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NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 8, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3



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Murder of People's Health: SC

Court orders Punjab, Haryana, UP, Rajasthan to stop stubble fire as Delhi chokes

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Amid a spike in pollution levels in Delhi and NCR, the Supreme Court on Tuesday directed Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan to ensure crop residue burning was stopped "forthwith", saying it cannot let "people die" due to pollution. Questioning the Delhi Government's odd-even rationing scheme, which is aimed at curbing pollution and is scheduled to be enforced in the city from November 13 to 20, the apex court asked about its effectiveness and termed it "all optics". "I am sorry, this is complete murder of the health of people, there is no other phrase I have," said Justice Sanjay Kishan Kaul, who was heading the bench which also comprised Justice Sudhanshu Dhulia. Another bench of the top court comprising Justices AS Bopanna and MM Sundresh, which was dealing with the firecrackers ban matter, clarified on Tuesday that the top court's order banning firecrackers containing barium binds every state and was not just limited to Delhi and NCR. The Justice Kaul-led bench also took a stern view of States trying to shift blame to one



Stubble burns at a farm at Ghanaur in Patiala district on Tuesday PTI

another for the pollution and observed there cannot be "political battle" all the time. While hearing a matter pertaining to the debilitating air pollution in the Delhi-National Capital Region (NCR), the bench flagged issues like crop residue burning, vehicular pollution and burning of waste in the open were the major contributors to pollution during this time of the year. The top court seized a plea filed in 1985 by environmentalist M C Mehta on air pollution and the issue of crop residue burn-

ing had cropped up during the hearing of the matter. Expressing concern over widespread stubble burning which did not stop following paddy harvest, the bench said, "The concern is this... These farm fires are not stopping. What action the states are taking to stop the farm fires?" "Delhi cannot be made to go through this year after year," it said. The bench directed the Delhi Government to ensure that municipal solid wastes were not burnt in the open in the city.

On the issue of stubble burning, the counsel appearing for Punjab claimed incidents of crop residue burning have come down by 40 per cent since last year. "We want to stop all this. We don't care how you do it. It is your business how to do it. It must stop," the bench told the counsel, adding, "You have to stop it, whether by forceful action, sometimes by incentives, sometimes by other actions, but you have to stop it." "We cannot let people die because of this (pollution)," the apex court said, while referring to the health related issues being faced by people due to the alarming rise in pollution levels. It said residents of Delhi have been grappling with health issues at this time of the year, year after year, because a solution to the problem has not been found. "We direct the State Government of Punjab and for that matter, all other States adjacent to Delhi, which is Haryana, Rajasthan and UP... to ensure that crop burning is stopped forthwith," it said. The bench made the local station house officer (SHO) concerned, under the overall supervision of the chief secretary, responsible for stopping crop residue burning.

The top court observed it was not saying that crop residue burning was the only contributor to pollution but it was a significant factor during this time of the year. Senior advocate Aparajita Singh, assisting the court as an amicus curiae in the pollution matter, spoke of recent media reports about non-operational smog towers, which were installed to combat air pollution, in Delhi. The bench, which asked the chairman of the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) to remain present before it on the next date of hearing, said it wanted smog towers to be operationalised and asked the authorities to take immediate steps for it. It also asked the Delhi Government to consider that only taxis registered in the city ply on roads here, saying a large number of taxis registered in other States were seen on roads carrying only one passenger. On the issue of crop residue burning, the counsel appearing for Punjab said the farmers were burning stubble due to economic reasons. The bench observed it was submitted before it that if subsidies were given to farmers for alternative solutions, they may be persuaded to stop crop residue burning.

It noted paddy cultivation was one of the reasons for decline in water table in Punjab and it was suggested during the hearing that it must be phased out and substituted with other crops. The bench noted it was also suggested that the Centre may consider exploring the possibility of providing minimum support price (MSP) for alternative crops. The top court said it was argued that paddy grown in adjacent States were illegally brought into Punjab to claim MSP. It noted that a particular kind of paddy grown in Punjab, of which stubble was a by-product, coupled with the season when it is grown, was one of the causes for the problem. The bench said a serious consideration was required on whether this particular kind of paddy should grow at all during this period. "We want all the stakeholders to act promptly in respect of the aforesaid aspects," the court said, suggesting a meeting of all stakeholders should be conducted to discuss these issues. The bench also referred to the government promoting millets. The top court said the issue requires immediate attention and court monitoring.

States pass the buck

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The Arvind Kejriwal Government in Delhi and the Manohar Lal Khattar Government in Haryana are engaging in a blame game as Delhi's air pollution reaches hazardous levels, with each side pointing fingers at the other for the current alarming state in Delhi and National Capital Region. According to data from the Ministry of Agriculture, Punjab has reported 20,978 incidents of stubble burning, Haryana 1,605, Uttar Pradesh 1,439, and Delhi 3 between October 29 and November 7. Specifically on Tuesday, Punjab reported 1,515 incidents of stubble burning, Haryana 26, and UP 167. On Tuesday morning, pollution levels in Delhi experienced a slight decrease and were categorised as "very poor" after five consecutive days of "severe" air quality. According to data from the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Delhi's 24-hour average Air Quality Index (AQI) was recorded at 395 on Tuesday, showing a marginal improvement from the 421 recorded on Monday.

Additionally, several cities in neighbouring Haryana, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh have also reported hazardous air quality. AAP's national spokesperson Priyanka Kakkar has attributed the serious air pollution situation in Delhi to the Haryana Government. Kakkar stated that in Punjab, 50 to 60 per cent less stubble has been burned compared to last year, and the stubble currently being burned is located 500 kilometres away. Responding to the AAP's claim, Khattar has asked his Delhi counterpart to focus on protecting people from the worsening air quality in the national Capital. BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla said, "After the complete expose of the Aam Aadmi Party by the Supreme Court on Delhi's Air Pollution and Punjab stubble issue, Arvind Kejriwal should apologise for making Delhi a gas chamber and stealing our right to breathe fresh air over the last 8 years." All that Kejriwal did was "blame others, including Diwali" for the rise in pollution levels in Delhi, he charged in a post on X.

