

UCC STORM BEGINS TO RAGE

SAD, AIMPLB oppose; Cong, JD(U) say bid to divert attention from price rise, unemployment; AAP lone voice of support to Modi's suggestion

PNS NEW DELHI

day after Prime Minister ANarendra Modi made a strong pitch for the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) and for ending the "duality of laws" in the country, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Wednesday announced support to it, while major Opposition parties dubbed it as a diversionary ploy. The All India Muslim Personal Law Board (AIM PLB) and Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) outright rejected it.

The Congress and Janata Dal (U) have taken a potshot at the PM for raising the issue of the UCC, saying it was an attempt to divert attention from issues of price rise and employment.At the same time, Sharad Pawar-led NCP said broaching the issue of a UCC ahead of elections was a polit-ical ploy and that such deci-sions should not be rushed through Modi's comments on the

UCC before the BJP workers in Bhopal on Tuesday triggered an animated debate between the BJP and the main Opposition parties. The AAP has declared its

stance on the UCC, citing Article 44 of the Constitution as a reason for its support. AAP Rajya Sabha MP Sandeep Pathak, though, emphasised the need for wider consultation before implementing the UCC, considering its implications for all religions.

"The Aam Aadmi Party supports the ideological stance of the UCC. Article 44 also states that there should be a Uniform Civil Code. However, the Aam Aadmi Party believes



too, the issue has come up

process of chalking out a strat-

before the 2024 elections."

that consensus should be reached after discussions with all religions and political par-ties before implementing it," Pathak said.

The SAD said the UCC would have an adverse impact on minority and tribal communities. SAD leader Daljit Singh Cheema said that the party believed that faith, belief, caste, and customs impact laws in the country. These were different for different religions, he added

The Opposition party in Punjab also criticised the rul-Punjab also criticised the run-ing AAP for extending "in-principle" support to the UCC and said it will oppose the law both in Parliament and in front of the 22nd Law Commission.

The AIMPLB held an emergency online meeting late on Tuesday evening and decid-ed that the Board will oppose the UCC. AIMPLB president the law commission more pow-Saifullah Rehmani and Board erfully." Mahali on Wednesday members and lawyers, who said at Lucknow, "Our stand is attended the meeting, decided that UCC is against the spirit to present their views in front of the Constitution and we will of the Law Commission. oppose it strongly. India is a country where many religions and cultures are followed. So, Documents to be submitted to the Law Commission were also the UCC is not only going to affect the Muslims, but also the finalised at the meeting. The AIMPLB member and Islamic Centre of India chair-Hindus, Sikhs, Christians, Jains, Jews, Parsis, and other minusman Maulana Khalid Rasheed Farangi Mahali said, "For the cule minorities?

past several years, politicians have been raising the issue of the Uniform Civil Code just Former Union Minister and senior Congress leader P Chidambaram said the Prime Minister was batting for UCC to divert people's attention before the elections. This time from issues of unemployment, price rise, and hate crimes. He He said that the Board has decided to fight the proposal tooth and nail and is in the also alleged the BJP was using UCC to polarise the society. "The Hon'ble PM is making it appear that UCC is a simple egy to counter the proposed exercise. He should read the report of the last Law move of the Government "by presenting our view in front of

Commission that pointed out it was not feasible at this time. The nation is divided today owing to the words and deeds of the BJP. A UCC imposed on the people will only widen the divisions," Chidambaram said.

The Congress also hit out at Modi for drawing a comparison between a family and the nation to justify UCC. In a tweet, the former Union Minister said, "The Hon'ble PM has equated a nation to a family while pitching for the Uniform Civil Code (UCC). While in an abstract sense, his comparison may appear true, the reality is very different. A family is knit together by blood relationships."

Chidambaram said a nation is brought together by a Constitution which is a political-legal document and the UCC cannot be forced. "Even in a family, there is diversity. The Constitution of India recognised diversity and plurality among the peo-ple of India. A UCC is an aspiration. An agenda-dri-ven majoritarian Government cannot force it on the people." AIMIM president Asaduddin Owaisi has tar-

geted Modi for backing UCC claiming the Prime Minister was trying to bring in a 'Hindu Civil Code.' 'India's Prime Minister is now talking about Uniform Civil Code. Are you going to snatch away pluralism, diversity in the name of Uniform Civil Code?" Owaisi said. "They will treat all Islamic references of practices as illegal and the Prime Minister will protect Hindu practices under the law," he said.

6 electrocuted, 15 hurt as Rath touches wires who have been admitted to the

Unakoti District Hospital in

Kailasahar. Some of the injured

individuals are reported to be in

critical condition, warranting

immediate medical attention.

Assistant Inspector General (Law and Order) Jyotishman

Das Chowdhury provided

updates on the situation, stat-

ing, "We are collecting details on the injured persons who have been admitted to Unakoti

District Hospital in Kailasahar. Some of them are known to be

Upon learning of the trag-ic incident, Chief Minister

Manik Saha expressed his con-dolences and immediately trav-

eled to Kumarghat to assess the

express his sympathies, saying, "In a tragic incident, several

devotees have lost their lives &

some other people sustained injuries due to electrocution

during Ulta Rath Yatra at

Kumarghat today. My deepest condolences to the bereaved

families who lost their near and

dear ones in the tragedy. In this

difficult time, the State Government stands by the side

Debbarma, the Royal Scion and TIPRA Motha party chief, also conveyed his condolences

and urged his party legislators

and members of the Tripura

Tribal Areas Autonomous

District Council (TTAADC) to

extend all possible assistance.

Taking to Twitter, he wrote, "Hearing about a terrible inci-

dent in Kumarghat during Rath

Yatra, my prayers and condo-lences to all those who have

been affected.

Kishore

of the affected families."

Pradyot

He took to Twitter to

critical."

situation.

Toll expected to rise in Tripura 'Ulta Rath' procession tragedy as some injured critically

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE AGARTALA

In a tragic accident during the 'Ulta Rath' procession in Kumarghat, Unakoti district of Tripura, six people, including three women and two children, lost their lives after a chariot carrying Lord Jagannath came into contact with high-tension power transmission lines on Wednesday. The incident left 15 others injured. Shocking video footage of the electrocu-tion incident quickly spread across social media platforms, capturing the horrifying

moment. The incident happened around 4.30 PM in the Kumarghat area during the 'Ulta Rath Yatra' which marks the return journey of Lord Jagannath and his siblings Lord Balabhadra, and Devi Subhdara — after the conclusion of the annual Rath Yatra festival. Unfortunately, tragedy struck as the crest of the chariot made contact with the overhead power lines, leading to fatal electrocutions.

The victims have been identified as Sima Pal (33), Sushmita Baishya (30), Suma Biswas (28), Rupak Das (40), Rohan Das (9), and Shan Malakar (9), each succumbing to the electric shock. Authorities are currently collecting details on the injured,

Singh Deo appointed **CM Baghel's Deputy**



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI/RAIPUR

Ahead of the forthcoming Assembly elections in Chhattisgarh, the Congress has appointed veteran leader TS Singh Deo as the Deputy Chief Minister of the State. The decision aims to quell a potential rebellion within the party, which has been brewing for the past few years, and avoid a situation similar to the ongoing controversy in Rajasthan involving Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and former Deputy CM Sachin Pilot.

The Congress is keen to prevent any factional disputes that could jeopardise its unity and electoral prospects. The defection of Jyotiraditya Scindia in neighbouring Madbua Pradeeb, which led to Madhya Pradesh, which led to the downfall of the Kamal Nath-led Government, serves as a cautionary tale for the KC Venugopal announced the appointment, stating, "The honorable Congress president has approved the proposal for the appointment of TS Singh Deo as the Deputy Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh."

Canada opens doors for H1-B visa holders It aims to attract skilled workers from US to its shores

CM declares State awards for panchayat bodies 3 killed in Which bagged ଶ୍ରୀୟକ୍ତ ନବୀନ ପଟ୍ଟଚାୟକ Bahuda Central awards ମାନ୍ୟବର ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତୀ, ଅଢ଼ିଶା

Yatra in State

BHUBANESWAR

L hree persons were killed and four others injured in two separate incidents during the Bahuda Yatra in the State on Wednesday.

Two persons died when the rope of the chariot they were pulling was entangled with a live electric wire at Kendua village in Keonjhar district.

Another person was killed at Kolab Nagar in Koraput district when the chariot's rope also came in contact with an electric wire.

for good performances PNS BHUBANESWAR

In a meeting here, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced State awards for the Central Government-awarded Zilla Parishads, Panchyat Sammitis and Panchayats while honouring the national

awardees. He announced that the State Government shall give prizes

Sammiti which stood first received Rs 12 crore. The secamounting to six times of the Central award to those position-holder ond panchayat bodies which secure panchayats like Kanchur and first position, three times of Sasan Ambagaon of Hinjli the Central award to those seblock, Kulda of Bhanjanagar curing second position and block, Ankuli of Patrapur two times of the Central award block were awarded Rs 2.25 to those with third position in crore each. The third positionthe national competitions. It holder Banaigada panchyat of will encourage healthy com-Banai block was awarded Rs 1 petition among the panchayat crore.



bodies, said he.

To empower the panchyat The Ganjam Zilla Parishad bodies, the CM announced which had secured the first two Panchayat Learning Cenposition, was awarded Rs 30 tres in each district, conductcrore and the Hinjli Panchyat ing of local champion training programmes, setting up of 70 satellite Interactive Terminals in 70 scheduled blocks.

> Panchayati Raj Minister Pradip Kumar Amat, among others spoke. Ganjam ZP President Anjali Swain, Hinjli PS Chairperson Saraswati Sethi, Ganjam Collector Dibyajyoti Parida, Banaigada Sarpanch Namita Nag shared their experiences.

PNS/AGENCIES NEW DELHI/TORONTO

n welcome news for Indians having American H1-B visas, Canada's Immigration Minister, Sean Fraser, has announced that the Government will establish an open work-permit stream for 10,000 such visa holders. The scheme starts on July 16.

This initiative aims to attract skilled workers from the United States (US) and provide them with employment oppor-tunities in Canada. In addition, the program will also allow for study or work permits for fam-ily members of H-1B visa holders. The approved applicants under this new decision will receive an open work permit valid for up to three years. This permit will enable them to work throughout Canada. Indian technical workers, who accounted for nearly 75 per cent of the H1B visas granted in 2020



Canada's Immigration Minister, Sean Fraser

and 2021 in the US, are expected to be prime beneficiaries of this initiative by Canada. An official release issued by Canada's Ministry of Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship late on Tuesday said, "Thousands of workers in high-tech fields are employed with companies that have large

'They will be able to work for almost any employer anywhere in Canada. Their spouses and dependants will also be eligible to apply for a temporary resident visa, with a work or study permit, as needed." Fraser said by the end of this year, the Canadian federal Government will be developing an immi-gration stream specifically designed for highly skilled individuals worldwide, allowing them to work for tech companies in Canada, regardless of whether they have a job offer or not.

The H-1B visa program in the US grants temporary work permits to foreign nationals in pecialised occupations, particularly in the technology and skilled sector. As tech compa-nies experienced a surge in hiring during the pandemic but subsequently faced layoffs, many H-1B visa holders found themselves in need of new job opportunities

Bahuda Yatra Chariots arrive at Shreemandir on time

Dozen injured during pulling as Taladhwaj Rath rope snaps midway MISHRA SAROJ KUMAR PURI

Ending the nine-day trip to the Gundicha Ghar, Lord Jagannath, Lord Balabhadra and Maa Subhadra returned to the Lions' Gate of Shreemandira as the Bahuda Yatra was held with much fanfare in Puri on Wednesday. After the arrival of the chari-

ots one after another near the

Jagannath Temple, they were parked under tight security. A dozen people were injured including one seriously who were admitted at the District Headquarters Hospital due to stampedes during chariots pulling. However, by and large, the return journey of the Trinity concluded safe.

During pulling of the chariot of Lord Balabhadra, the people fell down on the road as the coir rope suddenly broke into two parts.

The arrival of chariots on the same day, unlike the great delay in Gundicha Yatra, was seen as a big respite for the Puri



administration because of the famous Suna Besha scheduled for Thursday. Over a million people are expected to congregate in Puri to witness the golden attire of the deities. The Trinity will be decorated with quintals of valuable metals including gold, silver, diamond and other precious jewels. The administration was on an overdrive to ensure that the Thursday ritual goes smooth and hassle-free.

operations in both Canada and

the US, and those working in

the US often hold an H-1B spe-

cialty occupation visa. As of July 16, 2023, H-1B special occupa-

tion visa holders in the US, and

their accompanying immediate

family members, will be eligi-

ble to apply to come to Canada." The release read,

Earlier on Wednesday, the deities were taken to the chariots from the Gundicha Temple through Pahandi Bije after accomplishment of a series of special rites of the Trinity. The Pahandi Bije started at 8 am and ended at 11 am after the arrival of Lord Jagannath on the chariot. Then the first chariot belonging to elder brother Lord Balabhadra began rolling at about 1 pm from the parking spot at the Gudncha Temple.

Gajapati King Dibyasingha Deb performed his Chhera Pahara rites on the chariots as usual. On the way back along the holy Badadanda, the deities were offered Poda Pitha at the Mausima Temple and Pantis from several mutts and monasteries.



CM lays stone of Ekamra Prakalp



BHUBANESWAR

∠hief Minister Naveen Patnaik laid foundation-stone of the Rs 280-crore Ekamra Prakalp project near the Lingaraj Temple here on

For this occasion, a threeday Bhumi Pujan ceremony had been going on at the shrine with Wednesday being the fi-

nal day. The ceremony was

organised by the Lingaraj

Wednesday.

Temple Trust Board to highlight the cultural heritage of the Ekamra Kshetra. The ceremony was marked

by a Yajna and various cultural programmes. Lingaraj Temple, Ananta Basudev Temple, Mukteswar Temple, Bindu Sagar and other nearby temples were illuminated.

The CM felicitated the shopkeepers and individuals who had given up their land for the beautification and transformation project.

Notably, the State Government had in 2019 launched the Ekamra Prakalp, also known as Ekamra Kshetra Amenities and Monuments Revival Action Plan.

The project's objective is to revive the grandeur of the ancient heritage's precinct surrounding the Lingaraj Temple covering an expansive area of 80 acres. This includes a variety of monuments, sacred tank, and water bodies. In the initial stage of implementation, the focus will be on restoring the architectural and archaeological treasures of Ekamra Kshetra.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi's wife Yashoda Ben is spotted outside the Gundicha Temple in Puri after a darshan of the Trinity on Ranjan Ganguly: Pioneer Tuesday

Tainted Sub-Collector sent to 5-day remand

BHUBANESWAR

he Court of Special Vigilance Judge, Sundargarh, on Wednesday sent former Nabarangpur Additional Sub-Collector Prasant Kumar Rout to a five-day remand for further investigation.

Notably, on June 24, Rout was arrested and forwarded to the court for possessing disproportionate assets (DA) worth Rs 5,21,09,659 which is 506% of his known sources of income as unearthed by the Vigilance during searches conducted at nine locations.

Rout and his family members are also reportedly in pos-

building at KananVihar, Bhubaneswar, five plots in Cuttack and Bhubaneswar, cash of Rs 3,02,30,800, bank and insurance deposits of Rs 92.34 lakh and two four-June 26. wheelers worth Rs 37 lakh,

Besides, Rs 87 lakh has been spent on medical education of his daughter.

Investigation is still on by the Vigilance.

> Coming down heavily on the present ruling dispensation at the Centre, former

Democracy in peril in India: Speakers BHUBANESWAR

Elections in the country should be free, fair, impartial without any corrupt practices, opined former senior advisor of Election Commission of India Dr Bhagwan Prakash while addressing a symposium on defence of democracy and constitutional reforms here on

He emphasised on strict enforcement of the rules of code of conduct, autonomy status and power of Election Commission, regular audit of political parties' funds, etc.

Union Minister and president,

ଗଣଡନ୍ତ ସୁରକ୍ଷା ଓ ନିର୍ବାଚନ ସଂସ୍ଥାର CTORAL REFORMS TO SAVE D International Jaya Prakash said that the Election Compresent in the meet were journalist Rabi Rath, former MLA

Narayan Research Studies Center, New Delhi, Braja Kishore Tripathy observed that democracy in India is not safe as the country is going through an undeclared emergency situation. The freedom and equality of the individual are not seen anywhere except on exercising voting rights, Tripathy lambasted.

Senior journalist Rabi Das

mission should be free from Governmental pressure and act purely in an independent way as exemplified by former Chief Election Commissioner of India TN Shesan.

At the outset, rights activist Manoj Jena laid bare the theme of the discussion while emphasizing on a total overhauling of the electoral system. Prominent among others Usharani Behera.

Kishore Das and rights activist Alok Sarangi. Samajawadi leader Chitaranjan Mohanty, who was imprisoned during emergency era, was felicitated for his lifelong contribution and struggle for championing the cause of freedom and democracy. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by



9 students in Top 10 list

PNS BHUBANESWAR

 ${
m T}_{
m he~DAV}$ School of Business Management, Bhubaneswar (DSBM) bagged a Gold Medal as well as a major share in the Top Ten List of final year Utkal University Examination.

Archita Mohapatra emerged as the Gold Medalist and university topper for the year 2023 among all the affiliated colleges under Utkal University in Odisha by securing 9.55 CGPA with 'O' Distinction grade.

Besides that, the DSBM students bagged nine positions out of Top Ten List of Utkal University Examination.

capital 02

For the year 2023, 99% of the students of DSBM has secured with 1st Division in Accounting Honours, while two students have secured 'O' Grade; 24 have secured 'A+'Grade with Distinction.

On behalf of the management, Chairman, DSBM MM Panda, Regional DirectorDr KC Satapathy and Principal, DSBM Dr DN Mishra congratulated the students for their continuous efforts, sincerity and dedication.

session of a double-storied Gupta Brahma art exhibition held

BHUBANESWAR

 ${
m A}$ national art exhibition titled "Gupta Brahma" concluded at the Sakuntala Art Gallery at Uttara Square, Bhubaneswar on Sunday under the supervision of gallery founder Kailash Chandra Paramaguru and director

Janardan Paramaguru. The exhibition, which was held since June 20 to observe the holy Rath Yatra, witnessed participation of various artists College Baladev Maharatha, and flocking of local visitors Mamata Samantaray, Biswaiit in large numbers. The artists displayed how Lord Jagannath was hidden and protected during external invasions of Puri.



Chief guest Barabari-Cuttack MLA Mohammad Moquim, chief speaker former Secretary of State Lalit Kala Akademi Rabinarayan Ratha, former Principal of BK Art ThinkZone- Mo College Mou 3K youths in State to be given 2-yr skill training

BHUBANESWAR the signing of the MoU.

Mo College Abhijan Parichalana Sangathan' and 'ThinkZone' signed an MoU on Monday to implement an up-skilling program for 3,000



tury skills and basic skills required to teach young children. The modules covered in the training programme contain communication, digital skills (social media), financial literacy, micro-entrepreneur-

methodology. The 3,000 youth who will be getting trained over a period of two years will be transferring the quality learning experience to nearly 15,000 students in their communities. During the

hours a day. In the initial phase, ThinkZone will be launching its fellowship programs across colleges in Cuttack, Kendrapada and Khordha district. Till date, ThinkZone has up-skilled over 6,000 youths

Das, Nikunja Pasayat, Pradip Pandey and others encouraged the artists for their creative works.

college students in Odisha. Chairperson, 'Mo College' Akash Dasnayak along with 'ThinkZone' CEO Binayak Acharya were present during

rural, semi-urban and urban low-resource settings of the State. Regarding the training, it contains offline and online sessions along with training

via the 'ThinkZone' Mobile App. The 120 hours training sessions are designed so that youths can develop 21st cen-

ship, classroom management, teaching mathematics, Odia, English in primary grades, leadership as well as teaching children using play-based

training period the youths will be receiving certification after completing the fellowship and will continue getting paid for teaching children for a few

from rural and urban areas. 4,214 youths successfully completed the fellowship and continued teaching children for a brighter future.

THE BULL'S EYE HITTING Car Festival crowd be restricted as per containment capacity

the Lord, Shree Narsinhdasji

Maharaj, had begun the

year witnessed unprecedented crowds choking the little town of Puri so badly as cannot be described. As if the RathYatra was happening for the first time, people from all over including foreign lands kept dropping in Puri. The town has a wide enough road between the main shrine and the Gundicha Temple believed to be the birthplace of the deities. The wide three-km passage is called 'Grand Road' meaning only a 'majestic'. This whole road space can contain at the most 5 lakh people at a time. But during the opening day of the festival, several colourful and amusing rituals occur in front of the temple across the Lions Gate. The three decorated cars are parked there to have the sibling deities ceremonially carried and mounted on them. This area can only contain comfortably 10,000 onlookers or 15,000 tightly, exceeding which would result in suffocation particularly if the weather is hot and humid like it happened this season. If the crowd got unruly, killer stampedes might happen too.



BISWARAJ PATNAIK

In the 1920s, the population of undivided India was only 25 crore and what was then the Odiaspeaking region had less than one crore people, mostly living in villages. Only 10 to 15 thousand people from all over the country used to land in Puri to witness the Car Festival, which fell during the onset of monsoon. So, life was good as neither heat nor torrential rains ever showed marred the spirit of any. Besides, Puri used to be a temperately cool place throughout

the year, for which the first

Lieutenant Governor of separate Bihar-Odisha province, just carved out of Bengal, chose to set up an office in Puri. This government house was built in 1912-13. Ranchi was the administrative capital and Puri the summer capital. So cool and beautiful was Puri then!

RathYatra today is a punishing event. In days of yore, only the truly devout pilgrims undertook unspeakable physical pains to reach Puri on foot after crossing several rivers by boat. Not a single attendee was a merrymaker. It was strongly believed that the deities of Puri were very special and unique because one single glimpse of them ensured salvation. People then also knew that plain divine thoughts in heart were enough to get all the blessings provided. They followed the Sanatana faith which meant they were kind to all creations and discriminated against none irrespective of what faith the others espoused. Even if they could never make a visit, the Lord was still pleased with them. One little legend: About 146

Ahmedabad RathYatra after being ordered in dream to set up a Jagannatha temple in the historic city. He put up a beautiful temple. The deities on chariots then were pulled by elephants and humans replicating their journey in Puri. It was believed then that Lord Krishna's mortal remains were believed to have come to rest after being consigned to the oceans on the east and west coasts. At the end of the festival, the chariots were dismantled and their wood was used as fuel in the temple kitchens, believed to be the largest in the world that cook 56 things every day and feed anywhere between 2,000 to nearly 200,000 people. The festival always had elephants playing stellar roles. The Gajapati King of Utkal residing at Puri had elephants at all times. Now, no one cares to have at least one elephant to justify Gajapati's name or title as 'Gaja' means elephant. In impoverished times there were elephants. Now in years ago, one Gujarati disciple of prosperity, they do not get one!

The 146th Ahmedabad Rath Yatra was witnessed by 20 lakh people live and on television. There were 18 elephants, 101 trucks, 30 Akharas and the three Raths of Jagannath, Subhadra and Balbhadra traversing along an 18km route in the heart of Ahmedabad. These numbers reflect the magnitude of the event and the unique policing challenges it poses.

The Rath Yatra, a tradition which dates back to 1878, bore the consequences of communal clashes breaking out in 1946, 1985, 1986 and 1992. In 1985, considering the charged atmosphere, permission to conduct the annual event was denied by the police commissioner, but the Yatra was forcibly taken out, ultimately leading to stone pelting and larger communal violence all across the State. Such is its significance that even today any untoward incident during the event has larger and year-round ramifications across Gujarat. For long, Ahmedabad maintained the elephant tradition.

