborn girl and happy & healthy mama," her husband, Reddit doctor Alexis Ohanian, posted on Instagram alongside a photograph of himself with a beaming Williams hugging both her daughters.

Addressing his 41-year-old wife, he told her she had "given me another incomparable gift - you're the GMOAT," a new maternal twist on the sporting accolade Greatest Of All Time.

The new baby is called Adira River Ohanian, he added. In 2017 Williams, one of the greatest players in history, won the Australian Open - one of her many Grand Slam titles - while she was pregnant with the couple's first child, Alexis



Olympia Ohanian Jr.

But months later she nearly died after she developed a blood clot in her lung after giving birth to Olympia via emergency C-section.

She spent six weeks bedridden after the pulmonary embolism, but battled back to make her return to competition

just five months later in Fed Cup doubles alongside her sister, Venus.

Williams retired from tennis last year after becoming a superstar for a generation.

"I'm ready to be a mom and explore a different version of myself," she said after her final match last year.

Kipyegon seals historic hat-trick of world 1500m titles

AFP ■ BUDAPEST

Kenya's Faith Kipyegon produced a devastating last lap to win an unprecedented third world women's 1500m title in Budapest on Tuesday as arch-rival Sifan Hassan took bronze.

The double Olympic champion, who previously won world golds in 2017 and last year in Eugene, led from gun to tape in a magisterial display of running.

She kicked at the bell for the final lap to outstrip a loaded field to win in 3min 54.87sec.

Ethiopian Diribe Welteji took silver in 3:55.69, with Dutch runner Hassan rounding out the podium (3:56.00).

It was another remarkable result for the irrepressible Kipyegon in a stunning season in which she has set three world records. "This is a great season for me," the 29-year-old Kenyan admitted. "To break the world records and become a world champion here, to defend my title."

"I told myself, 'You are the strongest and just keep going'. I was chasing history today and I was chasing this title. I have done it."



Kipyegon is hailed as the world's best-ever runner over 1500m and it is easy to see why. She remains unbeaten over

the distance since June 2021. On that occasion at the Florence Diamond League meet she was beaten by Hassan.

SOMETHING SPECIAL

The bronze for Hassan capped a brave comeback after

a dramatic fall metres from the finish of the 10,000m which put paid to her bid for a treble.

"Just a couple of weeks ago I was coming from the marathon and I was struggling to get my speed back," said Hassan, who won gold medals in both the 5,000m and 10,000m and a bronze in the 1500m at the Tokyo Olympics.

"Before I decided to enter these three events I did not look at how fast the girls are this year. When I looked at the start list for my heat I was wondering why I put myself in this position!"

"I would never have imagined that I would win a medal. This season has been really crazy so far, especially for me. So this medal is really something special."

Kipyegon and Hassan will again face off in the 5,000m on Saturday.

"We are all strong runners. I knew the ladies were strong and I think them for pushing me today. I wish everyone the best, we have to help each other

in any way," Kipyegon said.

In sultry conditions at the National Athletics Centre, Kipyegon raced into the lead, with Welteji on her shoulder, Hassan in her customary early position at the back of the pack.

Kipyegon went through 800m in 2:11.78, the field resisting a surge to stay close.

At the bell, the Kenyan accelerated and Hassan made her move down the far stretch. Kipyegon hit 200 metres well out ahead and looked to have gold in the bag.

One last push saw the chasing Welteji and Hassan kick down the final 100 metres in pursuit, but they had left it too late and Kipyegon came through the line with arms raised for a historic third title in the distance.

"That was my plan, to get to the front and to go faster because I know these races can be up and down," Kipyegon said of her race strategy.

"I just got myself in front after 300 metres and nobody was coming."

Indian cricketers celebrate Chandrayaan-3's landing on moon

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Current and former India cricketers on Wednesday celebrated the successful landing of Chandrayaan-3's lunar module on the moon's surface, hailing the feat as "historic" and "extraordinary".

