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Ajit moves EC for NCP symbol; Sharad says won't let it happen

30 MLAs attend Ajit's meeting; 16 at Sharad's; Jr Pawar throws age jibe at uncle

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In the midst of a fierce confrontation between rival factions of the NCP, a bitter clash unfolded between NCP leader Sharad Pawar and breakaway group leader Ajit Pawar on Wednesday.

While Ajit approached the Election Commission, asserting his claim over NCP's name and symbol, Sharad asserted he would not allow his nephew to take them away.

Rubbing it in, Ajit highlighted his uncle's advanced age, remarking on his "82 or 83" years. Backed by over 40 affidavits from supporting MLAs and MPs, Ajit escalated the ongoing battle within the party.

Informed sources said that the Ajit faction had submitted affidavits signed by 40 MLAs on June 30 itself to the Election Commission.

In response, the Sharad faction filed a caveat before the EC, urging that it be heard on their side first before passing any directive in connection with the factional fight.

The Election Commission has asked both the factions to exchange the respective documents submitted before it. The EC is expected to look into the matter in the coming days.

Between the unrelenting uncle and a belligerent nephew, Ajit appeared to have an edge over Sharad in terms of numbers, going by the larger number of NCP MLAs who turned out for the rally organised by Ajit at the MET Institute of Management at Bandra in north-west Mumbai.

Though there was no conclusive proof of the numbers claimed by the two feuding factions, the Ajit faction claimed that it had the support of 40 out of total of 53 NCP MLAs.

However, some 30 NCP



NCP chief Sharad Pawar addresses party workers during the party meeting at YB Chavan Centre, in Mumbai on Wednesday



Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar during a Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) meeting led by him in Mumbai on Wednesday

MLAs were present with Ajit on the stage. On the other side, as many 15-17 rival Sharad faction MLAs, three MLCs, and five MPs turned out for Sharad's parallel meeting held at the YB Chavan Auditorium at Nariman Point in Mumbai.

In the guise of seeking blessings from his uncle, Ajit had a dig at Sharad when he said, "I don't understand even now why I'm made a villain in front of people. What's wrong with me? What wrong have I done? ... Sharad is my idol. But you tell me, isn't it true that if a person joins the Maharashtra government, he retires at the age of 58? If they are IAS, IPS, etc., they retire at the age of 60"

"If you are in politics, you retire at the age of 75 in the BJP. Murlu Manohar Joshi and LK Advani are such examples... Now, if you're 82 or 83, are you ever going to stop or retire? In terms of age, we want you to be a centenarian," Ajit said.

Continued on Page 2

Ajit's claim on 90 seats may upset Sena calculation

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

In a claim that put the Eknath-headed Shiv Sena on a back foot, breakaway NCP group leader Ajit Pawar announced here on Wednesday that his party would contest 90 seats out of 288 seats in the 2024 State Assembly which will leave the remaining 198 seats to the BJP and Eknath Shinde-led Shiv Sena.

Addressing his supporters at the MET Institute of Management at Bandra in north-west Mumbai, Ajit said his party (NCP with the clock symbol) would contest as many as 90 seats in the 2024 Maharashtra Assembly polls. "Of the seats that we intend to contest, I am confident we will win at least 71 seats."

When he made an announcement about his party contesting 90 seats, Ajit gave an



indication that he had arrived at such an understanding with the BJP leadership before joining the Shinde-Fadnavis Government in the State on Sunday.

Ajit's announcement has upset the plans of the Shiv Sena, which has a strength of 50 MLAs, including its own 40 MLAs, and it has been wanting to contest at least 70 to 90 seats in the 2024 polls.

Continued on Page 2

Won't bear slur on dad: Supriya

PNS ■ MUMBAI

Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) working president and MP Supriya Sule hit out at her cousin brother and breakaway faction leader Ajit Pawar for taking a dig at Sharad Pawar's advanced age and suggesting that it was time for Sr Pawar to retire.

"My father is a fighter. I am proud of my father. You may say anything about anyone else but not against my father and mother," Supriya warned Ajit at a meeting called by the Sharad Pawar faction at the YB Chavan Centre in south Mumbai.

Earlier during the day, at a gathering of his faction's MLAs and supporters, Ajit Pawar said, "Sharad Pawar is my idol. But you tell me, isn't it true that if a person joins the Maharashtra Government, he



retires at the age of 58? If they are IAS, IPS, etc., they retire at the age of 60... If you are in politics, you retire at the age of 75 in the BJP. Murlu Manohar Joshi and LK Advani are such examples... Now, if you're 82 or 83, are you ever going to stop or retire? In terms of age, we want you to be a centenarian."

Maintaining that Sr Pawar was still strong and he could

still many political battles, Supriya cited the examples of industrialist Ratan Tata, 85, who is guiding the fortunes of the Tata empire, Amitabh Bachchan, 82, still the highest-rated superstar, former Jammu & Kashmir Farooque Abdullah, 85, to prove her point that her father could carry on for many years in politics.

The NCP working president charged that the BJP was "the most corrupt party in India."

Referring to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's comment that the NCP stood for "Naturally Corrupt Party", Supriya said that the same BJP leaders who had loftily claimed "na khaunga, na khane dunga" had joined hands with the Naturally Corrupt Party (faction) of Ajit Pawar and have swallowed all its corruption.

Cabinet nod for Data Protection Bill, ₹250 crore fine on violators



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved the draft of Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Bill 2023 for tabling it in the upcoming Monsoon Session of Parliament. The Bill proposes to levy a penalty of up to Rs 250 crore on entities for every instance of violation of norms in the Bill.

The Monsoon Session of Parliament will be held from July 20 to August 11. The Bill includes almost all the provisions of the last draft that was issued by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology for consultation. Sources said the Government entities have not been granted a blanket exemption under the proposed law.

"In case of disputes, Data Protection Board will decide, citizens will have the right to claim compensation by approaching the civil court. There are a lot of things that will evolve gradually," sources said.

According to sources, individuals will have the right to seek details about their data collection, storage, and processing once the law is implemented.

Ministers throng BJP HQ ahead of Cabinet rejig



PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amidst discussions of imminent changes in the Union Council of Ministers, senior Ministers and party leaders continued to flock to the BJP office on Wednesday to meet with the party's national president JP Nadda. The meetings revolved around preparations for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

Union Minister Prahlad Singh Patel and the newly appointed Punjab unit chief of the BJP, Sunil Jakhar, were among those who visited the party office and held discussions with Nadda.

Other Ministers, including Jyotiraditya Scindia and SPS Baghel, also met with the party chief. Nirmala Sitharaman, Arjun Ram Meghwal, Bhupender Yadav, and Kiren Rijiju, who are Union Ministers, had met with Nadda the previous day. Additionally, Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat from Rajasthan,

met with party General Secretary (Organisation) BL Santhosh to discuss matters pertaining to the State.

Sources suggest that significant changes in the party organisation across several States can be expected in the coming days.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to visit poll-bound Telangana on July 8. During his visit, he will hold a party meeting and inaugurate a series of projects.

The BJP has recently restructured its party organisation in Telangana, appointing Union Minister G Kishan Reddy as the state president.

Reddy stated, "The Prime Minister is coming to Warangal city in Telangana on July 8. In the morning, he will inaugurate railway projects, address the 'BJP Aam Sabha', and deliver some messages. Tomorrow, I will be in Warangal to review the preparations for PM Narendra Modi's event scheduled for July 8."

30 lakh kids die of infectious diseases every year: Study

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Three million children and adolescents succumb to infectious diseases such as diarrhoea and pneumonia every year, translating into one death every 10 seconds, with India, Nigeria, and Pakistan sharing the highest disease burden, according to a new study published in The Lancet journal.

"Thus there is a need to focus on global infectious disease control measures from under 5 years old kids to young people between five and 24 years old," said the study led by Murdoch Children's Research Institute, Australia, and the Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, US.

Infectious diseases were found to have caused more than half of such deaths in low to middle-income countries, compared with 6 percent in high-income countries, said the study which looked across 204 countries between 1990 and 2019 from birth to 24 years of age. Diarrhoea, pneumonia, and malaria accounted for two-thirds of infectious diseases and death in this demographic, while HIV and tuberculosis were found to be the leading causes among older adolescents.

The shift in disease burden to older children and adolescents, the study said, was large-



ly driven by the considerable infection control efforts targeting children under five years in low-income countries and slower progress made across the older age groups.

In light of the Covid-19 pandemic, and recent epidemics of Zika virus, Ebola, and severe acute respiratory syndrome, the research would have important implications for global policy, financing, resource allocation, and health systems, said Murdoch Children's professor Peter Azzopardi.

He said it underscored the urgent need to take stock of infectious disease control. More adolescents than younger children have been affected by these emergent diseases, challenging the almost exclusive focus on younger children within existing infectious disease control, the study said.

"The findings highlight the need for health systems, particularly in low-income countries, to continue to build capacity and scale up trusted interventions like immunisation programmes.

"But there must also be an investment in broader approaches that address social barriers such as adolescent males with HIV having better access to health care," said Azzopardi.

The Covid-19 pandemic rightly focussed global attention on infectious diseases, said Susan Sawyer, Murdoch Children's professor. "This study reminds us of the importance of addressing the emerging, as well as the established, infectious diseases, especially in those aged 5-24 years who have too often been neglected by policy and programming," she said.

Shots fired at Tis Hazari court as lawyer groups fight; shooter advocate suspended

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Tis Hazari court in Delhi witnessed a tense and volatile situation on Wednesday as an escalating dispute between two factions of lawyers led to an exchange of gunfire. However, no casualties or injuries were reported amidst the chaos. The police swiftly intervened, bringing the situation under control.



thorough investigation to determine the cause of the altercation and to prevent

recurrence. The "shooter" lawyer has been suspended.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Sagar Singh Kalsi, said, "Around 1.35 pm on Wednesday, a firing incident occurred at Tis Hazari court. Upon reaching the scene, it was discovered that two distinct groups of lawyers were involved, with gunfire being discharged. Thankfully, no harm was inflicted on anyone."

Continued on Page 2

SC shields Teesta from arrest till July 19 in false evidence case

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court has granted activist Teesta Setalvad interim protection from arrest until July 19 in a case related to the fabrication of evidence to frame innocent people in the post-Godhra riots cases.

A bench comprising Justices BR Gavai, AS Bopanna, and Dipankar Datta issued a notice to the Gujarat Government in response to

Setalvad's appeal against the order of the Gujarat High Court which had instructed her to surrender immediately.

The bench said, "Issue notice returnable on July 19, 2023. Whatever documents the parties want to place on record shall be filed before July 15 after exchanging with each other. The interim order will continue until further orders."

Continued on Page 2

CAPSULE

NYT HAILS INDIA'S SPACE PROGRAMME
New York: Lauding India's ambitious space programme, The New York Times said the country, currently witnessing an "explosive" growth in space-tech start-ups, is set to "transform the planet's connection to the final frontier" and can emerge as a "counterweight" to China.

CANADIAN MP SLAMS PRO-KHALISTAN POSTERS
Canada: A day after Canada assured India about safety of its diplomats there, an Indian-origin MP in Canada has slammed the provocative pro-Khalistani posters labelling some senior Indian diplomats as "killers" and warned that the "snakes in our backyard are raising their heads and hissing."

World's largest jungle safari in Haryana! 1st phase to be ready by 2025

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

Haryana will develop the world's largest jungle safari park in the Aravalli range. The 10,000-acre safari park will cover Gurugram and Nuh districts. Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal on Wednesday reviewed the progress of the Aravalli Safari Park Project and the Rakhigarhi Museum at a meeting. At present, Sharjah is home to the largest curated safari park outside Africa. Opened in February 2022, the Sharjah Safari covers an area of about 2,000 acres. The jungle safari scheme will not only boost tourism but also provide employment opportunities to local residents.

At the meeting, the

Haryana Chief Minister directed the officers to complete all formalities related to the safari park project which is being developed in line with the biodiversity park concept in a 10,000-acre in the Aravalli region in Gurugram and Nuh districts. The safari will be developed in three phases, with the first phase expected to be completed in around two years.

Later while interacting with the media persons, he informed that 10,000 acres of land in the Aravalli area of Gurugram and Nuh districts had been identified for jungle safari park.

"Two firms with international experience in designing and operating such facilities were shortlisted for partici-



pating in Stage-2. A detailed technical proposal and pre-

sentation along with conceptual design accessed by the ten-

der evaluation committee and suggestion for selection of the

winning firm submitted to the Government for approval. The PMC will soon be selected for the development of Aravalli Safari Park," said Khattar.

At the meeting, a wide range of key issues related to these projects were discussed in detail.

The proposed Aravalli park would include a large herpetarium (a zoological exhibition space for reptiles and amphibians), aviary/bird park, four zones for big cats, a large area for herbivores, an area for exotic animal birds, an underwater world, nature trails, visitors, tourism zones, botanical gardens, biomes, equatorial, tropical, coastal, desert, etc.

According to officials, the locals of Bhonds, Ghamroj,

Alipur, Tikli and Akimpur, Naurangpur and Bar Gujjar villages in Gurugram and Kota Khandewla, Gangani, Mohamadpur Ahir, Kharak, Jalalpur, Bhango and Chalka villages in Nuh will benefit from the project.

He said a lake for migratory birds, similar to Sultanpur Lake, would be developed. The design of the Rakhigarhi Museum is almost final. Divulging the details about the construction of a museum in Rakhigarhi, the Chief Minister said that the State Government is working with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Government of India for the development of the Rakhigarhi Site Museum and Interpretation Centre.

Man forces wife to watch porn, have unnatural sex

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 35-year-old man in Delhi has been booked for allegedly forcing his wife to watch porn and committing unnatural sex against her wishes. The complainant has also alleged that her husband forced her to dress like a porn star. The incident took place in East Delhi and the 30-year-old woman had lodged a complaint against her husband and his family on Monday, the police said.

In her complaint, the woman also accused her husband and his family of demanding dowry, and mentally and physically harassing her, police said.

She said that her father had given Rs 3 lakh in dowry and promised to give the rest of the amount in instalments which was agreed to by her in-laws, a senior police officer said. Just three days into her marriage, she was forced to have sex by her husband during her menstrual cycle, he said, citing the woman's



complaint.

The woman alleged that her husband is an alcoholic and a chain smoker, who physically abused her several times, he added. He never gave me any respect and insisted that I looked like his favourite pornstars, and forced me to cook meat even though I am a vegetarian, she said, according to police.

"On Tuesday, a case was registered under sections 498 A (husband or relative of husband of a woman subjecting her to cruelty), 406 (crim-

inal breach of trust), 377 (unnatural offence) and 34 (common intention) of the Indian Penal Code and sections of Dowry Prohibition Act at Shahdara Police Station on the complaint of the woman," Deputy Commissioner of Police (Shahdara) Rohit Meena said. Meena said the investigation is at an initial stage.

"Statements of witnesses are being recorded, digital and other evidence are being secured for further action in the case," he said.

J&K gets India's 1st Tele-MANAS chatbot for 24X7 healthcare services

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Wednesday launched India's first Tele-MANAS Chatbot for the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The initiative will ensure round-the-clock services of Health Counsellors, Clinical Psychologists and Consultants.

The Lieutenant Governor also inaugurated the 'J&K Health Conclave' on Mental Health and Non-Communicable Diseases at Srinagar. On the occasion, J&K Health and Medical Education Department inked Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital & Research Centre and NIMHANS.

The MoU inked between J&K Health and Medical Education Department and Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital and Research Centre will provide significant technical support to improve cancer care services in the UT and help us to establish Preventive Oncology Service, Day Care Centres and Palliative Care



Service at District Hospitals.

In his address at the conclave, the Lt Governor commended the efforts of the Health Department to bring together medical experts on a common platform to deliberate on the most challenging health issues and to generate awareness on mental health and life-threatening non-communicable diseases.

"Our ultimate objective is patient-centered care and all the efforts are being made to ensure that Primary Health Centers and District Hospitals provide quality care focusing on the physical as well as emotional well-being of individual patients," the Lt Governor said. He said the new landmark

initiatives launched today are testimony to the commitment of the J&K Administration to providing quality, affordable and accessible healthcare services to all.

Another important MoU signed today with NIMHANS Bengaluru will improve mental health services, training and capacity building of Medical Officers and nursing staff, he added.

Per capita spending on the health sector in J&K is among the highest in the country. During upgradation or building new infrastructure, we have focused on three factors - effectiveness, accessibility and resilient system, the Lt Governor said.

Gurugram admin orders structural audit in 23 housing societies

STAFF REPORTER ■ GURUGRAM

The Gurugram administration has ordered a structural audit of buildings in 23 housing societies here after visual inspections showed that they could be unsafe.

Deputy Commissioner Nishant Kumar Yadav said after the accident at Chintels Paradiso society last year, the district administration is identifying unsafe buildings to complete their structural audit. On the basis of the audit report, repairs will be carried out and if a building is not repairable, it will be vacated, he said.

Two women were killed after the dining room floor of a sixth-floor apartment of Tower D at Chintels Paradiso in Sector 109 came down on February 10, 2022, triggering the collapse of roofs and floors directly under it, till the first floor.

After a visual inspection of 55 housing societies, it was decided that a structural audit



of buildings in 23 societies would be undertaken in the first phase, Yadav said.

The inspection included various checkpoints such as overall maintenance, plastering, leakage, seepage, dampness and cracks in the basement, beam, slab and floor dampness, and condition of water tanks and shafts built on the roof of the building, the official said. During the inspection, it was found that buildings in 23 housing societies were not safe, he added.

In February this year, the Gurugram administration declared Towers D, E and F of Chintels Paradiso unsafe on the basis of a structural audit report of the IIT Delhi. Last month, Tower F was cordoned off after a balcony of a flat was found to be "sagging".

US teachers visit school as part of exchange programme

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

To experience Delhi Government's transformative education model, a delegation of 15 American teachers visited Rajkiya Sarvodaya Kanya/Bal Vidyalaya, West Vinod Nagar as a part of the Fulbright Teachers for Global Classroom program by Fulbright Teachers Exchanges run by the US Government. During the visit, the cohort of American teachers had the opportunity to engage with Education Minister Atishi, who elucidated the Kejriwal government's educational policies to them.

"Delhi government schools have now become a source of inspiration for many teachers and academicians around the world who are eager to make remarkable changes in classrooms. In view of this, a delegation of 15 American teachers visited Rajkiya Sarvodaya Kanya/Bal Vidyalaya, West Vinod Nagar. These teachers are part of the Fulbright Teachers for Global Classroom program by Fulbright Teachers Exchanges run by the US Government," the government said in a statement.

Reflecting on the state of the public education system in India, Atishi said, "The scenario of the divide between public and private schools is no different in India from other parts of the world. Today, 70% of the children in India have moved to private education due to the deteriorating condition of state



government schools. It is mostly the children of people who can't afford costly education in private schools that attend government schools."

Atishi emphasized that the main aim of the Kejriwal government is to change this scenario and make quality education accessible for every child in Delhi, irrespective of their background.

Highlighting the extraordinary progress achieved in Delhi government schools, Atishi further said, "Remarkable change in Delhi Government Schools can be seen today because the Government, under the leadership of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, has kept education as its top priority.

Delhi presently has the highest budgetary allocation for education compared to other states across the country. Twenty five of our state budget goes into education.

This is one of the reasons that has expedited the process of transforming education in the past 8 years in Delhi."

Atishi also emphasized that the investments made in teacher training, significant improvements in school infrastructure, and the development of three unique mindset curriculums aimed at fostering responsible citizenship among students.

BJP to protest outside Kejriwal's house for AAP Govt's failure to fulfill promises

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP will stage a protest outside Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's residence on July 7 regarding the Delhi government's so-called failure to fulfil promises made to employees of Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC), Delhi Jal Board (DJB), guest teachers, anganwadi workers and ASHA workers.

Announcing this here on Wednesday, leader of the Opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri said the Kejriwal government has betrayed the employees.

The government has completely ignored the promises made to employees of DTC, Delhi Jal Board, guest teachers, anganwadi workers, and ASHA workers during the elections.

Bidhuri charged that the government is exploiting not only the retired employees of DTC but also the temporary and contractual workers, totaling 50,000 employees. The pensions of 28,000 retired employees have not been paid for the past three months.

Employees are facing financial hardships while the government spends over 50



crores annually on promoting Chief Minister Kejriwal's image, he said.

Temporary employees are working in thousands in DTC, and drivers are on contract in cluster buses.

Kejriwal had assured all these temporary and contractual employees that their salaries would be increased and their positions made permanent if the Aam Aadmi Party came into power.

However, like other unfulfilled promises, Kejriwal has forgotten this commitment as well.

The Delhi government has also deceived 22,000 guest teachers by neither increasing their salaries nor regularizing their positions. Now, the Education Minister has attempted to mislead everyone by making false statements in the Legislative Assembly, Bidhuri claimed.

SC shields Teesta from arrest till July 19 in false...

From Page 1

During the hearing, Additional Solicitor General SV Raju requested time for the translation of documents, which the bench agreed to, scheduling the next hearing for July 19. Senior advocate Kapil Sibal, representing Setalvad, urged the bench to urgently hear the matter.

On July 1, the apex court protected Setalvad from arrest and stayed the High Court's order rejecting her plea for regular bail, which had instructed her to surrender immediately.

The three-judge bench had questioned the denial of time for Setalvad to appeal against the high court's order, emphasising that even an ordinary criminal is entitled to interim relief.

The bench noted, "In

ordinary circumstances, we would not have considered such a request. However, it is to be noted that after the FIR was registered against the petitioner on June 25, 2022, the petitioner was arrested... This court, considering the application for grant of interim bail, had granted the same on certain conditions, vide order dated September 2, 2022. One of the factors that weighed with this court was that the petitioner was a woman and as such entitled to special protection under Section 437 CrPC."

The three-judge bench granted the stay on the High Court's order for a week, allowing Setalvad time to challenge the decision. The matter was heard in a special sitting on July 1 after a two-judge vacation bench

on the same day had differed on granting interim protection from arrest to Setalvad.

Teesta Setalvad, along with former Gujarat Director General of Police RB Sreekumar and ex-IPS officer Sanjiv Bhatt, was arrested in June last year on charges of fabricating evidence to frame innocent people in the post-Godhra riots cases.

The Gujarat High Court had observed that Setalvad had used her close associates and riot victims to file false and fabricated affidavits to undermine the establishment and tarnish the image of the then Chief Minister, Narendra Modi, who is now the Prime Minister.

Setalvad had previously obtained interim bail from the apex court in September of last year.

Ajit's claim on 90 seats may upset Sena...

From Page 1

Now with Ajit staking a claim for 90 out of 288 seats, the BJP - which has a strength of 105 seats in the current State Assembly - will have to give some seats out of its kitty of 198 seats to the Eknath Shinde Shiv Sena, with which it is currently sharing power in the state.

In fact, the Shinde-led Shiv Sena is already feeling the pinch of the Ajit faction joining his Government. So much so that some of Shinde Sena MLAs are already in talks with the rival Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena so that they can return to the parent party in the coming weeks.

Chief Minister Eknath Shinde will have a tough time keeping his flock together. Much to the dismay of Shinde, it is being speculated in the media that the ruling BJP is expecting a ruling by Speaker Rahul Narvekar on the disqualification of 16 Sena MLAs that might go against the Chief Minister.

In such an event, Shinde might not continue as the chief minister and Devendra Fadnis would replace in the post. In such an event, the BJP will be able to handle Shinde Sena in an effective manner.

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Chesta D/o Shri Sushil Kumar, R/o WB - 163, Ganesh Nagar, Shakarpur, Delhi-110092 Have Change my Name Chesta to Chesta Chaurasia for all future purpose. PD(092)A

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given on behalf of Mrs. Dil Jahan W/o. Mohd. Nigar who is owner of House No. 109, area admeasuring 100 Sq. Yds. i.e. 83.61 Sq. Mtrs., out of Kharsa No. 11, situated at Colony Sai Garden - 2, Village Shahberi, Pargana and Tehsil Dadri, District Gautam Budh Nagar, Uttar Pradesh, from Mr. Rashedudeen Dhanakar s/o Mr. Ranvir, vide Sale Deed dated 23.01.2019, which is duly registered vide Document No. 1729, at Sub-Registrar, Dadri, and intend to mortgage against the financial assistance from Housing Finance Corporation Limited. The said Sale Deed executed by Ash Sahiba Franchise Trust in favour of Mr. Devender Kumar Sharma s/o Mr. Bahouri Lal Sharma in respect of Kharsa No. 11, is Lost/ Misplaced/Not available. To comply the requirements of BAW/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any Person having any type of claim, High/Low/Title/Interest/creating mortgage/charge/lien/lien/lien may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections, within 7 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, liens etc.