But the Gajapati King of Puri doesn't once express desire to have an elephant at the festival. He is, incidentally, the head of the temple management committee that sits several times prior to the festival occurrence to ensure that the festival at the original abode of the deities goes well. The Car Festival is so heavy in the minds of the government that the Chief Minister too takes part in the

preparatory meetings. They discuss only public order, cleanliness and hygiene apart from routine traffic control and free shelter-food issues. Little do they bring to mind the containing capacity of the Grand Road and the town at large. On the contrary, government officials methodically publicise the festival as a grand global event with the sole view to luring more and more people to Puri irrespective of harsh weather conditions like it happened in 2023. The ordeal and predicament that ensued need not be explained any further.

The Supreme Court order has forced the State Government to put a full-time chief temple administrator. But a dull, halfbaked chief has come in place, who hardly has the age or energy to pick skills and lead a team. As people believe rightly, only a very few State-cadre officers live up to IAS level mindset that makes one clearheaded and daring. The government better put a direct younger IAS official, no matter if female.

The last words would have to be on the decision-makers to consider restricting the number of Car Festival visitors or pilgrims to a maximum 5 lakh provided the weather forecast is fine. If the weather is expected to be hot or inclement, the number be reduced to 2 lakh based on a prior registration mode which is plain and simple given the technology available at hand. Online registration is so easy. Check and scrutiny at the entry points will be easy to identify and let in the permitted ones to the city. The rest of the aspirants can have television pilgrimage staying in the comfort or happy of homes neighbourhoods.

Although every possible care and caution has been taken to avoid errors or omissions, this publication is being sold on the condition and understanding that information given in this publication is being sold on the condition is merely for reference and must not be taken as having authority of or binding in any way on the writers, editors, publishers, and printers and sellers who do not owe any responsibility for any damage or loss to any person, a purchaser of this publication or not for the result of any action taken on the basis of this work. All disputes are subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of competent court and forums in Delhi/New Delhi only. Readers are advised and requested to verify and seek appropriate advice to satisfy themselves about the veracity of any kind of advertisement before responding to any contents published in this newspaper. The printer, publisher, editor and any employee of the Pioneer Group's will not be held responsible for any kind of lass, consequences and further product-related damages on such advertisements

Printed and published by Sarada Prasanna Nanda for and on behalf of CMYK Printech Ltd., 1067, Nayapalli, Bhubaneswar-751012. Tel: 0674-2560272. Fax: 0674-2560355. e-mail: orissapioneer@gmail.com. Printed at WEBLINE, D-2/19, Sector-A, Zone-D, Mancheswar Industrial Estate, Bhubaneswar-751010. Officiating Executive Editor: Navin Upadhyay. Resident Editor: S.P. Nanda. RNI Regn. No. ORIENG/2007/22475. AIR SURCHARGE of Re. 1.00 East: Calcutta, Ranchi, North: Leh West: Mumbai & Ahmedabad South: Bangalore & Chennai. Central : Khajuraho, Delhi Office: 100K, Milap Bhawan, 8/A, Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg, New Delhi 110 002, Phone: 011-40110455, Communication Office: F-31, Sector 6, NOIDA, Gautam Budh Nagar-201301, U.P Phone: 0120-4879900. Lucknow Office: 4th Floor, Sahara Shopping Centre, Faizabad Road, Lucknow 226 016. Telephones: 0522-2346444, 2346444, 2346445



In Keonjhar – 5 killed as truck runs into wedding procession

CM announces Rs 3L aid for kin of each deceased KEONJHAR / PNS BHUBANESWAR

What should have been a joyful and memorable occasion soon turned into a scene of sorrow and despair as a devastating accident unfolded during a wedding procession in Keonjhar district on Wednesday. The mishap resulted in the loss of at least five lives with nine others sustaining injuries.

The tragedy took place in the early hours of the day at Sathighar Sahi near National Highway-20. The injured victims were transported to the Keonjhar District



Headquarters Hospital for urgent medical attention.

According to sources, the wedding ceremony was set to unite the daughter of Kartik Patra, a resident of Sathighar Sahi, with Hemanta Patra, son of Hadibandhu Patra from Manpur village in

Khariar NAC to be child

labour-free by 2024

Harichandanpur block. In a celebratory display, the groom and the wedding party were joyously parading with DJ music when the tragedy struck.

> A truck collided with the procession a few meters away from the bride's house. Five individuals were killed

on the spot while nine others suffered severe injuries. Prompt response from the fire services personnel led the injured to be swiftly transported to the hospital.

Among the deceased were the groom's nephew and another individual from their side while two other victims hailed from Sathighar Sahi.

The marriage was cancelled and the bride returned home.

Expressing grief over the accident, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik announced ex-gratia of Rs 3 lakh for the next of kin of each deceased. The ex-gratia will be provided from the Chief Minister's Relief Fund.

The CM also announced free treatment for those who sustained injuries.



Pallahara MLA Pal counters PNS PALLAHARA

Local BID MLA Mukesh Pal dismissed the allegations of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan that the State Government has not properly implemented the Central Government schemes in Odisha and encouraged irregularities in the schemes.

Addressing a Press conference here, Pal said Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is for the upliftment of the poor people and overall development of Odisha,

said that Pradhan was levelling false charges against the Naveen Patnaik Government keeping the forthcoming Assembly and general elections in view. Notably, Minister Pradhan who is a native of Angul district recently criticised the BJD Government in the State in different mass meetings in Talcher and Angul areas. Earlier, Dhenkanal MP and former Talcher and Pallahara MLA Mahes Sahu too had countered Pradhan saying that the Union Minister had done nothing for his native district during his tenure as MLA, MP and Minister.

expenditure and in order to

provide a boost to capital

spending by the States, the

scheme continued during

the Financial Year 2023-24

as announced in the Union

Under the scheme, special

assistance is being provided

to the State Governments in

the form of 50-year interest

free loan up to an overall

Budget 2023-24.

including Angul district. He

INBRIEF

GOVT DECLARES ID-UL-ZUHA HOLIDAY ON JUNE 29

Bhubaneswar: The State Government on Wednesday changed the Id-ul-Zuha holiday date for all its offices to June 29 instead of the previously announced date June 30. A notification was issued by the Revenue Department in this regard. However, the Central Government Employees Welfare Coordination Committee (CGEWCC) declared the Id-ul-Zuha holiday for all Central Government offices in Bhubaneswar for June 30 instead of the previously announced date June 29.

FREE HEALTH CAMP CONDUCTED AT B'PUR

Brahmapur: On the birth centenary of Madhusudan Panigrahi, founder of Madhumay Panigrahi Foun-



dation and Aakashvani here, a free health camp was held here wherein bone density and sugar tests patients were conducted. Medicine specialist Dr Mihir Kanta Panigrahi and orthopaedic specialist Biswakesh Panigrahi offered their services to the patients. Anchor and former All India Radio officer Hrusikesh Panigrahi praised the foundation for its noble deeds. Foundation trustee Tripati Patra, members Bhagaban Moharana, F Someya and Sunil Patnaik and Bhabani of Seva Samiti conducted the camp. The Seva Sadan felicitated social workers Sridhar Sahu, Antaryami Nahak and T Himanshu Sekhar Patra for their services for healthcare awareness in rural areas.

PEO LODGES FIR AGAINST 2 KANDHAMAL SCRIBES

Phulbani: Jubaguda PEO Linkil Digal has lodged an FIR at the Kotagarh police station in Kandhamal district against two journalists Saroj Baliarsingh and of Balliguda and Ajit Nayak of Daringbadi alleging that they were demanding money and harass



her. Digal alleged that she gave Rs 80,000 to the duo out of fear. Police have registered a case under Sections 294, 341, 354, 384, 506, 507 and 34 of IPC and are conducting a probe, said Kotagarh PS IIC Om Narayan Patra and added that after investigation the truth would be unearthed.

'COMPLETE BHARGAVI EMBANKMENT WORK SOON'

Balanga: Residents of Haripur village demand completion of the Bhargavi river embankment stone-packing work before the possible floods. Notably, the Water Resource Department is



prolonging the stone-packing work to strengthen the embankment. The riverbed and embankment were damaged near Haripur due to heavy pressure of floodwater last time. The department has allocated Rs 15lakh for stone-packing. Due to delay of the work by the contractor, stone-packing remains incomplete. The villagers alleged that due to lack of proper monitoring by department, contractor has not completed the work in his own interest.

VEDANTA SUPPORTS HUNDREDS OF TB PATIENTS

Iharsuguda: The Vedanta Aluminium has announced successful completion of Phase I of the Ni-kshay Mitra programme here. As



part of this initiative to support the Government of India's TB-Mukt Bharat Abhiyaan, the company has been supporting nearly 550 tuberculosis patients across Jharsuguda and Kalahandi districts since last year. Vedanta Jharsuguda CEO Sunil Gupta said, "The health and wellbeing of our community is a top priority for Vedanta Aluminium."

IOC PARADIP CELEBRATES BAHUDA YATRA

Paradip: The Indian Oil Paradip Refinery celebrated Bahuda Yatra

1/22 AJIT PANDA 🔳 NUAPADA

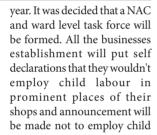
 ${f A}$ sensitisation programme on elimination of child labour was held at Khariar by Khariar NAC in collaboration with Aide et Action and Unicef.

Sensitisation

meet held

The chief guest on the occasion was Chairperson of Khariar NAC Ujjal Gupta. Chairperson of Child Welfare Committee, Nuapada Fanindam Deo was the guest of honour. Executive Officer of Khariar NAC Chinmya Acharya gave the welcome speech. This was followed by a presentation on objective of the workshop by District Child Protection Advisor, Aide et Action Ranjan Kumar Sahu.

The CWC Chairperson spoke elaborately on legal provisions of elimination of child labour.



labour in domestic work. A child labour survey through AWWs will be conducted. In addition, all JEs of NAC will give self declaration that child labour will not be employed in different development works of the NAC. There will be hoarding on child labour by NAC Khariar in prominent place of Khariar NAC, assured the Chairman.

Vote of thanks was given ICDS headquarters supervisor Narmada Behera. Vice chairperson, Sakuntala was present. All Anganwadi workers of NAC, all Councillors, SHG Federation members, Child line representative and a few adolescent girls participated.

For FY 2023-24 PNS NEW DELHI $T_{
m he\ Government\ of\ India}$

on Monday approved Rs 4,528 crore for Odisha under the scheme 'Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment 2023-24.'

The Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance has approved capital investment proposals of Rs 56,415 crore for 16 States including Odisha for the

current financial year.

Capital investment projects in diverse sectors have been approved including health, education, irrigation, water supply, power, roads, bridges and railways. Funds for meeting the State share of Ial Jeevan Mission (JJM) and Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) have also been provided to the States under the scheme to enhance pace of the projects in these

Odisha gets Rs 4,528 cr aid for capital investment The Ministry of Finance had launched the scheme in 2020-21 in the wake of Covid-19 pandemic which gave a very timely boost to capital spending by the States. The flexibility and simplicity of

the scheme design has earned liberal praise from the Chief Ministers and Finance Ministers of States in successive pre-Budget consultations.

PNS BHUBANESWAR

organised a series of virtual and physical yoga sessions along with expert speaker programmes covering close to 2,000 fitness enthusiasts across the country, marking the International Yoga Day. The programme was designed to spread the message on optimal health with a combination of good nutrition and regular physical activity such as yoga practices

was at the helm. Though late,

Statistics took a rapid

momentum, so much so that,

within the last one hundred

years, India has become a

leading country, changing the

world order. Mahalanobis, who

is the pioneer of the first

generation of modern

Statistics in India, is duly

credited with the honour for

Born as the eldest son of

this recognition.



Nutrilite Traditional Herbs Range, which includes products such as NutriliteTulsi, NutriliteAmalaki, Vibhitaki and Haritaki; Nutrilite Nutrilite Brahmi; Ashwagandha; and more to support immunity, mental agility, digestion etc. The range brings together the best of nature, the best of science with the best of Indian traditional wisdom, offering assured level of purity, safety and potency of herbs."

Physical and virtual events were organised for Amway direct selling partners and their customers comprising multiple sessions on yoga for gut health, heart health, etc, along with knowledge sharing on the importance of nutrition to achieve good health, happy soul and holistic wellness.

He was the brain behind

setting up the Central

Statistical Organization, now

the Central Statistical Office

(CSO). He too introduced Statistical Quality Control

(SQC) system in India. He had

the rare distinction of having

been closely associated with

the Indian planning process

and having formulated the

draft Second Five-Year Plan.

Mahalanobis was known for

his Brahmo Samaj background

and was a front-runner so far

as Bengal's social, cultural and

intellectual movements are

concerned. He was not only a

Rabindranath Tagore but was

the general secretary of Visva

Bharati during 1921-1931,

constitution. Mahalanobis

contributed to international

collaboration in scientific

research with eminent

scientists from across the

globe.The Indian Statistical

Institute remains the witness

of the activities for a galaxy

of statisticians, Statesmen and

dignitaries from all over the

world. Prof Mahalanobis

lived a very successful life and

drafted

associate

of

its

and

close

having

understanding

A multi-faceted personality,

survevs

multiplier effect of capital sectors. 2023-24.

yoga sessions

The Amway India

Senior Vice President East and West, Amway India Chandra Bhushan Chakraborty said: " Yoga is as much about the body as it is about the mind, an ancient practice which has long recognized the connection

sum of Rs 1.3 lakh crore In view of a higher during the financial year

Amway harnesses synergy of nutrition, yoga Holds series of

He further added, "We have

The NAC Chairman in his inaugural address said a plan of action would be prepared by the Khariar NAC to declare the NAC child labour free next

between the gut and brain, brain axis influencing mood, predating the scientific emotions, and overall wellunderstanding of the gutbeing."

at its township. The township was filled with religious fervour as devotees witnessed the grand procession marking the conclusion of the Rath Yatra. The event showcased the refinery's efforts to



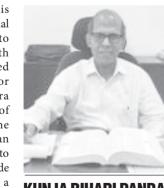
connect with the community beyond its industrial role.

June 29 Nat'l Statistics Day Empowering statistics key to growth of nation

^ ince 2007, June 29 is beserved as the National Statistic Statistics Day to commemorate the birth anniversary of a renowned statistician late Professor Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis, the father of Statistics in India. The Government of India, by an Act of Parliament, resolved to celebrate the day nation-wide as a mark of tribute to such a great son of the soil.

Ever since, the day has been receiving national importance with a specific year-wise theme determined by the Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

Contributions of Statistics has been immense over centuries. We are currently living in an era of information technology where information in some form or other is ruling the roost. Recently, we had reasons to feel happy when statistics revealed that our country is an emerging economy, i.e., the fifth largest economy in the world, having GDP growth of 7.2 per cent during the financial year ending March 2023 and were desperate when it was shared that ours was one of the poorest



KUNJA BIHARI PANDA

countries in terms of per capita income. To become world's most populous country is a virtue and a vice as well: Virtue because we are at the top so far as human resources are

concerned and vice when problems of their sustainability Prabodh Chandra and Nirodbasini Mahalanobis on assume significance for a developing country like June 29, 1893 in Kolkata, India.When the entire world Prasanta Chandra, after his was reeling from the shock of schooling from Brahmo Boys' the dreaded pandemic School, graduated with honours in Physics from the "COVID -19", statistics was the order of the day, providing Presidency College, Calcutta in 1912, followed by degrees hopes and confidence for a better future. All these things in mathematics and natural are possible because of very science from the King's efficient and effective College of the Cambridge University. He joined as a statistical systems followed faculty of Physics in the world over.

Even though the origin of Presidency College in the year statistics dates back to the 1915. Prasanta Chandra soon

existence of the mankind on became a Professor of Physics this earth, revolutions in in 1922, and eventually, statistics took place about 200 became its Principal in 1945. years ago. In India, the picture Besides his contributions to is a bit different. People started Physics, Mahalanobis found realizing the contribution and extraordinary interest in the importance of the subject only growth and development of during early part of 20th Statistics in India. century when Mahalanobis As a humble beginning, he

set up the Statistical Laboratory in the Presidency College in the early 1920s. His early researches include areas of anthropometry, meteorology and problems of flood control in North Bengal and Odisha. Going a step forward, he laid the foundation of the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), Calcutta on December 17, 1931 for advanced research and training in statistics, and in 1933, he introduced Sankhya, the Indian Journal of Statistics, a journal soon recognized all over the world. It is worth underlining here that Mahalanobis perceived statistics as 'a key technology' and 'a universal tool of inductive inference, research in natural and social sciences, technological and applications. Mahalanobis strongly advocated the fact that "Statistics must always have purpose, either in the

pursuit of knowledge or in promotion of human welfare".

Mahalanobis enriched statistics by way of his contribution to knowledge on D2- Statistics, known as 'Mahalanobis Distance', and the innovative techniques of sample survey such as optimum sample design, interpenetrating network of samples and pilot surveys which are considered today as his most valuable and lasting gifts to statistical science. His work on "Large Scale Sample Survey" was impactful so much so that he became a Fellow of the Royal Society, London in 1945. Mahalanobis was a great visionary, a fact that could be ascertained from his overall contributions to the statistical system in India. In 1950, he established the National Sample Survey, which subsequently, in 1972, got the recognition of being a separate organization of Government of India called the National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO), now the National Sample Survey Office and continued to function within ISI for periodic collection of socioeconomic data through successive rounds of sample

died on June 28, 1972.

The journey of statistics went on beyond Mahalanobis when a worthy successor was found in Professor Calyampudi Radhakrishna Rao, the former Director of ISI, Calcutta, the former National Professor of India and one of the world's most honoured statisticians. Prof Rao whose specialization was in mathematical statistics has made pioneering contributions to statistical theory and applications. A number of statistical results bear his name; Cramer-Rao Raoinequality, Blackwellisation, Fisher-Rao theorem, Rao's U-Test, Rao's quadratic entropy, Rao's score test, to name a few only.

Prof Rao, a 102-year living legend of statistics, after his superannuation from ISI, went to the United States and is currently Eberly Professor at the Pennyslavania State University, contributing continuously and consistently to the growth of statistics

Recently, the statistician non-pareil, Prof Rao reached the pinnacle of his career when he was awarded the 2023 International Prize in

Statistics - the equivalent of the Nobel Prize for statistics. In an exclusive interview with the Economic Times published in its Ahmedabad edition on December 17, 1994, Prof Rao highlighted on various issues and challenges faced by statistics. While considering statistics as the median of all endeavours, he revealed the irony that the use of statistics is not generally recognized by other scientists, at least by the or administrators.

Today, on this auspicious day of 130th birth anniversary of Prof PC Mohalanobis, we, the Indians in general and the statistics fraternity in particular, ought to pay our heart-felt obeisance to such a legendary statistician for his profound contribution to the nation-building. During India's G-20 Presidency, if it is resolved to give statistics its due, wonders are going to take place from the standpoint of all-round national growth. Thus, empowering statistics is the need of the hour.

(The writer is a Professor of Statistics, Central University of Jharkhand, Ranchi; M: 9437357249: Email: kbpanda@cuj.ac.in)



India, USA can work together to resist Chinese coercion: Garcetti

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

With China flexing its mus-cle in the Indo-Pacific, US Ambassador to New Delhi Eric Garcetti said here on Wednesday India and the US can work jointly in resisting "coercion" and deploy ships and air forces together in the Indo-Pacific to ensure freedom of the skies and the seas. In an address at an event in IIT-Delhi, the envoy said the two countries are poised to further deepen co-production of military equipment and cited the planned work in aero-

engines, artillery and ground vehicles as just a few examples. Touching on the issues relating to human rights, Garcetti said the US will continue to engage with India on it "as we have always done, and as we do in all countries around the world." He also quoted Mahatma Gandhi: "Our ability to reach unity in diversity will be the beauty and test of our civilization?

The US ambassador said India and the US together can build a bulwark against the "might makes right" mentality,



in comments seen as an oblique reference to China.

He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to Washington last week "crys-talised" that the India-US partnership is accelerating at "breathtaking speed" and is hav-ing "undeniable impact". The US and India have the

power to set an example and build a more peaceful world, in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond. A key component of peace is protection," he said.

"As we've unfortunately seen over the past three years, we live in a world in which countries ignore sovereign borders, advancing their claims through violence and destruction," he said, in an apparent reference to China and Russia. "This is not

Cong demands transparency in India-US drone deal

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Congress on Wednesday demanded complete transparency in the multi-crore India-US drone deal, while alleging that the 31 MQ-9B Predator UAV drones were being procured for a higher price. The party said national

security was paramount and that several doubts were being raised on the predator drone deal.

"The Modi government is known to jeopardise national interests and the people of India have witnessed the same in the Rafale deal, where the Modi government bought only 36 Rafale jets instead of 126. We also saw how HAL was denied transfer of technology. We also saw how sevthe world we want. This is not eral unilateral decisions were made, despite widespread

incompetence.

spiracy

acts prejudicial to the mainte-

nance of harmony and con-

objections from the Defence Acquisition Committee and the Armed Forces. The Rafale 'scam' is still under scrutiny in France," AICC Media department head Pawan Khera said at a Press conference.

"We demand complete transparency in this Predator Drone deal. India needs answers to the crucial questions. Otherwise, we will be trapped in another 'scam' under the Modi Government," he told reporters.

Experts find flaws in key components of Dhruv ALH

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI

Following a spate of crashes Dhruv advanced light helicopters (ALH), experts have identified critical flaws, including metallurgical and design issues, in a key component. Prompt actions are now being taken on a priority basis to address these concerns and enhance flight safety, reliable

sources said here on Wednesday. The army, air force, navy and coast guard operate more than 330 ALHs, sources said

here on Wednesday. The helicopters are indigenously designed and manufactured by the public sector aerospace conglomerate Hindustan Aeronautics Limited(HAL). The helicopters are now getting clear-ance for flying in batches for urgent missions after comprehensive checks, sources said. In the past five years, the ALH was involved in 12 accidents, including the crash-landing of an army helicopter in Jammu and Kashmir on May four this year

in which a soldier was killed and two pilots were injured.



Earlier, a Coast Guard ALH made a forced landing in Kochi on March 26, and a Navy ALH ditched (emergency landing in water) into the Arabian Sea on March 8.

As specified in a govern-ment letter dated May 22, the resumption of urgent flights followed the prescribed "satisfactory conduct of independent maintenance flight safety audit of critical items and systems, and compliance with safety-related special technical instructions and alert notices" issued by technical authorities.

Sources said the helicopters are being operated again, but the parts are being changed on a priority basis and their flying life has been reduced from what it was earlier.

Env Min prepares draft Green Credit Programme Implementation Rules



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DFI HI

As a part of the government's strategy to engage the private sector to help achieve net carbon emission zero by 2070, the Union Environment Ministry has prepared a draft Green Credit Programme Implementation Rules 20223. The programme proposes

to create a market based mechanism for providing incentives in the form of Green Credits to individuals, farmer producer organisations, cooperatives, forestry enterprises, sustainable agriculture enterprises, urban and rural local bodies, private

sectors, industries and organisations for environment positive actions.

The Ministry has issued a notification in this regard to help the entities in the private sector meet their existing obligations, stemming from other legal frameworks, by taking actions which are able to converge with activities relevant for generating or buying Green Credits.

The programme also envisages to create a mass movement around environment positive actions and realise the vision of "Mission LiFE" through pro-planet people and entities.

K'taka police file FIR against Malviya for incitement Rahul Gandhi felt aggrieved by any tweet, he should have pur-

the world we need," he added.

PNS NEW DELHI

The Karnataka police have registered a First Information Report (FIR) against the Chief of the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) IT Cell Amit Malviya, for allegedly promoting enmity within groups and instigating people through a social media video mocking Congress leader Rahul Gandhi. The BJP has strongly criticized the action, labeling it as "pathetic" and accusing it of attempting to intimidate and silence Malviya.