Voters defy Naxal threat

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/RAIPUR/AIZAWL

Amid reports of Naxalite violence and the call for boycott, a provisional turnout of around 71 per cent was recorded in the first phase of Chhattisgarh Assembly elections for 20 constituencies on Tuesday, while the single phase Mizoram Assembly elections passed off peacefully with over 77 per cent of 8.57 lakh electors exercising their franchise. Votes will be counted on December 3 alongwith other states which go to polls this month at different intervals. With this the political fate of former chief minister and BJP leader Raman Singh, Chhattisgarh Congress chief and MP Deepak Baij, and at least three ministers in the Bhupesh Baghel cabinet was sealed in EVMs. The polling for the remaining 70 Assembly segments will be held in the second phase on November 17 and votes will be counted on December 3. Incidents of violence were reported from Sukma, Narayanpur, Bijapur and Kanker districts. Four security personnel were injured in an encounter with



People wait in a queue to cast their votes for the first phase of Chhattisgarh Assembly elections at Jagdalpur in Bastar district on Tuesday PTI

Naxalites in the Chintagufa police station area of Sukma district while a CRPF commando sustained injuries in an IED blast near Tandamarka camp in the same district during separate area domination operations to ensure security during the polls, police said. Exchanges of fire also took place between Naxalites and security personnel, one each in Narayanpur, Bijapur and Kanker districts. However, no harm was reported to security personnel in those incidents, police said. Around 60,000 security personnel, 40,000 of them belong-

ing to the Central Armed Police Forces and 20,000 from the State police, have been deployed for the smooth conduct of polls in the Bastar division which has 12 Assembly segments, police said. Residents of 126 villages in the Bastar division rejoiced as polling stations were set up for the first time in their villages since Independence in seven Left Wing Extremist (LWE) affected districts, a statement issued by the poll authority said. Former Naxalite Sumitra Sahu, who joined the police force in 2018, voted for the first time.

She voted in the Narayanpur constituency. Family members of BJP leader Ratan Dubey, who was killed by Naxalites while campaigning for the party last week in Narayanpur district, also cast their votes. The Congress, which is seeking another term and the opposition BJP, which had ruled the state for 15 years before it was voted out by a huge margin in 2018 polls, are the main contenders for power. Voting for 10 constituencies was held from 7 am to 3 pm in 10 seats and from 8 am to 5 pm in the remaining 10 segments under a thick security blanket of police and paramilitary personnel in the Naxalite-hit Bastar division. "A 70.87 per cent voter turnout was recorded till 5 pm in the first phase of the Chhattisgarh elections on Tuesday. However, this figure may go up as the final data from several booths was yet to be received," a poll official said. Additional chief electoral officer H Lianzela said the voting percentage of Mizoram is likely to touch 80 as final reports were yet to come from far-flung districts. In the 2018 State polls, the overall voter turnout was 81.61

per cent. Polling in all the 1,276 polling stations was peaceful, the official said, adding 174 candidates, including 18 women, are in the fray. Of the 11 districts, central Mizoram's Serchhip recorded the highest polling percentage of 84.49, followed by Hhathial (84.16) and Khawzawl (82.39). Aizawl district witnessed the lowest turnout of 73.09 per cent. South Mizoram's Siaha (76.41) and Saitual (75.12) also posted lower voting percentages compared to others, ECI data said. The ruling Mizo National Front (MNF), main Opposition Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) and the Congress have fielded candidates in all 40 seats. The BJP is contesting 23 constituencies, while the AAP has nominated candidates in four Assembly segments. Besides, there are 27 independent candidates. Technical glitches in EVM were reported from one polling station in Aizawl where Chief Minister Zoramthanga went to vote, another official said. The 510-km-long international border with Myanmar and the 318-km boundary with Bangladesh had been sealed ahead of the polling.

Act against deepfake menace swiftly: Govt

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

With netizens expressing concerns over the deepfake contents, the Centre on Tuesday issued an advisory to all social media and internet intermediaries asking them to take strict action on any deepfake content in line with the provisions under the IT Act as laid by the Government of India. Deepfake is a digital method where users can replace one person's likeness convincingly with that of another using AI technology. The Ministry of Information Technology (IT) has asked all social media platforms, including X (formerly Twitter), Instagram and Facebook to remove morphed images within 24 hours of receiving a complaint under the IT rules. A deepfake video of actress Rashmika Mandanna has been circulating on social media platforms. Netizens, including several Bollywood stars led by megastar Amitabh Bachchan, claimed the video has been morphed and the actual video

is of an Indian-origin person living in the UK. "An advisory has been issued to all social media platforms citing clause of IT rules and obligations of social media companies," sources said. As per the advisory, social media platforms should take all measures to remove or disable content which is in the nature of impersonation in an electronic form, including artificially morphed images of such individuals within 24 hours from the receipt of a complaint in relation to the content. The advisory mentions that social media intermediaries shall observe due diligence, including ensuring the rules and regulations, privacy policy or user agreement and inform users not to host any content that impersonates another person. "MeitY (Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology) will act after social media companies fail to act as per the rule," officials said. Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar on Monday

had reacted to the deepfake video of the actress on X where he said social media companies are bound to remove any misinformation. The minister had said that if platforms do not comply with IT rules notified in April 2023, Rule 7 will apply and platforms can be taken to court by aggrieved persons under provisions of IPC. "Deepfakes are the latest and even more dangerous and damaging form of misinformation and need to be dealt with by platforms," the minister had said. Actors Mrunal Thakur, Naga Chaitanya and singer Chinmayi Sripada were other cinema personalities to voice support for Rashmika Mandanna after the "Pushpa: The Rise" star's deepfake video went viral on social media over the weekend. Mandanna's "Goodbye" co-star Amitabh Bachchan was the first to react after a fact checker posted the deepfake clip along with the original video of a British-Indian social media personality Zara Patel and emphasised the need for a legal and regulatory framework.