Lucem Legal LLP Plot no.136, (Basement) Uday Nagar, New Delhi-110049; Contact# 011-40046116

Public Notice

This is to inform General Public Notice that Sh. Deepak Kumar Gupta purchased the Entire Third Floor (With Roof Rights), 'Sai Floor', Built on Freehold Property Bearing No. 191, Land area measuring 48.00 Sq. mtrs. in Block-C, situated in the Layout/Plan of Rohini Residential Scheme, Rohini, Pocket-F, Sector-C, New Delhi-110086 vide Sale Deed Dated: 16.11.2017 Now, Mr. Deepak Kumar Gupta agreed to create a mortgage in respect of the said property in favour of our client IDFC FIRST Bank Limited. Further, if any person, body, individual, institution having any claim, title, interest and/or objection in respect of or relating to or touching upon said property or part of the property by way of sale, exchange, lease, lien, mortgage, charge, encumbrance, gift, trust, easement, maintenance, inheritance, testamentary disposition or otherwise or having in their custody any title, documents pertaining to the said property shall communicate the same to the undersigned at below mentioned address within 10 days from the publication of this notice with documentary evidence in support thereof, failing which all the claim, of such person shall be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned. Any objections raised after the completion of the 10 days shall not be binding upon the said property or my Client. In case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 10 days of this publication to Mr. Muneesh Dhanwan/ Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Veritas North, Unit no 907, 9th Floor, GD-ITL Tower, B-08, Netaji Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9068701729/91822838 (M).

छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर, अटल नगर, जिला- रायपुर (छ.ग.)

// सर्व संबंधित को सूचना //

भारत सरकार, पर्यावरण वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय की ई.आई.ए. अधिसूचना दिनांक 14/09/2006 (यथा संशोधित) के अंतर्गत सर्व संबंधित को सूचित किया जाता है कि मेसर्स लाईस स्टोन क्वारी (प्रो. श्री कमलेश पांडे), ग्राम-नंदनी - खुंदनी, तहसील- धमधा, जिला- दुर्ग स्थित खसरा क्रमांक 395, 405/1, 405/2, 405/3, 406, 407, 408/1, 408/2, 408/3, 409, 424/2 एवं 426/1, कुल क्षेत्रफल- 4.26 हेक्टेयर में प्रस्तावित चूना पत्थर (गोण खनिज) खदान उत्खनन क्षमता- 1,50,150 टन प्रतिवर्ष के पर्यावरणीय स्वीकृति हेतु लोक सुनवाई बावत छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, नवा रायपुर अटल नगर, रायपुर में आवेदन किया गया है। उक्त परियोजना के संबंध में आपत्ति/सुझाव/विचार/टीका टिप्पणी, इस सूचना के जारी होने के दिनांक से 30 दिवस के अंदर क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, 5/32 बंगला, भिलाई, जिला- दुर्ग के कार्यालय में मौखिक अथवा लिखित रूप से कार्यालयीन समय में प्रस्तुत की जा सकती है। इस परियोजना के लिये लोक सुनवाई दिनांक 07/08/2023 को ग्राम-दोपहर 12.00 बजे, स्थान- ग्राम पंचायत भवन के निकट खाली मैदान, ग्राम- नंदनी खुंदनी, तहसील- धमधा, जिला- दुर्ग (छ.ग.) में नियत की गई है। यह भी सूचित हो कि:-

1. लोक सुनवाई के दौरान सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों को फिजिकल / सोशल डिस्टेंसिंग का पालन करना अनिवार्य होगा।
 2. लोक सुनवाई में सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों द्वारा मास्क का उपयोग किया जावेगा तथा समय-समय पर सेनेटाईजर का उपयोग किया जाना अनिवार्य होगा।
 3. लोक सुनवाई स्थल पर सम्मिलित होने वाले व्यक्तियों की बैठक व्यवस्था कम से कम 02 मीटर की दूरी रखना अनिवार्य होगा।
 4. कोरोना वायरस के नियंत्रण एवं रोकथाम हेतु शासन द्वारा जारी समस्त दिशा-निर्देशों का अक्षरशः पालन किया जाना अनिवार्य होगा।
- ई.आई.ए. नोटिफिकेशन 14 सितम्बर 2006 (यथा-संशोधित) के अनुसार संबंधित व्यक्तियों के अवलोकन / पटन हेतु डाक्ट ई.आई.ए. रिपोर्ट कार्यालयक सार हिन्दी एवं अंग्रेजी भाषा तथा सी.डी. (साफ्ट कॉपी) डायरेक्टर, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, इंदिरा पर्यावरण भवन, जोर बाग रोड, नई दिल्ली, क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी, एकीकृत क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, पर्यावरण, वन एवं जलवायु परिवर्तन मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार, अरण्य भवन, नार्थ ब्लॉक, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर, अटल नगर, रायपुर, छत्तीसगढ़, कलेक्टर, कार्यालय कलेक्टर, जिला- दुर्ग, मुख्य कार्यालय अधिकारी, जिला पंचायत, जिला-दुर्ग, मुख्य महाप्रबंधक, जिला व्यापार एवं उद्योग केन्द्र, जिला- दुर्ग, सरपंच / सचिव, ग्राम पंचायत, नंदनी - खुंदनी, जिला- दुर्ग, क्षेत्रीय कार्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, 5 / 32 बंगला, भिलाई, जिला- दुर्ग एवं मुख्यालय, छत्तीसगढ़ पर्यावरण संरक्षण मंडल, पर्यावास भवन, सेक्टर-19, नवा रायपुर, अटल नगर, जिला- रायपुर में रखी गई है।

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

Ajit moves EC for NCP...

From Page 1

"A new generation is coming forward in later years. You can happily bless them... If I am wrong, tell me, Ajit, you're wrong. I will admit my mistake and fix it and move on. For whom else are we all working? Is it our fault that we weren't born to someone special?" the rebel NCP leader asked.

Having not kindly to the Ajit faction having moved the Election Commission, Sharad said, "I am not bothered that some people have made all kinds of comments about me. But, those people whom I got elected as MLAs, have betrayed me. Whatever may be the case, I will let not these people take away our party and its symbol from us. They (the rebels) may be using my photographs, but they will not gain currency in terms of popularity."

However, Sharad was relatively not that aggressive when it came to talking on his nephew. Sharad said, "On one hand, these people (rebels) calls me a God, while on the other they ignore me.. They call me a Guru but make alle-

gations against me," an upset Sharad said.

State NCP president Jayant Patil, a close aide of Sharad, claimed that the party cadres were still with the veteran Maratha leader.

"A small trailer of Sharad's popularity was witnessed a few days earlier in Kolhapur and Pune... These people (rebels) are forgetting that the ordinary workers of the NCP are still with saheb. Whatever Sharad says is the final word for us," said Patil. Invoking the popular slogan -- 'Sarfarooshi ki Tamanna ab hamare dil me hain, Dekhna hai zor kitna bazu-e-qatil me hain', Patil asked the enthusiastic gathering to take an oath.

The party workers gathered at the YB Chavan Centre took an oath in the name of god and under the leadership and presidency of Sharad that all of them would work the NCP till their last breath, they would not support the deserters, would not do anything that will sullay Pawars ideology and remain loyal to him and the party for their entire life.

People run for cover as lawyers fight, shot fired

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A sensational broad-daylight firing incident inside the bustling Tis Hazari court premises on Wednesday created panic among lawyers and litigants alike. The incident occurred around 1 pm, when two groups of lawyers clashed, according to a lawyer who was also an eyewitness.

"One faction of lawyers, armed with wooden sticks, clashed with another group. The dispute was purportedly over the allotment of lawyers' chambers and parking vehicles," he said.

One of the factions, led by an office-bearer of the Delhi Bar Association, fired in the air, triggering panic, he said. "People ran for cover when bullets were fired. There was panic all around," he said.

Another lawyer, Ravi Rai, said shortly after the incident, a large posse of police personnel arrived and sealed off the area.

Police also found empty cartridges from the spot, he said. The incident shocked

Firing at Tis Hazari court



several litigants, some of whom said the security provisions on the court premises were inadequate.

"I had come here to meet my lawyer for a civil case. If lawyers can sneak firearms inside, then there is definitely a question over the security and safety of litigants," said Ram Singh.

Meanwhile, the Bar Council of Delhi has suspended advocate Manish Sharma's licence to practise law with immediate effect for his alleged involvement in the incident. However, this is not an isolated incident, there have been multiple instances of gun violence in Delhi's courts.

On April 21, a 49-year-old debarred lawyer fired four rounds at a woman and wounded her in the Saket court complex in south Delhi.

A man who works as a 'munshi' in the court was also injured in the firing that occurred around 10.30 am. Police had said the suspended lawyer, Kameshwar Singh alias Manoj Singh, a resident of Durga Ashram in Chhatarpur, was arrested from a house in Faridabad. Singh had filed a case of cheating against the woman and her lawyer Rajendra Jha over a monetary dispute involving Rs 25 lakh.

'Don't release salaries of axed Delhi Govt hired pvt staffers without LG's consent'

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

After terminating over 400 private persons appointed by the Arvind Kejriwal government as advisers, consultants, fellows, advisors in different departments, autonomous bodies and Public Sector Undertakings, the Delhi government's Services Department on Wednesday directed all departments to stop engagements of all the fellows/ Associate Fellows/ Advisors/ Dy. Advisors/ Specialists/ Senior Research Officers/ Consultants, by whatever name, without the approval of Lieutenant Governor of Delhi.

Further, the Service Department has urged the Finance Department to direct all the Pay and Account Offices not to release salary to them without the consent of LG.

Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has directed to immediately terminate services of around 437 private persons appointed by the city government as advisers, consultants, fellows, advisors in different departments, autonomous bod-

ies and PSUs. According to a statement shared by the L-G House, Saxena's directions came following a proposal made by the Services Department.

"If any administrative department finds it appropriate to continue such engagements, the detailed case with all records and proper justification shall be forwarded by the concerned Departments to the Services Department, Delhi government for onward submission to Lt. Governor for consideration and approval immediately.

All the departments are accordingly directed to comply with the above instructions failing which action, as may deem fit, may be initiated against the concerned Administrative Secretary for violation of the Constitutional Provisions on Reservation," Special Secretary (Services Department) YVVJ Rajasekhar said in a letter to all Administrative Secretaries and Head of Departments of Delhi government.

The Services Department has said that there were a total of 437 fellows, associate fellows, advisors, deputy advisors, spe-

cialists/senior research officers and consultants were appointed in as many as 18 departments, autonomous bodies, PSUs, Corporations, Boards, etc where approvals of Lieutenant Governor were not taken. These engaged persons were taking salaries between Rs 25,000 and Rs 1.5 lakh per month depending of their designations.

As per details, the Assembly has engaged 140 fellow and associate fellow with monthly salary ranged from Rs 60,000 to Rs one lakh. The Department of Archeology has hired 12 persons and out of which 6 were Senior Research Fellow and 6 were Junior Research Fellow.

The environment department has engaged 28 private persons including three specialists, 10 fellows and 15 associate fellows were engaged while 15 SRF and 5 JRF were engaged in Department of Delhi Achieves. As many as five persons were employed in the Department of Women and Child Development and 7 persons in the Department of Industries. A whopping 49 per-

sons were engaged on various positions in the SCERT, 43 persons in the DUSIB, 6 persons in the DUSIB, three in the DRRS, 13 persons in the DTIDC, four persons in the DPCC, 9 persons including media advisor, chief media advisor, visiting consultant, nodal officer, etc in the Delhi Jal Board, one person each in the Delhi Parks and Garden Society, Delhi Tourism, Delhi State Institute of Cancer and Delhi Agriculture Marketing Board.

According to officials, the appointments of these personnel were made by flouting the constitutional provisions of reservation; by depriving the people belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and OBCs from their constitutional rights and through back door entry without meeting the qualification / experience.

"It was observed that the provisions of reservations for SC/ST/OBC shall be followed in all temporary appointments lasting for 45 days or more, and such temporary appointments have been done by the Delhi Government for more than 45 days in all such cases.

85% DU students oppose 4-year UG course: Survey

New Delhi: A survey among Delhi University students by AISA has found that over 85 per cent of respondents were against the continuation of the four-year undergraduate programme (FYUP).

It said most students felt overburdened by the continuous assessment in colleges and alleged that the model "has tried to kill the idea of debate, dissent and freedom".

In June, DU's AISA conducted the university-wide survey titled FYUP Ka Report Card'.

Over 4000 students from 23 different colleges of the University participated in the survey, answering questions about the course structure, fee hike and assessment scheme, the student group said.

The findings of the survey have comprehensively proven that FYUP has turned students into "shambles", the All India Students' Association (AISA) claimed.

From the course structure to the assessment scheme, students have "rejected" each and every aspect of the new system, the student wing of CPI(ML) said.

Portion of road in Janakpuri caves in

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A significant portion of a road in Delhi's Janakpuri area collapsed during the morning hours on Wednesday. Fortunately, no injuries have been reported thus far. The incident resulted in a noticeable gap in the road's surface, causing concern among residents and commuters. The spot has been barricaded to avert any mishap.

Local authorities are assessing the situation and working to ensure the safety of the affected area. Prompt action is being taken to address the road collapse and prevent any potential accidents or further damage.

Visuals of the massive cave-in circulated on social media. The national capital recorded 0.2 mm rainfall in a 24-hour period ending at 8.30 am on Wednesday.

According to police, the department responsible for the maintenance has been informed so that repairs can be undertaken. The traffic police posted about the matter on



A large portion of road caved at Possangipur area of Janakpuri in New Delhi on Wednesday morning Ranjan Dimri | Pioneer

Twitter to inform about the incident. "Road has caved-in near Possangipur park due to which traffic is restricted in both the carriageways from Joginder Singh Marg towards Possangipur Village and vice-versa. Kindly avoid the stretch," it tweeted. The traffic police

department said it has received information about congestion from Pankha Road in Janakpuri and on the road coming from Mangolpur towards Janakpuri. "The road caved in due to the leakage of a sewer line of the Delhi Jal Board. Two pipelines pass

through the area -- a sewer line and a water pipeline. The sewer line burst which led to the road cave-in," a senior PWD official said. "The DJB has been informed and they are working to repair the sewer line. Once they repair it, we will fill the road and make it motorable

once again. We have our manpower ready and as soon as DJB gives us a go-ahead, we will repair the road," it added. Delhi BJP president Virendra Sachdeva slammed the Arvind Kejriwal government for the caving-in.

"People of Delhi are surprised... That Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal boasts of making Delhi roads like European roads and here we witness road caving, craters and potholes on Delhi roads. The condition of Delhi roads as we enter from any border of Delhi is pathetic," Sachdeva said.

Delhi BJP president also mentioned the death of an autorickshaw driver last week at an unguarded construction site of PWD to home in his point and demanded accountability from PWD Minister Atishi of the Aam Aadmi Party.

Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri also slammed the AAP government for failing to maintain the roads and said this Kejriwal government must focus on their works instead of politicizing every issues.

DMRC warns passengers after kanwariyas video dancing inside metro train goes viral

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A video of a group of 'kanwariyas' dancing inside a Delhi Metro train has gone viral on social media, forcing the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) to warn that all commuters to maintain discipline and decorum while travelling in the train.

This note of caution came in the backdrop of the video clip showing kanwariyas, all clad in traditional saffron dress, dancing to the tunes of a song dedicated to Lord Shiva. Several videos made inside the Delhi Metro or its premises that turned up on social media in the last several months have led to controversies and attracted authorities' attention.

"We request our commuters to maintain discipline and decorum while travelling by the Metro," the DMRC said in a statement on Wednesday on the latest video that garnered considerable traction on social media sites. "All passengers must ensure that their



behaviour doesn't cause any inconvenience to fellow commuters. DMRC's flying squads regularly travel all across the network to detect such activity," it said. Incidentally, two videos in past few days gained traction.

The first clip showed two young men engaged in a brawl in the Delhi Metro and in another video a woman slaps a co-passenger standing right next to her. She can also be seen shouting at him before slapping him in front every one in the compartment. The video was shared on Twitter account Ghar Ke Kalesh. It has 67k

views. The video shows a woman standing next to a man and shouting at him.

The reason for the fight is not clear though. The woman screamed at the man and at one point of time she lost her cool and slapped him. Someone in the same compartment recorded the video and shared it online. Everyone present there watched as the two fought and did not intervene.

Following the video on brawl between two young men, the DMRC had said "we request that commuters conduct themselves responsibly while travelling by Metro."

Appointment of Delhi BJP office-bearers underway

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The process to appoint new office bearers of the Delhi BJP is underway and the names are likely to be announced by the end of this month, party leaders said on Wednesday.

The appointments of vice presidents, general secretaries, secretaries and other posts of the Delhi BJP as well as chiefs of different morchas were due since Virendra Sachdeva took charge as state president in March this year.

"The process to form the new team had slowed down due to the monthlong reach out campaign of the Delhi BJP in June. Now, it has picked up

pace. The new team is likely to be announced in July itself," said a senior Delhi BJP functionary.

Prior to the appointments of the office bearers, 14 district presidents will be named, he said. "Three to four potential candidates having ground connect, good performance in party programmes, and experience have been shortlisted for each post by the state president in consultation with the Delhi BJP general secretary (organisation)," said another senior Delhi BJP leader.

"The names will be sent for approval to the central leadership after which the new team will be announced," he said.

Sources in the party claimed that several senior leaders who repeatedly found a place in the teams of successive presidents of the Delhi BJP over the years could be dropped this time.

"The Delhi BJP team selection is crucial this time as the Lok Sabha elections are just a few months away. Also, Assembly elections in Delhi will be held in 2025 which entails the necessity to have a strong force of leaders with maximum political utility," said a party leader.

The Delhi BJP state unit office bearers include a president, four general secretaries, eight vice presidents and secretaries besides other posts.

Delhiites hold marches, burn effigies of ordinance: AAP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The people of Delhi have taken to the streets in a powerful protest against the unconstitutional and autocratic ordinance imposed on Delhi by the Modi government, demanding its immediate withdrawal.

Citizens across all assembly constituencies in Delhi marched in protest on Wednesday, expressing their strong dissent against the black ordinance and symbolically burning effigies representing it.

The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) firmly asserts that the people of Delhi have unequivocally resolved against this unjust ordinance until Prime Minister Narendra Modi heeds their call and retracts it. From



July 6 to July 13, effigies and copies of the black ordinance will be burnt at various localities, streets, and intersections across Delhi, serving as a powerful reminder of the people's discontent. On Wednesday, at 6 pm, people from all walks of

life in Delhi united to burn effigies and copies of the black ordinance introduced by the Modi government. The massive turnout of Delhi's residents clearly communicated their demand for the withdrawal of this oppressive ordinance,

which infringes upon the constitutional rights of the elected government. The public firmly believes that the black ordinance undermines the best interests of Delhi. It is important to note that a Supreme Court order previously granted the elected government of Delhi the authority services involving the transfer and posting of officers.

The Court recognised that denying a government control over its officers would hinder effective governance, contradicting the intention of the Constitution makers, and thus ruled that the Kejriwal Government should have legislative and executive power over services necessary for the region's administration. However, a week later, the

Modi government at the Centre disregarded the Supreme Court's decision and overturned it through the introduction of the black ordinance. This ordinance effectively stripped the elected government of Delhi of its rightful powers.

The AAP is resolutely committed to championing the rights and legitimate concerns of the people of Delhi and will take their struggle to the streets to challenge the black ordinance imposed by the central government.

As part of a pre-announced program, AAP workers and supporters demonstrated their opposition to the ordinance by burning copies of it in various assemblies across Delhi on Wednesday.

Public feedback sought on food outlets policy

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government has sought public feedback on its draft policy concerning independent food outlets in the national Capital that seeks to ease licensing norms and aid their expansion. The policy was announced in the Rozgar Budget 2022-23 by the then Finance Minister Manish Sisodia. The last date for public feedback is July 20.

According to the draft, the government has decided to recognise the existence of independent food outlets as a separate activity since most of the stakeholder departments of the government do not have a separate category named 'Independent Food outlets' in the policy regime.

"The term 'independent food outlet' shall include other similar terminology such as cloud kitchen, ghost kitchen,



dark kitchen, base kitchen, satellite kitchen and virtual kitchen etc.," it said. "Independent food outlet' shall mean those outlets that operate independently in any commercial or industrial space without any of its products being sold to consumers on-site," the draft mentions.

Specifying the definition of independent food outlets, the draft specified that all

food/products of such outlets should be invariably delivered to the consumers by way of delivery personnel.

However, outlets that are attached to dine-in restaurants or takeaway establishments should not be specified as independent food outlets. The Delhi government's Department of Industries has been mandated to develop a single-window portal for

licensing and compliance under the recently notified start-up policy. The single-window portal will also function as an online platform to facilitate all licences and permission for setting up and operating independent food outlets in the National Capital Territory of Delhi.

The policy proposes for removal of the requirement of a fire NOC while stressing that a 'no fire NOC' should be required for the establishment and operation of independent food outlets in industrial and commercial locations for covered areas below 250 square metres.

The policy envisions 24X7 operations for such outlets. The Labour Department will examine and bring suitable amendments to permit round-the-clock operations for independent food outlets. It proposes the adoption of a com-

puterised inspection management system, which may provide random assignment of inspections, wherever necessary. "The concerned department shall carry out a risk-based assessment in a time-bound manner by determining the need and periodicity of inspections ensuring transparency," the draft said.

The Delhi government will also develop independent food outlets if a need is felt for the development of such a facility in any industrial/commercial area, through the Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd. (DSIIDC).

It states that these facilities shall be of plug-and-play in nature with all the common infrastructures being provided at the complex. These facilities shall be allowed to operate on a rental basis and subsidised if required.

₹5 L green fine proposed for land owners who fail to maintain rainwater harvesting system

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi government has proposed slapping an environmental compensation of up to Rs 5 lakh on property owners with an area of at least 100 square metres who fail to maintain a functional rainwater harvesting system.

In a report submitted to the National Green Tribunal (NGT) recently, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government in the national capital said the penalty could be increased by 50 per cent for non-residential units.

The government has suggested implementing an environmental compensation of Rs 50,000 on properties on a plot area measuring 100 sq.M to 500 sq.M, Rs 1 lakh for a plot area between 501 sq.M and 2,000 sq.M, Rs 2 lakh for a plot



area between 2,000 sq.M and 5,000 sq.M and Rs 5 lakh for a plot area measuring more than 5,000 sq.M. The Delhi government had made rainwater harvesting (RWH) systems mandatory in 2012 and non-compliance attracts a penalty of one-and-a-half times the water bill amount. A 10-per cent rebate is given on the water bill if an RWH system is installed.

The city government also said the Delhi Jal Board (DJB)

has been asked to withdraw the rebate given on water bills to the societies and institutions that do not have a functional RWH system.

The NGT asked the Delhi chief secretary in February to file an action-taken report after a petition claimed that RWH systems were not functioning properly in many societies at Dwarka. The tribunal had directed the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) to coordinate with the DJB and take remedial action, creating awareness and preventing extraction of groundwater.

It had also formed a joint committee comprising the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Ministry of Jal Shakti (MoJS) and Ministry of Urban Development to consider the situation on the same pattern throughout country.

Canadian MP slams Khalistani posters

PNS/AGENCIES ■ NEW DELHI/TORONTO

A day after Canada assured India about safety of its diplomats there, an Indian-origin MP in Canada has slammed the provocative pro-Khalistani posters labelling some senior Indian diplomats as "killers" and warned that the "snakes in our backyard are raising their heads and hissing".