The FIR against Malviya was filed on the grounds of defamation and incitement against the Congress party and Rahul Gandhi, following a complaint lodged by Ramesh Babu, a member of the



Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee. The complaint specifically referred to a tweet by Malviya, which contained an animated video allegedly disparaging Rahul Gandhi and portraying the Congress party in a negative light.

In response to these developments, BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla claimed on Twitter that the FIR against Malviya was a malicious attempt to stifle free speech. Poonawalla suggested that if

ED arrests Additional **Commissioner of Customs under PMLA**

PNS NEW DELHI

sued a defamation case through the judicial system, rather than Enforcement The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on resorting to involving the police. Poonawalla further crit-Wednesday said it has arresticized the Congress party's ed Indian Revenue Service communication and social (IRS) officer and Additional media capabilities, suggesting Commissioner of Customs Sachin Balasaheb Sawant in a that their reliance on state money laundering case. Sawant is a 2008-batch authorities demonstrated their

Tuesday.

an FIR registered under the Prevention of Corruption Act by the Anti-Corruption

ED said.

in the bank



brother-in-law were direc-

tors. "It has been found that immovable property was purchased in the name of said dummy company. The source for purchase of the said property was shown as personal loans and other bank loans whose repayments were also made in cash. Although, the flat is in the name of dummy company but Sachin Sawant

duced before the Designated Special PMLA Court,

Philippines will continue to challenge Chinese assertiveness: Foreign Secy

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NFW DFI HI

With growing assertiveness of China in the South China Sea, the Philippines has "repeatedly" challenged its presence and will continue to do so, its Foreign Secretary Enrique A Manalo said here on Wednesday.

He also said his country wants to develop a "very robust" defence partnership with India and is looking forward to procuring military hardware from it. The visiting minister is scheduled to hold talks here with External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Thursday.

The defence and security ties between India and the Philippines are on an upswing. In January last year, the Philippines concluded a USD 375 million deal with India for the procurement of three batteries of the BrahMos cruise missile.

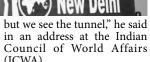
Delivering a lecture at a leading think tank here, Manalo said his country has eatedly challenged



the Philippines in the South China sea and will continue to do so.

The Filipino foreign secretary, on a four-day visit to India, said the 10 ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) countries and China have been engaged to formulate a code of conduct (CoC) for the South China Sea, but he appeared unsure about a positive outcome.

The code is envisioned to prevent any military conflict in the South China Sea, a region that has overlapping territori-al claims by China, Taiwan, Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia



(ICWA). Describing India as a key partner of the Philippines, Manalo said Manila wants to expand the bilateral cooperation in areas of maritime security, cyber-terrorism, education, healthcare and climate

technologies among others. "We hope to develop very robust defence cooperation arrangements with India. We have already entered into some potential deals and I think we will be looking forward to having more," he said when asked



Amit Malviya has been officer and was arrested on charged under sections 153(A), 120(B), 505(2), and 34 of the The ED had initiated Indian Penal Code, which perinvestigation on the basis of

tain to promoting enmity between different groups based on factors such as religion, race, Branch, CBI, Mumbai. place of birth, residence, and language, as well as engaging in

It is alleged that during the check period Sawant has amassed assets dispropor-tionate to his known and legal sources of income, the

During the Investigation conducted so far, it was revealed that cash deposits of around Rs 1.25 crore were made from unexplained sources in the personal bank accounts of family members account of a dummy compa-ny wherein his father and till July 5 to the ED.

was occupying the said flat as its real owner.," it said. To identify the proceeds of crime, Sawant has been arrested. Further, he was pro-

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during a meeting with a delegation from Young FICCI Ladies Organisation (YFLO), in New Delhi on Wednesday.

India hub of youth power: **UNICEF** director Wijesekara

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NFW DFI H

In his first visit to India as UNICEF Regional Director of South Asia, Sanjay Wijesekara, on Wednesday said that India is a hub of youth power, and it has tremendous role and potential in the world achieving the SDGs. He further stated India has the world's largest child population and therefore plays a pivotal role in shaping progress for children in the region and around the world.

"From 2025 to 2055, India will witness an unprecedented demographic dividend, which is a great opportunity to provide education and skills to young people, with a billion Indians joining the workforce" said Wijesekara.

He added that India has implemented some of the world's largest development programmes and social schemes, with UNICEF as a valuable partner, Swachh Bharat, Jal Jeevan Mission, Ayushman Bharat, Beti Bachao Beti Padhao and the

National Education Policy (NEP) have been rolled out and scaled up to reach children in remote areas. "India's innovative and scalable models can assist

other countries particularly Global South in achieving the SDGs. For example, the Ministry of Women and Child Development, Poshan Tracker App, which utilizes digital transformation to enhance



nutrition and well-being of children and India's remarkable immunization efforts. recently recognized in the UNICEF global State of the World's Children report,"

Wijesekara added. He said that UNICEF firmly believes that India can reinvigorate the focus on the power of young people and children in advancing the global SDGs, benefitting not only the G20 Presidency, but also the broader multilateral system

Munn

Chinese presence in the exclu-"We may not be seeing the sive economic zones (EEZs) of light at the end of the tunnel

ether his country is looking at procuring more military hardware from India.

Govt nod to PM-PRANAM to boost balanced use of fertilisers by farmers

PTI 🔳 NEW DELHI

The Centre on Wednesday approved a new scheme PM-PRANAM to incentivise states to promote alternative fertilisers and reduce the use of chemical fertilisers and also decided to continue the current urea subsidy scheme for three years ending March 2025, with an outlay of Rs 3.68 lakh crore.

That apart, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved an outlay of Rs 1,451 crore subsidy to promote organic manure, taking the total package to over Rs 3.70 lakh crore.

The CCEA also decided to introduce sulphur-coated urea (Urea Gold) in the country for the first time to address sulphur deficiency in the soil.

Briefing media, Union Chemicals and Fertilisers Minister Mansukh Mandaviya said the CCEA has approved a scheme PM-PRANAM (PM Programme for Restoration, Awareness, Generation, Nourishment and Amelioration of Mother Earth).

"PM-PRANAM is aimed at saving the soil and promote sustainable balanced use of fertilisers. The scheme involves the participation of the state governments," he said.

Under the scheme, Mandaviya said that the states, which will adopt alternative fer-tilisers will be incentivised with the subsidy that is saved by reducing the use of chemical fertilisers.

Citing example, suppose a



state is using 10 lakh tonne of conventional fertiliser, and if it reduces its consumption by 3 lakh tonne, then the subsidy saving would be Rs 3,000 crore. Out of that subsidy savings, the Centre will give 50 per cent of it -- Rs 1,500 crore to the state for promoting the use of alternative fertiliser and other development works, he added.

The scheme was announced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her Budget speech in February.

According to an official statement, the CCEA approved a "unique package" of innovative schemes for farmers with a total outlay of Rs 3,70,128.7

"The bouquet of schemes is focused on the overall wellbeing and economic betterment of farmers by promoting sustainable agriculture. The initiatives will boost farmers' income, strengthen natural/organic farming, reju-venate soil productivity and ensure food security," it added. The CCEA approved the continuation of the urea sub-

crore.

sidy Scheme to ensure constant availability of fertiliser to the farmers at the same price of Rs 242/45 kg bag, excluding taxes and neem coating charges.

NIA conducts searches in case related to BJYM leader Nettaru's death



PNS NEW DELH

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Tuesday conducted extensive searches at the houses of three absconding suspects in the case related to the murder of BJP Yuva Morcha member Praveen Nettaru by cadres of the banned terror group Popular Front of India (PFI) in Karnataka last year.

The NIA searched three locations in two districts of Karnataka as part of its efforts to hunt down the absconders. The agency seized several electronic gadgets and documents during the searches at the houses of Abdul Nasir, Abdul Rahaman in Kodagu district and Naushad in Dakshina Kannada district, the NIA said.

"All three are suspected of harbouring the main assailants of Parveen Nettaru at various hideouts across

CBI registers case against Guj businessman for defrauding banks



PNS 🔳 NEW DELHI

The CBI has registered a case on complaint from Union Bank of India, Ahmedabad (Gujarat) against a private company and its Managing Director among others for allegedly defrauding the public sector lender to the tune of over Rs 55

It was alleged that the

accused was sanctioned and

disbursed Term Loans of Rs

50.25 crore by the consortium of

banks (e-Corporation Bank now

Union Bank of India, Union

Bank of India and Central Bank

of India) for establishing sugar

factory in village Vadod, Surat

(Gujarat) to manufacture sugar

the said accused through its

Managing Director and others

had cheated the said three con-

sortium banks by resorting to

misappropriation, diversion/ siphoning off disbursed Term Loan funds and caused a loss to

the tune of Rs 55.39 crore on Iuly

16, 2022 to the said consortium

banks, the CBI said in a state-

It was further alleged that

and related by-products.

crore.

Karnataka and Tamil Nadu State. Besides the trio, five other accused are still absconding in the case, which NIA had taken over in August 2022," it said. A total of 21 persons,

including the absconders, have so far been chargesheeted by NIA under various sections of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and Arms Act.

Nettaru was hacked to death on July 26, 2022 in Bellare village of Sullia Taluk at Dakshina Kannada district by PFI 'Killer Squads' or 'Service Teams', it said.

"PFI has been indulging in such targeted 'hate killings' with the aim of driving a communal wedge and spreading communal hatred with its ultimate objective of establishing an Íslamic Rule in India by 2047. Efforts to track down the absconding accused are continuing," the NIA added.

ment. Searches were conducted at three official and residential premises of the accused, situated at Surat (Gujarat) which led to recovery of incriminating documents/articles, the agency said



the pioneer

BHUBANESWAR | THURSDAY | JUNE 29, 2023

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Inspired by the tips given by Prime Minister Narendra Modi from his virtual address a day ago, the workers of Bharatiya Janaa Party (BJP) have intensified their door-todoor contact campaign to apprise the people of the achievements of the Central Government during the last nine years. Though the 2024 parliamentary election is still far away and the opposition parties are busy in making a strong joint alliance, the BJP continued its activities to reach the voters as at present, its booth workers are doing contact with each voter under its on-going month long Maha Sampark Abhiyan, which was launched last month and it will continue till June 30.

During this month, the party had organised several big programmes including a public meeting of Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath apart from many others addressed by Deputy Chief Minister Keshav Prasad Maurya, Union Minister SP Singh Baghel and senior BJP leaders. According to regional party chief (Kashi Region) Dilip Singh Patel, one big public meeting was held in each of 14 parliamentary constituencies of the region includ-ing Varanasi, Chandauli, Bhadohi, Mirzapur, Jaunpur, Machhalishahr, Sonbhadra, Ghazipur, Prayagraj, Phulpur, Pratapgarh, Sultanpur, Kaushambi and Amethi.

Besides, the party has also made arrangements of big LED screens and other facilities so that the party workers could listen to the PM's virtual addresses on many occasions during the month including one from Bhopal when Modi interacted with party workers in 'Mera Booth, Sabse Mazboot' pro-



Regional BJP chief DS Patel making door-to-door contact in Varanasi on Tuesday

gramme. During this month, the senior party leaders con-tacted at least 250 special families of Padam award winners, sportspersons, artistes, entrepreneurs, doctors, former judges, martyrs and others in view that they would play as opinion leaders for the party in the upcoming elections. Recently, the party had performed superbly well in UP Urban Body polls, as usual the party did in the past but its leaders are confident about doing well in forthcoming panchayat elections as well as in recent time, the party has strengthened its organisationhours al structure in rural areas especially in this part of Purvanchal (eastern UP).

ongoing Maha Sampark Abhiyan, party workers are contacting the people at their doorsteps and handing over leaflets highlighting all the achievements of central governments during the last nine years. In this parliamentary constituency of the PM, the people have also been apprised about the overall development work done in the city areas under the leadership of Modi. In view of summer days, the BJP teams of workers generalcontacted the people during

In the last phase of the

the morning and evening Under this Maha Sampark Abhiyan, regional president Dilip Singh Patel, along with

MLA Dr Neelkanth Tiwari contacted people in booth number 206 (Adampur) and distributed leaflets of nine years achievements of the central government. They also asked the people

to fill forms and if they support the work of the PM, they should give a missed call on mobile number 9090902024. Such exercise will help the party to understand the reality of its ground level support from the people.

Regional spokesman Navratan Rathi said that doorto-door public contact drives at the booth level in all the Lok Sabha constituencies of Kashi Region will continue till June

Speed up civil engineering works, says CORE GM

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

conference of deputy chief Acontenence of acquiry and engineers and executive engineers of rail electrification projects was held at Central Organisation for Railway Electrification (CORE) headquarters here on Wednesday. The progress of engineering works in all projects located in every corner of the country was reviewed.

The conference was presided over by Sanjay Kumar Mishra, Principal Chief Engineer (PCE)/CORE and directed the officers of Engineering department to work in a planned manner to achieve the target of FY 2023-

Addressing the conference, the chief guest, Pramod Kumar, General Manager/ CORE/Prayagraj, directed to speed up the civil engineering works related to rail electrification works so that the rail electrification works going on in various sections are completed within the stipulated time. He heartily congratulated all the officials who came from the project for the highest railway



General Manager CORE, Pramod Kumar addressing a conference with official concerned

electrification of 4,767 route kilometers in the year 2022-23. Prominent among those resent included Anupam Singhal, Chief Administrative

Officer (CAO), PK Singh, Chief Signal and Telecom Engineer (CSTE)/Project, VK Garg, Senior Deputy General Manager (SDGM), Vinay

Ambade, Principal Chief Material Manager (PCMM), Dinesh Kumar Gupta, Financial Advisor and Chief Accounts Officer.

75,47,660 saplings to be planted

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

During this year's monsoon, the Forest department here will be increasing the greenery of the district by planting 75,47,660 saplings. The mega exercise will commence from the first week of July.

The target of planting the saplings has been distributed among different departments of the district administration, majority of which will be shared between Forest department, Irrigation department and the Rural Development department.

The department, every year, enhances its efforts to increase the green cover of the district and thereby increasing the oxygen output by planting saplings in a huge number. They have planned to plant 75,47,660 saplings within the next month which is over 3.54

lakh more as compared to last year. The previous year's data shows that 71,92,852 saplings were planted in the year 2022-23 and 60,88,947 in 2021-22.

The department has already prepared 70 per cent of the pits across urban and rural areas of the district and nowadays is busy transporting the saplings to the respective sites so that they can be planted during the 'Van Mahotsava' (plantation festival) starting next month. According to the Divisional Forest Officer (DFO), Mahaveer Kaujalgi, We have 41 nurseries in which we have 81,57,110 saplings of

different species of trees which would be planted during the drive." These include Sheesham (20 lakh saplings), Sagwan (teakwood, 7.5 lakh), Keji (8.5 lakh), Arjun (2 lakh), jamun (Java Plum) (1.25 lakh), tamarind (2.25 lakh), amla

saplings has been distributed among different departments of the district administration which include the Forest department with the target of 24,77,880, the Environment department will plant 2,27,000 saplings, the Rural Development department will plant 29,87,000 saplings, the

(4.50 lakh) and guava (5 lakh). The task of planting the

Revenue department 25,10,00, the Panchayati Raj department 3,04,000, the Urban Development department 1,37,000, the Agriculture department 5,99,000, the Housing development depart-ment 5000, the Animal Husbandry department 9,000, the Cooperative department 13,300, the Industries department 8,000, the Department of Energy 6,580 and the Irrigation department will plant 13,000 saplings.

Excluding the above the other departments also included in the target are the Basic Education department with 30,000, Technical Education 6,000, Higher Education 24,000, Labour department 1,900, Health department 12,000, Transport department 1,800, Railway department 5,000, Department of Defence 4,000, Horticulture department 3,69,000 and Home department 7,280.

However, with these promising figures Prayagraj has also seen a substantial number of trees being cut down for different developmental works, foremost being widening of major national and state highways. In the last three years, a total of 7,794 trees were cut down. This includes, 2,570 trees during the year 2022-23, 2,353 trees in 2021-22 and 2,871 in the year 2020-21.

Govt flayed for rising prices of vegetables

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

The local activists of National L Students Union of India (NSUI) staged a dharna at Chandua Satti (vegetables' market) near Bharat Mata Mandir here on Wednesday in protest against skyrocketing prices of vegetables. Speaking on the occasion, district NSUI president Rishabh Pandey said that under the government of Party (BJP), the burdens of the housewives have increased as the prices of all the items being used in kitchens have increased alarmingly. According to him, the price of cooking gas (LPG) has gone up to Rs 1,200 per cylinder, while tomatoes are being sold at the price of diamonds and the prices of ginger have gone upto Rs 250 per kg. He said that the BJP is celebrating the completion of nine years of Prime Minister by telling the people about the government achievements but it is keeping mum on the issues of inflation and



Location of Atiq's henchman Malli found in Gujarat

NSUI activists protesting against price hike of vegetables in Varanasi on Wednesday.

price-rise of most of the essential items and vegetables. He said that today the people are worried and feel cheat-

would continue its protest against the price rise and inflation. Among others also present in the dharna were city ed. He said that the NSUI president Sandeep Pal, state

vice president Prafulla Pandey, state secretary Shivam Choubey, Gautam Sharma, Lorik Yadav and Anurag Rai.

Maidagin-Godowlia route to be 'no vehicle zone' on Mondays

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

In view of the heavy rush in Shri Kashi Vishwanath Mandir, there will be complete restriction on 'sparsh darshan' of Baba Vishwanath on each Monday during the Shrawan. And, the Maidagin-Godowlia route will be 'no vehicle zone' on Mondays during the auspicious month.

It is noteworthy that this year, the Shrawan will be of two months because of adhimaas and it will begin from July 4 and end on August 31. Eight Mondays will fall during the auspicious month.

Divisional The Commissioner (DC) Kaushal Raj Sharma held a meeting with the officers of concerned departments and temple authorities in Shri Kashi Vishwanath Dham late Wednesday afternoon and took stock of the arrangements to be made in the temple during the auspicious month in view of the security and darshan of the devotees.



The DC Kaushal Raj Sharma and the CP Mutha Ashok Jain holding meeting with the officers in Shri Kashi Vishwanath Mandir.

Vishwanath, the DC said and

gate of sanctum-sanctorum The temple authorities apprised that there would be while the devotees coming complete restriction on 'sparsh towards Maidagin, Saraswati darshan' on each Monday and gate and Dhudhiraj Gali will no ticket would be provided for enter from northern, southern the sugam darshan and any and western gate respectively. aarti except mangla aarti. There As the Shrawan is of two devotees will exit from the months because of adhimaas same gate from which they will and so, the devotees across the enter and the devotees coming country will reach the temple towards gang-dhwar will be to have darshan of Baba

given entrance from eastern

directed that the officers would pay attention on the arrangements and facilities of devotees instead of engaging themselves in getting darshan to their dear and near

The DC directed the authorities to write a letter to all the departments for no VIP darshan because no vehicle will be allowed to ply on the route from Maidagin to Godowlia.

The DC directed the health officers to hold emergency medical camps at four places in the temple premises.

There should be arrangement of e-rickshaw fir the elderly person and divyangjan, he added.

The Commissioner of Police (CP) Mutha Ashok Jain directed the police officers to erect barricading and make arrangements of PS System to facilitate the devotees. The DM S Rajalingam, ACP Santosh Kumar Singh, SOD Umesh Kumar Singh, ACEO Nikhilesh Mishra, SDM Shambhu Sharan were mainly present in the meeting.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

Mafia Atiq Ahmad is no more but the police are keeping a special eye on his henchmen. Ashif Malli, one of Atiq's henchmen, is wanted for kidnapping and extortion of Rs 20 lakh. Special Task Force (STF) is on the lookout for him.

The location of Malli is found in the state of Gujarat. The STF is busy laying siege to nab him. It is expected that Malli is hiding at Atiq's place with some person. He is a resident of Puramufti area and has also been an active member of the Atiq gang. Many criminal

sharp shooter of the mafia. After the strictness of the police, he managed to flee from UP. Now the police will camp in Gujarat as well and try to reach him.

The police picked up a youth associated with Malli. During interrogation it has been confirmed that he is hiding in Gujarat only. On the basis of that, his location is being traced.

In the interrogation of the police, it has come to know that when the Atiq was lodged in Sabarmati Jail, Malli also used to live in a flat there. He used cases are also registered against to work on the instructions of

him, he is also said to be the Atiq. There he has come in memorandum, addressed to contact with many people, who are proving to be helpful in sav-Modi, to District Magistrate ing him.

Atiq's wife Shaista Parveen is still absconding. Shaista was also booked in the Umesh Pal murder case. Similarly, Guddu Bambaz is also out of the hands of the police. The search operation of the police is going on to find them.

VYAPAR MANDAL DEL-**SUBMITS** EGATION MEMO TO DM: Irked over the issue of ever increasing online trading and its adverse impact on the local business, a delegation of Prayag Vyapar Mandal (PVM) submitted a

district president of the body, Mohamad Qadir. However, the protest remained confined to holding public meeting as markets like Civil Lines, Katra and Chowk

remained open.

the Prime Minister Narendra

the policies of Prime Minister are benefiting all the classes in the country, but due to some

selective big industrialists,

about seven crore small retail

traders are being directly affected due to online trading and are on the verge of closure," said

While on the one hand

Sanjay Kumar Khatri.

Four drug smugglers arrested

CORRESPONDENT MIRZAPUR

Under the joint operation of SOG, SWAT/surveillance and area police station the police have arrested four interstate drug smugglers and recovered the 2.85 quintals of ganja worth Rs 60 lakh on Tuesday. After the Dramondganj police was tipped off by an informer that the drug was being transported through the area the SOG and SWAT teams were directed to be involved in the operation under the supervision of CO Lalganj Manjari Rao. The police started vehicle checking at night and stopped a suspicious car carrying four people, including the driver. During interrogation car driver Sandeep Singh said they were escorting the truck on which

the ganja was being transported from Odisha to Prayagraj. Based on his information provided by the car driver, the police checked the truck and recovered 2.85 quintals of ganja worth Rs 60 lakh. After registering a case the police arrested the smugglers and seized the

truck along with the car. For the successful operation the SP

awarded the police team with a cash reward of Rs 15,000. The arrested accused were identified as Ashish Pandey of Nibaiya village under Meja police station, Prayagraj, Komal Prasad of Katra Aadhartal under Aadhartal police station, and Jagannath Marvi of Ujagarpurva under Lordganj police station, both Jabalpur (MP) and Sandeep Kumar Singh of Baghera under Karchhana police station, Prayagraj. The police team which conducted the operation was led SOG byincharge Madhav Singh, incharge SWAT/surveillance Rajesh Chaubey and SO Dramondganj Virendra Singh.

Meanwhile the Chunar police arrested one drug smuggler and recovered heroin of value around 2 lakh on Tuesday. SHO Chunar police station Triveni Prasad Sen during routine patrolling was through an informer got information about the illegal trade of drug Acting on it the police team reached the spot and

nabbed one person. On frisking him the police recovered 20 gms of the heroin from his possession. After registering a case the police sent the accused Om Prakash Singh of Newarhiya village under Chunar police station to jail.

REVIEWED: Chairman, sub-committee of UP Assembly Estimate Committee Lokendra Pratap Singh while reviewing the progress of ongoing projects on Tuesday asked the officials to provide impetus to projects and utilise the fund timely. The committee was welcomed by a team of officers led by Divisional Commissioner Dr

Muthukumarasamy B and the DIG RP Singh at the inspection house. The team performed the rituals at Vindhyavasini temple and became aware of the future plan and ongoing works under Vindhya Corridor. DM Divya Mittal showed the proposed model of the corridor to the committee and made aware of progress. The team comprised Chairman Lokendra Singh, Vikas Gupta, Veer Vikram Singh, Chandan Chauhan, Gaurav Rawat and Ajeet Reviewing Kumar Verma. progress of developmental Lokendra Singh said expressed discontent over inordinate delay in the completion of works at Police Lines. He directed the officials to carry out works in a planned way and complete them within the stipulated time frame. After inspection of ongoing works at PAC campus the team members planted saplings and became aware of arrangements at the battalion. A team of forest officials was also present during the plantation.