Lockdown in Kerala Governor's kitchen

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ KOCHI

The adage "Ants eating fire" is frequently used in Kerala. It metaphorically signifies that individuals in lower hierarchies attempt to undermine and embarrass those in positions of power. This scenario unfolded in the State to a point where the functioning of the kitchen in Raj Bhavan, the residence of the First Citizen of Kerala, was on the brink of shutdown. This would have necessitated the Governor to source food from nearby restaurants. "Governor Arif Mohammed Khan was on the verge of ordering his food from nearby eateries when the CPI(M)-led Kerala Government released a portion of the funds meant for Raj Bhavan. Had it not been sanctioned by the Government, we would have witnessed a scenario of the Governor having

to procure from hotels," a source in Raj Bhavan told *The Pioneer*. Besides the closure of Raj Bhavan kitchen, the State would have also seen the half a dozen vehicles including the Governor's official car coming to a grinding halt. "This is because the Kerala State Civil Supplies Corporation's refuelling stations issued an alert that they may be forced to deny diesel to the Raj Bhavan vehicles as bills for many months were pending," said the source. The expenses incurred by the Governor is quite low compared to that of his predecessors. The delay in the payment of the bills and the expenses for Raj Bhavan is being seen as an act of vengeance by the CPI(M) against Arif Mohammed Khan because of his uncompromising stance against corruption, nepotism and partiality to party

leaders and their relatives and associates, said the Source. The Kerala Government has filed a plea in the Supreme Court asking it to declare Arif Mohammed Khan has failed in discharging his responsibilities like signing the appointment orders of faculties and vice-chancellors shortlisted for appointment in the State's Universities. A reply under the Right to Information query filed by the Save University Campaign brought out startling disclosures. This includes the travelling allowance, sitting fees and honorarium paid to the syndicate members of Kerala Technical University. "These individuals were given travelling allowance, sitting fees and honorarium for online meetings, an act of its kind reported from anywhere in the world," said RS Sasikumar, convener, Save University



Campaign Committee. The information disclosed that PK Biju, a CPI(M) leader and former members of Parliament During the period March 2021 to July 2023, PK Biju, a party leader staying at Thiruvananthapuram, had been reimbursed ₹12,20,898 as travelling allowance and honorarium. What is shocking is that Biju stayed at Thiruvananthapuram itself while he claimed the reimbursement of money. For every trip undertaken by Biju to attend the Kerala Technical University syndicate meeting, Biju claimed the TA by furnishing a Thrissur address. But he has not claimed room rent for hotels for his stay in the capital city. I Saju, an advocate by profession, who is another member of the syndicate, claimed ₹1.1 million for 2021 to 2023. "Syndicate members are paid

TA, DA, sitting fee and Honorarium from the examination fee, revaluation fee and affiliation fee which literally means that the students are paying the bills. There was blatant misuse of official vehicles provided to the syndicate members who used them to attend /visit AKG Centre, the party headquarters," said Sasi Kumar. The Raj Bhavan source said that the delay in reimbursing the expenses incurred by Arif Mohammed Khan should be seen as a warning by the Kerala Government to him for delaying the Bills enacted by the Legislature. A ray of hope for us is the Governor himself. The State has not seen any previous Governors endearing themselves to the people. But Arif Mohammed Khan is different from them because of his simplicity and honesty," said Sasi Kumar.

Naxal commander-turned-cop votes in Chhattisgarh election

PTI ■ RAIPUR

Voters standing in a queue outside a polling station in Chhattisgarh's Narayanpur constituency waited patiently for their turn and when a woman police constable walked out after exercising her franchise, they didn't take note as there was no apparent reason to do so.

For constable Sumitra Sahu, 34, this was the first occasion in her life, which took a turn for the better in December 2018, to participate in the poll process as a voter.

Before December five years ago, Sahu donned brownish-green fatigues and carried a gun as an active commander of the Aamdai Area Committee of Maoists in Narayanpur.

On Tuesday, voting was held in 20 constituencies during the first phase of the state assembly polls amid Naxalite violence, officials said. "I joined the police force in January 2019. I am happy that for the first time, I have exercised my franchise on Tuesday," she told PTI.

During elections- dubbed the festival of democracy- Naxalites in LWE-affected areas often threaten people against participating in the voting process but thanks to the efforts taken by the police and poll officials, voting can be held.

This was evident on Tuesday when a provisional turnout of around 71 per cent was recorded in the first phase of the state assembly elections for 20 constituencies.

A resident of Kadenar village in Narayanpur district, Sahu joined Naxalism in 2004 as a member of Chetna Natya Mandli- a cultural wing of outlawed CPI (Maoists). She was recruited by then East Bastar Division secretary Urmila, a dreaded Maoist leader. During elections, including parliamentary, assembly and panchayat she was also tasked to spread propaganda of the boycott call given by Naxalites, Sahu said. After her 6-7 colleagues were



killed in encounters with police and a police camp set up in her village Kadenar, she quit Naxalism in December 2018 and joined the police force in 2019. She initially served as a 'gopniya sainik' (secret trooper) and was later elevated as a constable, Sahu added. On Tuesday, residents of 126 villages in the Bastar division rejoiced as polling stations were set up for the first time in their villages since Independence in seven Left Wing Extremist (LWE) affected districts, a statement issued by the poll authority said.

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Modi to chair virtual summit of G20 leaders on November 22

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Russia-Ukraine war, the Israel-Hamas conflict and the challenges facing the Global South are among key issues which are set to figure at the virtual summit of the G20 leaders on November 22 that would be chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

At the end of the G20 summit in New Delhi in September, India announced that it will hold a virtual meeting of the leaders of the grouping before the end of its presidency. India has already sent invitations to leaders of the G20 member nations for the virtual summit.