Chandra Arya, a Liberal Party politician, who hails from Karnataka, also underlined on Wednesday that it was only a question of time when they would bite to kill, an apparent reference to the growing menace posed by Khalistani supporters in Canada.

Tweeting a poster announcing the so-called "Khalistan Freedom Rally" on July 8, Arya, who represents the Nepean constituency in



Ontario province, said: "Khalistanis in Canada continue to reach a new low in abusing our Charter of Rights and Freedom by promoting violence and hate." "Emboldened by non-criticism from elected officials of a recent Brampton parade portraying and celebrating the assassination of Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her bodyguards,

they are now openly calling for violence against India diplomats," Arya tweeted. "While it is good to see Canadian authorities are noticing, we should note the snakes in our backyard are raising their heads and hissing. It is only a question of time when they bite to kill," the 59-year-old MP wrote on Twitter. The Khalistani poster has sparked outrage across

India by calling India's High Commissioner to Ottawa Sanjay Kumar Verma and Consul General in Toronto Apoorva Srivastava as "killers" of the Khalistan Tiger Force chief Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

It came a month after alleged Khalistanis, marking the 39th anniversary of Operation Blue Star, put up a tableau of late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi with blood on her clothes and a poster that read, "Revenge of attack on Shri Darbar Sahib".

India summoned the Canadian envoy in New Delhi on Monday and issued a demarche over the increasing activities by pro-Khalistani elements in Canada. It is learnt that India has also asked the Canadian authorities to take appropriate measures in view of planned protests by pro-Khalistan groups outside Indian

missions in Canada on July 8. India also summoned the Canadian High Commissioner Cameron MacKay on Tuesday to discuss the issue. Canada on Tuesday assured India of the safety of its diplomats, a day after External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said India has asked its partner countries such as Canada, the UK and the US not to give space to "extremist Khalistani ideology" as it is "not good" for relations.

A statement by Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly on Tuesday termed the "promotional material" circulating ahead of the Khalistan rally "unacceptable". Joly, in the statement highlighting Canada's adherence to the Vienna Conventions, said: "Canada takes its obligations under the Vienna Conventions regarding the safety of diplomats very seriously."

India's SCO presidency hailed

RAKESH K SINGH ■ NEW DELHI

Indian and Russian experts have hailed India's presidency of Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) under which Iran joined as a full-fledged member of the grouping.

Russian experts said during India's presidency of the SCO, the maximum possible has been achieved.

After Iran being made a full member of SCO, Belarus joining the grouping next year will more balance to the organization, Head of the Department of Eurasian Integration and Development of the SCO of the Institute of the CIS countries and military expert Vladimir Evseev said in an online video bridge between New Delhi and Moscow.

The online meeting was organized by Russian state news agency Sputnik News. Former Dean of the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal

Nehru University, Anuradha Chenuy said India's presidency has been a remarkable achievement as there was common acceptance of multipolarity.

All countries are opposed to unilateral sanctions and there was a broader commitment on this even as the grouping voiced concerns of the Global South. Iran joining the SCO has strengthened the regional bonding, she said, adding that there is a need to follow up on the operational commitments.

She said Iran's membership of the SCO will lead to full utilization of the Chabahar port and International North-South Transport Corridor, boosting regional connectivity. The multimodal transport corridor can reduce number of days taken to move the goods.

This corridor has a lot of potential along the route and wherever it passes through. However, there could be concerns from the Indian side as

trade through corridor could attract secondary sanctions, the expert said.

National Co-Convenor of Swadeshi Jagran Manch Dr Ashwani Mahajan said Chabahar Port can facilitate better transportation and trade in region.

On the issue of trade imbalance against India in wake of increased oil and gas import from Russia, the Russian and Indian experts highlighted the need for exploring the possibility of Russian investment in Indian stocks and export of technology related to pharmaceuticals to Russia. Rupee-Ruble trade between India and Russia was also discussed by the experts during the online meet.

The experts also underscored need to take investment cooperation and joint co-production of defence hardware at a new level especially to maintain leverage of Russian military technology in Indian market.

SC Collegium recommends CJ T'gana, CJ Kerala for elevation to apex court

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court Collegium headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud on Wednesday recommended to the Centre the names of Justice Ujjal Bhuyan, Chief Justice of the Telangana High Court, and Justice S Venkatanarayana Bhatti, Chief Justice of Kerala High Court for elevation as the judges of the apex court. The Supreme Court has a sanctioned strength of 34 judges but is currently functioning with 31 after the retirement of three judges last month.

The revamped collegium having Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Sanjay Khanna, B R Gavai and Surya Kant, took the decision in its first meeting on Wednesday. Justice Gavai and Justice Kant are the new entrants to the collegium.

Noting that the apex court has three vacancies, the collegium said it is imperative to take steps to fill them up with a view to augmenting the work-



ing judge-strength to take care of the backlog of cases and the large institution of fresh matters. "The collegium deliberated on and discussed the names of Chief Justices and senior puisne Judges of the High Courts eligible for appointment to the Supreme Court.

"Judgments authored by those falling in the zone of consideration for elevation to the Supreme Court were circulated among the members of the Collegium, well in advance, for a meaningful discussion on and assessment of their judicial acumen.

The Centre for Research & Planning of the Supreme Court

has prepared a compilation of relevant background material to assist the Collegium," the resolution uploaded on the apex court website said. Born on August 2, 1964, Justice Bhuyan was appointed as a judge of the Gauhati High Court on October 17, 2011, and is the senior-most judge of his parent High Court (Gauhati). He is serving as the chief justice of the Telangana High Court since June 28, 2022.

Justice Bhatti, who was born on May 6, 1962, was appointed as a judge of the High Court of Andhra Pradesh on April 12, 2013 and is the senior-most in his parent High Court.

The collegium noted that the High Court of Andhra Pradesh does not have any representation on the Bench of the Supreme Court since August 2022. Justice Bhatti was transferred to the High Court of Kerala in March 2019 and is serving as the Chief Justice there since June 1, 2023.

Kharge to hold meet to sort out Gehlot-Pilot differences

PNS ■ NEW DELHI/JAIPUR

As the Assembly elections in Rajasthan draw closer, the ongoing power struggle between Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and his former deputy Sachin Pilot has prompted Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge to hold a meeting of senior party leader on Thursday to resolve their differences.

Sources revealed that the meeting will also focus on discussing the party's strategy and preparedness for the forthcoming elections in Rajasthan.

Kharge, former party chief Rahul Gandhi, AICC in-charge of the state Sukhjinder Randhawa, and senior leaders from Rajasthan will convene at the party headquarters. Sources indicate that Gehlot, who is currently recovering from toe fractures, will attend the meeting via video conferencing.

Kharge has been conducting crucial strategy meetings with leaders from states head-



ing into elections. Previously, he held separate meetings with leaders from Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and Mizoram.

All eyes are now on Rajasthan, as the Gehlot-Pilot tussle poses a challenge for the party in the upcoming assembly polls. After the recent success in Karnataka, the grand old party is determined to retain power in the desert state.

Pilot has been criticizing the Ashok Gehlot-led Congress government for its alleged inaction on corruption charges against the previous Vasundhara Raje-led BJP administration. He also under-

took a padyatra (foot march) last month, defying a warning from the party. Additionally, Pilot demanded the disbandment and reconstitution of the Rajasthan Public Service Commission, as well as decisive action and compensation for victims of leaked job exam papers.

Incidentally, Gehlot recently announced that the Rajasthan government will introduce a bill in the next assembly session to increase the punishment for those involved in recruitment exam paper leaks from 10 years to life imprisonment.

Brainstorming on cyber security, armed forces modernisation at MoD

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is set to preside over a day-long "Chintan Shivir" at the Ministry of Defence in New Delhi on Thursday. The session will focus on crucial topics such as cyber security, modernisation of the armed forces, and related matters.

This high-level brainstorming session follows a series of meetings held last month by various departments under the Ministry of Defence, including the Department of Defence (DoD), Department of Defence Production (DDP), Department of Military Affairs (DMA), Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare (DESW), and Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). During these sessions, officers discussed critical issues and explored ways to enhance productivity. Eminent subject matter experts

were invited to address the officers and share their insights. During the 'Chintan Shivir' on Thursday, Rajnath Singh will review the key takeaways from the previous brainstorming sessions. The focus will be on implementing the recommendations that emerged from these discussions.

The day-long meeting will be attended by Minister of State for Defence Ajay Bhatt, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan, Army Chief Manoj Pande, Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane, and other senior civil and military officials, according to defence ministry officials.

The themes covered during the previous sessions included cyber security challenges to national security, capacity building in defence acquisitions, enhancing production and defence exports, and promoting self-reliance (Aatmanirbharta).

Indian-Japan maritime exercise from July 5

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to forge closer defence ties, the seventh edition of the bilateral Japan-India Maritime Exercise 2023 (JIMEX 23) hosted by the Indian Navy is being conducted at and off Visakhapatnam from July 5-10. This edition marks the 11th anniversary of JIMEX, since its inception in 2012.

Giving details of the exercise, navy officials said here on Wednesday Japan Maritime Self Defence Force (JMSDF) units under the command of Rear Admiral Nishiyama Takahiro, Commander Escort Flotilla One, and Indian Naval ships under the command of Rear Admiral Gurcharan Singh, Flag Officer Commanding Eastern Fleet are participating in the exercise.

JIMEX 23 will witness the participation of INS Delhi, India's first indigenously built guided missile destroyer, INS Kamorta, an indigenously designed and built anti-sub-



marine warfare corvette, fleet tanker INS Shakti, a submarine, maritime patrol aircraft P8I and Dornier, ship-borne helicopters and fighter aircraft. JMSDF will be represented by the guided missile destroyer JS Samidare and its integral helicopters.

The exercise will be conducted over six days in two phases - a harbour phase at Visakhapatnam comprising professional, sports and social interactions, after which, the two navies will jointly hone their war fighting skills at sea and enhance their interoperability through complex multidiscipline operations in the surface, sub-surface and air domains.

IREO Group MD arrested on money laundering charges

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday said it has arrested Managing Director of IREO Group Lalit Goyal on money laundering charges in the judge bribery case.

The ED initiated an investigation on the basis of the FIR registered by ACB, Panchkula, Haryana.

As per the FIR, reliable information was received that Sudhir Parmar (posted as Special Judge for CBI and ED cases at Panchkula at the material time) was showing favouritism to the accused persons Roop Kumar Bansal, his brother Basant Bansal, the owners of M3M Group and Lalit Goyal, the owner of IREO Group in lieu of undue advantage extended by Sudhir Parmar in the criminal cases of ED under PMLA and other cases of CBI pending against these accused persons in his court, the ED said in a statement.

"It is alleged that undue



benefit was provided to Sudhir Parmar through this relative Ajay Parmar. It was further stated that as per reliable information instances of grave misconduct, abuse of official position and demand/acceptance of undue advantage/ bribe from the accused persons in the cases pending in his court were observed," it said.

Goyal was produced before the designated PMLA Court at Panchkula. The Court has granted custody of Goyal to ED till Friday following which the accused will be produced in the court.

ED has also arrested Basant Bansal and Pankaj Bansal, promoters/ directors of M3M Group, and Ajay Parmar, rela-

tive of Sudhir Parmar in connection with this case. Further investigations are in progress, it added. In a separate case, the ED has arrested Amar Sadhuram Mulchandani, former chairman of Seva Vikas Co-operative Bank on July 1, 2023 under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act.

The arrest was made in connection with the ongoing investigation in the Seva Vikas Co-operative Bank fraud case in which the Bank has suffered a loss of Rs 429 crore in 124 non-performing asset (NPA) loan accounts. This has caused the Bank to go bankrupt causing loss to thousands of small depositors.

Manual scavenging no more, but only 508 dists declared so: Govt

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A high-level Government panel of the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment on Wednesday claimed that with the conversion of most of the insanitary latrines into sanitary latrines under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, the problem of manual scavenging has been eliminated in the country.

But at the same time, it admitted that only 508 districts out of the total 766 districts in the country have declared themselves free from the inhuman practice.

This was disclosed at the eighth meeting of the Central Monitoring Committee held on Wednesday under the chairmanship of Dr Virendra Kumar, Union Minister of Social Justice and Empowerment to review the implementation of the "Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013." The

Committee noted that with the conversion of most of the insanitary latrines into sanitary latrines under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, the problem of manual scavenging was eliminated. Presently there is no evidence of the continuation of the practice of manual scavenging.

However, it also pointed out that "All States/Districts have been requested to declare their district free from manual scavenging. As on date, such confirmation from 520 districts out of 766 districts in the country has already been received.

The Committee suggested to follow up with the remaining districts," said a statement from the Ministry. The Committee was informed that the Ministry had initiated two surveys of manual scavengers in 2013 and then in 2018.

"During these surveys, a total of 58,098 eligible manual scavengers had been identified and all of them have been provided the One Time Cash Assistance of Rs. 40,000.

Opp: Take strict action against person accused of urinating on tribal

New Delhi/Bhopal: Opposition parties on Wednesday demanded strictest action against the BJP activist caught on camera urinating on a tribal youth in Madhya Pradesh's Sidhi district which has triggered outrage across all sections of the society. Congress demanded a CBI inquiry into the incident.

Congress and BSP chief Mayawati demanded that the properties of the person accused of urinating on a tribal man be confiscated or demolished.

Dalits and tribals staged a protest at Indore in Madhya Pradesh to condemn the incident. The protesters, under the banner of Akhil Bharatiya Balai Mahasangh, raised slogans and waved placards alleging increasing atrocities on members of Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) communities in the state.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi alleged that atrocities on tribals and Dalits are increasing under the BJP rule and said real face of BJP's hatred towards tribals and Dalits was exposed with "inhuman act." PNS

EAM visit: Tanzania, India to deepen ties

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

India and Tanzania will review the entire gamut of their bilateral ties and explore ways to strengthen their relations during External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's four-day visit there starting Wednesday.

Giving details of his schedule, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said here, the external affairs minister will first visit Zanzibar from July 5-6 where he will visit a water supply project funded by the Indian government India line of credit, call on top leadership and also attend a reception onboard Indian navy ship Trishul, which is visiting Tanzania. Thereafter, he will visit the Dar-es-Salaam city of Tanzania from July 7-8 where

he will co-chair the 10th India-Tanzania Joint Commission Meeting with his counterpart. Jaishankar will also call on the country's top leadership, including several Cabinet rank Ministers.

During the visit, he will meet the members of the Parliamentary Friendship Group for India and inaugurate an India-Tanzania business meeting. Jaishankar will also address the Indian diaspora and inaugurate the bust of Swami Vivekananda in Dar es Salaam.

India and Tanzania have traditionally enjoyed close and friendly relations and Jaishankar's visit will further consolidate the bilateral relations between our two countries, the MEA said.

Rlys may cut Vande Bharat fare to fill up seats

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Railway Board is set to conduct a comprehensive review of the fares for Vande Bharat Express trains in response to a decline in occupancy. Launched amidst much anticipation across several states over the past year, these high-speed trains have been facing low passenger numbers due to the exorbitant fare structure.

As a result, the board is considering fare reductions for specific routes, including Indore-Bhopal, Bhopal-Jabalpur, and Nagpur-Bilaspur Vande Bharat routes, among others. The Bhopal-Indore Vande Bharat service recorded a mere 29 percent occupancy while the return journey from Indore to Bhopal witnessed only 21 percent occupancy by



the end of June. Currently, the AC Chair car ticket for this three-hour journey costs Rs 950, while the Executive Chair Car ticket is priced at Rs 1525 per passenger. The fare revision aims to make the fares more reasonable, ensuring greater affordability and encouraging higher passenger turnout for these sophisticated semi-high-

speed train services. By reviewing the fare structure, the Railway Board hopes to optimize the utilization of Vande Bharat Express trains and improve their overall viability. "The idea is to ensure that all the Vande Bharat trains work towards ensuring passenger convenience. We have reviewed the situation and we believe

that some of the Vande Bharat trains, especially of shorter durations between two to around five hours will do much better if their prices are decreased.

We want more and more people to use these trains. While most of the Vande Bharat trains are running at 100 percent occupancy, a handful are not and we are making the changes needed to ensure they do," said a senior railways official.

Another train whose fares are under review is the Nagpur-Bilaspur Vande Bharat Express which has an average occupancy of around 55 percent. With a travel time of around 5 hours 30 minutes, the general belief is that it would do much better if the prices were brought down. The fare for the executive class from Nagpur-Bilaspur Vande Bharat Express is Rs

2,045 while that of the Chair Car is Rs 1,075. This train was replaced by the Tejas Express in May due to low occupancy. The Bhopal-Jabalpur Vande Bharat Express which has clocked 32 percent occupancy while the return journey on Jabalpur-Bhopal Vande Bharat service has shown 36 percent occupancy is also likely to see a fare reduction, sources said.

The 4.5-hour journey between the two cities costs Rs 1055 for AC chair from Bhopal to Jabalpur while an Executive chair car ticket will cost Rs 1880. On its return journey, the fare for an AC chair is Rs 955, while an Executive chair car ticket costs Rs 1790.

So far, 46 Vande Bharat Express services have reached all rail-electrified states of the country. Encompassing a total of 24 states and Union territories, the Vande Bharat Express

fleet has been ever-growing owing to its time-saving feature, which saves an average of an hour in comparison to other trains.

The Vande Bharat trains with top occupancy include the Kasaragod to Trivandrum train is the best-performing Vande Bharat Express (183 percent), Trivandrum to Kasaragod Vande Bharat train (176 percent), the Gandhinagar-Mumbai Central Vande Bharat Express (134 percent), Mumbai Central-Gandhinagar Vande Bharat Express (129 percent), Varanasi-New Delhi Vande Bharat Express (128 percent), New Delhi-Varanasi Vande Bharat Express (124 percent), Dehradun-Amritsar Vande Bharat Express (105 percent), Mumbai-Sholapur Vande Bharat Express (111 percent), Sholapur-Mumbai Vande Bharat Express (104 percent).

Modi to gift ₹12,100 crore worth projects to Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi will inaugurate and lay the foundation stones of multiple development projects worth more than ₹ 12,100 crore during his visit here on July 7. All these projects will be launched at a public meeting to be held at Wajidpur on Harhua-Sarnath Ring Road. Meanwhile, preparations are going on in full swing at Wajidpur and all other places where the PM will visit during his two-day visit to his parliamentary constituency. Top administrative and police officers visited the site apart from senior leaders of Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to see the arrangements at Wajidpur on Wednesday. Just a day ago the place was also inspected by the Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

According to the district administration, Outdoor Broadcast (OB) van of any electronic channel will not be installed in the public meeting programme of the PM at Wajidpur. Along with this, the entire programme venue will be declared as no flying zone. No one will be able to fly a drone etc here. Strict legal

action will be taken against anyone flying a drone etc despite being a no flying zone.

Modi will dedicate Pt Deendayal Upadhyaya Junction - Son Nagar railway line of Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC). Built at a cost of more ₹6,760 crore, the new line will facilitate faster and efficient movement of goods. The PM will also dedicate to the nation three railway lines whose electrification or doubling works have been completed at a cost of more than ₹990 crore. These include Ghazipur city - Aunrihar rail line, Aunrihar - Jaunpur rail line and Bhatni - Aunrihar rail line. This will mark the completion of 100 per cent electrification of railway lines in Uttar Pradesh.

The PM will also dedicate to the nation the four-lane widening of Varanasi-Jaunpur section of NH-56, which has been completed at a cost of more than ₹2,750 crore, making travel from Varanasi to Lucknow easier and faster. Among the multiple projects in Varanasi that will be inaugurated by the PM are construction and renovation of 18 PWD roads; International Girls Hostel building constructed on BHU campus;

Central Institute of Petrochemicals Engineering & Technology (CIPET), an vocational training centre at Karsara village; Residential buildings and amenities in police station Sindhaura, PAC Bhullanpur, Fire station Pindra and Government residential school Tarsada; Economic Offences Research Organisation building; Sewer line from Mohan Katra to Konia Ghat and a modern sewage management system in village Ramna; 30 double-sided backlit LED unipoles; a cow dung-based bio-gas plant at NDDB Milk plant Ramnagar; and a unique floating changing rooms jetty at Dashashwamedh ghat which will facilitate the bathing of devotees in river Ganga.

The projects whose foundation stone will be laid by Modi include construction of 3 two-lane rail over bridge (ROB) near Chaukhandi, Kadiapur and Hardattpur railway stations; Construction of Vyasnagar-Pt Deendayal Upadhyay Junction rail fly-over; and construction and renovation of 15 PWD roads. These projects will be developed at a cumulative cost of about ₹780 crore. He will also lay the foundation stone of 192

rural drinking water schemes, to be built at a cost of more than ₹550 crore, under the Jal Jeevan Mission. It will provide pure drinking water to 7 lakh people in 192 villages. Besides, Modi will also lay the foundation stone of redesigning and redevelopment of Manikarnika and Harishchandra ghats. The redevelopment ghats will have provision of public conveniences, waiting areas, wood storage, waste disposal and eco friendly cremation pyres. Other projects whose foundation stones will be laid include floating changing room jetties at six religiously significant bathing ghats on river Ganga in Varanasi on the lines of floating changing room jetties of Dashashwamedh Ghat and construction of students hostel at CIPET campus Karsara.

During the programme, the PM will also distribute the loans of PM SVANidhi, keys of PMAY Rural houses and Ayushman Bharat cards to the beneficiaries in UP. This will kickstart the Grih Pravesh of 5 lakh PMAY beneficiaries, distribution of 1.25 lakh PM SVANidhi loans to eligible beneficiaries and distribution of 2.88 crore Ayushman cards.

Drones, CCTV network for safety of kanwariyas

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Four drones, a network of CCTVs, barricading on Ganga ghats and travel route, one-way reserved for free flow of kanwariyas and Quick Response Teams (QRTs) are few security features that police authorities have decided to deploy on the kanwar route in order to maintain a strict surveillance between Prayagraj and Varanasi.

With lakhs of kanwariyas visiting Kashi Vishwanath to offer 'jalabhishek' at Varanasi after taking holy Ganga water from Sangam and other ghats from July 8 onwards, cops claimed to have made elaborate security arrangements for kanwariyas.

The Prayagraj-Varanasi

route will be one way to offer adequate space to devotees of Lord Shiva for their smooth movement towards Varanasi from Prayagraj.

Around 700 cops have been assigned duties for the same. A separate traffic plan, including diversion plan, will also be implemented.

ACP (Jhansi) Chirag Jain said cops will use drones and CCTV network for safety of kanwariyas, who would be embarking on a journey from Sangam and Daraganj Ghat to Varanasi (UP) to offer jalabhishek to Lord Shiva in Kashi during the Hindu month of Shrawan.

Apart from roping in four drones and additional force, police will also set up barricades and keep ambulances on

standby to help kanwariyas. The department has also drafted an elaborate traffic plan for the Shiv devotees which will be effective July 8 onwards, when the kanwar yatra starts.

He added, "The traffic police will designate lanes for the movement of kanwariyas and drones will also be used to monitor the yatra." Besides, QRTs will be deployed at the static points and Prayagraj police will be coordinating with Bhadohi and Varanasi counterparts to ensure safety and security of kanwariyas.

The kanwariyas are expected to pass through Daraganj, Jhansi before arriving at the Prayagraj-Varanasi highway.

Cops will be deployed at strategic points like Shastri bridge, Andhawa turn and

Sarayinayat, through which a large number of these kanwariyas are expected to pass.

The devotees of Shiva will assemble at Sangam and Daraganj ghat to take water from the Sangam and cover the across hundreds of km distance to different temples of Lord Shiva, including the Padila Mahadeo temple in Tharwai (Prayagraj) and the Kashi Vishwanath temple in Varanasi.

After taking water from the Ganges river, the devotees of Lord Shiva, known as kanwariya, travel barefoot and in saffron robes with their kanwar (walking sticks used to hang the urns of water) for hundreds of kms and usually in groups made of family, friends and or neighbours, and offer 'jalabhishek' to Lord Shiva.