WORKSHOP: Lalganj BDO Sanjay Srivastava while speaking as the keynote speaker in a day long workshop organised at block headquarters on Tuesday said it is the need of the hour that people come forward to conserve water not only for the present but for the coming generation. He said excessive exploitation of groundwater was the main reason behind water crisis. The workshop was also addressed by experts from different organisations.

BHUBANESWAR | THURSDAY | JUNE 29, 2023

she ploneer

nion 06

www.dailypioneer.com facebook.com/dailypioneer | @TheDailyPioneer | instagram.com/dailypioneer/ -PAPER WITH PASSION-

Uniform Civil Code

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is rooting for the Uniform Civil Code, but is it actually feasible?

he Prime Minister has once again made a strong pitch for implementing a uniform civil code in the country. He recently reiterated his views on the subject, saying a country cannot function when there are two sets of laws and that it was sanctioned in the Constitution itself. This in fact opens a Pandora's box as this topic is sure to generate a lot of heat and arguments. The recent proposition by the Prime Minister for a uniform civil code has ignited a contentious debate within our society. While the concept of a uniform set of laws for all citizens might seem appealing at first, it is crucial to examine its potential ramifications. We must carefully consider the implications of such a code, particularly on personal rights and cultural diversity of minority communities. The protection and preservation of individual rights and cultural autonomy should always take precedence over any drive towards uniformity. In the first place, the Prime Minister has always been in favour of one nation, one election, one leader, one party



and what-have-you. But this is not such a great idea for a diverse country like ours. Plurality is what makes the Indian democracy work. If it were not for the system's flexibility, it would have crashed long back. Interestingly, the country does have a uniform civil code; only personal laws such as marriage are governed separately. Even if you had a uniform civil code, you would have to give latitude to regional and cultural differences. Any diverse and pluralistic society thrives when it

recognises and respects the individual rights of its citizens. The idea of a uniform civil code may seem egalitarian on the surface, but it must not be pursued at the cost of compromising people's personal rights. Our

Constitution guarantees the freedom to practice and uphold one's cultural and religious beliefs but the introduction of a uniform civil code erases these differences as these are a direct infringement on such fundamental rights. India's diversity has been the bedrock of our nation, fostering tolerance and inclusivity. A uniform civil code threatens to homogenise this rich cultural tapestry and suppress the unique identity of minority communities. Personal laws, shaped by religious and cultural practices, have played a crucial role in safeguarding the rights and interests of minority communities. These laws have evolved organically, considering the specific needs and aspirations of these communities. Imposing a uniform civil code would risk negating these protections and imposing a one-size-fits-all approach, which may not adequately address the concerns of all citizens. Therefore, rather than imposing a uniform civil code, the focus should be on fostering dialogue and understanding among different communities. It is through open conversations and mutual respect that we can bridge the treacherous gaps and find common ground. Collaboration and consensus-building should be the guiding principle as we work towards creating a just society that respects individual rights while cherishing our diversity. Maybe we need to ultimately go down this path, but let's find another way.



The 'Amul Girl' cries for the first time

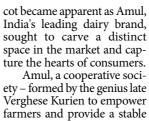
A tribute to Sylvester daCunha, the man who created 'Amul Girl' campaign to take Dr Kurien's cooperative movement forward

hether or not Oxford has included the word 'sadilicious' in its dictionary, I am taking the liberty of expression to write: "Utterly Butterly, sadilicious". I am feeling sad, and perhaps many of us. For, a generation that has grown up seeing the smile in the eyes of the 'Amul Girl' for over five decades since her inception in 1966, has seen tears dropping down. The "Utterly Butterly Delicious' girl has cried for the first time. She bereaved her creator the iconic advertising veteran Sylvester daCunha who died on Tuesday, June 20, leaving a void in the world of creativity. Sylvester was

In all these years, the 'Amul Girl campaign has not only stood the test of time but has also become a symbol of creativity, wit, and effective brand communication. With its ingenious use of humour, satire and social commentary, the brand Amul has successfully captured the hearts of the Indian audience, making it one of the most beloved and memorable and longest-running advertising campaigns ever.

The year was 1966 when Sylvester daCunha, the mastermind behind the 'Amul Girl' campaign, teamed up with artist Eustace Fernandes to create a character that would capture the essence of Amul's brand philosophy. The idea was to craft a mascot that would embody the purity, richness, and taste of Åmul butter, while simultaneously appealing to the masses through humour and relatability. The result was the birth of the 'Amul Girl', a cherubic, polka-dotted little girl, wearing traditional attire, who would go on to become the face of the brand for decades to come. Her mischievous smile and clever one-liners became synonymous with the brand and its tagline, "Utterly Butterly

Delicious... Amul" However, this iconic creation was not a random stroke of advertising genius but a strategic



market for their milk - needed a compelling and memorable advertising campaign to differentiate itself from other brands and establish a strong foothold in the market with two-fold objectives. First, to create a visual identity that would resonate with consumers and evoke positive emotions associated with the brand, and second, to communicate the key attributes of its flagship product, 'Amul Butter', in a simple yet effective and appealing manner, both catering to the taste, quality, and richness of Amul butter and simultaneously capturing the attention and imagination of

the Indian audience. Dr Kurien's unwavering commitment to the cooperative movement and his passion for empowering farmers found expression in the 'Amul Girl' campaign through the ingenuity of Sylvester. Their collaboration was the icing on the cake. By featuring a young girl, the campaign celebrated the their families and conveyed the message that Amul, as a cooperative society, was dedicated to supporting and uplifting the lives of farmers, ensuring their prosperity and well-being.

The clever wordplay and topical references employed in the ads over the years have made a deep bonding with the audience, making the brand's messaging memorable and shareable. The 'Amul Girl' soon became a ubiquitous presence in the lives of Indians. Without any exaggeration, it can be said that through these ads, Amul not only promoted its products but also fostered a sense of social consciousness WITH THE INDIAN and encouraged public discourse.

By leveraging the topical-**ITS ABILITY TO** ity of its ads, Amul has managed to stay relevant and cap-EVOKE ture the imagination of the Indian audience to date. The LAUGHTER, STIR 'Amul Girl' has often been depicted alongside famous EMOTIONS, AND personalities from various fields, including sports, enter-DELIVER tainment, and politics. These **MEMORABLE** ads not only celebrated the MESSAGES achievements of these legends but also served as a testimony to the brand's association with the cultural fabric of the counal century or other promotions and political campaigns, Amul has consistently struck a chord with the Indian audience due to its ability to evoke laughter, stir emotions, and deliver memorable messages. Over the years, the brand 'Amul' has managed to maintain its distinct identity while adapting to changing times and consumer preferences. Amul has also been quick to adapt to the changing media landscape. It has effectively utilized digital platforms and social media to amplify its campaigns and engage with a wider audience. Simultaneously, by adapting to diverse cultural nuances and crafting campaigns that reflect the aspirations, concerns, and shared experiences of the people, the 'Amul Girl' has also transcended the boundaries of being just another brand and becoming an integral part of the Indian identity.

While the void left by the death of the doyen of Indian advertising Sylvester daCunha is hard to be filled, one may rightfully say that the enduring 'Amul Girl' will continue to be a symbol of wit, charm, and social commentary and will keep us entertained and smiling again. (The writer is Programme Darshan Samiti)

move by Amul to establish brand recognition, build identity, and connect with consumers on a deeper level. The need for a innocence, purity, and aspirastrong and relatable brand mas- tions of Indian farmers and

and thus became a part of the collective consciousness of the nation.

Whether it was Sachin Executive, Gandhi Smriti and Tendulkar's 100th internation-

Devotees throng chariots during the Bahuda Yatra (return car festival of Lord Jagannath), in Puri

Real estate industry caters to digital nomads



The industry recognises the aspirations of digital nomads and their desire to have a house that suits their nomadic lifestyle and career

n today's digital age, the traditional office environ-Lment is no longer the only place where work gets done. The rise of remote work and digital nomadism has revolutionized the way we approach our careers and lifestyles. According to recent studies, the number of people working remotely has been steadily increasing, with a significant surge in the past few years. A report by FlexJobs and Global Workplace Analytics found that remote work has grown by 159% in the last 12 years.

With this shift in work dynamics, the role of real estate in supporting remote work and digital nomadism has become paramount. Realizing the potential of this emerging trend, we at Ambience Group have embraced the concept and are spearheading innovative projects to cater to the needs of remote workers and digital nomads. One such project is the Real estate industry, an upcoming residential development located in the heart of Gurugram. The real estate industry aims to create an ideal environment that fosters productivity, connectivity, and the in-house clubhouse has rative environment for profes-



high quality of life for individuals seeking a flexible work lifestyle with amenities and facilities that make living all the way better.

Work 2020 report highlights that 98% of remote workers would like to continue working remotely, at least some of the time, for the rest of their careers

A Home for Productivity: The real estate industry understands that a conducive work environment is crucial for remote workers. The project offers thoughtfully designed homes with enough space that can easily be turned into a home office, ensuring that residents have the ideal setting to focus and be productive. These homes are equipped with world-class amenities and facilities, and

been designed and created in sionals to network and such a way that it inspires creativity and efficiency. Flexibility:

The real estate industry recognizes the aspirations of digital nomads and their desire to explore the world while maintaining a fulfilling projects offers easy connectiv-

The State of Remote

mitments.

career. Each of our residential ity, allowing individuals to adapt their living arrange-

ments based on their travel plans. With the freedom to move seamlessly between locations, digital nomads can experience new cultures and environments without compromising their work com-

Amenities:

Real estate industry has a strong emphasis on connectivity, providing residents with robust internet infrastructure and uninterrupted connectivity. This ensures that remote workers can stay connected to their teams and clients, even while enjoying the serenity of their luxurious homes. The project also offers business suites, meeting rooms, multi-purpose halls, and a lot more within the premises, creating a collabo-

exchange ideas. Lifestyle:

The real estate industry goes beyond providing luxurious living spaces; it offers an array of lifestyle amenities to enhance the overall living experience. The project features state-of-the-art fitness centres, swimming pools, spa facilities, and recreational areas, ensuring that residents can relax and unwind after a productive day of work.

As remote work and digital nomadism become more prevalent, real estate developers should proactively embrace this trend. Ambience Group takes pride in being at the forefront of shaping the future of living and working. With thoughtfully crafted spaces, flexible living options, connectivity infrastructure, serene surroundings, and lifestyle amenities companies like Ambience Group provides the ideal environment for individuals seeking a seamless blend of work and leisure. As the world embraces remote work and digital nomadism.

(The writer is a Chief Business Officer, at Ambience Group)

THE EDITOR LETTERS

AMUL HAS

CONSISTENTLY

STRUCK A CHORD

AUDIENCE DUE TO

PM PUSHES UNIFORM CIVIL CODE

Sir - Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday pitched for a Uniform Civil Code (UCC) across the country. He said that running a country with multiple sets of laws is impractical and reiterated the need to provide equal rights as enshrined in the Constitution. But what is UCC and why it is necessary to be brought? The Constitution states that there should be no discrimination against any citizen on the basis of caste, religion, colour, or language. If the same crime is committed by criminals belonging to two different communi-ties, both will get the same punishment. According to section 494 of the IPC, no man or woman can remarry without divorcing the wife or husband. If he does so, he can be sentenced to seven years. But this section does not apply to the Muslim community because, according to the personal law of Muslims, they have the right to do 4 marriages. Communities that have their own personal laws continue to oppose the Uniform Civil Code. They believe that the Uniform Civil Code is tantamount to interfering in their religious affairs. It is believed that after its arrival, the condition of Indian women will improve. The rights of women are limited by the personal law of some communities. After the implementation of UCC, uniform rules will apply on issues like marriage, rights to ancestral property and adoption. There may have been a political tussle in the country regarding the UCC, but there is also a state in the country where the Uniform Civil Code has been in force since 154 years ago. It is Goa. Bhagwan Thadani |Mumbai

GROUNDBREAKING DEAL

Sir — Micron Technology's groundbreaking proposal to establish a \$2.75-billion semiconductor facility in Gujarat marks a significant milestone for India's semiconductor industry. This investment showcases India's determination to develop a robust chip manufacturing ecosystem and reduce dependence on China. However, it is crucial to sustain this momentum and con-

Letters to the Editor



etters to the Editor' are among the most widely read features in a newspaper, and they allow you to reach a large audience. Letters shape and influence public opinion, and they are a great way to increase awareness of the topic that one writes about. In addition to stirring debates on several issues, the letters section demonstrates that the newspaper is open to different perspectives

tinue attracting investments and fostering domestic capabilities. India can position itself as a global hub for semiconductor manufacturing and innovation by prioritizing training, research and development, capitalizing on geopolitical shifts and leveraging its talent pool along with creating an enabling business environment.

Bishal Kumar Saha | Murshidabad

ALL IS NOT WELL

Sir — Prime Minister Narendra Modi returned to India after a foreign tour and asked BJP President J.P.Nadda " what is happening in India?" Nadda in reply said all is well and the country is happy. PM Modi's question raises doubts that the PM was not keeping up with what was happening at home while he was away. When Modiji in the USA passionately reaffirmed the deeply rooted democratic values ingrained in Índia, in Jammu Kashmir unidentified soldiers attacked a masjid in Jammu Kashmir and allegedly forced the Namazis to chant the slogan " Jai Shri Ram". When you stressed that the country is run based on the constitution and strong fundamentals of democracy, which is in the DNA - a Dharam Sansad was carried out

Therefore, the LTE section fits perfectly in the democratic image of the Press as the 'Fourth Estate

The 'Editorial' and 'Op-Ed' or 'Opinion' pages, which carry articles from experts, offer plenty of scopes for readers to express their views in the form of letters. The advantage of these sections is that they inform and educate a large audience about an issue that is vitally important. Living in the digital era, the name "Op-Ed" may seem antiquated to readers. Yet, the section still holds its ace in many erstwhile newspapers across the world. Newspapers that do not have a section for letters, must provide space for the same, as readers' feedback act as a vital bridge between them and the newspaper

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

at Maharashtra and the hate mongers spewed venom on a particular community and incited ethnic cleansing of a particular community. When you were doing yoga in New York to mark Yoga day here in India female wrestlers who alleged Brij Bhushan of sexual harassment approached Delhi Court to request a copy of the Charge sheet filed against him. While in the US you boasted that your Govt emphasises all religions equality here in India Manipur is under a boil and the delegation committee of Manipur said that the PM does not have five minutes for us. When USA former President Barack Obama in an interview talked about the conditions of Minorities in India, Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma frankly abused his constitutional position by declaring that the Assam Police will prioritize going after the many "Hussain Obama" in the country. So when you received Egypt's highest civilian award and were treated as India's hero, here in India were not happy and were facing innumerable problems as usual.

Kajal Chatterjee | Kolkata

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com BHUBANESWAR | THURSDAY | JUNE 29, 2023 she pioneer

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

FIRSTCOLUMN **ARE WE LACKING COMMUNICATION?**

Communicate well to express yourself and to know the expectations of others



SAKSHI SETHI

In the words of Theo Gold, "Communication is the ticket to success if one pays attention and learn to do it effectively." Friendships and romantic relationships make the lives of an individual go merry-go-round. Without them, their lives would be dull and lonely. Communication means understanding that people will not know what they think unless one tells them. It is one of the most important things that one needs to establish in all relationships. When one talks about communication, it means one is talking about telling the people around them, their wants, their needs, their likes and dislikes. The importance of communication can never be ignored. One needs to understand that communicating effectively depends on more variables and how we manage them. Quite often an individual misses out on communication because of little time to spare and thinks that chat mode is a much quicker way of communicating even on the go but some situations need to be more personal.

Communicating effectively depends on many more variables and how one manages it can have vastly different outcomes. Effective communication boosts productivity but poor communication can be disastrous. Remember, lack of communication leaves room for imagination because instead of knowing how the other person is feeling, an individual just ends up assuming. The worst part is that the individual already plays the other party's role in the conversation that never took place and creates emotional responses to it. Also, it breeds assumptions about what the other person is thinking or feeling resulting in room for doubt. Lack of communication arises when someone experiences challenges with effectively communicating their needs and expectations.



Fertiliser subsidies are not the solution



analysis 07

UTTAM GUPTA

Instead of pumping more subsidies the Government should push for nano fertilisers which are efficient and cost-effective

he Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare and Chemicals and Fertilizers Mansukh Mandaviya has stat-A mansukh Mandaviya has stat-ed that during 2023-24, around Rs 46,000 crore would be need-ed for fertilizer subsidy payments over and above Rs 175,000 crore being the budget estimate (BE) given by the Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the budget presented on February 1, 2023. On the other hand, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) feels, payments could be even less than BE.

Fertilizer subsidy is payments made to manufacturers or importers to cover the excess of the cost of production/import and distribution (or cost of supply) over a low maximum retail price (MRP) they are directed by the Union government to charge from the farmers. The subsidy on each ton of fertilizer produced (or imported) and sold is the difference between the cost of supply and MRP. Multiplied by the total quantity of fertilizer sold, it gives aggregate subsidy payments.

In the case of urea, MRP is under 'statutory' control. The excess cost of supply over MRP is reimbursed to the manufacturer as a subsidy which varies from unit to unit depending on the cost. These reimbursements are made under the so-called New Pricing Scheme (NPS). For non-urea fertilizers which are de jure decontrolled, the MRP is 'indi-rectly' controlled. The government gives a 'uniform' subsidy on a per-nutrient basis to all manufacturers and importers under the Nutrient Based Scheme (NBS). The latter must deduct this from the cost to arrive at the MRP. All these exercises/determinations are made by the fertilizer ministry and arrive at the tentative estimates of subsidy requirements under each category viz. urea and non-urea fertilizers. The precise number is finalized in consultation with the MoF.

What makes the fertilizer minister feel that the actual requirement will be more than the BE for 2023-24? For a better understanding, we need

to look at both the financial years 2022-23 and 2023-24. For 2022-23, against BE of Rs 105, 000 crore, Sitharaman put the revised estimate (RE) at Rs 225,000 crore. This was based on actual payments during the first 10 months of the FY and likely outgo during the remaining two months i.e. February and March 2023. The actual was even higher at Rs 253,000 crore Under a business-as-usual scenario, if the allocation for 2022-23 had remained frozen at the level of RE i.e. Rs 225,000 crore, the shortfall of Rs 28,000 crore would have to be carried forward to 2023-24 and paid for from the current year's budget. Now, that full amount has been provided in 2022-23 itself, hence no spillover, Rs 28,000 crore need not be paid from the 2023-24 budget. Subsidy payments during 2022-23 leapfrogged to a peak of over Rs 250,000 crore because global fertilizer prices increased sharply. For instance, in April 2022, the price of urea touched US\$980 per ton while that of di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) - a widely used fertilizer in the non-urea category - was US\$925 per ton. The price of phosphoric acid and ammonia - raw materials (RMs) used in the production of nonurea fertilizers - were US\$1,530 per ton



and US\$1,050 per ton respectively. The price of muriate of potash (MOP) was US\$590 per ton. The price of imported LNG -

it meets over one-third of natural gas requirements for domestic production of urea – was at a high of around US\$24 per million Btu (British thermal unit) in April 2022. The price of domestic gas (it supplies the remaining two-thirds) for old and regulated fields was US\$ 6.1 per mmBtu whereas for supplies from diffi-SIGNIFICANT cult deep water and ultra-deep-water (D/UD) fields, it was US\$ SAVINGS IN 9.92 per mmBtu. From October 2022, these prices increased to SUBSIDY SHOULD US\$8.57 per mmBtu and US\$12.6 per mmBtu respectively.

BE POSSIBLE BY Since last year, there has been by farmers (read: MRP), the lower cost should lead to a corresponding reduction in subsidy outgo.

Accordingly, on May 19, 2023, the Union Cabinet approved a significant cut in the per kilogram subsidy rate for nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P), and potash (K) for the Kharif 2023 season (April-September) under NBS for P&K fertilizers. The subsidy outgo during this period will be Rs 38,000 crore down from Rs 61,000 crore spent during the last Kharif 2022 season. Given the continuing reduction in prices, there may be a further sizeable reduction in subsidies under NBS during the second half of the current FY.

During 2023-24, the Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative (IFFCO) which has developed the technology, plans to produce 50 million bottles of nano-DAP. This will replace 2.5 million tons of conventional DAP resulting in significant savings. Following the commissioning of three plants in the public sector (April 2023), domestic production of urea is expected to increase by 2-3 million tons. This will result in an equivalent reduction in import and turn, subsidy payments. All the above factors point towards containing subsidy outgo within the BE of Rs 175,000 crore. Then, why does the fertilizer minister

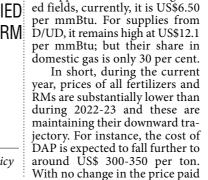
say 'more will be needed?

Healthy communication in any relationship – be it marriage, friendship or workplace helps create space for people to share their thoughts and feelings, express their needs, set healthy boundaries, learn to deal with relationship conflicts together and resolve issues as and when they arise so that they don't become problematic. If there is a problem, one should learn to speak up and tell.

Improving communication skills is an ongoing process and just like most learned skills, the more time and practice an individual puts into it the more improvements can one see. Remember, people who communicate well can clearly express themselves and their needs and understand the expectations that others have set for them. But this isn't a skill that always comes naturally rather it can take time and practice to truly master. Poor communication doesn't have to signal the end of a relationship instead it can be used as an opportunity to practice and improve.

(The writer is an educator)

PROMOTING THE a substantial drop in the prices of all fertilizers and RMs. Currently, USE OF NANO the prices are urea US\$333 per FERTILISERS. ton; DAP: US\$540/ton; phosphoric acid: US\$ 990 per ton; THESE ARE ammonia: US\$ 248 per ton and MOP: US\$ 422 per ton. The price of imported LNG is down FERTILISERS IN THE FORM OF to around US\$12-13 per mmBtu. As for the price of domestic gas, NANOPARTICLES on supplies from old and regulat-AND ARE APPLIED IN LIQUID FORM



(The writer is a policy analyst)

Meanwhile, the government has also reduced the subsidy rates for January – March 2023 'retrospec-tively' to reflect the reduction in global prices for those three months. This will be adjusted against payments to manufacturers/importers during the current

Significant savings in subsidy should be possible by promoting the use of nano-fertilizers. These are fertilizers in the form of nanoparticles and are applied in liquid form. Their efficiency is many times more than conventional fertilizers. For instance, a 500-ml bottle of nano-DAP is equivalent to a 50-kg bag of conventional DAP. The former is available to farmers for Rs 600 without any subsidy support, against the latter being available at more than double this price or Rs 1,350 and that too with substantial subsidy support.

He argues that at the begin-ning of the current FY, manufacturers were holding inventories stuff that was purchased during 2022-23 at high prices - which should be eligible for subsidy at higher rates. This is a flawed argument. This is because when prices rise and the government gives higher subsidies (for instance, in the second half of 2021-22), it didn't mop up the benefit accruing to manufacturers on the inventory that was earlier bought at a lower price. Likewise, there isn't merit in another argument for a 'less than required cut in subsidy rate' just because they suffered some loss during the second half of 2022-23. To conclude, MoF shouldn't agree to the fertilizer ministry's demand for more funds towards subsidy payments. The latter should make efforts to keep the actual lower than BE.

Modi's US visit paves the way for lasting India-US relations

Modi's visit is a path-breaking event that will take India-US ties to a new high and checkmate China's policy of aggression on LoC

Indian prime minister Narender Modi's recent visit to the United States assumes a lot of importance for the rest of the world when US President, Joe Biden says that two great friends, two great powers and two great friends can outline the course and path of the 21st century. One of the biggest takeaways even recognized by the entire world pertains to future strategy which will counter the growing influence of China and its expansionism laced with debt trap policy to create a security threat to India and the US.