It is learnt that India will focus on its development agenda for the grouping with a focus on challenges being faced by the Global South or the developing countries. There will be no joint outcome document at the end of the summit. Diplomatic sources said the Russia-Ukraine war and the Israel-Hamas conflict are set to figure at the deliberations. However, India is expected to



focus on its development agenda including initiatives in areas of digital public infrastructure, climate finance and clean energy. In the last few years, India has been positioning itself as a leading voice, flagging concerns, challenges and aspirations of the Global South or the developing nations, especially the African continent. In a related development, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday hosted envoys of the G20 nations at the India International Convention Centre (IICC), named Yashobhoomi, in Dwarka.

In the interactions, he thanked the G20 member nations for their "whole-hearted" support to India's presidency of the grouping. "Delighted to host Ambassadors of G20 member countries and international organisations at Yashobhoomi convention centre today. Thanked them for their whole-hearted support during our Presidency," Jaishankar said on X. "Like our G20 Presidency, this state-of-the-art convention and expo centre reflects the capabilities of Bharat. Confident it will be a great venue for prestigious international events in the times to

come," he said. The G20 joint declaration unveiled on September 9 was seen as a significant diplomatic victory for India as it pulled off a breakthrough on the contentious Ukraine conflict amid apprehensions that the summit may not be able to release the document in view of sharp differences on the matter.

As the G20 president, India has been focusing on issues like inclusive growth, digital innovation, climate resilience, and equitable global health access with an aim to benefit the Global South. The G20 member countries represent around 85 percent of the global GDP, over 75 per cent of the global trade, and about two-thirds of the world population.

The grouping comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, the US and the European Union (EU). The African Union was inducted as the new member of the G20 at the New Delhi summit.

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- PB10BL3562, DL9CT5773, DL8CS2517
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- DL9SR6151, DL8CQ1782, DL9CS2613
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HC rejects Naresh Goyal's plea challenging his arrest by ED

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

The Bombay High Court on Tuesday rejected the plea filed by Jet Airways' founder Naresh Goyal challenging his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) in the Rs 538 crore Canara Bank loan default case.

Holding that Goyal's petition seeking a writ of habeas corpus cannot be entertained, a HC justice bench of Justices Revati Mohite Dere and Gauri Godse noted: "... it is always open for the petitioner to avail of other statutory remedies, as permissible in law to him, vis-a-vis other prayers raised in this petition".

Averting that it was restricting itself to prayer seeking a writ of habeas corpus, the HC bench said: "It is also pertinent to note, that the competence and jurisdiction of the Enforcement Directorate and of the learned Special Judge, PMLA respectively, have not been challenged".

"We make it clear, that the observations made in this order, are restricted to the challenge before us i.e. maintainability of the petition seeking a writ of habeas corpus and as such keep all contentions of the petitioner open, on all other points raised in this petition," the Judges observed, as they dismissed Goyal's plea.

posed off Goyal's petition. Having registered a case against Goyal based on a first information report (FIR) of the CBI which itself was based on a complaint by Canara Bank for an alleged fraud involving Rs 7,000 crore, the ED had recorded his statement at his Delhi residence, flown him from Mumbai, where he was arrested on the night of September 1, 2023. Goyal had contested the arrest, saying that the grounds of his arrest were not furnished to him and that his detention was beyond 24 hours, which were never raised by the petitioner or his counsel, both, at the time of the first remand as well as the second remand.

On its part, Canara Bank alleged that Goyal along with his wife Anita Goyal and other public officers had cheated, conspired and indulged in a criminal breach of trust against the bank. Their default allegedly caused a wrongful loss of Rs. 538 crores to the bank, the complaint stated.

Subsequently Goyal approached the High Court challenging his arrest on the ground that it was illegal and arbitrary. Among other things, Goyal told the court that the orders placing him under ED custody first and judicial custody subsequently were without application of mind.

The petitioner said that the ED had failed to make out any grounds for arrest and that there could have been no reasonable belief on its part to believe that he committed laundering. Goyal told the high court that any action taken by Canara Bank pursuant to the master directions of the RBI was stayed by the High Court. Hence no further action can be taken.

He urged the court to quash the remand orders and his release from judicial custody considering his advanced age.

TMC plays victim card as ED cracks down

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

As scams continue to explode in its face one after the other in an election year and as the Enforcement Directorate continue to net big fishes, including ministers, an awfully embarrassed Trinamool Congress has set about to play the 'victim card' accusing the BJP Government of using the central agencies to defame its government in Bengal.

Party spokesperson Kunal Ghosh on Tuesday said that the BJP was using the agencies as never before not only to malign the opposition parties but also to weaken their governments. "Any agency must preserve its impartiality ... while they are running after the TMC leaders they are ignoring the BJP

leaders like Suwendu Adhikari, an FIR-named accused in the Narada pay-off case and his family that has amassed disproportionate wealth in a matter of a few years," he said adding how "the BJP leaders had published the video of this leader taking money in front of the camera ... but nothing has been done against him."

He said, "our leaders and ministers are being haunted by the central agencies for political reasons but when it comes to the corrupt BJP leaders there is no action ... the people will not forgive them for this." Ghosh's statements came with in hours of another Bengal minister getting notice from the Income Tax department. State Jail Minister Akhil Giri and his son Supraksh Giri, a Vice Chairman of a municipal board was on Tuesday served

with I-T notice directing the twosome to appear before its officials.

"Yes we have received notices ... and will respond accordingly with all the documents," said Giri who earlier hit national headlines after using bad words against President Draupadi Murmu. Ghosh's statements also came in the wake of Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee telling a post-Durga Puja social gathering that despite not having compromised on the issues of integrity and honesty she and her colleagues were being branded as thieves. "We have not taken a single paisa from anywhere ... I personally do not even take my salary as Chief Minister and pension as an MP ... still we are being branded as thieves," Banerjee had on Mondays

said. The two leader's statements come close on the heels of the arrest of Former Food minister Jyoti Priya Mallick for his alleged connection with the ration distribution 'scam'. The ED custody of Mallick was extended for another seven days on Monday.