TN BJP slams DMK regime for 'dragging' Guv into everyday issues

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Amid an ongoing tug of war between the DMK regime and Governor R N Ravi, the Tamil Nadu BJP strongly criticised the ruling party for attempting to "set a wrong precedent" by dragging Raj Bhavan into everyday state issues.

"If the Governor started to answer all the questions, where it would end," Tamil Nadu BJP president K Annamalai asked when reporters drew his attention to a specific issue.

The question posed was related to recent wall posters put up asking if 'Guindy' was prepared to answer queries following Minister V Senthil Balaji's dismissal from the TN Cabinet, which was put on hold later.

Downtown Guindy is an indirect reference to Raj Bhavan as it is situated there. The posters also claimed that other persons who had cases pending against them were continuing as Union Ministers.

"Will the TN government accept if the Governor is to hold press conferences daily and comment on all TN issues? They will not accept it. A Governor is not a politician," Annamalai said.

The TN BJP chief said if the DMK wished that the Governor answer questions on every issue, the BJP would write to him making a request

to comment on issues. "Is the DMK ready for that? Posters are pasted by the DMK asking the Governor to answer." Governor should not speak to the press/media or "it will go wrong", he said, hitting out at the ruling DMK for dragging the Governor towards "setting a wrong precedent".

Asked about the AIADMK's opposition to the Uniform Civil Code, he said that on several issues there was a divergence in their stands. For instance, the AIADMK was for a two-language formula while the BJP supported a three-language policy.

Hence, there are differences. He expressed confidence that there would be a change in the stand of those who oppose the code. "Let us wait," he said, adding, "Working together is possible despite differences on issues such as on NEET".

He said all those who oppose UCC should discuss and debate the matter, and asserted that UCC was for "uniting" the people.

"When the discussion paper, draft on UCC gets released and when more discussions happen, everyone will know that the code is good for Muslims, Muslim women and Christians as well.

"UCC is not going to be against anyone." On the Mekedatu dam row, Annamalai said it has been made clear by the Centre in

Parliament that an upper riparian state — Karnataka — cannot build a dam without the concurrence of lower riparian states including Tamil Nadu.

The issue, hence, is related to the Karnataka Assembly and the ruling Congress party, he added. Stalin should facilitate a meeting of all 39 Tamil Nadu MPs with Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to help prevent the dam construction, he said.

Karnataka has said there would be no Cauvery water given to Tamil Nadu this year. If this is the case, what would happen to the standing crops in the Cauvery delta region in Tamil Nadu, he asked.

He also demanded to know what the Tamil Nadu government would do if only a low volume of Cauvery water is given to the state. "The DMK regime is enacting a drama on the issue," he alleged.

"The BJP is clear that Tamil Nadu should get Cauvery water and Mekedatu dam must not be built." The matter should be taken up with the Cauvery Water Management Authority and the TN BJP will extend its support, he said.

Battling for site-inspections and other steps, he said Karnataka Deputy CM D K Shivakumar has no authority to claim that water would not be released to Tamil Nadu.

Mob sets IRB jawan's house on fire after clash in Manipur

PTI ■ IMPHAL

The house of an Indian Reserve Battalion (IRB) personnel was torched by a mob in Manipur's Thoubal district after he foiled the attempts of rioters to loot firearms from the police armoury, officials said on Wednesday.

The incident took place at Samaram on Tuesday night after a 27-year-old man, identified as Ronaldo, was killed in a clash when a 700-800-strong mob tried to storm the camp of the 3rd IRB at Wangbal, 4 km away, to loot firearms from the police armoury.

The jawan performed his duty well and did not allow the rioters to loot the police weapons store, security officials said. He was part of the IRB unit guarding the armoury, they added.

Police said that four bunkers were destroyed in Kangpokpi, Imphal West and Churachandpur districts on Wednesday by a combined team of the state police and central forces.

Firing between groups of unidentified gunmen was reported during the day in Luangshangol / Phaileng area along the border of Imphal West and Kangpokpi districts. Security forces controlled the situation, the police said in a statement.

BJP launches cleanliness drive

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) launched a two-day cleanliness drive in the entire district on Wednesday on the eve of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's arrival here on July 7. Apart from intensifying efforts of the party to accord a warm welcome to the PM and make his proposed public meeting at Wajidpur a grand success, the BJP also launched a massive cleanliness drive and in this direction, just a day ago during his visit here Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath also directed the administration and party for cleanliness drive.

City party chief Vidya Sagar Rai said that the cleanliness campaign is the dream project of the PM. "Today the awareness towards cleanliness has increased among people as they are playing their important roles in making the 'Swachh Kashi Sundar Kashi' drive a success," he said, adding that the PM has made the cleanliness drive a mass movement.

He said that on the eve of the PM's arrival, the two-day long drive was launched with making all the major maths and temples along with major crossings and statue places of great personalities clean in the city areas.

Mayor Ashok Tiwari said that the cleanliness campaign programme is being run continuously under the Nagar Nigam (Municipal Corporation), but on the arrival of the PM, we have launched a special cleanliness campaign



BJP workers launching two-day cleanliness drive in Varanasi on Wednesday on eve of PM's arrival.

and appealed to all the corporators to launch the same drive in their respective wards. District BJP chief and MLC Hansraj Vishwakarma said that the campaign was launched in the entire district and in this direction, responsibility has been assigned to the workers at the Mandal level.

Meanwhile, the regional party president Dilip Singh Patel instructed the party workers to make every possible effort to make the PM's meeting unprecedented and ensure to cross the target of 50,000

people in the proposed public meeting.

He said that with a view to ensure the participation of all sections, the party has activated all its fronts so that women, youths, farmers and other sections can reach Wajidpur in maximum numbers.

"Everyone is eager to listen to the PM so the right information about the programme should reach them," he asked the party workers while addressing the members of "Team 51 at BJP's regional office

at Rohaniya. While making the office-bearers of all fronts realise their responsibility, Patel said that we all have to worry about the participation of all sections in the meeting.

"It is necessary that the office-bearers of the fronts go among the people and invite them to attend the public meeting," he said, giving the different target to all the seven frontal units representing the youth, women, farmers, backward class, minority community, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Customs seizes gold worth ₹1.37 cr at Hyderabad airport

PTI ■ HYDERABAD

Hyderabad Customs officials on Wednesday seized 2.279 kilograms of smuggled gold valued at Rs 1.37 crore related to a set of three cases, and over one lakh smuggled cigarette sticks in another instance at the international airport here.

The seizures were made based on passenger profiling and surveillance, according to Customs officials.

A release from Customs department said in one case smuggled gold weighing 1,196 grams valued at Rs 72 lakh was seized upon rummaging the aircraft.

The gold was concealed behind the aircraft seat in paste form inside a flight that arrived at Hyderabad from Ras Al Khaimah in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), it said.

In the second case, 752 grams of smuggled gold, in the form of cut pieces of gold bars, valued at Rs 45 lakh was recovered from a passenger who had arrived from Kuwait via Dubai. In the third case, 331 grams of smuggled gold valued at Rs 20 lakh, was seized from a passenger, who came from Sharjah.

The gold was concealed in the form of paste in the undergarment of the passenger, it said.

In another case, as many as 1,01,000 smuggled cigarette sticks were seized from three passengers who arrived from Cambodia via Bangkok.

WB rural elections: HC dismisses NHRC appeal on deploying observers

PTI ■ KOLKATA

A division bench of the Calcutta High Court on Wednesday dismissed an appeal by the NHRC against a single bench order that set aside the human rights body's directive deposing its official to identify sensitive constituencies and for deploying micro-observers for the upcoming panchayat polls in West Bengal.

The division bench said the direction of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) seeks to encroach upon the jurisdiction of the State Election Commission (SEC) to conduct free and fair panchayat elections.

The NHRC in its June 12 order had deputed its director general (investigation) as a special human rights observer to apprise first-hand information of recent incidents and to conduct an on-the-spot survey of West Bengal in consultation with the SEC to identify the sensitive constituencies where such violation relating to panchayat polls is likely to occur.

It said that once the sensitive areas are identified, the DG will submit a comprehensive report to it for deployment of micro human rights observers in all sensitive constituencies in the state during and after the panchayat polls.

Holding that it is not inclined to interfere with the order passed by the single bench, a division bench presided by Chief Justice T S Sivagnanam dismissed appeals by the NHRC and the DG.

The bench, also comprising Justice Hiranmay Bhattacharyya, said that the NHRC order of June 12 does not speak of any specific violation of human rights or negligence in preservation of human rights or its abetment by a public servant.



The division bench said that the NHRC ought not to have issued the order "in the garb of protecting the human rights as the said direction seeks to encroach upon the exclusive jurisdiction of the SEC to conduct free and fair panchayat elections."

It said that the Supreme Court had in a judgement held that the NHRC cannot function as a parallel seat of justice.

The bench said that matters relating to protection of human rights during the panchayat poll process are covered by the orders passed by this court from time to time.

Panchayat elections in West Bengal will be held on July 8.

Observing that it is the duty of the SEC, being a constitutional authority, to appoint observers, the bench said "the NHRC cannot encroach upon the jurisdiction of the SEC by appointing observers."

The West Bengal SEC had contended before the court that while it is a constitutional authority, the NHRC is a statutory authority.

Holding that the jurisdiction of NHRC is also barred after the issuance of election notification by the SEC to pass an order appointing an observer, the division bench said that the NHRC's directive amounts to usurping the jurisdiction of the SEC and also amounts to interference in the conduct of elections by the SEC.

The NHRC order had been set aside by the single bench of the high court, against which the NHRC filed the appeal.

NDRF personnel deployed at ghats

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In view of the rush of devotees reaching the ghats of Ganga to take a holy dip during the auspicious month of Shrawan, the 11 National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) has deployed its personnel at various ghats with the equipments such as water ambulance, paramedics, deep diving set, life jacket, etc besides making available the ambulance and divers. It has also decided to hold medical camps at Shri Kashi Vishwanath Corridor, Food Plaza and Lalita Ghat to provide medical aids to the devotees reaching Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple to have a darshan and worship of Baba Vishwanath.

The Deputy Inspector General (DIG), 11 NDRF Manoj Kumar Sharma informed that the NDRF personnel always remain available in the rescue operations during the disasters and added that they also remain available for the safety of the devotees during the religious festivals.

During the auspicious month of Shrawan, the devotees in lakhs visit the holy ghats to take a holy dip in Ganga and also visit Shri Kashi Vishwanath Temple to have darshan and worship of Baba Vishwanath,



The medical team of 11 NDRF conducting the health check up of a devotee in the medical camp held in Shri Kashi Vishwanath Corridor.

he said.

Keeping this in view, the 11, NDRF has deployed its personnel at various ghats making coordination with the district administration and all the personnel are equipped with the safety equipments such as life jackets, paramedics, deep diving sets etc, he informed and added that the water ambulance and

divers are also available at ghats.

The NDRF personnel have identified the places of deep water in Ganga and advising the devotees not to go there and they are also keeping close vigil on the devotees through motorboats and trained divers, he informed adding that the NDRF team would keep a close watch on the

devotees the entire auspicious months.

Besides, the NDRF is also holding medical camps at Shri Kashi Vishwanath Corridor, Food Plaza and Lalita Ghat for the medical aids of the devotees; he informed and added that the NDRF team would coordinate with the district administration to make the festival a success.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Gaining steam

Though SCO's journey has been transformative, it must navigate the cross-purposes of its members

The recently concluded Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit hosted by India virtually marked a significant milestone in the organisation's journey, reaffirming its role as a key platform for promoting regional stability, economic cooperation and dialogue among member states. The SCO emerged in 2001, primarily as a security-focused organisation between China, Russia and Central Asian nations, with the aim of addressing common security challenges, combating terrorism and fostering stability in the region. Over time, the SCO has evolved into a multifaceted platform encompassing political, economic and cultural cooperation among its member states. The recent SCO summit witnessed several noteworthy takeaways that highlight the organisation's progress and potential for growth. Firstly, the expansion of membership was a significant development, with Iran joining as a full member and countries like Turkey and Sri Lanka becoming dialogue partners. This expansion not only demonstrates the growing



relevance and appeal of the SCO but also opens doors for enhanced regional integration and collaboration on diverse issues. Prime Minister Modi, in chair, once again called the members to slam those supporting terrorism. A clear hint to members to pressure Pakistan. Security and counterterrorism cooperation, being the core areas of focus for the SCO, were reaffirmed during the summit. Member states reiterated their commitment to joint efforts in combating terrorism, extremism and drug trafficking, emphasising the need for collective action to ensure peace and stability in the region.

Economic cooperation emerged as a focal point at the summit, with member states emphasising the importance of strengthening trade ties, promoting investment and enhancing connectivity within the region. The signing of agreements on transportation, energy and technological cooperation highlights the SCO's commitment to fostering economic integration. Furthermore, the SCO summit recognised the importance of cultural and people-to-people exchanges in building trust and understanding among member states. Initiatives such as educational exchanges, cultural festivals and tourism promotion were emphasised as means to foster harmony within the SCO. However, SCO must also navigate the roadblocks that could slow it down. It faces several challenges that require attention for its continued growth and effectiveness. These include divergent interests among member states, geopolitical complexities, security concerns and border disputes, external influences and cultural diversity. To address these challenges, open communication, mutual trust and inclusive decision-making are crucial. With proactive efforts from member states, the SCO can fulfil its potential as a key player in fostering regional stability, economic development and multilateral cooperation. The SCO's future trajectory appears promising. It is poised to gain geopolitical influence through its expanding membership and engagement with observer states and regional organisations.

PICTALK



Kanwariyas gather at Har Ki Pouri to collect holy water from the Ganga river for their 'kanvay yatra' Haridwar

Time to revisit the PoSH Act

All the gaps, legislative, judicial and implementation in the PoSH Act, should be urgently addressed to make it more effective



ARCHANA DUTTA

The horrifying footage of the Delhi police manhandling the medal-winning women wrestlers on the street is still vivid to many of us. Since January, the protesting wrestlers demanding action against the sitting President of the Wrestlers Federation of India (WFI) for the alleged acts of sexual harassment continued over a decade. A probe committee was set up, but the findings haven't yet been made public. On the SC's prodding, the Delhi Police, filed two FIRs, one under the non-bailable POSCO Act. But, now, the incumbent WFI, Chief, has been charged under the IPC sections, since the minor's complaint stands withdrawn.

India did make 'legislative advances' by enacting the PoSH Act, 2013, as a legal antidote to act against sexual harassment at workplaces, through the form of Internal Complaint Committees (ICCs) and Local Committees (LCs) for the formal and informal sector employees, respectively. As per the Act 'any sports institute, stadium, sports complex/ competition/ games venue...' are workplaces. Sadly, not only the WFI but, as many as 16 of the 30 national sports federations, didn't have the ICCs in place. Amid the wrestler's protests, the SC, while, deciding on an appeal under the PoSH Act, called out the 'uncertainties' in its implementations, and several 'lacunas' in the functioning of the ICCs, wherever they exist.

Nevertheless, looking at the formal sector, a recent study (Council of Ethics), vouched for 'increasing awareness among the employees (76%) about the presence of the ICCs, and also a rise in the percentage of employees, who decided to file complaints to the ICCs.' However, it also flagged the issue of a majority (55.2%) choosing not to reach out to the redressal authorities because of workplace fears. Some legal experts expressed apprehensions that such in-house committees 'may find it difficult in conducting a fair enquiry, more so, if the complaint is against the senior management'. Justice Varma committee, while examining the PoSH bill in 2012, forewarned



that 'the structure of the ICCs would dissuade many women from filing legitimate complaints, and promote a culture of suppression, and suggested for a separate 'Employment Tribunal'. The Saksham committee report on women's safety on campuses also cautioned that the redressal machinery shouldn't 'replicate the power inherent in workplace hierarchies'.

However, the creation of civil bodies at the workplaces has been defended by many socio-legal experts as an alternative redressal mechanism, supposed to be 'quicker than the long-winded legal routes'. While many others pointed out that it is the 'lack of legal expertise among the members, clarity in the Act, and Rules, in many areas, that have complicated the entire justice delivery system', and recommended for 'inclusion of at least one member with legal background'. On the procedural front, though the Saksham committee was categorical that the 'due process requirement in sexual harassment cases, is distinct from the criminal legal system', many women rights activists often raise concerns for insistence on 'concrete' evidence and contended that it does not necessarily amount to the absence of a crime. In the



IN THE ONGOING WRESTLER'S CASE, AS THE POLICE ASK FOR EVIDENCE, THE SC LAWYER TAKING A DIG, SAYING THAT 'NOW VICTIMS SHOULD BE READY TO CLICK ON THE CAMERA AND HAVE SOMEONE TO RECORD THE ASSAULT'

ongoing wrestler's case, as the police ask for evidence, the SC lawyer, who defended them in the apex court, takes a dig, saying that 'now victims should be ready to click on the camera and have someone to record the assault'. While, a Human Rights Watch (HRW) 2020 study highlighted the plight of India's huge number of women informal workers, who face a persistent onslaught of workplace sexual harassment, and accept them as 'normal, and a part of life'. A recent survey, though, indicated that there is a hike (67.4% in 2021 from 33.3% in 2020) in the number of informal workers who knew how to contact their LCs, but, ground reports reveal that the LCs are 'either non-existent or non-visible, and out of the 655 districts, only 29% confirmed about their formation (Martha Farrell & PRIA).

The employers, mostly, not registered with any Govt also tend to evade the Act's provisions, even if they are aware of it. Further, there is no transparency and accountability in the absence of publicly compiled data on the number of complaints and their outcomes at the Central or State level.

harassment is viewed, considering it as a women's problem, and not a labour issue.

The informal sector women employees as such, and particularly the domestic workers, not coming under the protection of labour laws and social benefits, remain the most vulnerable, as the PoSH Act says that the LCs must refer their cases to the police, leaving them with no civil remedy.

The Act needs to be amended to ensure that domestic workers get the same access to the LCs, and also India ratifies the ILO's Convention on domestic workers. As workplace sexual harassment is considered one of the reasons for gender inequality in the workforce, there is also an urgent need for India to adopt the ILO's Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019. Now, as the women wrestlers' fight for justice continues against the misuser of official positions, money and muscle powers, all the gaps, legislative, judicial and implementation in the PoSH Act, should be urgently addressed, to put it in practice in letter and spirit.

(The writer is former DG, AIR & Doordarshan and former Press Secretary to the President of India. Views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

MANAGING TWO BLOCS

Sir — This year India was the host of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired this year's summit virtually and the member states agreed on various issues. The groupings called for a multipolar world and decided to act on terrorism, the Afghanistan crisis, the economy, etc. collectively. Iran was added as a new member this year. SCO is now a 9-member grouping often seen as a counter to West.

India through this organization seeks to establish good relations with the Central Asian nation. New Delhi also wants to maintain peace in the region through the cooperation of the member states of SCO. The members like Russia, China, and Iran do not have a good relationship with the USA and its Western allies, so it is challenging for the Indian side to balance between the two blocs. India is among the few countries which share strategic ties with both the blocs. New Delhi has to manage both sides strategically which will help India to evolve as a global leader.

Deba Prasad Nayak | Cuttack

MACHIAVELLI OF MAHARASHTRA

Sir — The political chess game in Maharashtra is indeed mind-boggling. The recent developments have shown that Sharad Pawar, the veteran politician who is often called the "Machiavelli of Maharashtra", has been outplayed by Eknath Shinde and Devendra Fadnis. Pawar had thought that he had everything under control. He had stitched together the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) coalition of the Shiv Sena, the NCP, and the Congress, and he had managed to keep the BJP out of power. But Shinde's rebellion has shown that Pawar's grip on power was not as strong as he thought.

The defection of Praful Patel, the former Union minister and a senior NCP leader, is a further blow to Pawar. Patel's decision to join Ajit Pawar, Sharad Pawar's nephew, shows that there is more than meets the eye in the current political tur-

Abduction, rape of young girls



The abduction and rape of young girls is an alarming and escalating issue in many regions of the country. This reprehensible behaviour is often driven by a combination of factors, including poverty, gender inequality, and cultural norms that perpetuate a lack of education and awareness regarding the dangers of sexual violence. Consequently, these circumstances render young girls particularly vulnerable, heightening the risk of their abduction and sexual assault.

Compounding the problem is the underreporting of such heinous acts, primarily due to the prevailing stigma and limited access to essential resources and support. Regrettably, this leads to a lack of justice for victims, as many perpetrators continue to evade punishment and perpetrate these crimes with impunity. To address this grave concern, it is crucial to raise awareness about this issue and prioritize the provision of comprehensive assistance and resources to support the victims, ensuring that those responsible for these atrocities are held accountable and that justice prevails.

Therefore, we must prioritize initiatives aimed at reducing the stigma associated with reporting such incidents and improving access to resources and support networks. By doing so, we can strive to create a society that not only condemns these vile acts but also empowers young girls, providing them with the necessary knowledge and tools to protect themselves and seek justice in the face of such heinous crimes

Md Imdadullah | Hyderabad

moil in Maharashtra. The Congress is the main beneficiary of the current situation. The party has emerged as the main opposition party in Maharashtra, and it is likely to gain in the long run. The BJP, on the other hand, may lose its dominance in the state. The political situation in Maharashtra is fluid, and it is difficult to say what will happen next. However, the Machiavellian politics of Sharad Pawar have finally come to an end.

Amarjeet Kumar | Hazaribag

VIOLENCE DURING ELECTIONS

Sir — West Bengal is not the only State which witnesses violence during elections and such instances of violence take place in other States also, the State Election Commission (SEC) told the Calcutta High Court on Tuesday.

In recent years, we have witnessed an alarming rise in incidents of violence, including physical assaults, intimidation,

vandalism, and even loss of life, all in the context of election campaigns. This worrying trend not only endangers the lives of citizens but also poses a significant threat to the stability and integrity of our democratic institutions. Political commitment to non-violence: Political leaders and parties should actively promote a culture of non-violence, condemning any acts of violence and fostering an environment of tolerance, respect, and healthy debate.

By addressing the issue of violence during elections, we can work towards ensuring that our democratic process remains a beacon of hope, fairness, and progress. The future of our democracy depends on our collective efforts to safeguard the integrity of our elections and uphold the principles of peace and harmony.

Md Maimul Islam Safui | Howrah

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

New technologies are easing life, creating jobs

Technological advancements are creating job opportunities but skill is still required to avail them



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

In recent years, technological advancements have generated innumerable opportunities for economic and social development in India. And successive budgets have only strengthened this process, ensuring that people enjoy ease of living with the help of technology. In this year's budget too, the priority has been given to technology and a human touch. India of the 21st century is constantly empowering its citizens with the use of technology and improving the livelihoods of millions of those facing any kind of deprivation by increasing food production also. Here, harnessing the potential of new technologies more efficiently becomes important to create higher standards and ease of living.

It is technologies that have allowed people to work from home, order things online, personal transport services and book all sorts of things, which can spring into people's minds today. These monumental and unprecedented changes taking place in the Indian economy are bringing in new processes in increasingly interactive and



sophisticated ways. The adopted policies and their positive effects are progressively making lives simpler. Here, an encouraging element is that the government's intervention has reduced drastically and citizens no longer consider them an obstacle, rather, they look at the government as a catalyst where technology plays a huge role.

How technologies like 'One Nation One Ration Card', Jan Dhan, Aadhar, Mobile, Arogya Setu, CoWin App, railway reservation, Common Service Centers and others, have enhanced the ease of living of the citizens, was simply unbelievable in just a few years earlier. The ease of communication with the government has also empowered people like never before, as they get quick resolutions to their issues, which

remained pending for years earlier. Now, between people's grievances and the redressal, there is no individual involved, if there is something, it is just technology, which is solving people's problems and makes processes truly global.

In making things further easier and government employees more accountable, 'Mission Karmyogi' is there, which is also a part of this technological progression, where government employees are being trained with a view to becoming more citizen-centric. With the government investing heavily in improving digital infrastructure - modifications and improvements have become much easier because of the efficient feedback system. The best part of this process is that technology provides equal opportunities to all without

any disparity and deprivation. For example, the GeM portal is giving a presentation to small businessmen and even street vendors in government procurement. Similarly, e-NAM is allowing farmers to get linked with buyers at different places.