Experts opine that PM's visit will carve out the future course of action and strengthen his vision of 'ATAMNIRB-HAR BHART' through defence deals and emerging



KS TOMAR

(The writer is a senior

journalist)

with Hindustan tion Aeronautics which will be used for Tejas. Indian Shipyard can be used for repairs by US Navy ships besides agreeing to purchase MQ-9B Sea Guardian drones. Both sides will witness enhanced activities and greater cooperation in the areas of semiconductors, critical minerals, technology, space, and defence. US chip maker, Micron, is poised to establish a USD 2.7 billion semiconductor testing and packaging unit in Gujarat which will ensure the partic-

technologies. It will be an India and Gujarat governimpetus to trade and defence ment thereby investing 50 % cooperation as both nations have agreed that General and 20% respectively.

Experts say that America Electronics will produce jet has enjoyed an unchallenged engines in India in collaboraprominent position in the world arena, especially after the downfall of Russia in the nineties leading to the end of the Cold War and focused on its self-centred interests only which had dictated its illogical stand on Pakistan's open support to terrorists in Kashmir. In this changed geo-political scenario, India is gradually occupying centre stage which can be attributed to its growing economic potential and meaningful space being attained by it in advanced technology thereby fast emerging as a challenger to China in future.

ipation of the government of

the united states six months ago when he expressed his opinion about India-US ties "time is running fast hence we do not have much time at our disposal which warrants concrete road map to face challenges including China's threat on security." Sullivan concluded his discussion with Doval in Delhi before Modi visited the US. Both NSAs unveiled ambitious long-term plans for Indo-US collaboration in seven specific hightechnology areas, next-generation telecommunication strategy, semiconductors, defence and artificial intelligence. They announced the second Track-1.5 dialogue on the initiative on Critical

advisor, Ajit Doval's visit to (ICET) which had been organized by industry chamber CII. But both top officials confined themselves to covto counterpart, Sullivan that ering bilateral and regional issues only and nothing beyond it. Earlier, the spadework was done by US defence secretary, Lloyd Austin who held several meetings with defence minister Rajnath Singh and senior Indian officials in New Delhi. Similarly, Foreign Secretary, Vinay Kwatra met Assistant Secretary of State Victoria Nuland in the US to prepare the ground for Modi's visit and the above engagements highlighted the shared objectives of the two nations in terms of close cooperation and regional security.

A huge welcome was It was national security and Emerging Technologies accorded by the Indian dias-

pora at the prestigious Kennedy Center organized by Aghi and USISPF who have got a lot of relevance in American politics and India's growth. According to FM Sitharaman, union finance minister, overseas Indians remittances to India increased by 12 % to 100 USD in 2022 as compared to 2021 which is of utmost importance to India's economy. Some human rights activists did raise their concerns about the human rights violation in India and ex-president, Barack Obama was also critical when he said "if you do not protect the rights of ethnic minorities in India, then there is a strong possibility India at some point starts pulling apart and we've seen what happens when you start

getting those kinds of large internal conflicts."

Biden's red carpet to Modi is the evidence of all our efforts in America to take present Indo-US ties to the next level. Biden has even attacked China and praised India's democracy despite some concerns. China has not relished America's open-arm policy towards India hence it has accused the US of trying to block Dragon's progress. Modi's visit was billed as a path-breaking event that will take India-US ties to a new height and checkmate policy of aggression of China on LOC besides helping the US to retain its status of Super Power which seems to be dangerous given over ambition of Dragon to displace it in future.



Pak, IMF discuss \$2.5 bn 'standby arrangement'

economic and financial poli-

raised objections over the orig-

PTI II ISLAMABAD

ash-strapped Pakistan and the IMF are discussing a new short-term standby arrangement (SBA) worth about USD 2.5 billion to get the country through the political transition to the newlyelected government in the second quarter of the current fiscal year, according to a media report on Wednesday.

Pakistan's ninth review by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under the 2019 Extended Fund Facility (EFF) for the release of a USD 1.2 billion tranche is still pending with the programme's expiry on June 30.

A new short-term — six to nine months — standby arrangement (SBA) is being discussed by Pakistan and the IMF worth about USD 2.5bn, the remaining part of the EEF expiring on June 30, the Dawn

newspaper reported. Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday discussed the IMF programme with IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva and expressed hope that coordina-

tion on the points of the bailout programme would lead

have completed conditions of to a decision from the global not only 9th but with the revised budget, the terms of lender in a day or two, a statement by the PM Office said. 10th and 11th reviews had also Pakistan signed a USD been met and (Pakistan) deserves disbursement of 6.5 billion package with the Washington-based IMF in

2019. The plan was derailed several times and the full reimbursement is still pending due to insistence by the donor that Pakistan should complete all formalities.

cies (MEFP) a few days ago for completion of the 9th review, The SBA is one of the two the official added. options currently under disdo not provide quick reviews, cussion by the two sides after particularly when the prothe government met all the conditions and prior actions of the ninth review, and also those relating to subsequent 10th and 11th tranches with-

out disbursement of USD 2.5 billion funds outstanding since October 2022, the report added The options have been discussed at the staff level and during recent back-toback engagements between

the revised budget, including Prime Minister Sharif and additional taxes, expenditure Georgieva, including the one cuts, an end to amnesty through telephone on Tuesday scheme for remittances etc, had met its programme morning.

requirements

"In the strict sense, we The two options include the disbursement of USD 1.1 billion under the 9th review. But once approved by the IMF executive board, this would mean the end of the proentire outstanding approved quota," an official was quoted gramme, without the possibility of release of two subsequent as saying by the newspaper. The two sides had tranches of USD 1.4 billion.

This, however, is not a preexchanged a memorandum of ferred option for the government because Pakistan would lose USD 1.4 billion worth of quota approved by the IMF executive board, the report added.

However, the Fund's rules The other option under consideration is to enter into gramme's one-year extension a new short-term arrangeexpires on June 30. This was ment with upfront disburseexplained by Georgieva to ment equivalent to the 9th rime minister Sharif in Paris. review (USD 1.1 billion) with-The IMF has acknowlin the next 15 days, followed by two-three more reviews for up to USD 500 million edged Pakistani authorities' swift completion of policy actions. Earlier, IMF staff each

This would send a mesinal budget presented on June sage of stability to the markets 9 but has now confirmed that as the current government completes its term in less than two months and is to be replaced by a caretaker setup until a new regime takes charge after the general elec-

9 family members shot dead by

For both options, the two sides have to announce a stafflevel agreement by June 30 for confidence building. The executive board approval could follow over the next week or so.

"For us, the priority is to secure the entire amount of USD 2.5 billion," sources were quoted as saying by the report, adding the authorities pitched a higher amount for SBA but perhaps that was asking for too much.

But to achieve this, the government may have to increase the petroleum levy by up to Rs 5 per litre in the coming pricing review to secure at least an average of Rs 55 per litre petroleum levy for the year and commit to the expedited regulatory process for rebasing of electricity tariffs by Rs 5-8 per unit with effect from July 1 even if its approval takes a couple of weeks.

Both EFF and SBA windows are similar in nature except that EFF has a longer (3-4 year) tenure to address the medium-term balance of payment challenges while SBA is generally short-term (9-24

EU leaders forge ahead with tougher borders plans

AP BRUSSELS Meanwhile, Pakistan

overcrowded fishing trawler

Commission's president was asked for her thoughts. "It is

horrible, what happened, and

The priorities, she said,

Sudan violence likely to push

over 1 mn refugees by Oct: UN

European

sank, the

expected inflows from friendly Arab countries over the next couple of days to close the fiscal year with a higher forlast week, and bodies were eign exchange reserve posifound more frequently than survivors from among the more tion. than 500 people missing after an

months) with relatively flexi-

ble terms.

Pakistan urgently needs the IMF loan which will open avenues for more funding by various multilateral and bilateral donors to support its meagre foreign reserves of around USD 4 billion.

the more urgent is that we act," Ursula von der Leyen told Pakistan's economy has been in a free fall mode for the reporters at the headquarters of last many years, bringing the European Union's executive untold pressure on the poor branch in Brussels. masses in the form of unchecked inflation, making it should be to help the authorialmost impossible for a vast ties in Tunisia - where people bound for Europe sometimes number of people to make ends meet. Pakistan started leave from - to stabilise its economy and better manage preparations for the general elections with a meeting of the migration, and to finalise the long-awaited reform of the EU's election commission recently. The current National asylum rules, which is unlikely Assembly will complete its to happen before next year. five-year term on August 12 Never mind that the trawler left and the fresh general election from Libya, or the admittedly slim chance that survivors must be conducted within 60 days as laid down in the might be found, or that the dis-Constitution of Pakistan. aster might be the worst ever in

AP CAIRO

Sudan descended into chaos

after fighting erupted in mid-

by Gen Abdel-Fattah Burhan,

and the paramilitary Rapid

Support Forces, commanded

by Gen Mohammed Hamdan

Dagalo. Since then, over 3,000

people have been killed, the

country's Health Ministry said,

while about 2.5 million people

have been displaced, according

reportedly targeting non-Arab

tribes, local rights groups and

have escaped have fled east to

The violence has been

to the UN.

the Mediterranean. Von der Leyen's reply stood in stark As rescue efforts in the Mediterranean Sea flagged contrast to the actions of a predecessor a decade ago.

world 08

Standing near the coffins of scores of drowned migrants, having travelled to the small Italian island of Lampedusa after the deaths of around 300 people in October 2013, then European Commission President José Manuel Barroso swore that such tragedies "should never happen again." In response, the Italian navy

set up a search and rescue mission, but it was mothballed a year later over concern that it only encouraged more migrants to come. Fears of a creating a "pull factor" have dogged every-thing that the EU has tried to do since.

At a summit starting on Thursday, EU leaders will discuss von der Leyen's plans. As countries like Austria, Hungary and Poland block any meaningful attempt to equitably share out refugees arriving in Greece, Italy, Malta or Spain, the work focuses by default on preventing migrants from entering.

EID AL-ADHA

84 orgs banned from collecting animal hides



Vendors display goats for customers at a cattle market set up for the upcoming AP/PŤ Muslim Eid al-Adha, in Islamabad on Tuesday

AP ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's Punjab provincial government on Wednesday issued a list of 84 banned organisations prohibited from collecting sacrificial animal hides during Eid ul-Adha, including 10 so-called charity offshoots of the Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) headed by Hafiz Saeed, the mastermind attack. Eid ul-Adha, also called the festival of sacrifice, will be celebrated on Thursday. Pakistanis are expected to sacrifice millions of animals and terror groups disguised as charities collect animal hides and sell them to raise funds. The Home Department of Pakistan's Punjab province published a notification with a list of 84 organisations in the local newspapers with a warning that those providing any financial assistance (cash or sacrificial animal hides) to these banned organisations will be booked under the Anti-Terrorism Act. The notification specifically mentions that 10 of the 84 banned organisations are charity offshoots of JuD. The charity offshoots of JuD are Al-Nafal Trust Lahore, Idara Khidmat-e-Khalq Lahore, Al-Dawatul Irshaad Pakistan, Al Hand Trust Faisalabad, Mosques and Welfare Trust Lahore, Al-Madina Foundation, Maaz Bin Jabal Education Trust, Falah-i-Insaniat Foundation, Al-Fazl Foundation and Al Aisar Foundation Lahore. Apart from the 10 organisations, the Punjab

$\mathbf{N}^{ ext{ine members of a family}}_{ ext{were shot dead by relatives}}$ on Wednesday over a marriage dispute in northwest Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, police said. The incident occurred in the Batkhela tehsil of Malakand district, and nine members of the same family, including three women and six men, were shot dead in their sleep by relatives who opened indiscriminate fire after barging into their house, police said According to the police, a marriage dispute was the reason behind the brutal killings, and

government has also banned

some of the prominent radical some of the profilment factical and terror organisations such as Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad, ISIS, TPP, Jindallah, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Balochistan Liberation Army, 313 Brigade and Pak-Turk the accused. International (CAG Education Foundation) from collecting sacrificial animal hides, the notifi-

relatives over marriage dispute PTI II ISLAMABAD

Pakistani security forces on Wednesday killed an Islamic State group commander and two other militants during a raid on a militant hideout near the border with Afghanistan, the military said.

The raid was conducted in Bajur, a district in the Pakhtunkhwa Khyber province bordering Afghanistan, the military said It said IS commander

an investigation into the case has been started. After receiving Shafi Ullah was one of three the information, the provincial insurgents killed. He was wanted by the

paramilitary force reached the crime scene and shifted the Pakistani government, which alleges he was involved in dead bodies to Batkhela Hospital for postmortem. All attacks on security forces and had killed innocent civilians. entry and exit points of the dis-Security forces also seized

trict were sealed to help arrest the killers. Caretaker Chief weapons and ammunition Minister Muhammad Azam from the hideout and were Khan has directed police to carrying out a clearance operexpedite their efforts to arrest ation of the area, the military said. Pakistan's military has

Pak security forces kill ISIS commander PTI PESHAWAR

carried out massive operations in recent years in the tribal belt along the Afghan border, which served as a safe haven for local and foreign militants for decades.

However, militants still 100,000 people in six months (fleeing to) Chad. And now the carry out attacks in the region.

The United Nations has said the surging violence in Sudan is likely to drive more than 1 million refugees out of the African country by October, as the 10-week conflict shows few signs of easing. April between the military, led

> colleagues in Chad have revised their figures to 245,000," said Raouf Mazou, assistant secretary-general at United Nations High Commission for Refugees, at a news conference in the Swiss city of Geneva on Fuesday.

The province of West most acute in the capital, Darfur has seen some of the Khartoum, but also in the worst violence. In a report last week issued by the Dar Masalit sultanate, the leader of the western Darfur region, where RSF and Arab militias are African Masalit ethnic community accused the RSF and Arab militias of "committing geno-cide against African civilians." the UN said. Most of those who He estimated that more than "We were talking about 5,000 people were killed in the province's capital, Genena, over the past two months.

So far over 560,000 Sudanese have escaped to neighboring countries, with Egypt being the primary des-tination. "We expect, unfortunately, looking at the trends, that the conflict will continue and that many in Sudan will opt to (go to) Egypt," Mazou

said. Peace negations mediated by the US and Saudi Arabia in the Saudi coastal town of Jeddah have all but broken down. The talks, which led to at last nine cease-fires, were formally adjourned last week with both mediators publicly criticizing the RSF and the army for continually violating agreed truces.

brave intense heat



Chad.

Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM)'s two sub-organisations - Al Rehmat Trust Bahawalpur and Al Furqan Trust Karachi — are

also on the list of banned outfits. The 10 charity offshoots of

JuD seem to be working in 'low profile' in the country since the JuD was banned and the arrest of its chief Hafiz Saeed in early 2019. Saeed has been lodged in

Lahore's Kot Lakhpat Jail in multiple terror financing cases in which he was convicted for over 60 years. However, his sentence will run concurrently meaning he may not spend many years in jail. The JuD is believed to be the front organisation for the LeT which is responsible for carrying out the 2008 Mumbai attack that killed 166 people. It had been declared as a foreign terrorist organisation by the US in June 2014. Pakistan's tanning industry is one of the country's oldest and third-largest export sectors. In the fiscal year 2021-22, Pakistan exported products worth USD 1 billion, up from USD 850 million in the previous

year, according to the Pakistan

AP HOLLIS

 $F^{\text{lorida Gov. Ron DeSantis}}_{\text{and former President Donald}}$ Trump traded barbs on Tuesday as the two leading Republican White House candidates staged duelling events in the critical early voting state of New Hampshire.

Addressing a town hall in Hollis, DeSantis vowed to "actually" build the US-Mexico border wall that Trump tried but failed to complete in his first term while pledging to tear down Washington's traditional power centres in ways that Trump fell short.Speaking later at a Republican women's luncheon in the state capital of Concord, Trump countered that DeSantis was being forced to settle for second place in the primary and accused the governor of supporting cuts to Social Security, Medicare and other entitlement programs as a way to tame federal spending. Beyond the rhetoric, the

conflicting events demonstrated each candidate's evolving



strategy. DeSantis took extensive audience questions — a trademark in New Hampshire politics that he eschewed during his previous visit to the state, drawing criticisms that he was stilted and overly scripted. Trump, meanwhile, offered

his traditional, free-wheeling speech for more than hour but didn't take questions. Reporters covering the event were confined to a pen, chaperoned to the bathroom and told they could not speak to attendees in the conference centre ballroom or even in the hallways. DeSantis,

asked about people who had twice voted for Trump over his promises to "drain the swamp," used his answer to draw some of his sharpest contrasts yet with the former president. "He didn't drain it. It's worse today than it's ever been," DeSantis said. He added that such promises don't go far enough because a subsequent president "can just refill it." "I want to break the swamp," DeSantis said, pledging to take power out of the nation's capital by instructing Cabinet agencies to halve the number of employees there.

Trump countersues woman who accused him of rape

month.

two-week trial that Trump sex-

ually abused Carroll in a luxury department store dressing

room in spring 1996. It also found that he defamed her in

comments he made denying

the attack in a statement last

October and in a deposition the

same month. But the jury reject-

ed Carroll's claims, first made in

a 2019 memoir, that Trump

raped her in the dressing room.

At trial, Carroll testified that the

rape occurred after a chance

encounter at the midtown store

with Trump filled with frivolity

and flirtations turned into a vio-

lent assault as they each teased

each other to try on a piece of

lingerie that Trump was seeking

for a friend.

New York (AP): Former President Donald Trump is trying to turn the tables on the advice columnist who won a USD 5 million jury award against him after accusing him of rape, saying in a countersuit that she owes him money and a retraction for defaming him by continuing to insist she was raped even after a jury declined to agree. Attorneys Alina Habba and Michael T. Madaio, representing the Republican candidate for president, filed papers late Tuesday to say writer E. Jean Carroll should pay Trump unspecified compensatory and punitive damages and retract her damaging statements. The countersuit came two weeks after US District Judge Lewis A. Kaplan accepted a rewritten defamation lawsuit from Carroll that seeks at least USD 10 million more in compensatory damages and

to cast stones at pillars Mina (S Arabia): Hundreds of substantially more in punitive

thousands of Muslim pilgrims on Wednesday braved intense damages for comments Trump heat to perform the symbolic made after the jury verdict last stoning of the devil during the The jury concluded after a

Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia. With morning tempera-tures rising past 42 degrees Celsius (107 degrees Farenheit), huge crowds of pilgrims walked or took buses to the vast Jamarat complex just outside the holy city of Mecca, where large pedestrian bridges lead past three wide pillars repre-



senting the devil. Using pebbles collected the night before at a campsite known as Muzdalifa, the pilgrims stone the pillars.

It's a reenactment of the story of the Prophet Ibrahim known as Abraham in Christian and Jewish traditions - who is said to have hurled stones at Satan to resist temptation. The ceremony was marred by tragedy on a number of occasions in the 1990s and 2000s, when hundreds died in stampedes during the stoning ritual.Saudi authorities have since built an expand-ed network of massive pedestrian bridges and redesigned the site to make it safer for pilgrims. This year, the biggest danger might be the heat. Temperatures soared past 45 degrees Celsius (113 F) on Tuesday, as Muslims marked the spiritual high point of the the spiritual high point of the pilgrimage by spending the day praying at Mount Arafat, where there was no breeze and

almost no shade.

Alarming surge in child recruitment by armed groups in Syria

AP QUAMISHLI

13-year-old Kurdish girl Awent missing on her way home from a school exam last month, after being approached by a man from an armed group. Her parents immediately feared the worst — that she had been persuaded to join the group and was taken to one of its training

camps. The girl, Peyal Aqil, was with friends when she encountered the man who turned out to be a recruiter for a group known as the Revolutionary Youth. She followed him to one of the group's centres in the city of Qamishli in northeast Syria. Her friends waited for her out-

side, but she never emerged.

Bureau of Statistics.

Peyal's mother, Hamrin Alouji, said she and her husband complained to local authorities, to no avail.

The group later said Peyal joined willingly, a claim rejected by Alouji. "We consider that at this

age, she cannot give consent, even if she was convinced" by the group's programme, Alouji said, sitting for an interview in her daughter's room, filled with stuffed animals and school texts. Armed groups have recruited children throughout the past 12 years of conflict and civil war in Syria. A new United

child soldiers in Syria is growing, even as fighting in most parts of Syria is winding Nations report on recruitment, down.The number of children released Tuesday, says the use of recruited by armed groups in

Syria has risen steadily over the past three years — from 813 in 2020 to 1,296 in 2021 and 1,696 in 2022, the UN says. Among those allegedly recruiting children is a US ally in the battle against Islamic State extremists — the Kurdishled Syrian Democratic Forces, according to the UN In 2022, the UN attributed half the cases, or 637, to the SDF and associated groups in northeast Syria.

The report also said the UN had confirmed 611 recruitment cases by the Turkish-backed Syrian National Army, which has clashed with the SDF in the past, and 383 by the al-Qaida-linked Hayat Tahrir al Sham in northwest Syria. The report cited 25 cases of child recruitment by Syrian government forces and pro-government militias. Children are

being recruited across Syria, said Bassam Alahmad, executive director of Syrians for Truth and Justice, an indepen-

dent civil society organisation. In some cases, children are forcibly conscripted, he said. In others, minors sign up because they or their families need the salary. Some join for ideological reasons, or because of familv and tribal lovalties. In some cases, children are sent out of Syria to fight as mercenaries in other conflicts. Attempts to end such recruitment have been complicated by the patchwork of armed groups operating in each part of Syria. In 2019, the SDF signed an agreement with the UN promising to

end the enlistment of children younger than 18 and set up a number of child protection

The US State Department defended its ally in a statement, saying, that the SDF "is the only armed actor in Syria to respond to the UN's call to end the use of child soldiers." Nodem Shero, a spokesperson for one of the child protection offices run by the SDF-affiliated local administration, acknowledged that children continue to be recruited in areas under SDF control. However, the complaint mechanism is working, she said. Her office received 20 complaints in the first five months of the year, she said.

offices in its area.



world 09

RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

'Local man directed missile strike at Pizza outlet'

AP KYIV

 $U^{
m krainian}$ authorities on Wednesday arrested a man they accused of helping Russia direct a missile strike that killed at least 11 people, including three teenagers, at a popular pizza restaurant in eastern Ukraine.

The Tuesday evening attack on Kramatorsk wounded 61 other people, Ukraine's National Police said. It was the latest bombardment of a Ukrainian city, a tactic Russia has used heavily in the 16-month-old war.

The strike, and others across Ukraine late Tuesday and early Wednesday, indicated that the Kremlin is not easing its aerial onslaught, despite political and military turmoil at home after a short-lived armed uprising in Russia last weekend.

There has been no apparent military push by Ukraine to exploit that turmoil, though the government has been tightlipped about recent battlefield developments as it seeks to gain momentum in its recently

launched counteroffensive. The Kremlin reeled from the weekend mutiny led by Yevgeny Prigozhin, owner of the Wagner private army of prison recruits and other mercenaries. Wagner has played a key combat role for Russia in Ukraine. The rebellion posed the most serious threat so far to Russian President Vladimir Putin's grip on power.

Prigozhin went into exile in neighbouring Belarus on Tuesday, according to Belarus Alexander President Lukashenko, after Russia said he wouldn't face charges for the revolt. Prigozhin's whereabouts could not be independently confirmed. Two sisters, both age 14, died in the Kramatorsk attack, the city council's educational department said. "Russian missiles stopped the beating of the hearts of two angels," it said in a Telegram post. The other dead teenager was 17, according to Prosecutor General Andrii

Regulators begin final safety inspection for **Fukushima**



In this photo provided by the National Police of Ukraine, a police officer and a rescue worker walk in front of a restaurant RIA Pizza destroyed by a Russian attack in Kramatorsk, Ukraine on Tuesday Agencies

Kostin.