In a video shared by the BCCI, the Indian team was seen celebrating while following on TV the updates of the landing of the lunar module, just a couple of hours before

their final T20I against Ireland in Dublin.

"Witnessing History from Dublin! The moment India's Vikram Lander touched down successfully on the Moon's South Pole," the BCCI wrote on X, formerly Twitter.

India became the fourth country to land a spacecraft on the moon and first on its south pole.

Cricket icon Sachin Tendulkar hailed ISRO for the extraordinary achievement.



Rain Saves Ireland From Whitewash

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The toss for the third T20I between India and Ireland has been delayed due to rain and the covers are on at The Village, Dublin. As per the latest update by BCCI, it is still drizzling at the moment and overs will be deducted if play doesn't start by 9:15 pm.

Meanwhile, after taking an unassailable 2-0 lead in the series, Jasprit Bumrah-led Team India will now aim for a whitewash. India produced an all-round show in the previous encounter and won the match by 33 runs. Batting first



India piled a stiff 185/5 on the board with Rituraj Gaikwad leading India's charge, Rinku Singh and Shivam Dube then helped India finish on a high.

In response, India's pace attack led by Jasprit Bumrah

and Prasidh Krishna produced another clinical display. The duo along with Ravi Bishnoi finished with two wickets each as Ireland could only manage 152/8 in their 20 overs.

"@ISRO represents the best of India. Humble, hardworking women & men, coming together, overcoming challenges, and making our tricolour fly high," he wrote.

"India must celebrate and congratulate the Chandrayaan-2 team, which was led by Shri K Sivan, along with Shri S Somanath's #Chandrayaan3 team. Every hard landing has lessons which take us closer to a soft landing — on the moon, and in life," he added.

Star batter Virat Kohli wrote on X, "Many congratulations to the #Chandrayaan3 team. You have made the nation proud.. Jai Hind!"

"History. Congratulations @isro for this extraordinary

accomplishment. #JaiHind," wrote spin stalwart Ravichandran Ashwin.

Former pacer Venkatesh Prasad said, "We have created History. Congratulations @isro for giving joy to all of us. It is truly a great moment. Bharat Mata ki Jai #Chandrayaan3."

Former India opener Virender Sehwag wrote, "As we were approaching Sunset, Moon ke South Pole par hum set. What a glorious moment. Just proves, after every setback is a stronger comeback."

"Some naysayers who want Bharat to fail, some of them living in India as well will have some sleepless nights. #Chandrayaan3," he said.

Different batting styles work well for us: Gill on partnership with Rohit



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Young Indian batter Shubman Gill feels his and skipper Rohit Sharma's contrasting batting styles make their opening partnerships successful.

With India set to take part in the Asia Cup and the World Cup, the partnership between the two openers is likely to play a vital role in the Men in Blues' success in the two tournaments.

In just nine innings, Gill and Rohit have amassed 685 runs while batting together in ODIs at an average of 76.11.

"I think because his (Rohit's) targeted areas are a bit different (to mine). He loves to go aerial in the Powerplay," Gill was quoted as saying by the ICC.

"And I'm someone who likes to find the gaps and keep getting those boundaries, and he's

someone who likes to hit sixes. So I think that combination works well," he added.

Talking about batting with Rohit, Gill said the skipper gives everyone the freedom to play their natural game.

"It feels great to be able to open with him, especially knowing that all the focus is on him," he said.

"He's someone who likes the other batters to go and just express himself and play the way I want to play the game.

"So in that nature, he gives the players full freedom for how they want to express their game," Gill added.

India begins their Asia Cup Campaign against arch-rivals Pakistan on September 2 in Kandy, while the Men in Blue are slated to take on Australia in their World Cup opener on October 8 in Chennai.

GILL REACHES FOURTH SPOT IN ODI BATTING RANKINGS

PTI ■ DUBAI

India batter Shubman Gill on Wednesday moved up one spot to reach the fourth position in ICC rankings for batters in ODI cricket, while pacer Jasprit Bumrah and spinner Ravi Bishnoi also made gains in the shortest format.