The way the government is laying the roadmap for AI, 5G, Digilocker and other technologies, driving the fourth economic revolution, has a great impact on industry, medicine, education, agriculture and other sectors. Several significant technological steps have been taken to support MSMEs. The involvement of technologies also makes them more profitable and larger. Moreover, the government has also become a loan guarantor for MSMEs, which makes it easier for them to avail of credit from financial institutions. Finally, a lot more progress can be expected from this technology revolution, as our youth are talented, manpower is getting skilled and people have the willingness to adopt technology and adapt changes.

(The writer is a senior journalist)

FIRST COLUMN

NEVER GIVE UP 'YAJNA', 'DANA' AND 'TAPA'

These three acts are very important to succeed in life



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

These are three Sanskrit words. I chose to use them because two of them don't have appropriate English words. The closest English word for yajna is sacrifice, which is defined as giving up something valued for the sake of something else regarded as more important or worthy. The real meaning of yajna is an act of offering to God and His divine authorities meaning gods and goddesses and tyaga, for which the closest word is renunciation. The word dana is well represented by the English word donation. The closest English word for tapa is austerity, which is defined as the condition of living without unnecessary things and comfort, with limited money or goods, or a practice, habit, or experience that is typical of this. The real meaning of tapa is to accept difficult conditions to purify and raise self for high gains.

These three are very important to succeed in life. Lord Krishna states, "Acts related to yajna, dana, and tapa are worth doing; they purify wise persons." (18.5) In the next verse the Lord gives His definite opinion. "These acts of yajna, dana and tapa should be done by giving up attachment and fruits of action." (18.6)

Let me start with 'yajna'. They are done in many ways. The most popular yajna is 'havana' (fire sacrifice), in which offerings are made to gods and goddesses. Lord Brahma has instructed us human beings, "Do such yajna; gods and goddesses will fulfil all your desires." (3.10) We also give up our ahankara this way; accepting that they are superior to us. Such actions purify the atmosphere. However, the rewards are



material and are limited. Then, there are other types of yajna, "Yogis carry out sacrifice of money, sacrifice by austerity and sacrifice by yoga practice. The practitioners, who are determined to fulfil their vows, carry out sacrifice by self-study." (4.28) All such yajnas are meant to please God, "By knowing Me as the enjoyer of all sacrifices and austerities, the Lord of all the worlds, the friend of all living entities, one attains peace." (5.29) One gain many more benefits by doing yajnas, "One gets cleansed of impurities by performing sacrifices." (4.30) Let me take up 'dana' next. In human birth, we must give some dana. There is a wrong impression that Dana is of money only. It is not true. Material goods, which are not in use can be donated to the needy. Normally, almost everyone has many more clothes than one uses. Why store them? Why not give them away to someone who needs them? Lord Krishna encourages such acts when He stated, "Act related to charity are worth doing only; charity purifies." (18.5) Now I take up 'tapa' or 'tapasya'. These are of body, speech, and mind. Lord Krishna has described, "Properly honouring gods, Brahmins, teachers, and wise persons, purity, simplicity, celibacy and non-violence – these are called the tapa of the body." (17.18) "Utterance, which is not agitating; is truthful; and is pleasing and beneficial; and also regular recitation of Vedic texts – all these are called the tapa of speech." (17.15) And, "Satisfaction of the mind, pleasant peace, silence meaning not speaking unnecessarily, self-control over the senses and the mind, purity of emotions – these are tapa of the mind." (17.16) Tapa is to deprive our faculties of enjoying what is harmful. And the biggest gain is internal purity. External gains are also substantial but internal gains help us to reach higher levels, which qualify us for deserving peace, bliss, etc. What will I do? I will follow Lord Krishna's wise counsel, The Lord had stated, "Learned people have understood giving up acts, which fulfil desires for enjoyment as sannyasa, and wise people declare relinquishment of fruits of all acts as tyaga." (18.2) But yajna, dana and tapa must never be given up. (18.3)

(The writer is a spiritual teacher)

UCC: New India needs new beginnings



ASHWANI MAHAJAN

Uniform Civil Code will be a big leap forward as it will bring about social change, gender equality and secularism in the country



Recently, the Law Commission of India has issued a notification asking all the stakeholders to give their opinion about the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) by 13th, July 2023. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has also said that there should be a common code for all citizens in the country. A new debate has now started in the country regarding this and various people, organizations and political parties are discussing it. Till June 29, the Law Commission had received 8.5 lakh responses on UCC.

In independent India, one of the guiding principles of our Constitution, which we adopted, is that the State shall endeavour to secure a 'Uniform Civil Code' (UCC) for its citizens. It is noteworthy that the Directive Principles for the State Policy, as written in the Constitution are part of the Article 44 of the Constitution. This means that the constitution expects the government, to make efforts to make laws and rules according to these directive principles of the state policy, but no time frame was fixed for complying with these directive principles. Also, there is no provision to implement them through court. Along with this, there are many other directive principles of the state policy, which have not yet been fully complied with, of which the law of 'cow protection' is also one. Although many state governments have enacted laws for cow protection, no law has been enacted by the central government in this regard.

Today, when a debate is going on, all over the country on the matter of making a Uniform Civil Code for all citizens, we need to understand that it is by the basic concepts of our Constitution. In our country, every citizen is equal before the law. But people having different faiths are governed by different personal laws. The majority Hindu society is governed by Hindu personal law, while the minority society (mainly Muslims) is governed by their respective personal laws. Significantly, these personal laws have been in force in



TODAY, WHEN A DEBATE IS GOING ON, ALL OVER THE COUNTRY ON THE MATTER OF MAKING A UNIFORM CIVIL CODE FOR ALL CITIZENS, WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS BY THE BASIC CONCEPTS OF OUR CONSTITUTION

(The writer is Professor, PGDAV College, University of Delhi)

society for a long time. It has to be understood that these personal laws are related to marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption etc.

For a long time, it is being felt that there is a lack of uniformity in society due to different personal laws governing people of different religious faiths. At the same time, due to some historical and conservative influence, the personal laws of some religious groups are not in the best interest of various sections of their community, such as women and children. This hinders the optimisation of the welfare of the whole society. For example, for the past several centuries, Muslim society has had a very unequal and exploitative divorce system. The situation after that was even worse, if the husband of that woman wanted to remarry his divorced wife, the only way was Halala, according to which, his ex-wife had to marry another man and had to go through the ordeal of living with her new husband, before marrying her previous husband, as per the dictate of Halala. Recently, thanks to the active support of the Central Government, and the intervention of the court, this system has been abolished and this triple talaq has been declared illegal. Provision of jail term has also been provided under the law, for the man giving triple talaq.

Meaning of Uniform Civil Code

Though, the tragedy of Muslim women has been reduced significantly by the abolition of triple talaq without there being any change in the personal law of Muslim society. But despite this, where according to the personal law of the Hindu society, there has been complete gender equality, but it was not so in the

Muslim society. According to Hindu personal law, women have equal rights in inheritance, but this is not the case for Muslim women. Similarly, there are neither any equal rights between Muslim women and men in divorce nor marriage. That is, it can be understood that with the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code, the rights and status of women will improve significantly. It's worth noting that gender equality is a major goal set forth by global organizations, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), of the United Nations. That is, if the Uniform Civil Code is implemented, the country will take a giant leap forward in achieving these SDGs.

Due to different personal laws, there is discrimination between people of different religious faiths. For example, Muslim men are allowed to practice polygamy (up to four marriages), which is not the case for Hindu men. But after the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code, the evil practice like polygamy will be abandoned.

Though we claim that ours is a secular country, unless we adopt UCC in our country, real secularism cannot be achieved. By ending unequal personal law, UCC will also help in reducing disputes between the followers of different sects. At present, there are more legal disputes between the followers of different sects due to different personal laws. With the implementation of the Uniform Civil Code, steps can be taken towards a more peaceful and integrated society.

Challenges are very many

Immediately after independence, a Uniform Civil Code should have been implemented in the

country by the basic spirit of the Constitution. But the leaders sitting in the corridors of power, fearing that the radical-minded people of some sects may not like the same, kept avoiding making UCC. This is the reason why these fundamentalists got emboldened and an atmosphere was created that if Uniform Civil Code is implemented then law and order in the country may be endangered. But the country has seen that when an exploitative system like triple talaq was abolished, they got full support from right-thinking people in society. Despite being opposed by some fundamentalists, it was greatly appreciated by the society at large, and the intelligentsia. There were also such moments in history when in the case of Shah Bano, the court gave a decision in favour of giving alimony to Muslim women, the then Congress government under the leadership of Shri Rajiv Gandhi overturned that decision by enacting a law and the rights of Muslim women were curtailed. In this way, the unequal treatment continued.

Various political parties will also work to foster their political agenda, under the policy of appeasement of minorities (Muslims) they can try their best to create obstacles in the way of implementation of the Uniform Civil Code, without any logic. Although Prime Minister Modi is lobbying strongly in favour of the UCC, in the coming days, when the Parliament will sit to pass the UCC Act in the country, not only the government, but the whole society will have to show firmness in this regard. We have to understand that UCC law is not an ordinary law, it will be a big leap forward to real social and gender equality, secularism and justice for women.

'Assistive technology' is a boon for persons with disabilities

India is witnessing a growth in start-ups focused on developing AT solutions for people with disabilities

Assistive Technology (AT) is any product or service that helps Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) or health conditions to perform daily activities to join the mainstream and improve their quality of life. According to the first Global Report on Assistive Technology (GrAT) launched by WHO and UNICEF in May 2022, more than 2.5 billion people in the world need one or more assistive products. In India, where about 26.8 million people with disabilities according to the Census 2011, which speaks for the need for assistive technology.

People with disabilities in India face many challenges, including limited access to education, employment, and healthcare. In addition, many



RAJESH AGGARWAL

(The author is Secretary, Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, GOI)

people with disabilities struggle to access basic services such as transportation and housing due to a lack of accessibility. Assistive Technology can play a critical role in addressing these challenges by helping people with disabilities to perform everyday tasks and equally participate in their communities.

The Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), a Central PSU under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment aims to provide quality assistive devices and rehabilitation services to PwDs. Over the years, ALIMCO has become a key player in the field of AT in India. ALIMCO manufactures a wide range of assistive devices, including prostheses, orthosis, hearing

aids, and mobility aids such as Tri-Cycle, wheelchairs, Stick, Walker, Crutches etc.

ALIMCO has taken proactive measures to modernize its facilities to produce State of the Art technology aid and assistive devices to maintain pace with the advancement worldwide. In this direction, ALIMCO collaborated with international companies and signed ToT to pave the way for indigenous manufacturing of Lower Limb Prosthetic Component (Artificial Leg) and active wheelchairs. "Parivartan Kit" for prosthetics made by ALIMCO has a much lower price as compared to imported prostheses in the given category, which has been fitted to thousands of beneficiaries across the country. Indigenous designed and man-

ufactured 'Sugamya' Cane for the visually impaired envisaged in Atma Nirbhar Bharat Campaign.

The efforts made by ALIMCO towards technology absorptions include State of art Prosthetic & orthotic centre; Improved design efficiency - 3D Modeling and Analysis software; Computer Aided Designing (CAD) & Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAM) including 3D Printing; Use of CNC Sliding Head Machine & CNC Turn Mill Machine; Spectro Analyzer - For accurate/precise metal analysis; New features like Reverse Drive & Disc Brake incorporated in Battery Operated Motorized Tricycle; and Design/Drawing of Active folding Wheelchair and rough Terrain Wheel Chair.

The Accessible India Campaign was launched by the Government in 2015 to make public spaces and transportation systems more accessible for PwDs and focuses on making information and communication technology more accessible for people with disabilities. National Action Plan for Skill Development launched in 2015 aims to provide training to one million people with disabilities by 2022 with provisions for providing AT to PwDs to help them develop their skills.

Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of Aids and Appliances (ADIP) Scheme by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwDs) provides financial assistance to people with disabilities for the

purchase of assistive devices and equipment and is the most popular and covered almost every district of the country to provide free of cost assistive devices to needy Divyangjan.

Nine National institutes have been established by the department across the country, under the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPwDs) along with 21 Composite Regional Centres (CRCs) as extended arms of National Institutes.

India is witnessing a growth in start-ups focused on developing AT solutions for PwDs leveraging the latest technology to create innovative products for PwDs that can help to promote inclusion and improve their quality of life with the support of GOI.

Today, AT is an increasingly important topic of discussion at the World Forum on Disability, which is a global event focused on improving the lives of people with disabilities. Overall, the scope of Assistive Technology in the disability sector in India is significant, and there is a growing ecosystem of start-ups and innovators focused on this area. The government has recognized the potential of AT solutions in promoting inclusion and improving the lives of people with disabilities and is taking active steps to promote the development, adoption, and use of AT solutions. With continued investment and support, India has the potential to become a global leader in the development and adoption of AT solutions.

Israel ends West Bank raid

AP ■ JENING REFUGEE CAMP (WEST BANK)

Israel withdrew troops from a West Bank militant stronghold Wednesday, but warned that its most intense military operation in the occupied territory in nearly two decades could be repeated.

Twelve Palestinians and an Israeli soldier were killed in the two-day raid. Residents of the Jenin refugee camp emerged from their homes to find alleys lined by piles of rubble and flattened or scorched cars. Shopkeepers and bulldozers started clearing the debris. Thousands who had fled the fighting began returning.

Kefah Dabayyah, a 33-year-old Jenin refugee camp resident, said that he and his family had returned Wednesday to find widespread destruction.

"Roads were destroyed and many houses were affected, glass from windows was everywhere," he said. His home was not hit, but there was no water, electricity or internet service.

The army claimed to have inflicted heavy damage on militant groups in the operation, which included a series of airstrikes and hundreds of ground troops.

But it remained unclear whether there would be any lasting effect after more than a year of heavy fighting in the West Bank.

Ahead of the withdrawal, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed to carry out similar operations if needed.

"At these moments we are completing the mission, and I can say that our extensive



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu arrives for a briefing near the Salem military post between Israel and the West Bank, on Tuesday. AP/PTI

operation in Jenin is not a one-off," he said during a visit to a military post on the outskirts of Jenin.

"We will eradicate terrorism wherever we see it and we will strike it."

The Jenin raid was one of the most intense Israeli military operations in the West Bank since an armed Palestinian uprising against Israel's opened occupation ended two decades ago.

Some of the scenes from Jenin, including massive army bulldozers tearing through camp alleys, were eerily similar to those from a major Israeli incursion in 2002, which lasted for eight days and became known as the battle of Jenin. Both operations, two decades apart, were meant to crush militant groups in the camp and deter and prevent attacks on Israelis emanating from the camp. In each case,

the army claimed success.

However, the continued cycle of army raids and Palestinian attacks raised new questions about Israel's tactics.

This week's raid had wide support across Israel's political spectrum, but some critics in the country argued the impact is short-lived, with slain gunmen quickly replaced by others.

"A usual, these things are best taken in proportion. To the security establishment, this is a successful operation thus far, but it holds no real chance of effecting a fundamental change in the state of affairs in the West Bank," wrote Amos Harel, military affairs commentator for the Haaretz daily.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, whose autonomy government administers parts of the West Bank, has rejected violence against

Israelis, but has effectively lost control over several strongholds of gunmen.

Amateur videos posted on social media appeared to show angry residents of Jenin hurling stones at the Palestinian Authority police headquarters after the Israeli military's withdrawal.

Mass funerals for the Palestinians killed in the raid drew thousands of mourners. At one stage, participants booed representatives of Abbas's Palestinian Authority, chanted their support for a local militant group and ran them out of the cemetery.

Palestinians see the actions of the gunmen as an inevitable result of 56 years of occupation and the absence of any political process with Israel.

They also point to increased West Bank settlement construction and violence by extremist settlers.

IAEA chief to visit Japan's tsunami-wrecked n-plant

AP ■ TOKYO

The UN nuclear chief is to visit Japan's tsunami-wrecked nuclear power plant Wednesday after the agency affirmed the safety of a contentious plan to release treated radioactive water into the sea.

On his way to the Fukushima Daiichi plant, a highlight of his four-day Japan visit, International Atomic Energy Agency chief Rafael Mariano Grossi will join government and utility officials to hear the concerns of mayors and fishing association leaders and to assure them of the plant's safety.

The IAEA, in its final report released Tuesday, concluded the plan to release the wastewater — which would be significantly diluted but still have some radioactivity — meets international standards and its environmental and health impact would be negligible.

But local fishing organisations have rejected the plan because they worry that their reputation will be damaged even if their catch isn't contaminated. It is also opposed by groups in South Korea, China and some Pacific Island nations due to safety concerns and political reasons. Fukushima's fisheries association on June 30 adopted a resolution saying their rejection to the treated water discharge plan remains unchanged.

Grossi told a news conference Tuesday that the IAEA will continue to monitor and assess the release of the water,



Members of civic groups wearing masks of Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, right, and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol pose during a rally to oppose Japanese government's decision to release treated radioactive water into the sea from the Fukushima nuclear power plant, in Seoul, South Korea on Wednesday. The letters read "Report of the IAEA." AP/PTI

which will be done over decades. "I believe in transparency, I believe in open dialogue and I believe in the validity of the exercise we are carrying out," he said.

The report is a "comprehensive, neutral, objective, scientifically sound evaluation," Grossi said. "We are very confident about it."

A massive earthquake and tsunami on March 11, 2011, destroyed the Fukushima Daiichi plant's cooling systems, causing three reactors to melt and contaminating their cooling water, which has leaked continuously. The water is collected, treated and stored in about 1,000 tanks, which will reach their capacity in early 2024.

The government and the plant operator Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings say

the water must be removed to prevent any accidental leaks and make room for the plant's decommissioning.

Japanese regulators finished their final safety inspection last week, and TEPCO is expected to get the permit for the release in coming days. It could then begin gradually discharging the water any time through an undersea tunnel from the plant to a location 1 kilometer (1,000 yards) offshore in the Pacific Ocean. But the start date is undecided due to protests at home and abroad.

Grossi said treating, diluting and gradually releasing the wastewater is a proven method widely used in other countries, including China, South Korea, the United States and France, to dispose of water containing certain radionuclides from nuclear plants.

'North Korean satellite was not advanced enough'

Seoul (AP): The satellite North Korea failed to put into orbit wasn't advanced enough to conduct military reconnaissance from space as it claimed, South Korea's military said Wednesday after retrieving and studying the wreckage.

North Korea had tried to launch its first spy satellite in late May, but the long-range rocket carrying it plunged into the waters off the Korean Peninsula's west coast soon after liftoff. The satellite was to be part of a space-based reconnaissance system North Korea says it needs to counter escalating security threats from South Korea and the United States.

South Korea mobilised navy ships, aircraft and divers to recover debris from the rocket and satellite in a 36-day operation that ended Wednesday, the South's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

"Numerous" and "key" parts of the rocket and the satellite were recovered and the South Korean and US experts who jointly examined them concluded the satellite wasn't capable of conducting military reconnaissance works at all, the statement said. North Korea didn't immediately respond to the South Korean announcement. The day the launch failed, North Korea's state media said the rocket lost thrust following the separation of its first and second stages, then crashed into the sea. At a ruling party meeting last month, North Korea called the failed launch "the most serious" shortcoming this year and harshly criticized those responsible.

LOST & FOUND

1. Sameer Trikha s/o Surinder Trikha in capacity of Senior Vice President at Catalyst Trusteeship Limited having office at 910-911, 9th Floor, Kailash Building, 26, Kasturba Gandhi Marg, New Delhi - 110001, lost following original Property Documents/ Sale Deeds at given address FIR Lodged LR No. 621309/2023. If anyone found kindly contact on +91-8527909151

Property No.	Sale Deeds No.
Property No- 51	2572
Property No- 56	3597 amended with 3650
Property No- 54	2690
Property No- 53	2691
Property No- 55	3295
Property No- 62	3277
Property No- 57	3433

Public Notice

This is to inform general public that (1) Mr. Ved Vyas Nangia, (2) Mr. Jagdish Kumar Chawla, and (3) Mr. Dinesh Kumar Pawha acquired the Residential House/Property bearing No. 969, area measuring 150.10 sq. yds., Type-II, in the residential colony known as Housing Board Colony, Saraswati Vihar, Chakkarpur, Gurugram, Haryana and District Gurugram, Haryana vide Sale Deed dated 19.09.2018, Doc. No. 9475. Above said owner/owner's mislaid the Original Conveyance Deed dated 30.04.1993 Doc. No. 774, SRO- Gurugram. Anyone who find the above said documents, kindly handover the same to the Manager of Axis Finance Limited, Noida (P.N.Ow), (1) Mr. Ved Vyas Nangia, (2) Mr. Jagdish Kumar Chawla, and (3) Mr. Dinesh Kumar Pawha is intending to sell the above said property to Mr. Atul Garg and further Mr. Atul Garg, is mortgaging the said property with Axis Finance Limited. & in case anyone has any objection, the same may be raised within 07 days of this publication to Mr. Manish Dhanraj Mr. Sudhir Jain (Advocates), Law Offices, Unit no 507, 5th Floor, GD-4TL Tower, (B-08), Netaji Subhash Place, Delhi-110034 or contact at 9066707172/98282836 (M).

INDAG RUBBER LIMITED

(CIN: L74899DL1978PLC009038)
 Regd. Office: 11, Community Centre, Saket, New Delhi - 110017.
 Ph. No. 011-2696317/273, E-mail ID: info@indagrubber.com, website: www.indagrubber.com

Information regarding Forty-Forth Annual General Meeting of Indag Rubber Ltd.

Notice is hereby given that the Forty-Forth Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Members of Indag Rubber Limited ("the Company") will be held on Thursday, August 3, 2023 at 03.00 P.M. through Video Conferencing ("VC") / Other Audio Visual Means ("OAVM"), in compliance with all the applicable provisions of the Companies Act, 2013 and the Rules made thereunder and SEBI (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015 ("Listing Regulations") read with Circular No. 14/2020 dated April 08, 2020 and Circular No. 17/2020 dated April 13, 2020 issued by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs followed by Circular No. 20/2020 dated May 05, 2020, Circular No. 02/2021 dated January 13, 2021, Circular No. 02/2022 dated May 05, 2022 and Circular No. 10/2022 dated December 28, 2022 and all other relevant circulars issued from time to time ("MCA Circulars") and Circular No. SEBI/HO/CFD/CMD/1/CIR/P/2020/79 dated May 12, 2020, SEBI/HO/CFD/CMD/2/CIR/P/2021/11 dated January 15, 2021, Circular No. SEBI/HO/CFD/CMD/2/CIR/P/2022/62 dated May 13, 2022 and Circular No. SEBI/HO/CFD/ PoB-2/CIR/2023/4 dated January 5, 2023, issued by the Securities and Exchange Board of India ("SEBI Circulars") (collectively referred to as "relevant circulars"), to transact the business as set out in the Notice calling the AGM.

In compliance with the relevant circulars, the Notice of the AGM and the Annual Report for the financial year 2022-2023 will be sent to all the Members of the Company through electronic mode whose name appears in the Register of Members as on June 30, 2023 and whose email addresses are registered with the Company/Registrar and Share Transfer Agent/Depository Participant(s). The aforesaid documents will also be available on the Company's website at www.indagrubber.com and on the website of BSE Limited at www.bseindia.com and on the website of NSDL at www.evoting.nsdl.com. Members can attend and participate in the ensuing AGM through VCOAVM only and such Members shall be reckoned for the purpose of quorum under Section 103 of the Companies Act, 2013. Remote e-voting facility is provided to Members to cast their votes on any of the Resolutions set out in the Notice of AGM. Members have option to cast their vote using the remote e-voting facility prior to the AGM or during the AGM. Detailed procedure for remote e-voting is provided in the Notice of the AGM.