The attack also damaged 18 multistory buildings, 65 houses, five schools, two kindergartens, a shopping centre, an administrative building and a recre-ational building, regional Governor Pavlo Kyrylenko said.

Rescuers are still searching the rubble for bodies and more survivors. Officials initially blamed the strike in Kramatorsk on an S-300 missile, a surface-toair weapon that Russia's forces have repurposed for loosely targeted strikes on cities, but the National Police later said Iskander short-range ballistic missiles were used. Kramatorsk is a front-line city that houses the Ukrainian army's regional headquarters. The pizza restaurant was frequented by journalists, aid

workers and soldiers, as well as local residents. The Security Service of Ukraine said the man it detained, an employee of a gas transportation company, is suspected of filming the restaurant for the Russians and informing them about its popularity. It provided

no evidence for its claim. Russia has insisted during the war that it doesn't aim at civilian targets, although its air strikes have killed many civilians. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov repeated that claim on Wednesday. Kramatorsk is in Donetsk, one of four Ukrainian provinces that Russia annexed last September but does not

fully control. Russia has also occupied Crimea since 2015. Ukrainian-held parts of the partially occupied provinces have been hit especially hard by Russian bombardment, and are a central point of dispute in the war. The Kremlin demands that Kyiv recognize the annexations, while Kyiv has ruled out any talks until Russian troops pull back from all occupied territories. Russia has stepped up its air campaign in Ukraine while fighting

continues along the front line. Russian forces on Tuesday and overnight also shelled 16 settlements in the southern Zaporizhzhia region, the Ukrainian presidential office reported.It said a 77-year-old

civilian was killed in the frontline town of Orikhiv, and that Russian shelling wounded three people in a nearby village recent-ly retaken by Kyiv. Also, a Russian supersonic cruise missile slammed into a cluster of holiday homes in central Ukraine, sparking a fire which injured a child, the presidential office said.

In other developments: Pope Francis' peace envoy, Italian Cardinal Matteo Zuppi, was to meet with an aide to President Putin, Yury Ushakov, in Moscow on Wednesday. Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov said the talks would include "possible ways of political-diplomatic settlement"

Francis dispatched Zuppi, a veteran of the Catholic Church's peace initiatives, to Moscow in hopes of helping spur peace negotiations after his visit to Kyiv earlier this month. At the Vatican on Wednesday, Francis again appealed for an end to the war, praying that Ukrainians "may soon find peace: There is so much suffering in Ukraine, let us not forget that."

'Belarusian leader approved forced transfers of Ukrainian children'

AP TALLINN (ESTONIA)

Belarusian opposition activist says that A Belarusian opposition activise on periode the International Criminal Court with materials allegedly detailing President Alexander Lukashenko's involvement in the forcible transfer of Ukrainian children to Belarus, accusations angrily rejected by Minsk. Lukashenko has been Moscow's clos-

est ally, allowing the Kremlin to use Belarusian territory to send troops and weapons into Ukraine, welcoming a con-tinued Russian military presence in Belarus and the deployment of some of Russia's tactical nuclear weapons there.

The authoritarian leader has also agreed to a "union state" project that has seen Moscow and Minsk tighten their economic, political and defense ties, while so far stopping short of a full merger.

Pavel Latushka, a former Belarusian culture minister, said Tuesday that the materials he has handed over to the ICC indicate that more than 2,100 Ukrainian children from at least 15 Russia-occupied Ukrainian cities have been forcibly taken to Belarus with Lukashenko's approval.

Latushka voiced hope that the materials would prompt the ICC to issue a warrant for Lukashenko's arrest, as it did with Russian President Vladimir Putin. The



court's prosecution office on Wednesday didn't immediately confirm receipt of the naterials described by Latushka.

In March, the ICC issued warrants for both Putin and his commissioner for children's rights, Maria Lvova-Belova. Judges in The Hague said they found "reasonable grounds to believe" that the two were responsible for the war crimes of unlawful deportation of children and unlawful transfer of children from occupied areas of Ukraine to Russia. Moscow has angrily rejected the move.

⁴Ukrainian children, who were under the guardianship of the Ukrainian state, including orphans, children with disabil-ities and those whose parents were stripped of their parental rights, have been illegal-ly transferred into the territory of Belarus," Latushka told The Associated Press. "The materials handed over to the prosecutors prove that Lukashenko has personally signed the documents under the auspices of the so-called union state of Russia and Belarus that provided a basis for organising and funding the transfer of Ukrainian children to Belarus," he added.

In an online statement published Tuesday, Latushka's anti-Lukashenko National Anti-Crisis Management Group claims to have gathered evidence that the Ukrainian children were placed in five Belarusian summer camps and health resorts.

In a phone interview, Latushka charged that the documents point to Ukrainian children held in Belarusian facilities undergoing ideological brainwashing and "Russification" before being sent to Russia for adoption, activities he said could amount to war crimes.

Materials published online by the National Anti-Crisis Management Group include a video that shows an entertainer on stage wishing death on US President Joe Biden and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, to cheers and applause from several dozen children gathered in the audience.

Palestinians to halt West Bank violence AP ■ UNITED NATIONS near the West Bank town of

Eli on June 21 that killed four and injured several others and condemned it "in the strongest terms." He also condemned "the recent extremist settler attacks against Palestinian civilians, which have resulted in a death, injuries and significant damage to their property."

At a time of escalating violence, there was widespread council criticism of plans by Israel's far-right government to build over 5,000 new homes in Jewish settlements in the West Bank, and speed up settlement approvals. Under international law, all Israeli settlements in occupied territory are illegal. Wennesland warned that

Israel's "relentless expansion" of settlements is fueling violence "and is impeding access by Palestinians to their land and resources, reshaping the geography of the occupied West Bank and threatening

the viability of a future Palestinian state." Wood called on Israel to refrain from building settlements, evicting Palestinians and demolishing their homes, and on both

UN urges Israel and Pashupatinath Temple closed for reinstallation of gold ornaments

PTI KATHMANDU

Nepal's Pashupatinath Temple here was closed on Wednesday afternoon till Thursday morning as authorities reinstalled more than 100 kilogrammes of gold ornaments around the Shiva Linga at the fifth-century revered Hindu shrine.

The gold ornaments were removed after Prime Minister Kamal Dahal Pushpa "Prachanda" directed the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) to probe the jewellery following reports that more than 10 kilograms of gold were missing from the ornaments installed on Maha Shivratri festival last year. Pashupati The Area Development Trust (PADT) reinstalled the ornaments after they were taken out from the main temple for the purpose of weighing and determining their

quality. All four gates, including the temple's main gate, were closed and security personnel were deployed at the temple premises, who did not allow devotees inside saying that the



am after a special puja.

Meanwhile, the former treasurer of the PADT told PTI that during the investigation 500 grams of gold was found missing from the ornaments.

It is claimed that 500 grams less gold was used while installing the Jalahari, the gold ornament around the Shiva Linga.

However, CIAA spokesperson Bhola Dahal said the outcome of the investigation had not been made public yet. "We will make it public after the investigation is over," he said.

The country's apex antigraft body CIAA had taken con-Pashupatinath

NATO tells Moscow it has increased preparedness AP THE HAGUE

ATO's chief has said that

Wagner Group deploys its "ser- stands ready to permanently ial killers" in Belarus.

base forces in Lithuania, if enberg said it was still early to draw any conclusions met with the presidents of about what Wagner leader Romania and Poland and lead-Yevgeny Prigozhin and some of ers of Belgium, Norway, his forces might do or whether Albania and Lithuania at the they all might end up in Dutch leader's official residence Belarus. The leaders agreed in a leafy suburb of The Hague. that, given the short-lived revolt Earlier Tuesday, Russian authorities said they had closed by Wagner fighters in Russia over the weekend, that the a criminal investigation into allies should continue to bolster the aborted armed rebellion their forces along NATO's eastled by Prigozhin and are pressern flank to discourage Russian ing no charges against him or President Vladimir Putin from his troops. The mutiny by attempting to widen his war. Wagner Group forces lasted less than 24 hours, but formed the latest twist in a series of events that have brought the gravest threat to Putin's grip on power in the 16-month-old war in Ukraine. The war led Sweden and Finland to seek to join NATO. Finland has already become the alliance's latest member, but Sweden's membership is being held up by Turkey.

The UN Security Council has urged Israel and the

Palestinians to avoid actions

that can further inflame ten-

sions in the volatile West

Bank. The statement was

backed by both the United

States and Russia in a moment

of unity on a divisive issue,

reflecting the widespread

international concern at the

escalating violence especially

by Israeli forces and settlers.

lowed what UN Mideast

envoy Tor Wennesland called

"an alarming spike in vio-lence" in the West Bank that

led to numerous Palestinian

and Israeli casualties. He warned the council that

"unless decisive steps are

taken now to rein in the violence, there is a significant risk that events could deteriorate

Wennesland said he was particularly alarmed by "the extreme levels of settler vio-

lence, including large num-

bers of settlers, many armed,

systematically attacking

Palestinian villages, terroriz-

ing communities," sometimes

further."

Tuesday's statement fol-

wastewater

Tokyo (AP): Japanese regula tors began the final inspection Wednesday before treated radioactive wastewater is released from the wrecked Fukushima nuclear plant into the Pacific Ocean.

The inspection began a day after the plant operator Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings had installed the last piece of equipment needed for the release the outlet of the undersea tunnel dug to discharge the wastewater 1 kilometre (1,094 yards) offshore.

TEPCO said the Nuclear Regulation Authority inspectors were to examine the equipment related to the treated water transfer and its safety systems as part of their three-day inspection through Friday. The permit for releasing the water could be issued about a week later, and TEPCO could start discharging the water soon after, though an exact date has not been decid-

The plan has faced fierce protests from local fishing groups concerned about safety and reputational damage. The government and TEPCO in 2015 promised not to release the water without consent from the fishing community, but many in the fishing community say the plan was pushed regardless. Neighboring South Korea, China and some Pacific Island nations have also raised safety concerns.

Government and utility officials say the wastewater, currently stored in about 1,000 tanks at the plant, must be removed to prevent any accidental leaks and to make room for the plant's decommissioning. They say the treated but still slightly radioactive water will be diluted to levels safer than international standards and will be released gradually into the ocean over decades, making it harmless to people and marine life.

IN the power of Russia's military shouldn't be underestimated following the weekend mutiny against it by Wagner Group mercenaries, and said the alliance has increased its readiness to confront Russia in recent days. Jens Stoltenberg said the alliance may decide to further boost its strength and readiness to face Russia and its ally Belarus when NATO leaders meet in the Lithuanian capital of Vilnius on July 11-12.

"So, no misunderstanding NATO responded to Russia's full-scale invasion of and no room for misunderstanding in Moscow or Minsk Ukraine in February 2022 by about our ability to defend our deploying multinational battleallies against any potential threat," Stoltenberg said Tuesday.At a meeting in The groups in Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria. They complement another four Hague of eight NATO leaders, deployed in 2017 in the three Lithuanian President Gitanas Baltic states and Poland, to Nauseda said that neighbourexpand NATO's presence from ing countries would face a the Baltics to the Black Sea. On heightened danger if the Monday, Germany said that it forces. Council members called for restraint and "encouraged additional steps to restore a durable calm and de-escalate tensions."

This year has been one of the deadliest for Palestinians in the West Bank in years, and last week saw a major escalation in settler violence. At least 137 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire in the West Bank in 2023. As of Saturday, 24 people on the Israeli side have been killed in Palestinian attacks. The United States, Israel's closest ally, supported the council statement and US deputy ambassador Robert Wood told the council that the Biden administration shares Wennesland's alarm.

He said the United Stated was "horrified by the brutal terror attack against Israelis"

ith support from Israeli refrain from terror ism and incitement to violence, "all of which serve to only further inflame the situation." Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia also expressed serious concern at

the escalating violence, pointing to an Israeli raid on June 19 in the Jenin Refugee Camp that killed seven Palestinians, clashes between Israeli settlers and Palestinians, and intensified Israeli activity to broaden and legalize settlements.

Nebenzia warned that the situation will remain "explosive" until negotiations resume on a two-state solution that sees Israel and the Palestinians living side by side in peace. And he reiterated Russia's call for a meeting with the Arab League and neighboring countries to give impetus to longstalled talks.

The temple will remain closed for the whole night and is likely to reopen for devotees early on Thursday morning around 3

Temple on Sunday afternoon to investigate the newly installed gold ornaments around the Shiva Linga.

GURU NANAK DEV UNIVERSITY, AMRITSAR NOTICE forms Applications for allotment of hostel Canteen/

Shops for session 2023-24 upto 30.06.2024 of University Campus, Amritsar, Regional Campus, Gurdaspur, Regional Campus, Jalandhar are invited till 10.07.2023. The details, terms & conditions and forms can be downloaded from the university

website link:https://online.gndu.ac.in/tenders-notice.aspx

Dated CHD :- 6/28/2023

Dean Students' Welfare NA/12/17311/2023/25395

PUBLIC NOTICE The Rosemary Apartment Co-Operative Group Housing Society Ltd. (Regd. No. 1174tH) H.No.WZ-551A, Top Floor, Sri Nagar, Shakur Basti, Rani Bagh, Delhi-3 In pursuance to rule 19(2) of DCS rules, 2007, applications are invited from general public of Delhi who fulfill the conditions laid down in rule-19 & 20 of DCS Rules. 2007 for filling up Six vacancies in Rosemary Apartment CGHS Ltd (Regd No 1174-GH Apartment CGHS Ltd (Regd No 11/4-GH) which has arisen due to resignation of members, Interested persons can collect the application form in person from society office i e H.No WZ-551A,Top Floor,Sr Nagar Shakur Basti Rani Bagh,Delhi 110034 between 10 00 a.m. to 1 00 p.m. 110034 between 10 00 a.m. to 1 00 p.m. (Mon. to Fri) free of cost and the same have to deposited along with the amount of Rs 6,77,110/- towards share money, land money admission fee and towards administrative charges through Pay order or Demand Draft within 15 days from the date of publication of this public notice to the President / Secretary at H No WZ-551A Top Floor Sri Nagar Shakur Basti, Rani Nagh, Delhi-110034 Equalization will be charges as per DCS Act & Rules(This is a CBI scanner society) sd/- President-The Rosemary CGHS Ltd

Tesla's EV plug closer to industry standard following a move by an automotive group

nonprofit parent company.

Guidehouse Research e-Mobility

vehicles than Tesla's NACS con-

AP DETROIT

Akey US automotive industry organisation says it will set performance standards for Tesla's electric vehicle charging cords in another move toward using the Tesla plug on all EVs.

The move on Tuesday by SAE International, formerly the Society of Automotive Engineers, comes just weeks after Ford, General Motors and Rivian said they would join Tesla's large Supercharger network and adopt its North American Charging Standard connector in new versions of their electric vehicles. But a rival connector called CCS is still in thousands of current EVs and will stay in use.

Also on Tuesday, Volvo Cars said it had become the fourth automaker to sign an agreement with Tesla to join the company's charging network, starting next year. Volvo said it will adopt nector, he said. Most consumers Tesla's charging connector in who have used both would new electric vehicles starting in choose Tesla's connector, 2025. SAE said that it's already Abuelsamid said. working on the standards and But he said charging stations

hopes to finish them within six will have to accommodate both months. The standards would plugs for many years because so many vehicles are equipped with govern how the plugs connect with charging stations, cybersethe CCS connectors.

curity measures, charging speeds Menchaca said Tesla and and reliability requirements, said industry engineers are working Frank Menchaca, president of on the standards in partnership. sustainable mobility solutions He said automakers and confor the innovation arm of SAE's sumers won't have to pay royalties to Tesla, but EV owners will The move likely spells the need to pay Tesla to charge on its end of CCS, which was developed network.

The organisation, he said, is to standards set by SAE, said not picking which connector will analyst Sam Abuelsamid. "It's be used and said the industry still only a matter of time before no wants to support CCS.

Menchaca said SAE is setting one is building new EVs with CCS connectors on them," he standards for NACS because said. CCS, he said, is much hard-Ford, GM and Rivian have adopter to maneuver and plug into ed it and it "looks like it's poised to become really widely used. So

in talking to all of the stakeholders we decided it needs to be standardised?

The standards, he said, will pa Ma provide more choice and conve-16 Ma SC nience and access to a bigger charging network. "Who knows if others come on board, it could Di be the dominant way that people (H charge," he said. un

Öther automakers such as Stellantis and Hyundai are considering switching to Tesla's connector. At present, nearly all automakers other than Tesla use CCS. Tesla's Superchargers are coveted by other automakers because it has more direct current fast-charging plugs in the US than any other network, and its stations are in prime locations along freeway travel corridors.

GM, Ford, Rivian and Volvo owners will get access to more than 12,000 Tesla Supercharger plugs

Locker hired by Mrs. Silky	रुग्वलिय वरिष्ठ प्रवल्पक, विद्युत खण्ड-द्वितीय उठपुठ टाज्य औद्योगिक विकास प्राधिकरण टीडीएस सिटी, गाजियावाद । E-Mall- ed2@upsida.co.in इं-जिविदा सूचना एतदद्वारा स्यित किया जाता है कि प्राधिकरण के विभिन्न जनपदों में स्थित आधौगिक क्षेत्रों में विद्युत विकास/अनुरक्षण कार्यों हेतु सरकारी विभागों/सार्वजनिक उपक्रमों/ निगमों/प्राधिकरणों/परिषदो/नगर निकार्यों में पंजीकृत फर्मो/ठेकदारों से अल्पकालीन ई-निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती है।				
H. NO. 947, Sector 15,	ø	कार्य का नाम	निविदा का प्रकार	कार्ब की समय रूप (सरह में)	
Faridabad, Haryana 121007 and Flat No. 204, Building No. E-7, Bramha Sun City, SR No. 7 parts Wadgaon Sheri, Pune,		Upgradation of Conventional sodium street lights to LED along with AMC for three Years under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at IA. Etah & IIDC Etah.	अल्पकालीन	59.60	
Maharashtra 411014 with Sec. 16 Faridabad Branch of Kotak Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated at SCO No. 2, Sector – 16,		Upgradation of Conventional sodium street lights to LED along with AMC for three Years under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at IA. Salempur (Hathras).	अल्पकालीन	55.42	
District Center, Faridabad (Harvana) 121002 remains		Upgradation of street lights network along with AMC for 03 years under AIIM at IA. CDF, Aligarh.	अल्पकालीन	67.43	
un-operated for the past 7 ⁴ . years.		Providing H.T/L.T. Network on road no. 05, 07, 08 & 09 under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at IA. Babrala (Sambhal)	अल्पकालीन	368.74	
Silky Malhotra and Mr. Abhinav Malhotra calling upon		Upgradation of street light network along with AMC for Three years under Atal Industrial Infrastructure Mission at IA. TDS City, Ghaziabad.	पूर्णकालीन	663.30	
returned unserved and they are not contactable. It is hereby informed that despite this notice if the said locker is not operated by Mrs. Silky Malhotra and Mr. Abhinav Malhotra within 90 days from the date of this notice, break open of the said locker will be done on September 28, 2023 at around	क्रमांक 01 से 04 तक की निविदा दिनांक 30.06.2023 को 11:00 बजे से दिनांक 07.07.2023 को 18:00 बजे तक अपलोड की जा सकती है, जिसे दिनांक 10.07.2023 को 11:00 बजे या इसके पश्चात खोला जायेगा एवं क्रमांक 05 पर अंकित निविदा दिनांक 30.06.2023 को 11:00 बजे से दिनांक 20.07.2023 को 18:00 बजे तक अपलोड की जा सकती है, जिसे दिनांक 21.07.2023 को 11:00 बजे या इसके पश्चात खोला जायेगा। निविदादाताओं द्वारा अपलोड श्रापथ पत्रों की मूल प्रतियों निविदा खोलने के बाद 03 कार्यदिवस में पंजीकृत बाक / व्यक्तिगत रुप से कार्यालय में जमा की जा सकती है। नोट: 1. निविदादाता अपनी निविदाओं में समस्त कर एवं जी0एस0टी0 सहित दरें अंकित करें। अलग से कोई कर देय नही होगा। 2. विद्युत कार्यों हेतु निविदादाताओं को निविदा अपलोड करते समय ''विद्युत सुरक्षा विभाग'' उठाय्र शासन, लखनऊ में क' श्रेणी, अनुमोदित लाइसेन्स एवं Eligibility Criteria के अनुसार समस्त प्रपत्र अपलोड करना अनिवाये होगा, अन्यथा निविदा को Consider नहीं किया जायेगा। निविदा सम्बन्धी विरत्त जानकारी website: www.onlineupsidc.com पर स्थापित लिंक यूपीएलसी की website: https://etender.up.nic.in पर देखी जा सकती है। बारिश प्रवयक्र अव्यक्षाओवीवण्रा , गांक्रियाक्ष				

money 10



Govt seeks industry feedback on PLI scheme to enhance effectiveness

PTI NEW DELHI

he Government has sought feedback from the industry on the production linked incentive (PLI) scheme with a view to enhancing its effectiveness, according to an official statement issued on Wednesday.

The commerce and industry ministry, which coordinates the scheme, also urged PLI beneficiaries to take up any procedural challenges/ issues with the respective implementing ministry or department so that positive reforms can be brought about and the scheme can be made more efficient and effective.

Issues pertaining to the scheme were discussed in a workshop called by the Commerce and Industry Ministry on June 27 here.

Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal stated that the government is committed to fostering a conducive business environment and accelerating growth in PLI sectors. "The minister encouraged industry's feedback and collaborative engagement to shape the policies, procedures and effectiveness of the PLI scheme,"



the ministry said in a statement. The government announced the PLI (production-linked incentive) scheme in 2021 for as many as 14 sectors, such as telecommunication, white goods, textiles and pharma with

outlay of Rs 1.97 lakh crore. The meeting assumed significance as the government has disbursed only Rs 2,900 crore till March 2023, out of Rs 3,400 crore claims received under the

scheme. The minister asked the implementing departments to hold regular consultations and roundtables with their respective PLI beneficiary to resolve their issues. The objective of the workshop was aimed to bring all the key stakeholders on a single platform so that

they can exchange their knowledge and experiences to ensure effective implementation of the schemes under 14 key sectors.

The Workshop witnessed participation from 10 implementing central departments, companies/ PLI beneficiaries under 14 key sectors, various Project Management Agencies (PMAs) like IFCI (Industrial Finance Corporation of India), Small Industries Development Bank of India (Sidbi), Metallurgical and Engineering Consultants (MECON), Indian Renewable Energy

Development Agency (IREDA), and Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI), select industry associations and relevant export promotion councils.

Representatives were also there from Wistron, Foxconn, Samsung, Dell, Wipro GE, Dr. Reddy's, Tata Motors, Mahindra & Mahindra, Nokia Solutions, ITC, Dabur, JSW, and Reliance among others.

"Key executives from these companies, along with Government officials, were actively involved in a collaborative open discussion, interactive session, and presentations throughout the workshop," the ministry said adding the work-

shop provided a unique forum to exchange insights on the impact of the schemes.

The workshop agenda covered various aspects related to PLI schemes, including their scope, eligibility criteria, incentives, and the roadmap for successful implementation including grievance redressal mechanism provided by concerned central departments and PMAs.

"Key topics included fac-tors/ policy nuances contributing to Schemes' success, enhancing domestic value addition, and capitalizing on emerging technologies," it said.

Actual investment of Rs 62,500 crore has been realized (till March) which has resulted in incremental production/ sales of over Rs 6.75 lakh crore and employment generation of around 3,25,000.

PLI schemes have played a significant role in promoting domestic value addition (DVA) in various sectors. It has led to increased value addition in the electronics sector and in smartphone manufacturing, 23 per cent and 20 per cent respectively, from negligible in 2014-15. "Up to 80 per cent, DVA has been reported in various products under pharmaceuticals.