He is the second minister and fourth MLA --- after Partha Chatterjee, Manik Bhattacharya and Jivan Krishna Saha who was arrested in the school level recruitment scam --- in the TMC to have been arrested on scam charges in little more than a year's time. Earlier TMC MPs Sudip Bandopadhyay, Saugato Roy, Tapas Pal and minister, Madan Mitra were jailed in Sharada chit fund scam. Subsequently senior minist-

ters Subroto Mukherjee, Firhad Hakim and Sobhan Chatterjee too were arrested in the Narada scam.

Panja also alleged that soon after the arrests of the leader's media trials began at the behest of the BJP. "The media has already held the minister guilty. We welcome the investigations, but there should be a timeline. You cannot humiliate for eternity," she said, adding how in today's politics most of the investigations were done with an eye on elections. "If an investigation becomes poll-centric, then the probe progresses slowly. For instance in the Saradha scam, the investigation is still going on," said Panja. The minister also said how the property of the BJP leaders like Suwendu Adhikari and Saumitra Khan had increased meteorically.

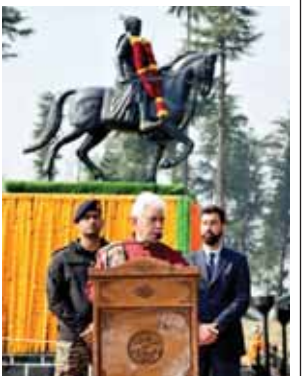
Shivaji statue installed near LoC

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha along with Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Eknath Shinde and Cultural Affairs Minister Sudhir Mungantiwar Tuesday unveiled the statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj at Kupwara amid patriotic chants.

The ten and a half feet long statue has been installed at 41 National Rifle (Maratha LI) located close to the line of control in North Kashmir's Kupwara district. An equestrian statue of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj has been built in collaboration with the 'Amhi Punekar Foundation' and the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Smarak Samiti.

In his address, the Lt Governor congratulated the 'Amhi Punekar' and 41 Rashtriya Rifles of the Indian Army for the historic initiative. He said the statue of Great Shivaji would be a source of inspiration for people and the



bravehearts of the army. Paying homage to the great warrior and founder of Swarajya, the Lt Governor said, Shivaji was a born leader, who scripted a new history of India through his mesmerizing victory against the enemy. By unleashing his military genius and moral force, Shivaji mobilized millions of Indians and achieved sovereignty for the Maratha empire. His universal and eternal values continue to be relevant today and guide us on the path of social equality and peaceful co-existence, the Lt Governor said.

AI to predict person's risk of cardiac disease

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the disturbing trend of deaths due to cardiac arrest being recently reported from the country, a study has offered a ray of hope in artificial intelligence (AI) which, it said, may help predict and perhaps even address a person's risk to prevent future death.

This could offer a new move toward prevention and global health strategies, said the researchers of the study who had analysed electronic health records from 25,000 people who had died suddenly and 70,000 people hospitalised for cardiac arrest who did not die in Paris, France and Seattle, Washington. They used AI to build personalised health equations that identified each person's risk of dying from sudden cardiac arrest. The outcome holds importance for India too where the occurrence of heart attacks among young people has increased in recent years,



mainly owing to fast-paced lifestyle and changes in habits. Those who suffered severe Covid are also said to be vulnerable to heart attack.

The researchers of the study will present at the American Heart Association's Resuscitation Science Symposium 2023 soon in Philadelphia. The event is a premier global exchange of the most recent advances related to treating cardiopulmonary arrest and life-threatening traumatic injury. As per the researchers, they were able to develop a customized risk profile of each of the individuals, a tool they said could be used in the future to address individual risks before a person experiences cardiac arrest and may lead to preventing deaths.

Army looking to phase out old choppers from 2027

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Army is looking at phasing out its ageing fleet of Cheetah and Chetak choppers starting 2027, and considering induction of the light utility helicopters as the replacement besides exploring the option of leasing, sources said. The Army Aviation Corps is currently operating around 190 Chetak, Cheetah and Chetak helicopters, they said. While the Army will be getting around 100 light utility helicopters (LUH), it is also looking at the option of taking choppers on lease to meet its requirement.

"We require around 250 light helicopters for the reconnaissance and surveillance activities. Out of these about 100 plus will be Light Utility Helicopters, and given the capacities that HAL has today, we have to look at alternative means also to replace the entire fleet of Cheetah and Chetaks," a source said.

SALE NOTICE

The under mentioned asset will be sold through auction on "AS IS WHERE IS BASIS" and "AS IS WHAT IS BASIS" for recovery of dues as per court orders, in the following cases:-

Case Details	Asset Details
ICICI BANK LTD. VS Piru And Anr. CNR No. DLCT01-009006-2021 [CS (Comm) No.:2395/21]	Vehicle No. UP37AT3643 Make and Model- TATA MOTORS LTD., TATA 1512 Manufacturing Year - 2019

PUBLIC NOTICE

To be known to all that I, Nalini Tripathi W/o Late Sh. Nagendra Kumar Pandey, Cont. 99990 82505, Email: someshjaintripathi@gmail.com, R/o. 28-B, MIG Flat, Sheikh Sarai, Phase-3, Malviya Nagar, Delhi-110017, has applied for the conversion of aforesaid property, this is my vide File No. F48(S)83/H/3/MIG/GENERAL issued by DDA of aforesaid property has been lost. An F.I.R. to this effect has been lodged in police station on dated 02/11/2023. Any person(s) claiming any right having any objection or found in possession of original document may write/contact with above named person at above address within 7 days from the date of publication of this notice and can personally contact Deputy Director (LAB Housing) MIG, D-Block, 3rd Floor, DDA Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi.