Manner of registering / updating email addresses by the Members is given below:

- In case shares are held in physical mode please provide Folio No., Name of shareholder, scanned copy of the share certificate (front and back), PAN (self-attested scanned copy of PAN card), AADHAR (self-attested scanned copy of Aadhar Card) and ECS Mandate by email to admin@indagrubber.com or to info@indagrubber.com
- In case shares are held in demat mode, please provide DPID-CLID (16 digit DPID + CLID or 16 digit beneficiary ID), Name, client master or copy of Consolidated Account statement, PAN (self-attested scanned copy of PAN card), AADHAR (self-attested scanned copy of Aadhar Card) and ECS Mandate to your Depository Participant.

Manner of casting votes through e-voting is given below:

- The manner of voting remotely ("remote e-voting") by members holding shares in dematerialised mode, physical mode and for members who have not registered their email addresses will be provided in the Notice of the AGM. The details will also be available on the website of the Company at www.indagrubber.com.
- The facility for voting through electronic voting system will also be made available at the AGM and Members attending the AGM who have not cast their votes(s) by remote e-voting will be able to vote at the AGM.
- The login credentials for casting votes through e-voting shall be made available to the members through email. Members who do not receive email or whose email addresses are not registered with the Company / Depository Participant(s), may generate login credentials by following instructions given in the Notice of AGM.
- The same login credentials may also be used for attending the AGM through VC / OAVM.
- The Board of Directors in their meeting held on May 5, 2023 has recommended a Final Dividend of Rs. 150/- per equity Share of face value of Rs. 2/- each. The Book closure date for the purpose of AGM and Final Dividend for the financial year 2022-23 will be from Friday, July 28, 2023 to Thursday, August 3, 2023 (both days inclusive). The Final Dividend, once approved by the Shareholders in the ensuing AGM will be paid within 30 days from the date of AGM on or before September 2, 2023, electronically through various online transfer modes to those Shareholders who have updated their Bank Account details with the Company or the Depository Participant(s). The Shareholders who have not updated their Bank Account details, dividend warrants/demand drafts will be sent to their registered address. To enable direct credit of the Dividend Amount, Shareholders are requested to update their Bank Account details with their Depository Participant(s) (where Shares are held in Dematerialised mode) and with the Company's Registrar and Share Transfer Agent (where Shares are held in Physical mode).
- Pursuant to the changes introduced by the Finance Act, 2020, dividends paid or distributed by the Company after 1st April 2020, shall be taxable in the hands of the Members and the Company shall be required to deduct tax at source (TDS) at the prescribed rates from the dividend to be paid to Members. The TDS rate would vary depending on the residential status of the Member and the documents submitted by them and accepted by the Company. For more information, please refer the communication sent to the Shareholders for TDS on Dividend Distribution, dated July 20, 2021 which is available on the website https://indagrubber.com/uploads/Document/Email_to_Shareholders_reg_TDS_on_Final_Div_2020-21.pdf. The Shareholders are requested to update their PAN with the RTA (where shares held in Physical mode) and with depositories (where shares held in Dematerialised mode). This Notice is being issued for the information and benefits of all the Shareholders of the Company in compliance with the relevant circulars issued by MCA and SEBI.

By order of the Board
 For Indag Rubber Limited
 Place: New Delhi
 Date: July 5, 2023
 Sd/-
 Company Secretary

UN urges Security Council to extend Turkiye border crossing into Syria

Idlib (AP): The UN secretary general is hoping that the Security Council will vote later this month to keep a key border crossing from Turkiye to Syria's rebel-held northwest open for critical aid deliveries for a period of one year instead of six months, a UN official said Tuesday.

Syria's northwestern province of Idlib is home to some 4 million people, many of whom were earlier displaced during the 12-year civil war, which has killed nearly half a million people. Hundreds of thousands live in tent settlements and rely on aid that comes through the Bab al-Hawa border crossing. The Security Council is expected to vote in the coming days, as the current six-month opening period expires on July 10.

The situation got worse after the February 6 earthquake that hit southern Turkiye and northern Syria, killing tens of thousands of people and leaving many more homeless and in need of aid.

In the past, Russia, the main backer of Syrian President Bashar Assad, abstained on or vetoed resolutions on cross-border aid deliveries. It has sought to replace aid crossing the Turkish border to Idlib province with convoys from government-held areas in Syria. Since the early years of the war in Syria, Turkiye has sided with and supported the rebels. The Security Council initially authorized aid deliveries in 2014 from Turkiye, Iraq and Jordan through four crossing points into opposition-held areas in Syria.

Myanmar SC hears arguments in two appeals by Suu Kyi

Bangkok (AP): Myanmar's Supreme Court heard final arguments on Wednesday in appeals by ousted leader Aung San Suu Kyi of her convictions in two cases in which she was charged with election fraud and breaching the Official Secrets Act, a legal official said.

Suu Kyi, 78, was arrested when the army seized power from her elected government in February 2021. She has been convicted of a string of criminal offenses and sentenced to a total of 33 years in prison, mostly on charges brought by the military government.

Suu Kyi's supporters and legal experts say the cases are an attempt to legitimise the military's seizure of power while discrediting her and preventing her return to politics.

The legal official said the

Australian PM criticises HK's attempt to arrest activists

Canberra (AP): Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on Wednesday criticised Hong Kong authorities over their pursuit of two pro-democracy activists who live in Australia.

Hong Kong's leader said Tuesday that eight pro-democracy activists who now live in the United States, Britain, Canada and Australia will be pursued for life for alleged national security offenses, dismissing criticism that the move to have them arrested was a dangerous precedent.

Albanese said his government was concerned and disapproved by Hong Kong authorities issuing arrest warrants for Australian citizen



Kevin Yam and Australian permanent resident Ted Hui.

"I am of course disappointed. I've said we'll cooperate with China where we can. But we will disagree where we must. And we do disagree with China with these actions," Albanese told Australian Broadcasting Corp.

The US and British governments also criticised the move, taking issue with the extrateritorial application of Hong Kong's National Security Law. The US said it marked a dangerous precedent that threatened human rights, and Britain said it will not tolerate attempts by China to intimidate and silence people overseas.

Hong Kong's leader John Lee insisted that extraterritorial power exists in the security laws of many countries and his government will not be swayed by comments by overseas officials and politicians.

Albanese also said he disagreed with China on the detention of Australian journalist Cheng Lei who has yet to learn of a verdict after standing trial in March last year on national security charges.

KAMA HOLDINGS LIMITED

CIN : L92199DL2000PLC104779
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 Email: info@kamaholdings.com website: www.kamaholdings.com

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Certificates pertaining to Shares of the Company detailed below have been reported lost and request(s) for issue of duplicate Certificates in lieu thereof have been received by the Company :-

Sl. No.	Folio No.	Name of the Share Holder / Legal Heir (Claimant)	Cert.No.	Dist.No.	Lost Shares
1	SPP0000907	M MANGALAM K MAHALINGAM	952	37579-628	50
2	SPP0000373	SHYAMA SHARMA	414	18447- 88	42
3	SPP0008595	SUSHILA RANGARAJAN M RANGARAJAN	10088	609182-241	60

Any person having any claim / objection in respect of the above requests should lodge such claim / objection with the company at its Corporate Office within 15 days of the publication of this notice, failing which the company will consider to give effect to the above requests.

Public is hereby cautioned against dealing with the aforesaid share certificates.

for KAMA HOLDINGS LIMITED
 Sd/-
 EKTA MAHESHWARI
 WHOLE TIME DIRECTOR, CFO
 & COMPANY SECRETARY
 Place: Gurugram
 Date : 04.07.2023

Scotland hosts event to honour King Charles III

PTI ■ LONDON

Britain's King Charles III and Queen Camilla were on Wednesday presented with the crown jewels of Scotland in a historic ceremony in Edinburgh that celebrates the Coronation of a new monarch and followed a similar multi-faith format to the Coronation at Westminster Abbey here in May.

The National Service of Thanksgiving and Dedication at St. Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh is symbolic of the monarch's connection with the devolved region.



Britain's King Charles III, left, and Queen Camilla, center, accompanied by the moderator of the High Constables, Roderick Urquhart, right, unveil a plaque at the new Jubilee Gates, installed at the entrance to Abbey Yard to mark the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II, at the Palace of Holyroodhouse, in Edinburgh, Scotland on Tuesday. Agencies

Majesties and the royal family with purity and unity of thoughts, words and deeds to serve and uplift the people of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth," said Dr Srihari Vallabhajousla, Honorary Priest of the Hindu Temple of Scotland in Glasgow, in his reading.

Pak court summons Khan

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

A Pakistani court here on Wednesday fixed Toshakhana case for hearing on Thursday and summoned Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan to appear before it in person.

Additional District and Session Judge Hamayun Dilawar would take up the case for hearing on Thursday, the Express Tribune newspaper reported. Earlier, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) had directed the trial court to re-decide the maintainability of the Toshakhana case within seven days after hearing Khan.

Khan, 70, was indicted in the Toshakhana case on May 10 by Additional Sessions Judge Dilawar, who rejected objections about the admissibility of the case.

Khan had challenged the admissibility of the case before the IHC which set aside the verdict of the trial court. The IHC bench had stated that the trial court had dismissed the petition of the former prime minister on weak grounds.

TOSHKHANA CASE



The bench asked the lower court to consider the petition of Khan as pending.

The Toshakhana issue over the sale of state gifts received by the cricketer-turned-politician became a major issue in national politics after the Election Commission of Pakistan disqualified the former premier for making "false statements and incorrect declaration".

Khan is facing more than 140 cases across the country and faces charges like terrorism, violence, blasphemy, cor-

ruption and murder. He was accused of misusing his 2018 to 2022 premiership to buy and sell gifts in state possession that were received during visits abroad and worth more than Rs140 million (USD 635,000).

The Toshakhana is a department under the administrative control of the Cabinet Division and stores precious gifts given to rulers, parliamentarians, bureaucrats, and officials by heads of other governments and states and foreign dignitaries.

Petition filed in Lahore HC seeking Sharif's disqualification

PTI ■ LAHORE

A petition has been filed in a Pakistani court seeking the disqualification of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for making a "false promise" to the court regarding the return of his elder brother Nawaz Sharif from the UK after his treatment. The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Tuesday adjourned the hearing for an indefinite period, observing that this petition should have moved when Shehbaz Sharif failed to fulfil his promise during the tenure of the previous government.

Nawaz Sharif, the supreme leader of the ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the elder brother of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, has been living in self-exile in the United Kingdom since November 2019.

Petitioner Azhar Abbas contended that Shehbaz Sharif had filed a "false affidavit" before a two-judge bench of the LHC in November 2019 that he would ensure the return of his elder brother within four weeks if he (Nawaz Sharif) was allowed to go abroad for his treatment.

The petitioner said the LHC accepted Shehbaz Sharif's affidavit and allowed Nawaz Sharif, now 73, to go abroad for his treatment for four weeks. But Nawaz Sharif had been travelling to Europe and the Gulf since November 2019 but was not returning to Pakistan as undertaken by Shehbaz Sharif. Besides, it appears that Nawaz Sharif had feigned his illness to secure court relief, he alleged.

Shehbaz Sharif, 71, should be disqualified under the provisions of Articles 62 and 63 of the Constitution, the petitioner pleaded before the court.

Assistant Attorney General Sheraz Zaka objected to the maintainability of the writ petition, saying the petitioner was not an aggrieved person in the matter. He said former premier Nawaz Sharif was allowed to travel abroad by the federal government of the time (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf of Imran Khan). He argued that the petitioner had a remedy to approach an appropriate forum if he believed there was any offence. He requested the court to dismiss the petition as not maintainable. The LHC then adjourned the hearing for an indefinite period.

9 people shot, including 2 minors, in Washington DC July 4th celebration

AP ■ WASHINGTON

Nine people were shot and wounded, including two juveniles, early Wednesday in Washington, DC, police said. Shortly before 1 a.m., police responded to a report of a shooting on Meade Street in the northeastern quadrant of the US capital, Assistant Chief Leslie Parsons of the Metropolitan Police Department said in a statement on Twitter.

Upon their arrival officers discovered multiple shooting victims, including a 9-year-old and a 17-year-old, Parsons said.

A dark coloured SUV seen driving through the neighbourhood, stopped and then shot at the victims outside enjoying the July Fourth holiday, Parsons said, calling the shooting targeted.

Several victims were transported to local hospitals by DC Fire and EMS while others transported themselves. All the victims suffered non-life threat-



Meade Street is seen after multiple people were shot in Washington, DC early on Wednesday.

ening injuries, Parsons said. None were immediately identified.

It was not immediately clear if there was more than one shooter in the vehicle and no arrests have been made.

The DC shooting is the latest in a string of mass shootings

over a violent holiday weekend. Thirty people were shot, two fatally at a block party in Baltimore early Sunday.

Authorities say many of the shooting victims were under 18.

On Monday night, a gunman in a bulletproof vest has

opened fire on the streets of Philadelphia, killing five people and wounding two boys, 2 and 13, before he surrendered to responding officers, police said.

Three people were killed and eight others injured when several men fired indiscriminately into a crowd of hundreds that had gathered in a Texas neighbourhood following a festival in the area, authorities said. The shooting in the Fort Worth neighbourhood of Como happened late Monday night, about two hours after the annual ComoFest ended.

And in Florida, a 7-year-old child was killed in a shooting during an altercation between two groups gathered for July 4th celebrations along a causeway that crosses Tampa Bay, police said.

A man was also hit with gunfire, but was expected to survive, the Tampa Police Department said in a news release. The child was taken to a hospital and pronounced dead, the statement said.

Pak PM hopeful of IMF board approving loan agreement

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday said he was hopeful that the IMF's executive board meeting on July 12 will approve the USD 3 billion nine-month bailout plan with his cash-strapped government and emphasised that the country was no longer under the threat of default.

Pakistan is hoping that the Washington-based lender will release the first tranche of USD 1.1 billion as part of the loan programme.

The Pakistan government and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reached a long-awaited staff-level agreement on June 29 to inject USD 3 billion into the ailing economy after months-long negotiations that pushed the country to the brink of default.

Prime Minister Sharif acknowledged Finance Minister Ishaq Dar's effort in reaching a staff-level agreement with the IMF on a nine-month Stand-by Arrangement (SBA) in the amount of SDR 2,250 million (about USD 3 billion). "Because of Ishaq Dar



and his team's efforts, on July 12, God willing in the board meeting, I am hopeful that it will be approved," he was quoted as saying by The Dawn newspaper.

The USD 3 billion funding, spread over nine months, is higher than expected for Pakistan.

The country was awaiting the release of the remaining USD 2.5 billion from a USD 6.5 billion bailout package agreed in 2019, which expired on June 30.

The nine-month Stand-by Arrangement (SBA), if approved, will bring USD 3 bil-

lion, or 111 per cent of Pakistan's IMF quota which will ease the country's financial crisis.

Shehbaz also stated that he was "grateful" to the IMF Managing Director, Kristalina Georgieva, and her team, adding that this was Pakistan's opportunity to move toward progress.

The prime minister reiterated that unlike the previous government and their "delays" concerning the conditions put forth by the IMF, the SBA was a nine-month-long programme and the government planned to complete it within the stipulated timeline, it said. He said Pakistan was no longer under the threat of default.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said it was the government's responsibility to rehabilitate the country's economic conditions and to help it "stand on its feet".

The initial disbursement is contingent upon the board's approval as the country continues to grapple with a severe balance of payments crisis and declining foreign exchange reserves.

Ukraine, Russia accuse each other of preparing attack on n-plant

AP ■ KYIV

Ukraine and Russia accused each other Wednesday of planning to attack one of the world's largest nuclear power plants, which is located in southeastern Ukraine and occupied by Russian troops, but neither side provided evidence to support their claims of an imminent threat.

The Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant has been a focus of concern since Moscow's forces took control of it and its staff in the early stages of the war. Over the last year, the UN's atomic watchdog repeatedly expressed alarm over the possibility of a radiation catastrophe like the one at Chernobyl after a reactor exploded in 1986.

While Russia and Ukraine regularly traded blame over shelling near the plant that caused power outages, Ukraine has alleged more recently that Moscow might try to cause a deliberate leak in an attempt to derail Kyiv's ongoing counteroffensive in the surrounding Zaporizhzhia region.

Citing the latest intelligence reports, Ukrainian President Volodymyr

Zelenskyy alleged Tuesday night that Russian troops had placed "objects resembling explosives" on top of several power units to "simulate" an attack as part of a false flag operation.

The "foreign objects" were placed on the roof of the plant's third and fourth power units, according to a statement from the General Staff of Ukraine's armed forces. "Their detonation should not damage power units but may create a picture of shelling from Ukraine," the statement said.

The International Atomic Energy Agency has officials stationed at the Russian-held plant, which is still run by its Ukrainian staff.

IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi said his agency's most recent inspection of the plant found no mining activities, "but we remain extremely alert."

"As you know, there is a lot of combat, I have been there a few weeks ago, and there is contact there very close to the plant, so we cannot relax," Grossi said during a visit to Japan. In Russia, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov

raised the specter of a potentially "catastrophic" provocation by the Ukrainian army at the nuclear plant, which is Europe's largest but has its six reactors shut down.

It still needs power and qualified staff to operate crucial cooling systems and other safety features.

"The situation is quite tense. There is a great threat of sabotage by the Kyiv regime, which can be catastrophic in its consequences," Peskov said in response to a reporter's question about the plant.

He also claimed that the Kremlin was pursuing "all measures" to counter the alleged Ukrainian threat.

Grossi said he was aware of both Kyiv's and Moscow's claims and reiterated that "nuclear power plants should never, under any circumstances, be attacked." A nuclear power plant should not be used as a military base," he said. Peskov's comments came after Renat Karchava, an advisor to Russian state nuclear company Rosenergoatom, said there was "no basis" for Zelenskyy's claims of a plot to simulate an explosion.

US Navy: Iran tried to seize 2 oil tankers near Strait of Hormuz

Dubai (AP): Iran tried to seize two oil tankers near the strategic Strait of Hormuz early Wednesday, firing shots at one of them, the US Navy said.

It said that in both cases, the Iranian naval vessels backed off after the US Navy responded, and that both commercial ships continued their voyages.

"The Iranian navy did make attempts to seize commercial tankers lawfully transiting international waters," said Cmdr. Tim Hawkins, spokesman for the US Navy's Fifth Fleet. "The US Navy responded immediately and prevented those seizures."

He said the gunfire directed at the second vessel did not cause casualties or major damage. There was no immediate Iranian comment on the incidents. Ambrey, a maritime intelligence service, said the tanker that was fired upon was a Bahamas-flagged, Greek-owned, US managed crude oil tanker transiting from the United Arab Emirates to Singapore. It said the firing of shots happened 28 nautical miles northeast of Muscat, the capital of Oman.

German Cabinet approves lower 2024 budget

AP ■ BERLIN

Germany's Cabinet on Wednesday approved a draft 2024 budget that foresees lower spending, with defence among the exceptions, as Europe's biggest economy sticks to rules limiting borrowing that were suspended during the coronavirus pandemic.

The government's plan calls for spending of 445.7 billion euros (USD 486 billion), down 6.4 per cent from the 476.3 billion euros it expects to spend this year.

Defence spending is set to rise by 1.7 billion euros to some 51.8 billion euros, some way short of what the defence minister initially sought.

Germany plans to reach a NATO target of spending 2 per cent of gross domestic product on defence next year, a measure on which it has long fallen short, with help from a special 100 billion-euro fund set up to modernize the German military after Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Berlin aims to meet the target via its regular budget later this decade. "Security, economic prosperity and industri-

al fitness for the future, climate neutrality and cohesion are the most important characteristics of a budget that of course is challenged by the fact that many in recent years have got used to the big dimensions" associated with measures to tackle the effects of the pandemic and Russia's war in Ukraine, Chancellor Olaf Scholz told lawmakers.

Scholz's three-party coalition is returning this year to compliance with Germany's so-called debt brake, which allows new borrowing to the tune of only 0.35 per cent of annual gross domestic product.

It can be suspended to deal with natural disasters or other emergencies that are out of the state's control, and was for three years after the coronavirus pandemic started in 2020 to allow for large amounts of borrowing to finance various support and stimulus packages.

Finance Minister Christian Lindner and his pro-business Free Democrats have been particularly adamant about saving money to adhere to those rules, and the coalition also has agreed at their insistence not to raise taxes.

China, EU at odds over top diplomat's visit, cancellation at last minute

AP ■ TAIPEI

China has abruptly cancelled a visit to Beijing by the European Union's top diplomat, the EU said on Wednesday, amid ongoing disagreements between the two powers over trade, human rights and the Ukraine war. Josep Borrell, the EU's high representative for foreign affairs and security policy, was due to arrive in China on July 10 for talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang and other officials, according to an announcement by the EU ambassador to Beijing on Sunday.

The European and Chinese diplomats were set to discuss topics including trade, human rights and China's stance on the war in Ukraine, according to Ambassador Jorge Toledo.

But China has cancelled Borrell's visit, the EU announced, without saying why.

"Unfortunately, we were informed by the Chinese counterparts that the envisaged dates next week are no longer possible and we must now look for alternatives," EU spokesperson Nabila Massrali said in an emailed statement on Wednesday. "It is for China to com-

municate on the reasons," she added. "We will adapt and find together a new date."

China's Foreign Ministry was vague on the topic.

"China attaches high importance to Sino-European relations and has maintained exchanges with Europe at all levels and in various aspects," ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbing said at a routine briefing in Beijing on Wednesday.

"We welcome Representative Borrell to visit China as soon as possible at the convenience of both sides, and we are ready to carry on exchanges with the European side."

Borrell was initially scheduled to visit Beijing in April but had to postpone after testing positive for Covid-19, the EU said. While it remains unclear what has caused the latest cancellation, it comes on the heels of a summit by EU member states last week during which the bloc endorsed a strategy to try to procure critical materials from sources other than China, while insisting it did not want to entirely "decouple" from the world's second-largest economy.

The member states also affirmed the EU's "multifaceted" position on China, which the bloc

labels as "simultaneously a partner, a competitor and a systemic rival."

The "systemic rival" designation, first adopted by the EU in 2019, has long irked Beijing, as have recent European efforts to align with the United States on reducing dependencies on Chinese trade and supply chains.

Brussels, on the other hand, takes issue with China's refusal to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Beijing claims it is neutral in the conflict but has backed Russia by organizing frequent state visits and joint military drills.

The EU member states last week urged China "to press Russia to stop its war of aggression, and immediately, completely and unconditionally withdraw its troops from Ukraine."

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and French President Emmanuel Macron made similar requests during visits to Beijing earlier this year.

The EU also opposes a change in the status quo of China's relationship with Taiwan, even as Beijing continues to threaten to take over the self-ruled island, which it considers a breakaway province.

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NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Share Certificates pertaining to shares of the Company detailed below have been reported lost and request(s) for issue of duplicate Certificates in lieu thereof have been received by the Company :-

Sl. No.	Folio No.	Name of the Share Holder / Legal Heir (Claimant)	Cert-No.	Dist-No.	Lost Shares
1	SRF0026382	SHYAMA SHARMA SURESH SHARMA	1126461	308621326-3037	1712
			369758-61	17041797-825	29
			518758-61	25061589-617	29
2	SRF0032977	D N LOHANI SUDHA LOHANI	1126464	308623462-893	432
			90191403	14984335-384	50
			644690	9794550-69	20
3	SRF0137086	S C SUKHIIJA ROMITA SUKHIIJA	644690	15292525-554	30
			1125667	308342450-649	200
			1128765	309571234-1625	392
4	C 0000414	C K PADMANABHAN	90006494	4243373-376	4
			90015497-98	6306410-453	44
			90154134	10539330-79	50
			436321-22	21529086-185	100
			585321-22	29548878-977	100
5	SRF0049947	A VIJAYALAKSHMI A S ARUMUGAM	90202567-68	15414060-159	100
			90241483-84	10172670-769	100
			1129901	309967858-8257	400
6	SRF0030676	NANJAMMA VENKATRAMIAH PARVATHI PRABHAKAR	1129901	309967858-8257	400

Any person having any claim/objection in respect of the above requests should lodge such claim/objection with the company at its Corporate Office within 15 days of the publication of this notice, failing which the company will consider to give effect to the above requests. Public is hereby cautioned against dealing with the aforesaid share certificates.

for **SRF LIMITED**
 Sd/-
RAJAT LAKHANPAL
 Sr. VP (Corporate Compliance)
 & Company Secretary

Place: Gurugram
 Date: 04-07-2023

Net zero target for shipping industry could be reset

AP ■ LONDON

The shipping industry's carbon neutral deadline could be reset to a flexible 'mid-century' deadline considering the national circumstances, a relaxation from the strict 2050 goal that was actively deliberated among the member states of the International Maritime Organisation (IMO). The crucial 80th session of the Maritime Environment Protection Committee (MEPC)

of the IMO is likely to reach a consensus, mostly considering the demand from the developing nations, to reset the carbon neutral goal to mid-century, with interim goals of reduction of GHG emissions 20 per cent by 2030 and 70 per cent by 2040. "These targets seem to be achievable with a mid-century deadline, considering the national circumstances," Ajithkumar Sukumaran, Additional DG, Shipping, and an Indian delegate at the MEPC

80, told PTI. Most of the developing nations have been lobbying for the mid-century target — could be 2051, 2052 or 2053, insisting on not strictly fixing 2050 as the year for achieving net zero. The shipping industry accounts for almost 3 per cent of global emissions.