Formal employment generation rate insufficient; need to create more quality jobs: Jayant Sinha

PTI MUMBAI

Ruling BJP lawmaker Jayant Sinha on Wednesday said the rate at which India is creating formal jobs is insufficient and there is a need to focus on opening up quality employment avenues for the people.

Speaking at a youth conclave organised by IMC Chamber of Commerce, Sinha said creating quality jobs is a major challenge for India at a time when technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning are staring at us, which can be argued as "job diminishing" ones, the member of Parliament from Hazaribagh said.

"We... Need to do a much better job of creating high quality employment for our young people... We have to be able to create high quality, formal jobs very very quickly and that rate is not sufficient right now," the former Union minister said.

He said India has over a billion people in the working age of between 18-64 years at present, and over 200 million will be added to the workforce over the next decade, which makes it a significantly important task.

"When you ask people in rural



sustainability.

India, in tier III, IV cities, they all want formal, high quality jobs. And we are not creating enough high quality jobs for them," he rued. Sinha said the farm-to-factory model centred around indus-

its own growth model that will stress on

transformational adjustments" not just

on energy systems but the entire econ-

omy if we are to pursue the path of sus-

tainable prosperity, Sinha said.

India will have to make "rapid and

Massive amount of investments

will be needed to bend the climate

change curve fast enough in order to

achieve the net zero commitment by

2070, he said, adding that the corporate

sector will also have to participate in it.

listed companies invest around USD 65-

70 billion a year on sustainability efforts

and the same will have to double

"immediately", if we have to bend the

curve and achieve net zero by 2070.

At present, Sinha said the top-500

trailisation and urban-Price (FRP), the minimum price that mills isation which has worked since the indushave to pay to sugarcane growers, by Rs 10 trial revolution, and helped economies to Rs 315 per quintal for the 2023-24 seafrom the UK to China, will not work in son starting October. the future and India will have to evolve

PTI NEW DELHI

The decision to increase the FRP of sugarcane was taken in the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The FRP of sugarcane has been fixed at

Centre hikes sugarcane

price by ₹10 to ₹315 per

quintal for FY2023-24

Rs 315 per quintal for the 2023-24 season. 'The Cabinet has increased the FRP of

sugarcane to Rs 315 per quintal for 2023-24. Last year, FRP of sugarcane was Rs 305 per quintal," Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur told reporters after the cabinet meeting.

The Prime Minister has always been with "annadata". The government has given priority to agriculture and the farmers, he said.

The FRP of sugarcane, which stood at Rs 210 per quintal in 2014-15 season, has now been increased to Rs 315 per quintal for 2023-24 season, he added.

Sensex up by 64K-mark; Economy made solid recovery despite global turmoil: Das

Gold falls

PTI NEW DELHI

₹ 300; silver

plunges ₹350

Nifty scales 19,000-peak in intra-day trading

PTI MUMBA

 $B_{\rm hit\ their\ lifetime\ high\ lev-}^{\rm enchmark\ equity\ indices}$ els on Wednesday, with the Sensex reaching the record 64,000-mark and the Nifty scaling the 19,000 level in intra-day trade, propelled by fresh foreign fund inflows and a rally in the US and European markets.

Buying in market heavyweight stocks like Reliance Industries and HDFC Bank added to the positive momentum.

Extending the previous day's rally, the 30-share BSE Sensex surged 499.39 points or 0.79 per cent to settle at its life time closing high of 63,915.42 points. During the day, the index jumped 634.41 points or 1 per cent to hit its all-time intra-day peak of 64,050.44

points. The NSE Nifty climbed

TOP INTERS BSE Sensex 📦 28 LOSERS TOP CAINERS LOSERS 18.972.30

from the recent fall in inflation, anticipating the end of the rate hike cycle," Amar Ambani, Group President & Head -Institutional Equities at YES SECURITIES, said.

In Asian markets, Tokyo and Hong Kong settled in the green while Seoul and Shanghai ended lower. an markets were trac in the positive territory. The US markets ended significantly higher on Tuesday.

PTI MUMBAI

 $R^{\mbox{eserve}}$ Bank Governor Shaktikanta Das on Wednesday said that the Indian economy has made a solid recovery and is among the fastestgrowing large economies despite heightened uncertainties and formidable headwinds.

He said that financial stability is non-negotiable and all stakeholders in the financial system must work to preserve this at all times.

financial regulators remain steadfast in their commitment to safeguard financial stability in the face of potential and emerging challenges," he said in a foreword to Financial Stability Report

serving macroeconomic and financial stability, shoring up confidence and

Indian banks' asset quality best in a decade, expected to improve further: RBI



supporting sustainable growth are top priorities for policymakers the world

Over the last three years, the global economy has been navigating suc-cessive high-amplitude shocks: the COVID-19 pandemic waves; protract-

ed geopolitical hostilities; rapid mon-etary policy tightening; and the recent banking turmoil.

Economic fragmentation is threatening macroeconomic prospects, especially among emerging market and developing economies (EMDEs), he said. Since the last issue of the FSR in December 2022, the global and Indian financial systems have charted somewhat dif-

ferent trajectories. The global financial system has been impacted by significant strains since early March 2023 from the banking turmoil in the US and Europe. Earlier this year, US-based Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank collapsed. It was followed by the bailout of UBS, the Switzerland's largest bank, by Credit Suisse in March.

Since the last issue of the FSR in December 2022, the global and Indian financial systems have chart-

ed somewhat different trajectories, it said, adding, the global financial system has been impacted by significant strains since early March 2023 from the banking turmoil in the US and

Europe. In contrast, it said, the financial sector in India has been stable and resilient, as reflected in sustained growth in bank credit, low levels of nonperforming assets and adequate capi-

tal and liquidity buffers.

Both banking and corporate sector balance sheets have been strengthened, engendering a 'twin balance sheet advantage' for growth, he said, adding, the reach and depth of financial intermediation are being aided by technology and growing digitalisation, which provide new

opportunities for growth and financial inclusion. As the recent banking turmoil in

certain advanced economies (AEs)

suggests, new risks have necessitated reassessment of global standards on financial sector regulations, he said. While international cooperation among regulators on these issues is of paramount importance, he said, so far

as India is concerned, both regulators and regulated entities need to stay the course with an unwavering commitment to ensuring a stable financial system. It has to be remembered that seeds of vulnerability often get sown during good times when risks tend to get overlooked, he said.

International cooperation and regulatory focus are also needed to tackle other challenges such as cyber risks and climate change, he said.

Through its G20 presidency, India is striving to improve the efficacy of multilateralism in several such areas. These efforts are fittingly captured in India's theme for G20: One Earth, One Family, One Future.

India's average growth rate likely to be 6.7% till FY27, consumer activity to be lead driver: S&P

softening private consumption

activity, Rana said, adding, with

tighter monetary policy there is

expected to be some impact on

growth on average over the

course of our forecast horizon

which extends to FY26-27. This

fiscal (2023-24) we expect

growth to be 6 per cent," Rana

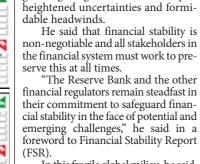
said, adding that consumer

activity would be the lead driver

"We expect 6.7 per cent

consumer demand.

of growth.



In this fragile global milieu, he said, balancing the policy trade-offs, pre-

oints or 0.8 to end at a record high of 18,972.10 points. During the day, it zoomed 193.85 points or 1 per cent to reach its lifetime intra-day high of 19,011.25 points

From the Sensex pack, Tata Motors, Sun Pharma, Titan, Larsen & Toubro, IndusInd Bank, Reliance Industries, NTPC, UltraTech Cement, Bajaj Finance, Infosys, HDFC Bank and Maruti were among the major gainers.

Tech Mahindra, Mahindra & Mahindra, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bajaj Finserv, HCL Technologies and Wipro were the laggards.

"After almost a sevenmonth consolidation, the Nifty has surpassed the 19,000 mark and what's more, all sectors are in the green as well. Investors are massively turning positive on risk assets, taking comfort

Global oil benchmark Brent crude climbed 0.83 per cent to USD 72.86 a barrel.

"After multiple attempts, the domestic market successfully managed to sustain record high levels, thanks to the

increased buying interest in heavyweight stocks. The market's bullish

momentum was further supported by strong FII inflows and a narrowing current account deficit, both of which positively impacted investor sentiments.

The gains were widespread, with the pharma and metal sectors leading the way as top performers, outshining other sectors," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

PTI MUMBAI

 $T^{\rm he}_{\rm assets\ ratio\ for\ Indian\ banks}$ fell further to a ten-year low of 3.9 per cent as of March 2023, the Reserve Bank said on Wednesday.

In the bi-annual Financial Stability Report (FSR) released on Wednesday, the central bank said the GNPAs are expected to improve further to 3.6 per cent in the baseline scenario.

The banking and corporate sector balance sheets have been strengthened, engendering a 'twin balance sheet advantage' for growth, RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das said in his foreword to the report.

He stressed the need for international cooperation and regulatory focus to tackle challenges like cyber risk and climate change

"Financial stability is nonnegotiable, and all stakeholders in the financial system must work to preserve this at all times," Das said.

Amid events like some of the banks facing severe stress or even going down globally, Das underlined the need to be watchful, and added that the financial sector regulators and regulated entities in India are committed to stability.

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI old fell Rs 300 to Rs G59,050 per 10 grams in

the national capital on Wednesday amid a decline in overseas precious metal prices, according to HDFC Securities. In the previous trade, the yellow metal had ended at Rs

59,350 per 10 grams. Silver also plunged Rs 350 to Rs 71,250 per kg.

"Gold edged lower on Wednesday, with spot gold prices in the Delhi markets trading at Rs 59,050/10 grams down by Rs 300 per 10

grams," Saumil Gandhi, Analyst Senior Commodities at HDFC Securities, said. In the international mar-

kets, gold and silver were quoting lower at USD 1,910 per ounce and USD 22.75 per ounce, respectively.

Indian economy is expected to clock an average growth rate of 6.7 per cent till 2026-27 fiscal driven by domestic consumption, S&P Global Ratings Senior Economist (Asia Pacific) Vishrut Rana said on Wednesday.

He said the economic growth in the current fiscal is expected to come in around 6 per cent, lower than 7.2 per cent clocked in 2022-23.

'We are seeing some headwinds from the trade side which is affecting activity and that is one of the factors that is affecting growth this year," Rana said at a webinar.

The factors that are driving the slowdown from 7.2 per cent growth last fiscal are weaker external environment, moderation in pent-up demand, and

Al-first strategy working for Infosys despite

unresolved ethical, IPR issues, says Nilekani

Reserve Bank of India has projected GDP growth in the current fiscal to be 6.5 per cent. Further, Rana said there is they mil Standard & Poor's "strong tailwind" coming from the investment side and the

investment outlook is looking significantly stronger. "Inflation is moderating. We do not expect RBI to be in

a hurry to cut interest rates," Rana said, adding, the RBI is likely to wait till early 2024 to cut rates till inflation expectations are anchored fully.

Retail inflation has declined to an over 2-year low of 4.25 per cent in May. The RBI has been mandated to keep inflation at 4 per cent with a band of (+/-) 2 per cent.

Earlier this week, S&P had said that at 6 per cent economic growth, India will be the fastest-growing economy among Asia Pacific nations.

Debate is between AI vs human intelligence, says Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan

PTI LONDON

rtificial intelligence (AI) and Adigitisation are the order of the day, and the debate now is about balancing this with human intelligence (HI), Union Minister for Education Dharmendra Pradhan said on Wednesday.

Addressing India Global Forum's (IGF) UK-India Week summit from his office in New Delhi, the minister joined UK Education Secretary Gillian Keegan in London to highlight the many areas of bilateral cooperation in the field of education and also two-way skills exchanges

"India and the UK are very dependable and old partners in the area of knowledge and education," said Pradhan."We don't have the option to judge whether it is good or bad; AI and ChatGPT are there today as new tools to create ease of living in society. Now, the debate is going on about god-gifted



skills are the need of the hour."

he said, responding to a question

Keegan, who spoke of how AI

could be used to free up a lot of

teaching time in the classrooms

of the future. "In my experience,

you don't get to pause technol-

ogy. It happens, so you have to

embrace it... there's a huge

opportunity within education,

said the UK education minister.

"I think it (AI) can free up

His views were echoed by

about the role of ĂI.

a lot of teaching time as teachers want to be able to sit in the classroom and they want to take time to learn more themselves so that they can develop and there are lots of things that AI can really help us with," she said.

The ministers also highlighted the innovative and forhuman intelligence. This is a ward-looking partnership debate between artificial intellibetween both countries in the gence, AI, versus human intellifield of education and skills, with gence, HI... digitisation is the Keegan welcoming the mutual order of the day, and globalisarecognition of qualifications agreed upon recently. tion, mobility and the future

"Transnational education partnerships have been a big focus, where UK universities have opened up campuses in India, and obviously, that is a great moment that we will look to continue. We've got a lot of students coming from India to the UK and students going from the UK to India as well. We also have those mutual recognition qualifications that form a really important foundation," said Keegan.

PTI 📕 NEW DELHI

The Artificial Intelligence-first business strategy adopted by Infosys is working well for the company despite unresolved ethical and IPR issues around the technology, Infosys Chairman Nandan Nilekani said on Wednesday.

In his address at Infosys' 42nd Annual General Meeting, Nilekani said the company has to be more efficient while nurturing readiness for growth, given its performance in challenging scenarios created by inflation, interest rates, geopolitics, demand volatility and supply chain dislocations. "Several practical, ethical and intellectual property-related issues, when it comes to AI remain unresolved. We also know that the motto of scaling AI in the enterprise is far from



simple. And yet, the AI-first strategy we're embracing already working for us," Nilekani said. Infosys had long ago donated funds to the development of OpenAI but holds no stake in the platform after it became a for-profit entity.

Responding to a share-holder's query, Nilekani said AI has the potential to make a big improvement in the productivity of people. "Ŷou can derive more benefit from AI like automatic code generation and all that. So, definitely, pro-

ductivity will go up. We believe that it will be used to amplify the productivity of existing people," he said. Infosys MD and CEO Salil Parekh said that the company has started using AI in various processes within the company, including software development. "The receding pandemic brought an end to one set of challenges but its aftermath has created new ones.

The cocktail of inflation, interest rate, geopolitics, war, demand volatility, supply chain dislocations, and shift from efficiency to resilience and security — all morphing quickly and without warning is upon us. This makes doing all we can to be efficient in the present as well as nurturing readiness for growth in the future," Nilekani said.He said that the board has approved a dividend of Rs 17.5

per share, taking the total to Rs 34 per share. "The company has returned approximately 86 per cent of free cash flow to shareholders over four years starting FY20," Nilekani said.

Infosys also informed that it has returned USD 3.1 billion last year to shareholders, comprising USD 1.7 billion as dividends and USD 1.4 billion through a share buyback programme. "Total dividend paid for FY23 amounts to Rs 34, which is a 9.7 per cent increase over FY22. With this, the company has announced a total dividend of approximately Rs 14,200 crore approximately for FY23," Nilekani said.

He said that the company recruited over 50,000 college graduates, bringing the total headcount to over 3.4 lakh employees, of which 39 per cent were women. Several

shareholders during the AGM asked the board about the company not taking a tender route for buyback, which they felt could have benefitted them with higher returns.Infosys board, in its meeting on October 13, 2022, approved the buyback of equity shares from the open market route through the Indian stock exchanges, amounting to Rs 9,300 crore at a price not exceeding Rs 1,850 per share.

The buyback was completed in February at an average share price of Rs 1,539.06 apiece. The company signed 95 large deals worth Rs 9.8 billion, of which 40 per cent were new deals. The AGM agenda included approval of appointment of Parekh as a director, whose office of directorship is liable to retire at the ensuing meeting, among others.



the announcement on the head coach's front will be made before

"I don't think bringing back Tushar will be a good choice.

The team needs someone with

fresh ideas. Someone like Amol

is the right person to take the

"The management needs to build a big pool of players before the T20 World Cup next year

After picking the head

coach for the women's team on

Friday, the CAC is likely to

appoint the chief selector for the

Indian men's team - a post that

has been vacant since Chetan

Sharma's unceremonious exit in

The last date of application

The CAC has the mandate

Agarkar was linked to the

team forward.

Labuschagne and Smith powering **Australia in 2nd Ashes test**



AP LONDON

arnus Labuschagne and Steve Smith hurried Australia to 190-2 against England at the first tea in the second Ashes test at Lord's on Wednesday.

Australia added 117 runs in the second session for the loss of only David Warner's wicket. The opener scored 66. Labuschagne was 45 not out

and Smith on 38.

Josh Tongue, in his Ashes debut, became the first England bowler to bowl out Australia's opening batsmen since 1968, and the first at Lord's since 1884. A new concern for England

was No. 3 batsman Ollie Pope, who left the field soon after

lunch when he injured his right shoulder while making a diving stop of the ball.

made Australia bat on a grassy

have an unbeaten 94-run stand the win at Edgbaston last week.

Cummins expected a big comeback from his two best batters and Labuschagne and Smith began to deliver, scoring at almost 5 an over on a slow pitch and aging ball. They slowed down before tea with the return

of Joe Root's part-time spin. Both batters overturned leg before decisions against them.

England won the toss and Broad, Smith hit consecutive pitch under cloud cover but then boundaries through the covers struggled for a breakthrough in to reach 24. On the third ball, he was given out, caught behind. But Smith reviewed immediateideal bowling conditions. Labuschagne and Smith

ly and video proved he didn't in response to sharing a total of touch the ball 35 runs across four innings in Labuschagne was struggling until after the drinks break, when he took three boundaries Australia captain Pat

off an over by Broad. Labuschagne was given out lbw to Broad on 33, but the review showed the ball was missing the wickets. When he was on 37, another lbw appeal led by Broad cost England a of Tongue and the introduction review when video showed bat

hitting ball.

Broad's 13 overs have conceded 48 runs. The only wickets have been In one over against Stuart

taken by Tongue, who has 2-48. Warner resumed after lunch on 53 and got to 66. He'd been

beating up Tongue before lunch but Tongue's extra pace finally beat him when one ball nipped in and hit Warner's leg stump. Like his opening partner

Usman Khawaja (17), who was also bowled by Tongue, Warner was stunned. Warner, on 1,999 runs in

Ashes history, will have to wait until the second innings to become the 18th Australian to reach 2,000. Smith, typically batting air,

came in to booing.



Protesters briefly disrupt play

IANS LONDON

 $A_{\text{the 'Just Stop Oil' activist}}^{\text{group of protesters from}}$ group on Wednesday briefly interrupted the proceedings on the first morning of the second Ashes 2023 Test between England and Australia at Lord's.

Ahead of the second over of the match, protestors wearing 'Just Stop Oil' t-shirts and holding bags of orange powder, ran onto the ground but neither made it onto the playing strip

The ground staff then arrived to sweep and remove the orange powder paint which had spilled on the outfield. Bairstow, meanwhile, ran to the dressing room to change his white shirt and wicketkeeping gloves, which was made dirty by orange powder paint. In all, play was delayed for nearly six minutes before action resumed.

"Cricket is an important Police matter."

part of our national heritage, but how can we enjoy England vs Australia when much of the cricketing world is becoming unfit for humans to live in? We can no longer afford to distract ourselves when the sports we play, the food we eat, and the culture we cherish is at risk."

"It's time for cricket lovers and all those who understand the severity of this situation, to get onto the streets and demand action from this illegitimate, criminal government. When our children ask us what did we do' to avert this crisis, we better have a good answer," said a spokesperson

from Just Stop Oil. The Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) said the protestors who invaded the field have been arrested. "Following the earlier pitch incursion, three people have been arrested for aggravated trespassing and taken into police custody and it is now a Metropolitan



Indian women's head coach to be picked on June 30 India have a tour of Bangla-desh scheduled next month and

PTI NEW DELHI

The shortlist for the Indian women team's head coach job includes Amol Muzumdar and Tushar Arothe, who are among those to be interviewed on June 30.

While Arothe has coached the Indian team in the past, Muzumdar, who is also in talks to become Baroda coach, has had stints with IPL franchise Rajasthan Royals and the South African national team.

which will also be held in Bangladesh," said a former India It has also been learnt that Englishman and ex-Durham player. Ajit Agarkar frontrunner for chief selector's post head coach, Jon Lewis has also applied for the job.

The Cricket Advisory Committee comprising Ashok Mal-hotra, Jatin Paranjpe and Sulakshana Naik will conduct the interviews in Mumbai.

"The interviews will be conducted on Friday," a BCCI official told PTI.

The Harmanpreet Kaur-led India, guilty of throwing away is June 30 and the interviews are likely to be held on July 1. knock out games from winning positions in multi-team events over the past five years, has been to pick a selector who can stand without a head coach since up to the high profile team man-Ramesh Powar was sacked in agement in case there are differ-December. ences," added the BCCI official.

Batting coach Hrishikesh Kanitkar was in charge of the team in the T20 World Cup in South Africa earlier this year.

chief selector's post in the past as well, but this time, he is likely to get the high pressure job.

February.

'Win ODI WC for Kohli like we did for Tendulkar': Sehwag

PNS NEW DELHI

Drawing inspiration from its last World Cup triumph, India is looking to win the upcoming tournament for Virat Kohli like the batch of 2011 won it for Sachin Tendulkar, feels former opener Virender Sehwag.

The ICC on Tuesday announced the schedule for the 50-overs World Cup here, which begins on October 5 in Ahmedabad with England and New Zealand playing the opening match, with the world's largest cricket stadium also hosting the final on November 19.

Since winning the 2011 up which Kohli was a

plays cricket with his passion, he is the one now. Everybody is looking to win this World Cup for Virat Kohli," he added.

"Virat Kohli is the same now. Everybody will look to win the World Cup for him. He always gives more than 100 per cent. I think Virat Kohli is also looking (forward) to this World Cup.

"(About) 100,000 people will watch you at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. Virat knows how the pitches will behave. I am sure he will score a lot of runs and he will do his best to win the World Cup for India." With the country hosting the World Cup later this year ein India will feature in nine different venues alone in the league stage, the expectations will be high for them to go all the way and end their drought.



Muttiah Muralitharan said since the World Cup is in the subcontinent, spinners will have a big role to play and agreed with Sehwag that India, England, Australia and Pakistan could be the favourites for the semifinals.

"I am looking forward to the India-England match, that will India-England match, that will be a tough match. England is playing really well at the moment. India is one of the favourites in my mind because they are playing at home and they know the conditions real-ly well. They know how to win in India," said Muralitharan, adding that Adil Rashid would be his pick as the most success-

Pak not to play Af in World Cup warm-up



Pakistan To Play Australia, New Zealand In World Cup 2023 Warm Ups

Pakistan have their warmup games scheduled against New Zealand and Australia on September 29th and October 3 respectively. Notably, Pakistan had requested the International Cricket Council to not schedule their warm-up matches against Afghanistan and other Asian teams. The board had cited reasons that the team will play the sub-continent teams in the preeding Asia Cup

part of, India have won only one ICC event - the 2013 Champions Trophy - and their wait for lifting a trophy in another global event has now lasted more than a decade

"We played that World Cup for Tendulkar. We won the World Cup, and it was a great exit for Sachin paaji," Sehwag said during an ICC event to announce the World Cup schedule.

"Virat Kohli is (now) in Sachin Tendulkar's shoes. The way he plays, he talks, he looks after the others and the way he

Sehwag said India are favourites to win their blockbuster clash against Pakistan on October 15 in Ahmedabad because they can handle pressure comparatively better. Sehwag said, "I feel that

now India handles the pressure that is why they win whereas Pakistan have a burden that they haven't won against India. In the 1990s, they were good at deal-

ing with pressure but after 2000, India soak it better.

"If any player says that they don't feel pressure, I don't think it's right. We used to say it too but at the end of the day, we know it's an India versus Pakistan game and emotions run high," he said.