In the latest ODI rankings released by the ICC after the first ODI between Pakistan and Afghanistan, Gill has now got 743 rating points and is placed as India's top-ranked batter.

Comeback man Bumrah, India's captain for Ireland series, moved up seven places to reach the 84th position, Bishnoi has jumped 17 spots to reach 65th.

Following his 58 in the second T20I against Ireland, Rituraj Gaikwad moved up 143 places to reach the 87th position.

Despite missing the Ireland series, Suryakumar Yadav remains on the top spot in the T20I rankings for batters.

In ODIs, while Pakistan's Babar Azam and Imam Ul Haq occupy the first and third spots respectively, there has been no change for Indian mainstays Virat Kohli (ninth) and captain Rohit Sharma (11th).

In Tests, Indian spin duo of Ravichandran Ashwin and Ravindra Jadeja are world's No 1 bowler and all-rounder, respectively.



Butcher reveals stokes ideal position to bat ahead of WC

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former England cricketer Mark Butcher revealed that the 2019 ODI World Cup hero Ben Stokes can play at No.6 in the upcoming tournament in India.

The England red ball captain Ben Stokes has reversed his ODI retirement decision which strengthens the English side. Jos Buttler and Co. are currently the reigning champions and they will try to defend their World Cup title in October-November.

In the 2019 World Cup in England, wicket-keeper batter Jos Buttler played a key role at No.6. Whereas, Jos Buttler who is the current white-ball captain is currently batting higher in the order. However, Butcher feels that English all-rounder Stokes is more suited to the No.6 position than any batter like Liam Livingstone.

In a recent session with Wisden Cricket, Mark Butcher expressed his thoughts on Ben Stokes' ideal batting position in the ODI World Cup. "If you have gone to Ben and brought him in the side then that's his position (No. 6) isn't it? The guy who has the ability to play through all the gears from 1 to 8. You're quite happy watching Ben walk out to bat at 90/4 with 30 overs left to bat. If Ben Stokes is in the starting XI then he would be ideal for No. 6."

"One can wonder whether there are too many medium-pace all-rounders in the squad and not enough specialist batters and bowlers of higher pace and do they need as many quicks as they are taking at the moment," Mark Butcher said.

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) on 16 August, Wednesday announced their 15-person provisional squad for the upcoming quadrennial tournament.

The defending champions will begin their campaign on the opening day of the tournament against New Zealand on October 5. At the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

BCCI announces BookMyShow as ticketing platform For WC 2023



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Board of Cricket Council for India (BCCI) on August 23, Wednesday announced an exclusive 24-hour window designated exclusively for ICC's commercial partner, Mastercard.

"As we approach the highly anticipated ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023, we are thrilled to unveil BookMyShow as the ticketing platform. The commencement of online ticket sales marks a pivotal moment in the lead-up to the World Cup."

With the prestigious tournament commencement scheduled from 29 September, the tournament will be played till November 19, providing cricketers fans with a chance to see cricketing heroes in the action from the stadium stands.

The prestigious tournament will feature a total of 58 matches, including 10 warm-up fixtures which are to be played from September 29 to October 3 across three Indian cities.

In line with ensuring a seamless and comprehensive ticketing experience for fans, the sales process for this iconic

tournament will be introduced in a series of carefully managed phases. The initial phase entails an exclusive 24-hour window designated exclusively for ICC's commercial partner, Mastercard.

"As we approach the highly anticipated ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023, we are thrilled to unveil BookMyShow as the ticketing platform. The commencement of online ticket sales marks a pivotal moment in the lead-up to the World Cup."

With unwavering confidence, we anticipate a seamless ticketing experience, aimed at offering fans unobstructed access to the thrilling on-field encounters," said BCCI interim CEO Hemang Amin.