Earlier, during a media interaction, the IMO Secretary-General Kitack Lim had said that there were three options put forward, net zero by 2050,

by mid-century considering the national circumstances, and beyond mid-century.

"Agreement is there for checkpoints, cut on total emissions by 20 per cent by 2030 over 25 per cent and 70 per cent by 2040 over 75 per cent," Lim said.

The developing nations are particular about considering the national circumstances before setting any targets for achieving net zero. "We have to look at the impact and ensure

that no decision should paralyse the industry. So we are also in favour of the mid-century target considering the national circumstances," Vusi September, Head of Corporate Affairs and Government Relations, South African Maritime Safety Authority, representing South Africa at MEPC 80, said. He said some of the present targets put forward by the developed nations are "unrealistic" even for them to achieve.

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 Ref : MD/MK/04/NIT/1248
 Date : 05.07.2023

TENDER NOTICE

MPMKVVCL, Bhopal, invites following bids from manufacturers through e-tendering.

Sr. No.	Tender specification Number	Particulars	Approx. Value (Rs. Lakh)	Tender Fee including GST (in Rs.)	Date of Pre-Bid Conference	Date of opening of Tender
1	MD/MK/04/949	Supply of Various Size of PVC Insulated Armoured Aluminium Cable	236.19	11800/-	18.07.2023 at 3:00 PM	02.08.2023 at 3:00 PM
2	MD/MK/04/950	Supply of 3X150+1X16+1X95Sq mm. LT AB Cable	762.11	11800/-	18.07.2023 at 3:00 PM	02.08.2023 at 3:00 PM

Other details and full Tender documents would be available on Company website <https://portal.mpcz.in> & Govt. Website <https://mptenders.gov.in> shortly.
 M.P. Madhyam/110702/2023

CHIEF GENERAL MANAGER (PROC.)

Sensex slides marginally after record-breaking rally

Nifty hits fresh peak

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices ended flat on Wednesday with Sensex sliding 33 points and Nifty gaining 9 points after an unabated record-breaking rally in the last few trading sessions. Weak global market trends and fall in HDFC twins also spoiled markets party.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dipped 33.01 points or 0.05 per cent to settle at 65,446.04. The benchmark remained in the negative territory for most part of the trade and fell 222.56 points or 0.33 per cent to 65,256.49 in intra-day.

The NSE Nifty eked out marginal gains of 9.50 points or 0.05 per cent to end at its fresh record high of 19,398.50. During the day, it hit a high of 19,421.60 and a low of 19,339.60.

From the Sensex pack, HDFC Bank fell over 3 per cent and HDFC declined nearly 3 per cent.

Bajaj Finserv, Wipro, Tata Motors, Axis Bank, NTPC, Bajaj Finance and UltraTech Cement were among the other laggards.

However, Maruti, Tech Mahindra, IndusInd Bank, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, ICICI Bank, Power Grid and Nestle were among the gainers.

Markets remained range bound and ended almost unchanged. After the flat start, the Nifty oscillated in a narrow



band and finally settled around the day's high at 19,398.50 levels. Meanwhile, a mixed trend across sectors kept the participants busy wherein FMCG and auto majors were in the limelight. Besides, a modest up move in the midcap and smallcap space added to the trading opportunities," said Ajit Mishra, SVP - Technical Research, Religare Broking Ltd.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.68 per cent and smallcap index advanced 0.62 per cent.

Among the indices, FMCG jumped 1.71 per cent, auto rallied 1.62 per cent, oil & gas (1.04 per cent), consumer discretionary (0.86 per cent), energy (0.75 per cent) and services (0.68 per cent).

Financial Services, telecommunica-

tion and bankex were the laggards.

In the past five trading sessions, the 30-share BSE benchmark jumped over 2,500 points and the Nifty climbed 723.5 points since June 26.

Rallying for the fifth straight session on Tuesday, the BSE benchmark jumped 274 points or 0.42 per cent to settle at its all-time closing high of 65,479.05. During the day, the benchmark had surged 467.92 points or 0.71 per cent to hit its lifetime intra-day peak of 65,672.97.

The Nifty climbed 66.45 points or 0.34 per cent to end at a fresh record high of 19,389. During the day, it advanced 111.6 points or 0.57 per cent to hit its all-time intra-day peak of 19,434.15.

India's services sector growth eased

to a three-month low in June but service providers continued to signal positive demand trends, which resulted in a stronger increase in new business volumes and further job creation, a monthly survey said on Wednesday.

The seasonally adjusted S&P Global India Services PMI Business Activity Index fell from 61.2 in May to 58.5 in June. Despite falling from May, the latest figure was consistent with a sharp pace of growth.

"Global worries along with moderation in Services PMI data briefly impacted the domestic market's rally. Heightened trade tensions between the US and China, coupled with uncertainties surrounding the upcoming release of Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) minutes, tested the risk appetite of global investors.

"However, the market's last-minute broad based recovery serves as a reaffirmation of investors' confidence in the Indian economy," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower.

Equity markets in Europe were trading in the negative territory. The US markets were shut on Tuesday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude dipped 0.43 per cent to USD 75.92 a barrel. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,603.15 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

RBI panel suggests steps for internationalisation of rupee

PTI ■ MUMBAI

A Reserve Bank-appointed committee on Wednesday suggested a host of short-term and long-term measures for internationalisation of Indian rupee, including efforts for inclusion of the Indian currency in IMF's Special Drawing Rights (SDR) basket.

SDR is an international reserve asset created by the IMF to supplement the official reserves of its member countries. It is a potential claim on the freely usable currencies of IMF members. As such, SDRs can provide a country with liquidity. A basket of currencies defines the SDR: the US dollar, euro, Chinese yuan, Japanese yen, and the British pound.

The Inter Departmental Group (IDG) headed by RBI executive director R S Ratho in its report said that internationalisation is a process rather than an event, with continuous efforts to build upon all the initiatives that have been taken in the past.

Suggesting short-term measures, the panel said, there is a need to design a template and adopt a standardised approach for examining the proposals on bilateral and multilateral trade arrangements for invoicing, settlement and payment in INR and local currencies and encour-



age opening of INR accounts for non-residents (other than nostro accounts of overseas banks) both in India and outside India.

The Inter-Departmental Group (IDG) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was formed in December 2021.

The objective of the IDG was to review the extant position of INR as an international currency and to frame a road map for the internationalisation of INR. The IDG has since submitted its report containing its final set of recommendations.

The report and its recommendations reflect the views of the IDG and do not in any way reflect the official position of the Reserve Bank of India. The recommendations of the report will be examined for implementation, it said.

The IDG said that over the long term, India will achieve higher level of trade linkages with other countries and improved macro-economic parameters, and INR may ascend to a level where it would be widely used and preferred by other economies as a 'vehicle currency'.

Sebi proposes consolidated cyber security framework

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Markets watchdog Sebi has proposed a consolidated cyber security and cyber resilience framework wherein all regulated entities need to put in place an up-to-date cyber crisis management plan.

The framework has been mooted to further strengthen cyber-risks, incidents prevention, preparedness, and response capacities of the entities.

Sebi has issued a consultation paper on 'Consolidated Cyber Security and Cyber Resilience Framework (CSCRF)' for Sebi Regulated Entities' looks at providing a common structure for multiple approaches to cyber security to prevent any cyber-risks/incidents.

Comments have been sought on the consultation paper till July 25.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said the framework is based on five concurrent and continuous functions of cyber security as defined by NIST — Identify, Protect, Detect, Respond, and Recover.

NIST refers to the National Institute of Standards and Technology.

According to Sebi, the framework will continue to be updated and improved as technology evolves and the securities market evolves as different REs (Regulated Entities) provide their feedback.



"All REs shall formulate an up-to-date Cyber Crisis Management Plan (CCMP)," the consultation paper issued on Tuesday said.

They would also have to put in place a comprehensive incident response management plan and respective Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

"Alerts generated from monitoring and detection systems shall be suitably investigated for Root Cause Analysis (RCA)," it noted.

With technological developments in the securities market, Sebi said that maintaining robust cyber security and cyber resilience to protect the organisations operating in the securities market from cyber risks/incidents has become indispensable.

The regulator has been issuing targeted cyber security and cyber resilience frameworks for various regulated entities since 2015.

Bajaj Auto, Triumph launch two co-developed motorcycles in India

PTI ■ PUNE

Bajaj Auto and British motorcycle brand Triumph on Wednesday launched co-developed Triumph Speed 400 and Scrambler 400 X motorcycles in India. These motorcycles were unveiled globally in London last week. The two companies formed a global partnership in 2017.

Triumph Speed 400 has been priced at Rs 2.33 lakh with the inaugural price of the bike for the first 10,000 customers pegged at Rs 2.23 lakh, the two partners announced at the launch event on Wednesday. Speed 400 will be available

in the market from mid-this month while Scrambler 400 X, whose price is yet to be announced, will hit the market by October this year.

At the launch, Bajaj Auto Managing Director Rajiv Bajaj said, "we are hopeful of (achieving) significant volume" with the launch of the two new motorcycles, developed in partnership with Triumph.

He said that the motorcycles will be produced at Bajaj Auto's new manufacturing facility in Chakan, which currently has a capacity to produce 5,000 units of these bikes per month. It can be scaled up depending on the demand.



"We will take some time to scale up...we will watch the demand and assess it (before scaling up), he said.

The company also said that over 100 Triumph World showrooms will come up across 80 cities within this fiscal year.

Last month, Bajaj Auto and

Triumph Motorcycles announced the completion of the transfer of the latter's India sales and marketing operations to the Indian firm.

As part of the partnership, the current 15 Triumph Motorcycle dealerships will be managed by Bajaj Auto but will remain exclusive to the brand and continue to operate in line with Triumph's global standards, the statement said.

The Pune-based automaker said the company already operates four distinct and exclusive dealership networks for its KTM, Bajaj Motorcycles, Chetak Electric and Bajaj three-wheelers range of products.

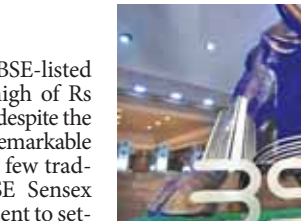
Market valuation of BSE-listed firms reach all-time high of ₹299.90 lakh cr

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms reached an all-time high of Rs 299.90 lakh crore on Wednesday despite the Sensex falling marginally after a remarkable record-breaking rally in the last few trading sessions. The 30-share BSE Sensex dipped 33.01 points or 0.05 per cent to settle at 65,446.04, after rallying in the past five trading straight sessions. During the day, the benchmark hit a low of 65,256.49 and a high of 65,584.33.

The BSE benchmark had jumped over 2,500 points in the past five sessions.

But, investor sentiments largely remained unfazed by the muted trend in equities during the day, with the market capitalisation (mcap) of BSE-listed firms scal-



ing a lifetime peak of 2,99,90,050.73 crore.

The mcap of BSE-listed companies is Rs 9,949.27 crore away from the historic Rs 300 lakh crore mark. Investors' wealth also climbed Rs 1.32 lakh crore on Tuesday.

From the Sensex pack, Maruti jumped 3.61 per cent, IndusInd Bank, Tech Mahindra, Hindustan Unilever, ITC, ICICI Bank, Power Grid and Nestle were among

the other major gainers.

HDFC Bank fell over 3 per cent and HDFC declined nearly 3 per cent.

Bajaj Finserv, Wipro, Tata Motors, UltraTech Cement, Axis Bank and NTPC were among the other laggards.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.68 per cent and smallcap index advanced 0.62 per cent.

Among the indices, FMCG jumped 1.71 per cent, auto rallied 1.62 per cent, oil & gas (1.04 per cent), consumer discretionary (0.86 per cent), energy (0.75 per cent) and services (0.68 per cent). Financial Services, telecommunication and bankex were the laggards. Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) bought equities worth Rs 1,603.15 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

Unsold housing stocks in Delhi-NCR drops 21% to nearly 1.11 lakh units at June-end: Anarock

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Unsold housing stocks in Delhi-NCR fell 21 per cent annually during the April-June period of this calendar year to nearly 1.11 lakh units on better demand and calibrated new supply, according to Anarock.

Delhi-NCR's unsold housing stock at the end of the June quarter stood at 1,10,990 units as against 1,41,250 units in the corresponding period of 2022,

real estate consultant Anarock said.

"The increasing sway of branded developers has been steadily boosting homebuyer confidence in Delhi-NCR. Before the pandemic, this market was being burdened by excessive supply from unbranded players.

"Today, despite very healthy sales, branded developers are carefully calibrating the supply pipeline," Santhosh Kumar, Vice

Chairman at Anarock, said.

Compared with the pre-Covid Q2 2019-end period, there has been a 39 per cent reduction in overall unsold housing stock in the whole of NCR, he added.

Noida saw a maximum decline of 31 per cent, followed by Ghaziabad (26 per cent), Gurugram (21 per cent) and Greater Noida (20 per cent).

As per the data, the unsold housing stocks in Gurugram

declined to 46,650 units at the end of the April-June quarter from 59,120 units in the year-ago period.

Unsold residential properties in Noida fell to 8,440 units from 12,150 units, while in Greater Noida, the number dropped to 23,170 units from 28,870 units.

Anarock data showed a 26 per cent decline in unsold inventory in Ghaziabad to 13,385 units from 18,000 units.

Looking to double turnover by 2030-31: Maruti Suzuki India CEO

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Maruti Suzuki India is looking to double its turnover to around Rs 1.68 lakh crore by 2030-31 from FY22 level in line with parent Suzuki Motor Corporation's global growth strategy, company Managing Director and CEO Hisashi Takeuchi said on Wednesday.

The company expects India to "play a very big role" in Suzuki Motor Corporation's goal to achieve a global turnover of Rs 4.32 lakh crore in FY30-31, which would be exactly double the turnover of Rs 2.16 lakh crore achieved in FY21-22, he said.

"Yes, of course" because we would like to make our volume double the size, Takeuchi said when asked if Maruti Suzuki India was also looking to double its turnover like its parent Suzuki.

He said, "We will invest for production facility, we will invest for human resources so that we will be able to handle such a big volume by 2030. So that is our plan."

Maruti Suzuki India had clocked net sales of Rs 83,798 crore in 2021-22. Takeuchi was speaking at the sidelines of the company's launch of premium



multi-purpose vehicle Invicto, marking the mass market car-maker's entry in the over Rs 20 lakh segment.

While he did not elaborate on the investments required for doubling the turnover, he said part of it would also come from Suzuki's planned investment of around Rs 2.8 lakh crore by FY30-31. The investment by Suzuki is towards enriching products, bringing new technologies and setting up new facilities, he added.

"Right now, we have almost like a 2.2 million production capacity, together with SMG (Suzuki Motor Gujarat), and this production capacity should go beyond 4 million for that almost 2 million additional capacity is required," he added.

The additional investment

would be over and above those required for new technology like electric vehicles and batteries.

Takeuchi said construction at the company's new manufacturing facility at Kharkhoda in Haryana is in full swing and "we plan to commission the first plant with an annual manufacturing capacity of 2.5 lakh units by 2025."

Further, he said, "Once fully operational, the facility will have an annual capacity to manufacture 10 lakh vehicles and will be one of the world's largest single location manufacturing sites."

In addition, he said, "We have received the Board approval for expanding our production capacity to manufacture up to 10 lakh additional units per annum over and above Kharkhoda."



Rupee falls 22 paise to close at 82.23 against US dollar

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee fell 22 paise to close at 82.23 (provisional) against the US dollar on Wednesday, weighed down by a weak tone in local equity markets and disappointing domestic macroeconomic data.

The strength of the American currency in the overseas market and firm crude oil prices also put downside pressure on the rupee.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 82.05 against the dollar, and finally settled at 82.23 (provisional), down 22 paise from its previous close.

During the day, the rupee touched a high of 82.05 and a low of 82.25 against the green-back.

IN BRIEF

KIIT SHINES IN TIMES UNIVERSITY RANKINGS 2023
Bhubaneswar: KIIT has consistently excelled in various rankings and accreditations. Every year, universities and educational institutions are ranked according to various criteria by various government and private organizations globally. As the only institution in Odisha, KIIT has always excelled due to its quality. KIIT Deemed to be University has once again demonstrated its strong academic foundation, securing an impressive 12th position among Indian universities and ranking in the esteemed cohort of 151-200 worldwide in the prestigious Times Higher Education Young University Rankings 2023.

PFC SIGNS MOU WITH KING GEORGE'S MEDICAL UNIVERSITY
New Delhi: Power Finance Corporation Ltd. (PFC) a Maharatna Company and India's leading NBFC in the power sector has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with King George's Medical University (KGMU), Lucknow to facilitate the procurement of life-saving medical devices specifically aimed at assisting underprivileged cancer patients.

4,900 fake GST registrations cancelled since May 16, ₹15-K cr tax evasion detected

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

GST authorities have so far cancelled over 4,900 GST registrations and detected tax evasion of over Rs 15,000 crore during the ongoing two-month drive to weed out fake GSTINs which will end on July 15, a senior tax official said on Wednesday.

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs

(CBIC) member Shashank Priya said the large number of fake registrations unearthed during the drive underlines the need for policy changes to tighten Goods and Services tax (GST) registration and return filing process.

Over 69,600 GST Identification Numbers (GSTINs) have been selected for physical verification, of which 59,178 have been verified by field officers during the ongoing pan-India special drive.

DJOKER WINS, AGAIN

DJOKOVIC RESUMES WIMBLEDON TITLE BID AS RAIN, PROTEST CAUSE DISRUPTION

AFP ■ LONDON

Novak Djokovic was bidding to take another step towards a record-equaling eighth men's Wimbledon title on Wednesday as the All England Club reeled from more rain delays and a climate protest.

World number two Djokovic will claim a 350th Grand Slam match win if he defeats Australia's Jordan Thompson.

Only the retired Roger Federer, an eight-time Wimbledon champion, and Serena Williams, have won more matches at the majors.

The 36-year-old Djokovic is also chasing a 24th career Grand Slam title, which would take him level with Margaret Court's all-time record. However, he will not underestimate the 70th-ranked Thompson, who reached the final of the s-Hertogenbosch grass-court event last month.

"I don't recall the last time I played an official tennis match anywhere, particularly in Grand Slams, where I didn't feel any nerves," Djokovic said after his opener at the All England Club.

"It's just a matter of how you adapt." Djokovic swept past Pedro Cachin in the first round

on Monday on a damp Centre Court surface, jokingly attempting to mop up excess moisture with a towel at one stage.

The unseasonable cold and wet have given officials a scheduling headache. Tuesday's torrential downpours meant only one hour's play was possible on the outside courts and just eight of the scheduled 77 matches were completed.

At the start of play on Wednesday, 35 first round matches remained to be completed. In all, 87 ties were on the menu, but rain again played spoilsport, with the start delayed on outside courts by 90 minutes.

Once play got underway, two climate protesters from the Just Stop Oil environmental activist group ran onto Court 18, one of the showpiece arenas, to scatter orange confetti and jigsaw pieces during Grigor Dimitrov's match against Sho Shimabukuro.

TWO ARRESTS

The two, both in their 60s, were swiftly removed by security staff.

Following an incident on Court 18, two individuals have been arrested on suspicion of



aggravated trespass and criminal damage and these individuals have now been removed from the grounds," said a Wimbledon spokesman.

As the weather improved, 11th seeded Daria Kasatkina became the first woman to make the third round, while a

number of opening round matches had yet to start.

Russia's Kasatkina, a quarter-finalist in 2018, eased by Britain's Jodie Burrage in straight sets. Women's world number one Iga Swiatek, the US and French Open champion, takes on Spain's Sara Sorribes Tormo.

The 22-year-old Pole has yet to get past the last 16 at Wimbledon. Third-ranked Daniil Medvedev, who was banned from the tournament last year along with all other Russian and Belarusian players after the invasion of Ukraine, takes on Arthur Fery of Britain.

France-born Fery, 20, a former student of Stanford University, is ranked at 391 and is making his Grand Slam debut.

"I really missed it. I always said, I love playing this tournament," said former number one Medvedev.

Petra Kvitova, widely seen as a contender for a third women's title, begins her campaign against Jasmine Paolini.

The veteran Czech defeated the 44th-ranked Italian at the same stage in 2022 and arrives at the All England Club fresh from winning her sixth career grass-court title in Berlin.

Kvitova's compatriot, Karolina Pliskova, the 2021 Wimbledon runner-up, tackles Serbia's Natalija Stevanovic, ranked at a lowly 225.

After falling in qualifying 10 times at the Slams, Stevanovic is finally making her Grand Slam main draw debut at the age of 28.

Fifth-seeded Stefanos Tsitsipas resumes his clash with former US Open champion Dominic Thiem after dropping the first set on Tuesday.

Holger Rune, the world number six, is back on court to complete his first round clash with Britain's George Loffhagen.



Iga Swiatek eases into 3rd round

AP ■ WIMBLEDON (ENGLAND)

Wimbledon increased its security in coordination with London police and other agencies for this year's tournament, in part as a result of protests at other major sports venues in Britain this year.

The rain had already created a major backlog of matches after the first two days, and only eight matches were completed on Tuesday. Several matches scheduled for the outside courts on Wednesday were pushed back to Thursday.

Only Centre Court and No. 1 Court at the All England Club have roofs.

On Centre Court on Wednesday, top-seeded wo-

man Iga Swiatek eased into the third round with a 6-2, 6-0 win over Sara Sorribes Tormo, hitting 27 winners compared to just three for her opponent.

Defending men's champion Novak Djokovic was up next, facing Jordan Thompson of Australia in the second round.

On No. 1 Court, third-seeded Daniil Medvedev beat British 20-year-old Arthur Fery 7-5, 6-4, 6-3.

American duo Taylor Fritz and Frances Tiafoe both reached the second round, but in contrasting fashion. The ninth-seeded Fritz came from a set down to beat Yannick Hanfmann of Germany 6-4, 2-

6, 4-6, 7-5, 6-3 on No.

Serie A champion Napoli to kick off title defense



AP ■ MILAN

Serie A champion Napoli will kick off its title defense at newly-promoted Frosinone.

That will mark Rudi Garcia's first match as Napoli coach after he replaced Luciano Spalletti at the end of last season.

The upcoming Serie A schedule was announced Wednesday.

Runner-up Lazio visits Lecce on the opening weekend, while Inter Milan hosts Monza and AC Milan visits Bologna. Juventus also plays at Udinese.

The season starts the weekend of Aug. 19 and the final day will be on May 26. In a break with tradition there will be no pause over the Christmas period, with matches played on

Dec. 23 and 30.

There will also be only one midweek round, on Sept. 27, and four international breaks.

The first matches between the top teams come in the third round when Napoli hosts Lazio and AC Milan visits Roma. That weekend also sees Inter host fierce rival Fiorentina.

The first derby match between the Milan teams takes place the following weekend, Sept. 17, with Lazio also encountering back-to-back difficult matches as it visits Juventus.

The first Rome derby - between Roma and Lazio - will be the weekend of Nov. 12.