Notice is hereby given that my client Fakir Mohanand Gauri is in process to avail LAP against his Second Floor of Property Bearing No. T-807, Area Measuring 55.76 Sq. Mtrs., Out of Kharsa No. 301, Situated at Sukhdev Nagar, Kaila Malabarpur New Delhi (availing loan from Piremal Capital & Housing Finance Limited), who acquired the same vide Sale Deed dated 26.06.2013 executed by Chiranjit, Karu @ Prem Lata. All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us within 7 days from the date of the above mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned. - Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate) Unit No. FF-2, First Floor, Malabarini Metro Tower Sec-4, Vaishali, Gzb., U.P., Mob. 9810063351

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16 cars, 2 bikes gutted in Mumbai high-rise fire

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

At least 16 cars and two two-wheelers were gutted in the small hours of Tuesday, after a major fire engulfed the Bombay Municipal Corporation's parking lot at a high-rise building at Dadar (west) in north-central Mumbai.

The fire broke out in the Podium 4 of a three-level basement parking in the 13-floor podium Kohinoor Building parking area in the 3-storey residential tower. Though the exact cause of fire has not been established, the blaze swept through the parking lot, where some high-end cars were parked close to each other.

AAP to conduct referendum to decide whether Kejriwal should resign or work from jail if arrested

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The AAP will conduct a referendum in the country whether Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal should run the government from Tihar jail or submit his resignation if he is arrested. It also decided to engage people through public dialogue to decide whether Delhi's CM Shri Arvind Kejriwal should resign or run the government from jail. "It was decided that referendums will be conducted in Delhi and the entire country on the same matter. People will be engaged in a public dialogue to decide whether Delhi's CM Shri Arvind Kejriwal should resign or run the government from Tihar Jail. AAP's coun-

requested the CM during the meeting and that he shouldn't even think about resigning. If the ED of the Modi government dares to arrest him, he has to run the government from jail. Along with this, a public referendum will be initiated across the country to understand their opinion on whether Delhi's CM Arvind Kejriwal should resign or run the government from jail.

Earlier on Monday, Kejriwal had called a meeting with his party MLAs amid a furore over recent action by central probe agencies against ministers and leaders of the party. At the meeting, all party MLAs had urged Kejriwal to continue as the chief minister of Delhi even if he is arrested by any investigative agency.

AAP Govt didn't OK Odd-Even scheme, misleading court: LG

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A fresh controversy erupted after Lieutenant Governor (LG) VK Saxena's office on Tuesday accused the Arvind Kejriwal Government of misleading and diverting the court's attention from the worsening air pollution in the national Capital and said no decision has been taken to introduce the odd-even scheme so far. A statement from the Raj Niwas said "The file to this effect clearly shows that the decision to implement odd-even scheme as a part of measures under GRAP-IV, was not approved by Minister (Environment) Gopal Rai. Subsequently, Chief Minister

Arvind Kejriwal's office conveyed his approval to deferring a decision on odd-even plying of vehicles, as proposed by Gopal Rai, since the Chief Minister was out of town." Rai on Monday announced that the odd-even scheme will be enforced in the city from November 13 to 20. Elaborating on the odd-even scheme, the statement said the file pertaining to the matter in its para 158.2 proposed for physical classes for all classes up to class-XI to be discontinued and lessons to be conducted online and all public, municipal and private offices to work on 50% strength. Also, all colleges / educational institutions and non-emer-

gency commercial activities to be closed. Vehicles to run on odd-even basis of registration numbers. Gopal Rai and the Chief Minister approved all proposals except that about odd-even plying of vehicles, where they wanted a decision on implementation to be taken after advice from "experts," the statement said. The file was subsequently sent to the LG Secretariat for LG's approval. The LG Secretariat has flagged this deliberate misrepresentation in its notings to the CM Office. The note from LG Secretariat to CM Office said "Hon'ble Lt Governor has seen the file and desired that the lackadaisical



indifference and callousness in dealing with this file of critical importance be conveyed to Hon'ble Chief Minister. As indicated in the file, the closure of schools, restriction on vehicles including odd-even plying of vehicles etc, were part

of the mandatory GRAP SOPs laid down by the CAQM, as and when AQI increases from bad to severe etc. Orders for implementation of the GRAP measures are to be issued under Section 5 of the Environment Protection Act, 1986, for which

the Government of India has delegated the powers to Hon'ble Lt. Governor. The above mentioned was proposed by the Department for consideration and approval of Hon'ble Minister, Hon'ble CM and subsequently Hon'ble LG, way back on 16.10.2023. The file was sent back by the Office of Minister Environment on 23.10.2023 asking for a discussion. Even while the AQI kept rising from end October, beginning to peak from 02.11.2023 onwards because of smoke from neighbouring States, especially Punjab, the file was finally re-submitted to the Minister on 03.11.2023 and the same day, it reached the Chief Minister's Office.

The CM Office noted on file that the Hon'ble Chief Minister is out of station and that the proposals in this regard have been shown to the Hon'ble CM, on 03.11.2023. The file was finally sent to the LG Secretariat on 04.11.2023, even as public announcements regarding the order for implementation of actions under Stage-IV of GRAP, had already been made in the Media, and the order was issued on 05.11.2023 itself. Notings of the Minister (Environment) at Para-163 and subsequently those by the CM Office on behalf of the Hon'ble Chief Minister at Para-164, clearly indicate that no decision whatsoever has been taken

with regards to implementing the Odd-Even Scheme as envisaged in Para-158.2.IV. In light of this announcements to this effect in the Media amounts to misleading the people as also the Hon'ble Courts, who are closely monitoring the situation arising out of severe Air Pollution in the City. The LG has also conveyed his anguish on the casual approach of the Government as reflected in the unfortunate delay as mentioned aforesaid, on such a life-threatening issue, perennially affecting the Capital city of the country, since as early as 2016 with no concrete remedial action having been taken till now" the letter said.