Sehwag said players from countries like England and

cessful over a long period of

Australia tend to do well if the wickets are good but the same players struggle against spin."A player from the subcontinent has a better idea (of playing spin) than someone coming from outside," he said, adding that India and Pakistan could end up playing a final before the final if they meet in the semifinals.

Sri Lankan spin legend

in the competition "The subcontinent teams

will be favoured by the wickets, a lot of good spinners are there. Afghanistan's batting is not that great but their spin attack is tremendous. India and Sri Lanka have good spin attacks.

In the subcontinent, I always believe there is a chance of two teams from the subcontinent coming into the finals, with the exception of 1987 when England and Australia came (in the final). Other than that, last time two best teams came into the final and the best team

won in 2011," he added.

PNS NEW DELHI

O^{DI} World Cup 2023 sched-ule was announced by the ICC and BCCI at an event in Mumbai on Tuesday. The tournament will commence on October 5, with defending champions England taking on 2019 runners-up New Zealand at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

Hosts, India will open their campaign against Australia on October 8 before taking on Afghanistan on October 11. The highly-anticipated clash

with Pakistan will be played at them again will not help them the Narendra Modi Stadium on October 15.

Pakistan, who will be looking to win their first ODI World Cup post the 1992 win, will play their first two games against the qualifier teams in Hyderabad on Öctober 6 and Óctober 12 before taking on India.

Ahead of the main draw, the teams will also play two warmup matches to fine-tune their combination. The warm-up matches will be played in Hyderabad, Trivandrum and Guwahati.

in any way. The ICC accepted PCB's demand and scheduled the matches against New Zealand and Australia. Meanwhile, the Pakistan Cricket Board also requested the ICC to change venues for the games against Australia and

Afghanistan. Pakistan are scheduled to take on Afghanistan in Chennai and Australia in Bangalore, however, the Men in Green wanted a swap in venues for the matches but the BCCI and the ICC paid no heed to the demands.

Lyon becomes first specialist bowler to play 100-consecutive Test matches

IANS LONDON

fter taking the field for the Asecond Test of Ashes 2023 against England at Lord's, veteran Australian off-spinner Nathan Lyon on Wednesday became the first specialist bowler to play 100 consecutive matches in the longest format of the game.

Lyon, who made his Test debut in July 2011, has also become only the sixth player in the history of cricket to feature in 100 consecutive Tests. Other players in the list are Alastair Cook (159), Allan Border (153), Mark Waugh (107), Sunil Gavaskar (106) and Brendon McCullum (101).

Coincidentally, Lyon has achieved this rare landmark at Lord's, the same venue where he was dropped in the format for the last time. This was almost a decade ago during Australia's tour of England for the 2013 Ashes series.

"That's something I'm really proud of. To be able to tick off 100 consecutive Test matches, that's a proper stat in my head. That's a lot of Test cricket, a lot of ups and downs. No wonder



I've got no hair," Lyon had told out his 12-year Test career, apart from acknowledging support cricket.com.au, ahead of his from family and friends. 100th consecutive Test appear-"For any athlete to be suc-

Lyon also credited former New South Wales Waratahs rugby representative and Australia women's rugby sevens' head of athletic performance Tom Carter for keeping him in prime physical shape through-

ance

support and love and care," the spinner said.

"Then there is Tom Carter, who is arguably one of my best mates but also my PT (personal trainer) who I do a lot of work with behind the scenes. It's probably five days a week when we're at home, and he's a psychologist as well as a fitness trainer because I'm able to vent to him and there's no judgement. We have really good conversations, so it's probably having those really good people around you and I dare say a lot of athletes would feel the same, being able to do it for a long period of time," he added.

Australia were pushed into batting first under overcast skies at Lord's by England, who won the toss and elected to bowl first.

For Australia, left-arm pacer Mitchell Starc replaced rightarm seamer Scott Boland in the playing while England have brought in pacer Josh Tongue in place of off-spin all-rounder Moeen Ali.

time, you've got to have really Australia are currently leadgood people around you, and I'm not talking within the ing five-match Ashes series 1-0, Australian cricket team. I feel after winning the opening match like my family has been at Edgbaston by two wickets in absolutely amazing, with their a thrilling fashion.

PNS NEW DELHI

Snehasish Ganguly, the president of the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB), said on Tuesday that the preparations have started for the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023 and added that an India vs Pakistan match at Eden Gardens would be a dream match. The schedule for CWC 2023 was announced on Tuesday

Arch-rivals India and Pakistan will square off at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 this October at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad. The opening game of the World Cup is scheduled to place at the same venue on October 5 with a match between defending champions England and New Zealand in Ahmedabad, the ICC announced on Tuesday.

"Preparations have started.'We started preparations after IPL for the World Cup. We are renovating the stadium, corporate boxes. Ground conditions are excellent. Preparations will start from July 1 for the ground. We had a meeting with our curator. Eden Gardens is ready to host the World Cup. There are some patches here and there, within the next two months, we will resolve all those issues," said Ganguly to ANI.

On the WC schedule, Ganguly expressed his satisfaction, saying that they got "what we expected, what we wished for."

"We tried that we get a semifinal match this time and at the last moment, we got a semifinal match at Eden," he said.



Indo-Pak Semifinal match at Eden Gardens

would be a Dream: Ganguly's brother

Kolkata will host Qualifier 1 vs Bangladesh on October 28, Pakistan vs Bangladesh on October 31, India vs South Africa on November 5, England vs Pakistan on November 12 and the second semifinal on November 16. "Everyone's first choice will be an India vs Pakistan semifinal at Eden Gardens, it would be a dream match," he added.

On the pitch, Ganguly said that the staff will go for a sporting wicket, which offers high-scoring contests and helps both bowlers and batters.

"In IPL, everyone enjoyed the match since they were high scoring and the wicket condition was good. We will try maintaining it," he added.

Ganguly said that a decision on tickets price will be taken in the next couple of days.

"We expect the crowd to come, we have a capacity of 65,000. Keeping this in mind, we will have a reasonable price," he added.

Lastly, he urged fans to come to the stadium to watch the matches or at least enjoy them live on TV. Ganguly said that the matches will be done smoothly with proper security for all during the Durga Puja days, which will take place during the duration of the tournament.

"Last time also during international matches, Kolkata police managed this festival and an international match well. They cooperated with us. We are confident that matches will be carried out in a big way, with proper security and safety," he said.

Ahmedabad will host the tournament opener as well as the final. The other venues are Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi, Dharamsala, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Lucknow, Mumbai and Pune. Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram join Hyderabad in hosting the practice matches. Eight teams have qualified for the 46-day event through the Cricket World Cup Super League while the final two spots will be taken by the finalists of the World Cup Qualifier taking place in Zimbabwe.

The tournament retains the round-robin format of last time with all teams playing against each other for a total of 45 league matches. The top four teams will qualify for the semi-finals to be played in Mumbai on 15 November and in Kolkata on 16 November. The semi-finals and the final will have reserve days.



sport 12

SHOREY SHINES FOR NORTH ON DAY 1 OF DULEEP TROPHY

PTI BENGALURU

hruv Shorey carried the sublime form he showed in the latest Ranji season to Duleep Trophy as his composed 135 took North Zone to 306 for six on the opening day of their quarterfinal against North East Zone here on Wednesday.

Nishant Sindhu also contributed to the total with an unbeaten 76 after NE Zone fielded by choice in the morning.

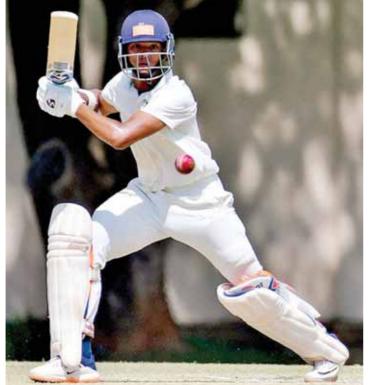
Delhi man Shorey was in wonderful touch coming into this match after aggregating 859 runs from seven matches in the 2022-23 Ranji season at an astounding average of 95.44 with three hundreds.

In fact, the 31-year-old was the fourthhighest run-getter of Ranji Trophy the previous season, and all of that form and experience reflected in his innings on the day.

Shorey took his time to settle on a clement Bengaluru day as the NE pacers, Jotin Singh, Palzor Tamang and Dippu Sangma, found some help.

They did not have the pace to rattle Shorey and his partner Prashant Chopra, but kept them honest with just enough movement away from the batters.

In fact, the first 15 overs produced just 29 runs. However, once they sussed up the conditions and bowlers, both Shorey and Chopra played more freely.



North Zone went into lunch at 115 for 2 in 34 overs and even those wickets were a result of batsmen's indiscretion. Chopra tried to leave a ball from Jotin but his attempt to withdraw the bat was delayed, resulting in a played on. Left-handed Ankit Kalsi could have eas-

ily avoided the poke he made against a delivery from Jotin miles away from the off-stump as he had to walk with a golden duck.

In the post-lunch session too, NE got a couple of fortuitous wickets as Prabhsimran Singh's desire to dominate Imliwati Lemtur resulted in a catch by Kishen Mietam. A little later, Ankit Kumar was snaffled by Sangma as North Zone looked a tad shaky at 162 for 4 in the 46th over. However, Shorey and Nishant milked 80 runs for the fifth wicket in about 22 overs that released the pressure on North to a good extent.

Left-arm spinner Kishan Singha inflicted two blows in as many balls, jettisoning Shorey and captain Jayant Yadav to reduce North to 242 for 6.

Still nearly 30 overs remaining, North needed a rescue act and it came from Nishant and Pulkit Narang for the seventh wicket, an association that was worth 64 runs. It took North to a healthy position when the play for the day was called off due to bad light.

Manchester City announce signing of Croatia's Kovacic

AFP LONDON

Manchester City on Tuesday announced they had completed the signing of Croatia midfielder Mateo Kovacic from Chelsea following the loss of captain Ilkay Gundogan.

The treble winners said the 29-year-old had signed a fouryear contract after the clubs reportedly agreed an initial fee of £25 million (\$32 million), with a potential £5 million in add-ons

Kovacic joins Pep Guar-diola's side after five years at Chelsea, where he won the Champions League and Europa League and made 221 appearances

He is City's first signing of the transfer window and his arrival compensates for the departure of Gundogan, who joined Barcelona on a free transfer on Monday after seven years at the club.

"This is a brilliant move for me and I cannot wait to get started with City," said Kovacic.

'Anyone who has watched this team under Pep knows how good they are. For me, they are the best in the world.



"The trophies they have earned 95 caps for his country. City director of football won are clear for all to see, but Txiki Begiristain said Kovacic they are also the best footwas a versatile player.

balling side out there." Kovacic is a four-time "He can play as a 'six' or an Champions League winner hav-'eight', has plenty of experience ing also enjoyed success in at top-level clubs and he under-Europe's elite competition three stands the Premier League. times with Real Madrid before

joining the Blues.

"It was a very simple decision to bring him to City because The midfielder, who began he has the tactical and technical qualities we are looking for in a his career with Dinamo Zagreb before a spell at Inter Milan, has midfielder."

rent and future generations of

female tennis players," WTA

Players' Council member

Donna Vekic said. "We are

incredibly proud to be part of

these developments and the

England captain Bright | WTA Tour aims for equal prize money in top events till 2033 expects to be fit for WC

AFP MIAMI

The WTA Tour announced plans Tuesday for a side's opening game of the group stage on July 22 in Brisbane. "I think we are a little bit revised calendar structure that will lead to equal prize money at combined events with the ahead (of schedule) actually," ATP Tour over the next 10 Brighton told reporters on

years. The plan would have top players consistently compete in top events with combined 1000 and 500 level WTA events attaining equal prize money by 2027 and singleweek non-combined events reaching the goal by 2033. The WTA will boost the number

of the World Cup, the 29-yearold believes she will be rested and refreshed after a gruelling 12 months. Bright was a key figure as

England won Euro 2022 on home soil last summer and helped Chelsea to a Women's Super League and FA Cup dou-

Tuesday.

of the Lionesses' World Cup ble campaign next month as she "I think the amount of minutes I've played leading up to this has been ridiculous, through the The Chelsea defender has not featured for club or country roof, so if anything I feel mentally and physically fresher than However, Bright was still I've ever felt," she added.

"I can't remember the last time I had longer than two weeks off. It's been a fair few years now.

of 1000 level tournaments to 10 with several stretching to two weeks in length with larger draws as Miami and Indian Wells are now staged. Rome made the jump for

2023 with Madrid and Beijing set to do so in 2024 and Cincinnati and Canada making the change in 2025 and attain equal prize money by 2027.

Other WTA 1000 events would be one-week tournaments at Doha and Dubai in February and a site to be determined in October with prize money equality reached



Mbappé expresses criticism after cops kill teen

tice he felt.

nationwide concern and trig-

Kylian Mbappé and other prominent French soccer players have expressed their indignation after the death of a 17-year-old delivery driver shot and killed during a police check

in a Paris suburb. "I hurt for my France," Mbappé, who grew up in the Paris suburb of Bondy, wrote Wednesday in a Twitter message check. The police officer suspected of firing on him was accompanied by broken hearts

gered unrest in multiple towns. Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said 31 people were arrested, 25 police officers

being in the wrong leads to death," he wrote. Maignan's injured and 40 cars burned in France teammate Jules Koundé overnight disturbances. The tensions focused criticized the media coverage of the teenager's death. around the suburban area of "As if this latest police blun-der wasn't enough, the 24-hour Nanterre, where lawyers say the teen, identified as Naël M., was killed Tuesday during a traffic news channels are taking advan-

tweeted about the sense of injusfor masking the real problem. Why don't we turn off the TV "A bullet in the head...It's and find out what's going on? always for the same people that

> EAST COAST RAILWAY e-Tender Notice No.:SBP-ELECT-2023-T-165. Dt.:20.06.2023

NameofWork ELECTRICAL WORKSIN CONNECTION WITH CONSTRUCTION OF REST HOUSE FOR TRACK MACHINE STAFF AT SATELLITE DEPOT, BOLANGIR STATION. Approx. Cost of the Work : ₹8,23,999.20 EMD: ₹16,500/-

within a decade. "Fifty years Washington, Seoul, Berlin, Adelaide, Abu Dhabi, Eastbourne, Monterrey, Strasafter the players found strength in unity, I'm proud bourg, Zhengzhou and the WTA continues to be a global leader focused on pro-Stuttgart plus the United Cup viding opportunities and hope and two events in unrevealed that women in other sports markets. "This game-changing mo-ment for the WTA Tour will and walks of life are inspired by its example," WTA founder Billie Jean King said. align both tournament and player interests and help cur-

New player entry rules would ensure top players compete at the premium-level events consistently. The number of 500 level

events will jump to 17 with stops in Tokyo, Brisbane, Charleston, San Diego,

OFFICE OF

Bid Iden

1 Odish

The E

۲

B-393

ι,	San	Diego,	legacy	it	will	have	on	equal
		NT OF ODISHA, "						
ſĦJ		RINTENDIN			ER, K	HARL	AR ()	R&B)
	-	DIVISION, H mail: eeroads.khr						
	No. 2899				.06.2023			
	NO. 2093			40	00.2025			
Invitation For Bids								
tification No. S.E. (R&B) KHARIAR– 06 / 2023-24								
xecutive Engineer, Khariar (R&B) Division, Khariar on behalf of Governor of								
a, invites percentage rate composite & Non composite bids in Single cover								
		NODE only.						
e of v	vork				Road (CO	C Drain) &	Buildin	g

	system in ONLINE MODE only.	
2	Nature of work	Road (CC Drain) & Building works.
3	No. of work	03 Nos. Works
	Tondor Paper cost	As specified in the notice for the respective Work to be remit

"Coming into it, there's a big chunk of time before the first game, so we're really confident and everything is going exactly the way we wanted it to go." Rather than being con-cerned by the long lay-off ahead

AP PARIS

Williamson suffered an anterimjur

selected as her nation's skipper

for the tournament in Australia

and New Zealand after Leah

AFP BURTON UPON TRENT

England captain Millie Bright Eexpects to be fit for the start

recovers from knee surgery.

(UNITED KINGDOM)

since March.

Bright will not be involved when England face Portugal in a warm-up friendly on Saturday, but is hoping to face Haiti in her

blessing in it, that I've mentally and physically been able to completely just have a clean slate and let my body recover."

family and loved ones of Naël,

laces ation. All my thoughts go to the manslaughter charges, according to the Nanterre prosecutor's this little angel gone much too office. Mike Maignan, another soon." The death prompted French international player,

distorting the truth, criminalizing the victim and finding extenuating circumstances where none exist. An age-old method

tage of it by making a big fuss,'

he wrote. "The "journalists" ask

e sole

Marta leads Brazil squad for women's World Cup

AFP RIO DE JANEIRO

 $V_{\rm faced}^{\rm eteran}$ forward Marta will lead a fresh-faced Brazil looking to pull off an upset to win its first women's World Cup when the tournament kicks off next month, coach Pia Sundhage announced Tuesday.

At age 37, the legendary number 10, considered by many the greatest female footballer ever, will be playing in her sixth World Cup in Australia and New Zealand after battling back from a knee injury that sidelined her for nearly a year.

"Marta is the 'Queen', the icon, and just to be around her is contagious," Sundhage told reporters as she announced her 23-player squad.

"In the final pass, she is one of the best. Would she start in the line-up? I don't know yet." Copa America champions Brazil are at a generational crossroads, and not tipped to lift the trophy. Sundhage picked 11 players who will be making their World Cup debuts — though the Swedish coach also included tournament veterans such as goalkeepers Leticia and Barbara, defenders Kathellen, Rafaelle and Tamires, and forwards Bia Zaneratto, Andressa Alves and Debinha.



Brazil, who are in Group F with France, Jamaica and Panama, will kick off their World Cup campaign against Panama in Adelaide on July 24.

Nishikori to end long **ATP Tour layoff**

AFP WASHINGTON

apan's Kei Nishikori, a former world number four and the 2014 US Open runner-up, will return to ATP Tour competition at next month's Atlanta Open, tournament officials said Tuesday.

time ATP winner and 2016 Rio Olympic bronze medalist, has not played since undergoing surgery last year on his left hip.

His most recent ATP start was at Indian Wells in October 2021. His most recent title came in January 2019 at Brisbane. The Atlanta Open, a hard-court event, will be played July 24-30 with six-time winner John Isner, fellow



The 33-year-old, a 12- American and world num

Rico.



nine Taylor Fritz and defe ing champion Alex de Min of Australia also in the fie Nishikori, ranked 493

the world, began his comebac on the Challenger Tour earlier this month. Despite a 20month layoff, he dropped only one set on his way to capturing the title at the Caribbean Open Challenger in Puerto

	4)	Tender Cost	: Rs.6,000
D	5)	Class of Contractor	: "C" Clas
	6)	Availability of Bid document in the	: From 03
P		Website	
mber	7)	Date of Opening of Bid	: 14.07.20
fend- inaur	8)	The Bidders have to participate in https://tendersorissa.gov.in.	ONLINE bidding
ield.	9)	Any Corrigendum/Addendum/Cancell	ation of will be dis
Brd in	0	IPR-34150/11/0002/2324	
back	Ŭ	11.04.100/11/000E/E0E4	

Sr. Div. Elect. Engineer (G), PR-299/0/23-24 Sambalpur	OIPR-340	062/11/0014/2324	Executive Engineer Khariar (R&B) Division, Khariar	
http://www.ireps.gov.in NOTE: The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website 15 days before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender.	9	The Bidders shall have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: <u>https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in</u> . Any addendum / corrigendum / cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website. The authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids without assigning any reason thereof.		
Complete information including e-tender documents is available in website:	8	EMD/Bid Security	As specified in the notice to be remitted on line only	
invalid and shall be rejected summarily without any consideration.	7	Date of opening of Bid	Dt. 14.07.2023 at 11:30 hours	
e-Tenders even if these are submitted on firm's letter head and received in time. All such manual offers shall be considered	6	Availability of Bid Documents in the website	10.00 hours of 04.07.2023 to 17.00 Hours of 13.07.2023	
No manual offers sent by Post/Courier/Fax or in person shall be accepted against such	5	Class of Contractor	As specified in the notice for the respective Work.	
Completion Period: 6 Months Tender closing Date and time : At 1630 hrs. on 14.07,2023	4	Tender Paper cost	respective Work, to be remit online only.	

GOVERNEMENT OF ODISHA

. OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, N.H. DIVISION, PARALAKHEMUNDI (GAJAPATI) Phone : 06815-222097, e-mail : ee.nhdgajapati@gmail.com INVITATIONS FOR BIDS (IFB) [e-Procurement] b-13 BID IDENTIFICATION NO. 03 /EENHPKD of 2023-24 No. 639 Dated: 22/06/2023 The Executive Engineer, National Highway Division, Paralakhemundi (Gajapati) on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bid in single cover system in ONLINE MODE from eligible contractors for construction of Boundary wall as detailed in the table below. 1) 2) Nature of work : Boundary Wall Works 3) No. of work : 1 no. 0/ass & "B" Class 3.07.2023 12.30 PM to 13.07.2023 5.30 PM 023 at 11.00 A.M. ng only. Further details can be seen from the website isplayed in the e-tender website only Executive Engineer N.H. Division, Paralakhemund GOVT.OF ODISHA ۲. **DEPARTMENT OF PANCHAYATIRAJ & DRINKING WATER** OFFICE OF THE PANCHAYAT SAMITI i-209 RAJGANGPUR DISTRICT:STNDARGARH Phone:06624-220312, E-mail:ori-r. nsat.nic.in Notice No. 02 / Date:- 27.06.2023 S1. No. Class of Period of Tender Name of the work cost contractor completion Construction of Community Centre and Repair Renovation of RC Church at Keshramal "D&C" class Three (03) 01 12,48,545/-Calendar months contractor Construction of Community Centre and Repair and Renovation of GEL Church at W.N-12, Rajgangpur. "D&C" class Four (04) 02 15,15,991/-Calendar months contractor Date and time of availability of bid documents in the portal - 03.07.2023 to 19.07.2023 Last date/Time for receipt of bids at the block office - 22.07.2023 (05:30 PM)

Date and time of opening of bid - 24.07.2023 (11:00 AM)

Name and address of the Officer Inviting Bid - Block Development Officer, Rajgangpur

Sundargarh, PIN 770017 The detailed terms and conditions can be downloaded from the District website www. w.sundergarh.nic.in

OIPR-19332/11/0003/2324

Block Development Officer, Rajgangpur

Determined to maintain unbeaten run: Chhetri

PTI BENGALURU

draw feel likes a defeat, but Ainspirational Indian skipper Sunil Chhetri is determined to maintain their unbeaten run intact, a splendid home run that stretches to almost four years.

In a high-octane and illtempered SAFF Championship contest against Kuwait, India took the lead in the first-half

injury time following Chhetri's 92nd international goal.

However, an unlucky own goal from Anwar Ali in secondhalf injury time put a heart-

topping the group. "To a large extent, we could do exactly what we had trained for. They are not an easy side. This team can play, and we could

energy, and for most of the time, I think we did well, "said Chhetri.

"But the feeling that comes to our mind is that of a loss breaking end to India's hopes of because we conceded at the last moment," he added.

"Clean sheet was one of our targets, which went out of the window. All of us in the dressing room are a little bit disheartsee that. But we matched their ened about that. Now, it's the unbeaten run that we want to keep as long as possible."

India are unbeaten in all nine matches played in 2023. At home, the run stretches to almost four years, with the last defeat coming in Guwahati against Oman in September 2019 in the FIFA World Cup **Oualifiers**.

Chhetri further backed Anwar who conceded the own

goal in the dying minutes that cancelled India's 1-0 lead.

"It's not Anwar, it's the country that conceded," captain Sunil Chhetri was quick to clar-

"It's an own goal. It can happen to anyone. We are professional enough not to talk about it. I hope the kid shrugs it off. We all have his back," he said.