The final round sees Napoli host Lecce, Lazio at home to Sassuolo, Inter at Hellas Verona, Milan playing Salernitana and Juventus against Monza.

Indian footballer Jeakson creates flutter by wrapping himself in Meitei flag

PTI ■ BENGALURU

National team's Manipuri footballer Jeakson Singh created a flutter on Tuesday night by wrapping himself in a Meitei flag while collecting his individual medal after India beat Kuwait in the final of the SAFF Championship.

The flag Jeakson wrapped himself in, is called Flag of Kangleipak or Salai Taret Flag - a rectangular seven-colour flag which represents the seven clan dynasties of the Meitei ethnicity in ancient Manipur.

The North-Eastern state is in turmoil since ethnic clashes broke out between Meitei and Kuki communities in May. The Meitei community has been demanding its inclusion in the

Scheduled Tribe list like the Kuki community, whose members primarily reside in the hills. The tribal communities have protested the Meitei demand.

The Indian government had to deploy military to restore peace in the region with more than 100 people losing their lives along with mass destruction of public and private property.

Jeakson belongs to Meitei clan and his gesture led to widespread criticism with netizens putting up photographs and stills of Salai Taret flag being hoisted after destroying Kuki churches.

The 22-year-old midfielder, who became the first Indian to score in a FIFA World Cup in the 2017 edition of the U17 tournament at home, late in the night



backtracked after his symbolic gesture attracted criticism from some quarters. Jeakson, took to twitter late in the night and defended himself.

"Dear Fans, By celebrating in the flag, I did not want to hurt

the sentiments of anyone. I intended to bring notice to the issues that my home state, Manipur, is facing currently. This win tonight is dedicated to all the Indians," he tweeted.

Earlier in an interaction

with ESPN.In, Jeakson urged people in his state to maintain peace. "It's my Manipur flag. I just wanted to tell everyone in India and Manipur to stay in peace and not fight. I want peace. It's been 2 months now and still fighting is going on," Jeakson said.

"I don't want that kind of thing to happen more and I just want to bring the government's and other people's attention to get peace you know."

"My family is safe but there are lot of families who have suffered and lost their home and all. Yeah it's difficult now...Even for me it's difficult to go back home now with the situation...Even I don't know what's going to happen. I hope things get well soon," the talented player added.

Mason Mount says goodbye to Chelsea

AP ■ MANCHESTER

Staring straight into the camera, Mason Mount bid an emotional farewell to Chelsea fans as the England international closes in on a move to Manchester United.

Mount, who was a graduate of Chelsea's famed academy, spent 18 years at the London club.

Now he is about to join its Premier League rival United in a deal worth 55 million pounds (USD 69 million) and is set to sign a five-year contract.

"Given the speculation over the last six months this may not come as a surprise to you, but it doesn't make it any easier to tell that I've made the decision to leave Chelsea," he said in a video message posted on Instagram on Tuesday night.

"I know some of you won't be happy with my decision but it is what's right for me at this moment in my career."

Mount, sporting bleached blonde hair and a tan from a recent holiday, said fans deserved more than "just a written statement," adding "we've been through a lot together."

"I wanted to tell you how grateful I've been for all of your support over the last 18 years," he said.

The midfielder joined Chelsea when he was 6 years old and became a fan favourite after rising through the ranks to become a key player in the club's Champions League triumph in 2021.

He made 195 appearances and scored 33



goals. He went from being named the club's academy player of the year in 2017, to winning the first team player of the year award in 2021 and 2022.

During his time at Chelsea, the 24-year-old Mount also established himself as a regular for England.

Now he is set to begin the next chapter of his career at United, with manager Erik ten Hag making him a key target ahead of the club's return to the Champions League next season.

Mount's contract at United will have the option of a further 12 months.

United will also have to pay an extra 5 million pounds (USD 6.

MU gives Ronaldo's shirt to Mason Mount

AP ■ MANCHESTER (ENGLAND)

Wearing the iconic No. 7 shirt adorned by Manchester United greats like Cristiano Ronaldo and David Beckham, Mason Mount became the club's first signing of the off-season on Wednesday.

And upon completion of his 55 million pounds (\$69 million) transfer from Chelsea, the 24-year-old midfielder declared his intention to emulate United's stars of the past.

"I am hugely ambitious; I know how amazing it feels to win major trophies and what it takes to do it," Mount said. "I will be giving everything to experience that again at Manchester United."

The No. 7 has been worn by some of United's greatest

players including 1960s icon George Best, Bryan Robson, who was dubbed Captain Marvel in the 80s and 90s; and Eric Cantona, who inspired the start of the club's near 20-year dominance of English soccer in 90s and 2000s. Beckham and Ronaldo are global icons that have transcended the sport, as well as winning soccer's biggest prizes. In other words, it is a big shirt to fill. Not that United thinks that will be a problem for a player who won the Champions League with Chelsea in 2021 and has established himself as an England regular.

"Mason is an extremely intelligent footballer and has so many fantastic technical qualities that will significantly add to our squad," United football director John Murtough said.



Former Liverpool star Firmino joins Al-Ahli

AP ■ JEDDAH

Roberto Firmino signed for Al-Ahli to become the latest star to head to Saudi Arabia's lucrative Pro League. The Brazil striker left Liverpool at the end of last season after a trophy-filled eight-year spell, which saw him lift every major club title.

Now, at the age of 31, he will join a host of other top soccer stars in Saudi Arabia as the oil-rich kingdom embarks on a

spectacular attempt to raise the profile of its league. "I always played for big teams, now I am in Al-Ahli," Firmino said in a video posted on Twitter by the club to announce his signing on Tuesday.

Al-Ahli, based in Jeddah, has already signed former Chelsea goalkeeper Edouard Mendy this offseason.

It is one of four teams that recently came under the ownership of the kingdom's sovereign

wealth Public Investment Fund.

Other Saudi Pro League teams have secured star signings such as Karim Benzema, N'Golo Kante, Kalidou Koulibaly and Marcelo Brozovic. Cristiano Ronaldo started the trend when he joined Al-Nassr in January.

Firmino won the Champions League, Premier League, FA Cup and English League Cup with Liverpool. Other titles included the Club World Cup and European Super Cup.

PSG replaces Christophe Galtier with Luis Enrique

AFP ■ FRANCE

Paris Saint-Germain fired coach Christophe Galtier after a disappointing season on Wednesday and replaced him with former Spain and Barcelona manager Luis Enrique.

Enrique was introduced at a press conference hours after Galtier was dismissed. Club president Nasser Al-Khelaifi said his arrival will mark the start of a "new cycle, with a new style of play."

PSG in an earlier statement thanked Galtier, who had one year left to run on his contract, "for his professionalism and commitment."

Galtier's assistants Thierry Oleksiak and Joao Sacramento were also being fired.

In its so far ill-fated quest for Champions League glory, PSG appointed an eighth coach in 12 years of Qatari ownership, with World Cup top scor-

er Kylian Mbappé set to play for a fifth coach since joining in 2017.

Enrique has been without a contract since Spain's elimination from the World Cup last year.

The 53-year-old coach took over the national team in 2018 to start revamping the squad after its elimination in the round of 16 of the World Cup in Russia. He temporarily left because of the illness and eventual death of his young daughter, but returned in 2019.

He helped Spain reach the last four of the Nations League twice, and also led it to the semifinals of the European Championship. He was more successful with Barcelona, winning the Champions League, La Liga, and Copa del Rey in his first season in charge.

Galtier led PSG to another French league title as expected, but the club was eliminated early in the Champions League and the French Cup by rival



Marseille this past season. PSG's form slumped after the World Cup, with 10 losses in 28 games in 2023.

PSG was unbeaten in all competitions when the European season paused in November for the World Cup in Qatar.

Mbappé's league-leading 29 goals arguably saved the club from losing the title, which was retained with only one game to spare, and just one point ahead of unheralded Lens.

PSG's final game was a 3-2 defeat to modest Clermont and highlighted the glaring weaknesses in midfield and defense that Mbappé's goals have papered over.

In addition to his star-studded team's mediocre performances, Galtier was destabilized by allegations he made racist and anti-Muslim comments when he was in charge of French club Nice. He has been summoned to stand trial in December as

part of the investigation.

Galtier signed a two-year contract last July after leaving Nice, which hired him after the French coach's outstanding leadership led Lille to the title over PSG in 2021 in a huge upset. Lille was the only team to deny PSG the trophy in six seasons with Mbappé, who joined for 180 million euros (\$194 million) after winning the title with Monaco in 2017.

Since cash-rich Qatari investors QSI took over in June 2011, Carlo Ancelotti is the only coach not to be fired, leaving for Real Madrid in 2013.

But Ancelotti was hired only after Antoine Kombouaré was astonishingly axed in December 2011 when PSG was three points clear of Montpellier at the top. PSG lost the title by three points in an embarrassing defeat, and the casual way in which Kombouaré was replaced set the tone for over a decade of musical chairs.

YASHASVI, TILAK EARN MAIDEN T20I CALL-UP

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Two-format skipper Rohit Sharma and the peerless Virat Kohli are unlikely to feature anytime soon in the Indian T20 team as they were once again left out of the 15-member squad led by Hardik Pandya that will take on the West Indies in a five-match series, starting August 3.

The side led by Hardik has a youthful look to it with the only player above 30 being world No.1 batter and team's vice-captain Suryakumar Yadav.

The only new face in the team is Hyderabad and Mumbai Indians left-hander Tilak Varma, who had made a strong case for himself during the past two IPL seasons batting in the middle-order and donning the role of a finisher with a strike-rate of 142-plus in 47 IPL and Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy games.

Yashasvi Jaiswal, who is set to make his Test debut next week, is also a part of the T20 squad after a stupendous IPL.

While the emphasis for the next three months is on the 50-over World Cup and people privy to development would term it as being rested, it is certainly not a pattern in isolation that two pillars of Indian batting have not been a part of the last three T20 series (Sri Lanka, New Zealand), including this one.

As the saying is in Indian cricket circles, the two contemporary doyens "would never be officially dropped" but "phased out" unless some remarkable turnaround happens,



which would be nothing short of a miracle. The meeting on Wednesday was also Ajit Agarkar's first as chairman of the national selection committee and there weren't any names that would have surprised anyone.

Rinku Singh, whose finishing

skills at Nos 5 or 6 for KKR in IPL have impressed one and all, didn't figure in the 15-member squad but it is understood that with only a week's gap between the West Indies series and Ireland T20Is, there is a high possibility that both Rinku and Vidar-



bha's Jitesh Sharma will make that team along with Rituraj Gaikwad. Jitesh the glovesman lost out as both Ishan Kishan and Sanju Samson are ahead in the pecking order and will always have an advantage unless they fail to perform.

The two players who have made international comebacks are pacer Avesh Khan and leg-spinner Ravi Bishnoi.

Bishnoi, who last played for India in the Asia Cup in September, will be playing first-class cricket for Gujarat this season.

The team has three wrist spinners with Kuldeep Yadav and Yuzvendra Chahal also being part of the 15-member squad. Axar Patel, who going by current form is a better T20 bet compared to Ravindra Jadeja, has been picked in the squad. In Jadeja's case though, unlike Rohit and Kohli, he has been rested.

In the pace department, Avesh has been cranking it up with the red ball for Central Zone in the Duleep Trophy and in the absence of Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami and Mohammed Siraj, the pace depart-

ment will be handled by Avesh and Umran Malik along with left-arm seamers from Arshdeep Singh.

Bengal's Mukesh Kumar is the back-up pacer.

INDIA'S T20I SQUAD:

Ishan Kishan (wk), Shubman Gill, Yashasvi Jaiswal, Tilak Varma, Surya Kumar Yadav (vc), Sanju Samson (wk), Hardik Pandya (c), Axar Patel, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Ravi Bishnoi, Arshdeep Singh, Umran Malik, Avesh Khan, Mukesh Kumar.

Doordarshan to telecast Team India tour of WI

IANS ■ MUMBAI

Doordarshan (DD) will telecast the upcoming India's tour of the West Indies. The month-long bilateral series comprising 2 Tests, 3 ODIs, and 5 T20Is, is scheduled to take place from July 12 to August 13.

DD will give viewers the choice to watch the games in their own language - with T20Is and ODI series being telecast in Hindi, English, Tamil, Telugu, Bangla and Kannada on DD Sports along with the network's regional channels DD Podhigai, DD Saptagiri, DD Yadagiri, DD Bangla and DD Chandana. Test matches will be telecast on DD Sports. The primary telecast on DD Sports will be a combination of Hindi and English.

This will be the first time team India will be in action after the loss at the WTC final, and the team will look to start off the new WTC cycle on a winning note.

Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Hardik Pandya will be amongst the names to watch out for while young guns like Yashasvi Jaiswal, Rituraj Gaikwad too will be looking to make the most of the opportunity.

As the primary media rights holder, FanCode will stream the entire series on its digital platform.

'When people don't like a dismissal, they cite Spirit of Cricket': Taufel

IANS ■ SYDNEY

Former ICC Elite Panel umpire Simon Taufel has slammed hypocrisy of many people criticising third umpire Marais Erasmus' decision to give Jonny Bairstow out after wandering out of crease in second Ashes Test at Lord's, stating that people cite Spirit of Cricket to support their view when they don't like a dismissal under Laws of Cricket.

On day five's play in the second Ashes Test at Lord's, Bairstow was on 10 in the 52nd over when he ducked under a bouncer from Cameron Green and inadvertently walked out of his crease.

Australia wicketkeeper Alex Carey immediately directed an underarm throw after catching the delivery, and jumped in joy after firing an accurate underarm throw towards the stumps. On-field umpires Ahsan Raza and Chris Gaffaney sent the decision upstairs, where TV umpire Marais Erasmus confirmed Bairstow's dismissal. The dismissal drew a furious reaction



from the fans, who started to chant "same old Aussies, always cheating", and booed the visitors for the rest of the day, with some players also facing verbal abuse from MCC members in the long run.

"Was Jonny Bairstow's dismissal at Lord's a breach of the Spirit of Cricket? This is a question I have been inundated with, so I thought it best to share my thoughts publicly by asking everyone a question or eight to consider... Have you seen any umpire tell a fielding side that the keeper standing back is not allowed to attempt a stumping? Was there a complaint from anyone

when Bairstow tried to stump Marnus exactly the same way in the first innings? What has Jonny Bairstow said about his dismissal? He has been very quiet. Why? My experience is when people don't like a dismissal under the Laws of Cricket, they cite the Spirit of Cricket to support their view," wrote Taufel in a post on LinkedIn.

Carey's stumping of Bairstow has made huge headlines in the cricketing world even England and Australia now gear up for the third Ashes Test at Leeds from Thursday, with the respective nations Prime Ministers Rishi Sunak and Anthony Albanese defending their teams.

Taufel, who sits on the MCC Laws subcommittee, further wrote, "Which part of the codified Preamble (the Spirit of Cricket) was breached by the fielding side? What did the fielding side do in effecting a legitimate dismissal that unfairly impacted the ability of the batter in their attempt not to be dismissed? (Did they run into him or distract him or prevent him making good his ground?)"

Ponting Sees Traits Of Dhoni In Stokes

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Former Australia captain Ricky Ponting has compared Ben Stokes' match-winning ability with that of India great MS Dhoni, who is regarded as the best finisher in the modern game, and believes the England skipper excels at handling pressure more than most of his current contemporaries.

During the second Ashes Test against Australia at Lord's, Stokes almost single-handedly dragged his side over the line with a brilliant century that included a record-breaking nine sixes.

It wasn't the first time that Stokes has terrorised Australia, the brilliant all-rounder produced similar heroics during the 2019 Ashes series in England when he smashed an unbeaten 135 to help pull off a remarkable one-wicket victory over Australia.

"I think any international player is under pressure anytime they walk out to play, but Ben batting in the middle order or later order like he does, probably finds himself in more match-winning opportunity situations than some others might,"



Ponting said.

"The first one that comes to mind is maybe someone like a Dhoni, who's there at the end in a lot of T20 games, and finishing games, whereas Ben's doing it at the end of Test matches, and there's not, probably not many, many players through the history of the game that have found themselves in that sort of role and are there at the end winning games, and especially as a captain," Ponting said on the latest episode of The ICC Review.

Ponting also revealed he had Stokes' match-winning innings at Headingley from four years ago at the back of his mind during a pulsating final day at Lord's and was relieved when Australia finally got the

breakthrough and dismissed him for 155. "I thought and everyone probably thought he could do it again because we've seen it happen before, but this was probably, slightly more runs that they were chasing (in 2019)."

"In the back of everyone's minds, I think once it started playing out the way that it was and how many similarities there were to Headingley in 2019... Steve Smith dropped him... and he was dropped on 116 by Marcus Harris at Headingley. So, those sort of ghosts of the past kept coming back out."

While Stokes only averages just north of 36 with the bat at Test level and more than 32 with the ball, Ponting acknowledges the star all-rounder has the remarkable ability to influence games at a level that don't do those modest numbers justice.

"We have all over the years really only sort of judged cricketers on their numbers and their stats of what their average is and how many wickets they take. If you looked at Ben Stokes in that light only, it doesn't do him full credit to the player that he is as he averages 35 (36) with the bat and 32 with the ball," Ponting noted.

Shepherd's three-fer, King's century give WI first Super Six win

IANS ■ HARARE

Romario Shepherd took a three-fer while Brandon King slammed a century to give West Indies their first win of the Super Six stage in an inconsequential Men's ODI World Cup Qualifiers match with a seven-wicket win over Oman at the Harare Sports Club, here on Wednesday.

Half-centuries from Shoaib Khan and Suraj Kumar helped Oman reach 221/9 as Shepherd took 3/44 in his ten overs. But King played a com-

posed knock of 100 off 104 balls, laced with 15 fours, and with support from captain Shai Hope's 63, took West Indies over the line with 62 balls remaining.

Electing to bowl first, West Indies got early rewards as Shepherd and Kyle Mayers dismissed Jatinder Singh and stand-in skipper Aqib Ilyas inside the first ten overs. Ayaan Khan and Kashyap Prajapati rebuilt for Oman, but that came to a halt as the latter was run out by Roston Chase. The run-outs kept hurting



Oman throughout their innings with three of their batters, including Shoaib Khan, who made a fighting 53 off 65 balls. But before he was run-out by Akeal Hosen, Shoaib and wicketkeeper Suraj Kumar (50 off 54 balls) took charge of Oman's recovery.

From 116/6, Shoaib and Suraj took Oman past 200 with an 85-run partnership which saved the blushes for the team. After Shoaib's fall, Kumar continued to pile on the runs with the tail and completed his half-century off the

final ball of the innings. Apart from Shepherd, Mayers was economical in his seven overs, taking 2/31 while spinners Hosein (0/48), Roston Chase (0/36), Kevin Sinclair (1/42) kept things tight from their end.

West Indies didn't have a great start to the chase as Kaleemullah castled Johnson Charles with a superb delivery, where he beat him for pace in the second over. Keacy Carty looked sedate in his 49-ball 29, before being run out by Sandeep Goud.



England playing CazBall not Bazball: McGrath

PTI ■ LONDON

Legendary pacer Glenn McGrath has slammed England for playing casual cricket against Australia in the ongoing Ashes, sarcastically terming it as "CazBall" instead of "Bazball", the aggressive version of game associated with the Brendon McCullum coached side in recent times.

England are down 0-2 after losing the first two Tests at the Edgbaston and the Lord's.

The 53-year-old said he was initially in "two minds" over the dismissal of Jonny Bairstow, which has divided the cricketing world with many, including skipper Ben Stokes and coach Brendon McCullum, calling it contrary to the 'spirit of the game'.

"I want to start by saying Jonny Bairstow's controversial dismissal was not my favourite. I have been thinking about it a lot, reading all of the reaction, and it has had me in two minds," McGrath wrote in a column for BBC.

"Originally, I would have liked to have seen Australia captain Pat Cummins withdraw his appeal... But the more I think about it the more I think it was the right decision from Cummins. I think it is a sign of something deeper in England's mentality.

"...Now, I am a fan of Bazball. The concept of backing yourself, playing without fear and putting pressure back on the opposition — that I agree with wholeheartedly.

"But Bairstow's dismissal epitomises what we have seen from England in this series. It has been Casual Ball - CazBall if you will, not Bazball."

McGrath said England were "too casual" from day one of the Lord's Test.

"After a rain delay, Australia's batters were champing at the bit to get out there. The umpires were on the field, but despite conditions massively in their favour, half the England players, captain included, still had their feet up on the balcony.

"In the first Test, England declared on day one — again, casual." Bairstow was dismissed on final day of play when after ducking a slow bouncer from Cameron Green, he had immediately left his crease to have a chat with Ben Stokes in the middle, believing that the ball was 'dead'.

However, wicketkeeper Alex Carey played within the rules and broke the stumps and third umpire Marais Erasmus gave a decision in favour of Australia.

Anderson rested, Wood and Ali included in England playing XI for third Test



IANS ■ LEEDS

England on Wednesday included Chris Woakes, Mark Wood, and Moeen Ali in their playing eleven for the third Ashes 2023 Test, which will be played at Headingley from Thursday. The trio replace James Anderson, Josh Tongue and an injured Ollie Pope as England look to come up from being 2-0 behind in the five-game Ashes series.

As per England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) media release, the fast-bowling duo of Anderson (three wickets in two

matches) and Tongue (five wickets in Lord's Test) are rested while Pope is out of the rest of the series after dislocating his right shoulder in the second Test at Lord's, where England lost by 43 runs.

In Pope's absence, Harry Brook has been promoted to number three while Jonny Bairstow will bat at number five. The presence of Woakes and Ali means the England lower-order batting gets a big boost.

The Headingley Test will be Woakes' first appearance in the longest format of the game under Brendon McCullum's

coaching. Woakes' last Test outing came against West Indies in March 2022, while his last home Test match came in September 2021.

On the other hand, Wood played two Tests on a victorious 3-0 tour of Pakistan in December 2022, but hasn't played a first-class match since then. Wood was in consideration for playing at Lord's, but concerns over his bowling workload meant he didn't feature in the match.

Wood's last competitive cricket outing came in April, where he turned out for Lucknow Super Giants in IPL 2023. Ali, meanwhile, is back in action after blisters on his right index finger saw him miss out on playing the second Test at Lord's. The off-spin all-rounder needs two more scalps to reach 200 wickets in Tests.

England playing XI: Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Harry Brook, Joe Root, Jonny Bairstow (wicketkeeper), Ben Stokes (captain) Moeen Ali, Chris Woakes, Mark Wood, Ollie Robinson and Stuart Broad

Eng Fans Forced Smith's Mother To Leave Lord's Test

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The 2023 Ashes has been a cracking series so far. While the scorecard shows 2-0 to Australia, England have played some bold cricket too. The series has also been surrounded by controversies with players from both teams having a go at each other. In the first Test, Ollie Robinson made a controversial remark on Aussie veteran Ricky Ponting, justifying sledging and the trend continued in the second Test as well with Stuart Broad and Alex Carrey getting involved in a heated exchange.

The second Test also saw two controversial decisions being made which further spiced up the rivalry. In the first incident, Ben Duckett was caught by Mitchell Starc at



fine leg but the third umpire ruled it not out as he felt that the ball touched the ground when Starc took the catch.

The second controversy was a bigger one which saw Jonny Bairstow being given out after Alex Carey shattered the stumps when Bairstow wandered out of the crease, assuming that the over has ended.

Bairstow's wicket created a huge uproar from the England fans and media who called Aussies' cheaters'. A few Aussie players were also sledged by the MCC members when they were heading towards their

dressings room.

Australian Cricket Team Request For More Security Ahead Of 3rd Ashes Test At Headingley. Meanwhile, as per reports, the Australian cricket team has requested more security for the third Ashes Test after it was reported that the mother of Steve Smith had to leave the stadium following continuous taunts from English fans. While the fans were not aware of the lady's relationship with Smith, they recognised her nationality.

"The Australian cricket side has requested extra security be provided for families after abusive fans left one staff member's 11-year-old son in tears and forced one player's mother to leave the Lord's Ashes Test on the fifth day," a report in The Australian read.