The schedule for the pre-sale of tickets for the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 is as follows: 24th August from 6 PM IST onwards: Mastercard Pre-sale - All Non-India event matches excluding warm-up games

Ashwin Justifies Suryakumar, Varma's Selection Over Samson

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Indian cricket team's squad for the Asia Cup was announced on Monday. Yuzvendra Chahal and Sanju Samson were the only players in contention who failed to make a cut into the 17-member squad. The selectors opted for Kuldeep Yadav over Chahal while Suryakumar Yadav grabbed the spot ahead of Sanju Samson. The wicketkeeper-batter has been left out of the main squad but will travel with the team to Sri Lanka as a cover for KL Rahul who is carrying a niggle.

Home SportsR Ashwin Justifies Suryakumar Yadav, Tilak Varma's Selection Over Sanju Samson In Asia Cup Squad

R Ashwin Justifies Suryakumar Yadav, Tilak Varma's Selection Over Sanju Samson In Asia Cup Squad



Rahul who is carrying a niggle Indian cricket team's squad for the Asia Cup was announced on Monday. Yuzvendra Chahal and Sanju Samson were the only players in contention who

failed to make a cut into the 17-member squad. The selectors opted for Kuldeep Yadav over Chahal while Suryakumar Yadav grabbed the spot ahead of Sanju Samson. The wicketkeeper-batter

has been left out of the main squad but will travel with the team to Sri Lanka as a cover for KL Rahul who is carrying a niggle.

Ever since the squad was announced, social media was set ablaze with discussions surrounding Suryakumar Yadav's selection ahead of Sanju Samson despite his ordinary numbers in ODIs. The fans also questioned Tilak Varma's inclusion in the team ahead of Samson, with most of them slamming the selectors for picking a rookie over the experienced batter.

R Ashwin backed the selection of Suryakumar Yadav and Tilak Varma ahead of Sanju Samson and slammed the fans for questioning the selectors.

"The selectors know what they are doing. In a huge country like India, when you select a squad, there will be some key players who will be missing the cut. So, just because your favourite is not there in the squad, you should not degrade the others," Ashwin said on his

YouTube channel.

Ashwin accepted that Tilak Varma has not been able to continue the form on Ireland tour but said the youngster has a clear mind and needs backing from the team.

"Tilak hasn't scored much in this Ireland series so far. But he is showing unreal intent from the first ball. And this youngster is coming to bat with a clear mind. Since he is bringing some freshness into the squad, they have backed him for that back-up slot. Similar to Surya," Ashwin said.

Ashwin also justified Surya's selection, saying that the selectors are backing him as he brings an X-factor to the team.

"He has that x-factor and that's why the team is backing him to come good in the ODI format as well. We will go back in time to see how we have won World Cups. be it MS Dhoni or any other captain, they have backed their players to come good. Of course, if you want to have a for and against debate for dropping or selecting a player, you can have a healthy debate. We all know how good a player Suryakumar Yadav has been. His impact, what a match-winner he has been, and he has been our go-to T20 player."

Riaz announces international retirement

PTI ■ KARACHI

Pakistan fast bowler Wahab Riaz on Wednesday announced his retirement from international cricket to focus on playing T20 leagues around the world.

The 38-year-old left-arm pacer played 27 Tests, 91 ODIs and 36 T20 Internationals from 2008-2020, claiming 83, 120 and 34 wickets respectively.

"After an incredible journey, I've decided to retire from international cricket. Big thank you to PCB, my family, coaches, mentors, teammates, fans, and everyone who supported me. Exciting times ahead in the world of franchise cricket!" he said in a statement posted on social media platform X, formerly Twitter.

"As I bid farewell to this chapter, I am thrilled to embark on a new adventure in franchise cricket, where I hope to entertain and inspire audiences while competing against some of the



best talents in the world," added the fast bowler. Riaz is the ninth bowler in history of Pakistan to take a five-for on debut, recorded against England as he took 5/63 at The Oval.

Riaz also took a famous five-wicket haul against arch rivals India in the semifinal of 2011

World Cup in Mohali, albeit in a losing cause.

But for many, the most famous spell from Riaz came in the quarterfinal of the 2015 World Cup when he rattled Australia batters, particularly Shane Watson, with a barrage of short-pitch bowling.