Kejriwal recommends suspension of official for halting smog tower operation

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

A fresh tussle appears to be brewing between the AAP government and bureaucracy as the Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday recommended to Lieutenant Governor the immediate suspension of the Delhi Pollution Control Committee chairman Ashwani Kumar for "arbitrarily halting" the operation of a large smog tower installed at Connaught Place two years ago to mitigate air pollution. According to sources, the file recommending the suspension of Kumar, a senior IAS officer and principal secretary (home) in the Delhi government, has been sent to Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena. However, the officials later said the matter had been placed before the National Capital Civil Services Authority (NCCSA) as the Lt Governor's involvement was not required at this stage. No immediate reaction was available from Kumar, who is also the principal secretary (home) and divisional commissioner in the Delhi government. Kumar is member secretary of the National Capital Civil Services Authority (NCCSA) headed



by the chief minister that takes a final call on disciplinary action against IAS officers in the Delhi government. Delhi Chief Secretary is the third member of the panel. Refuting the charges against Kumar, sources in the DPCC said the smog tower was not yielding desirable results and did not have any impact on pollution remediation. They also claimed that the source apportionment study seemed to suggest that air pollution in Delhi was caused by external sources even when there were no incidents of parali (paddy stubble) burning in winter. Sources claimed the Supreme Court has pulled up the DPCC Chairman Ashwani Kumar for shutting down the smog towers on the issues of public

interest on Tuesday. "The Supreme Court has noted this situation as 'ludicrous,' and has directed the DPCC Chairman to be present before it, in person. The Court further directed operationalising of the towers immediately," sources said. Delhi environment minister Gopal Rai last week said a study to find the reasons behind Delhi's polluted air has been stalled, allegedly because Kumar first questioned the project cost and then the findings of the study, the minister Saturday wrote to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal asking for the suspension of and disciplinary action against Kumar for "not reopening the smog tower after the monsoon months".

Polluting vehicles entering city freely despite GRAP stage IV restrictions: Gahlot

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot on Tuesday said polluting vehicles were entering the city freely despite restrictions under GRAP stage IV being in place in view of hazardous air quality and directed officials to ensure proper checking at the borders. Restrictions under GRAP stage IV, including a ban on all kinds of construction work and the entry of polluting trucks into the capital, kicked in on Sunday after air quality in the capital dropped to "severe plus" (AQI above 450) levels. "The pollution situation in Delhi is grave and has resulted in the imposition of GRAP-IV by CAQM. However, it has come to my notice that polluting vehicles are entering Delhi

borders at odd hours from neighbouring states without any hindrance. It appears that no checking is being done at the borders to restrict entry of such polluting vehicles into Delhi. It is requested that all agencies and departments be directed to ensure proper checking of polluting vehicles whose entry is restricted as per stage IV of GRAP," read the directive from Gahlot. He also noted that the Supreme Court was monitoring the pollution situation in Delhi very closely and cautioned that "any laxity in this regard may invite strictures". The directive has been marked to Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC) chairman, Principal Secretary, Environment and Transport Commissioner.

Govt will study SC ruling before going for Odd-Even scheme: Rai

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A day after announcing to implement Odd-Even formula for vehicles in the city from November 13, Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai said the government will first study the Supreme Court order and then go for the odd-even rule, after the Apex Court on Tuesday rapped government for the pollution situation in the National Capital and asked whether the odd-even scheme to ration the number of cars plying on the roads has ever been successful. "It's all optics," the Supreme Court observed a day after the Delhi government announced that the odd-even scheme would be back from November 13 to November 20. Rai said he held a meeting with senior officers of the transport and environment departments and the traffic police to discuss the modalities of the odd-even scheme. "But meanwhile we came across some observations made by the Supreme Court. So now instead of announcing the odd-even rules, we will go through the order/observations of the



Supreme Court. After studying them, we will incorporate them into the scheme," Rai said. Amid worsening air quality in the national capital, the minister on Monday announced that the odd-even scheme will be enforced in the city from November 13 to 20. Rai said there are "very few" incidents of stubble burning in Delhi and the government has arranged free sprinkling of bio decomposers to keep it in check. The minister said the air pollution crisis needs to be tackled through the efforts and cooperation of all the concerned states. The city government announced odd-even formula soon after the fourth and final stage of GRAP was

announced on Sunday considering the air quality of the capital in the 'severe plus' category. The Delhi government has decided to implement the Odd-Even scheme in Delhi from November 13 to 20. On Odd days, only vehicles with license plates ending in 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9 will be allowed to operate, and on Even days, vehicles ending in 0, 2, 4, 6, and 8 will be allowed. Delhi has been battling deteriorating air quality for the past five days with physical classes of schools being shut until November 10. Non-essential construction work and an embargo on certain vehicles have been imposed as the air quality hovered around the severe category.

Kejriwal should apologise for turning city into gas chamber: BJP

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP on Tuesday said the Supreme Court's directive on pollution is a slap on the face of Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and demanded that he apologise for turning the national capital into a gas chamber. This came after the top court, earlier in the day, directed Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, and Rajasthan to ensure that crop residue burning was stopped "forthwith", amid a spike in pollution levels in Delhi-NCR. Reacting to the court's directive, BJP national spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla said, "After the complete expose of the Aam Aadmi Party by the Supreme Court on Delhi's Air Pollution and Punjab stubble issue, Arvind Kejriwal should apologise for making Delhi a gas chamber and stealing our



right to breathe fresh air over the last 8 years". All that Kejriwal did was "blame others including Diwali" for the rise in pollution levels in Delhi, he charged in a post on X. "This is like a slap on Arvind Kejriwal's face," BJP IT department head Amit Malviya wrote on X, Commenting on the court's directive to the Delhi government. He hoped that Kejriwal would now stop blaming "everyone under the sun, except his own government in Punjab and Delhi." "People in Delhi-NCR are forced to inhale poisonous air because of one

man's incompetence, who has reduced Delhi to a gas chamber," Malviya said in an apparent reference to Kejriwal. Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri said after this strong criticism from the Supreme Court, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has no moral right to remain in office. "Kejriwal should immediately resign from his position. AAP and its leaders do only lip service. They do nothing on ground," Bidhuri added. Keeping in view that the Supreme Court is going to hear the matter, AAP, for the two three days have started blaming Haryana and Uttar Pradesh for stubble burning and given a clean chit to Punjab where AAP is ruling. Data shows Punjab has reported the highest number of stubble burning events and this is going to increase in the coming days," Bidhuri said.

Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva, addressing a press conference said Kejriwal is a visionless Chief Minister who does not have any concrete action plan on pollution and has ignored the actions of both the states of Delhi and Punjab on pollution. "For the last 15 days, the Chief Minister of Delhi, the Environment Minister as well as the entire AAP were trying to put the blame on Haryana for the pollution in Delhi," Sachdeva said. A bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Sudhanshu Dhulia said Delhi can't be made to go through this year after year. "There cannot be a political battle every time," the bench told the counsel representing the Punjab government. The court also directed the Delhi government to ensure that municipal solid waste was not burnt in the open.

4,700 vehicles issued challans for not having valid PUC certificates

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Amid high pollution levels in the national capital, Delhi Traffic Police has issued over 4,700 challans to vehicle owners driving without a pollution under control (PUC) certificate in the last four days, officials said on Tuesday. Stage IV of the Centre's pollution control plan called the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) came into force in Delhi on Sunday as the city's air quality plummeted to the 'severe plus' category. Under the final Stage IV of the plan, all kinds of construction work and the entry of polluting trucks into the city have been banned. Plying of old diesel or petrol vehicles and trucks carrying non-essential material in the national capital attracts a challan of Rs 20,000 under the

Motor Vehicles Act. According to data shared by police, a total of 4,785 challans were issued to vehicle owners driving without PUC certificates, 4,482 challans and 4,207 notices were issued for improper parking and 1,496 vehicles were towed away. In the last four days, 814 challans were issued to BS-III petrol vehicles and 3,656 BS-IV diesel vehicles. A total of 495 challans were issued for driving against traffic flow. While 3,038 challans were issued for no-entry violations, 12 challans were issued for carrying uncovered construction and demolition waste. The data stated that 1,163 challans were issued on Monday to vehicle owners driving without a valid PUC certificate, while three old diesel and petrol vehicles were also fined.

Man gets impaled on iron rod after falling into construction pit



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A 32-year-old man received serious injuries after he fell into a pit at a construction site and an iron rod pierced through his stomach at Shastris park area of Delhi's northeast, police said on Tuesday. The incident happened on Monday near the Saharanpur highway construction site, they said, adding that the man had to undergo a surgery and is stable. "At 7.21 pm on Monday we got information that a person

had fallen down in a pit made for the construction of a highway pillar and had been impaled on an iron rod," Deputy Commissioner of Police (northeast) Joy Turkey said. The iron rod had pierced through Gandhi Nagar resident Sayed Kamel's body. A portion of the iron rod was cut and the man was sent to the hospital. "(The remaining part of the) rod was later removed after a surgery and the condition of the patient is stable," the DCP said.

DU revises hike in fee for PhD programme

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi University's English Department has revised the hike in fee for its PhD programme after coming under fire from students and teachers. In a notification issued on Tuesday, the department announced that the fee has been reduced to Rs 17,118 from Rs 23,968 earlier. Any excess payment already made by students will be adjusted at the time of the next payment, it added. "As decided by the university, the revised fee for PhD scholars admitted with effect from the academic years 2023-24 will be Rs 17,118," the notification read. Reacting to the announcement, a Delhi University Teachers' Association (DUTA) executive said the

decision to partially roll back the fee hike is not satisfactory. "This revision is not satisfactory. We demand that the University immediately reviews the decision," Abha Habib, DUTA Executive said. Earlier this month, several teachers pointed out that the English Department had hiked the fee for PhD scholars by 12 times when compared to Rs 1,932 last year. The Democratic Teachers' Front had written a letter to Vice Chancellor Yogesh Singh expressing concern over the fee hike and demanded its roll back, saying it will put students under financial stress. "Such an astronomical hike in fee was not previously discussed in the Academic Council and the Executive Council," the letter added.

MCD's non-gazetted staff to get Diwali bonus: Mayor

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

After the Delhi government, Mayor Shelly Oberoi announced that the municipal corporation's non-gazetted employees from three different categories will get a bonus, terming it a "big gift" on Diwali for them. Hailing the AAP-led MCD's decision to give Diwali bonus to its non-gazetted employees, Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Tuesday said the municipal corporation is doing "good work" in the city. Kejriwal said that they "are trying to fix the system gradually". In a short online press conference, he lauded the decision of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi to give Diwali bonus to its non-gazetted employees from three different categories and daily-wage workers. The AAP's National Convenor extended Diwali greetings and mentioned that all non-gazetted Group D, Group C, and Group B employ-



ees of the MCD will receive a bonus of Rs 7,000, while non-permanent employees who have been working for the past three years will get Rs 1,200 as a bonus. "After 14 years, all employees are now receiving their salaries on time," he said. Earlier, addressing a press conference, Oberoi announced that the municipal corporation's non-gazetted employees from three different categories will get a bonus, terming it a "big gift" on Diwali for them. She also said that daily-wage workers who have done 240 days of work in

the last three years will receive a bonus. "The AAP government in MCD under the leadership of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal is happy to inform that we are going to give bonus to our workers, and non-gazetted employees from 'B', 'C' and 'D' categories. This is a big gift to all of them on Diwali," she said. The mayor said employees in these three groups will receive a bonus of Rs 6,900 while eligible daily-wage workers will get Rs 1,184. A budget of Rs 62 crore has been made for these bonus-

es, and "we will try to ensure, they all receive it before Diwali". Oberoi also said that on Tuesday, she visited some of the pollution hotspot areas in R K Puram and took stock of the situation. "Today, in a ward in RK Puram, Delhi, along with Councillor Raj Bala Tokas, Deputy Commissioner and zonal officers, made an inspection visit to the hotspots there. Before Diwali, water sprinkling with dust suppressant powder is being done intensively all over Delhi and cleaning campaign is going on. "Out of concern for the people of Delhi, the Honorable Chief Minister @ArvindKejriwal is taking minute-by-minute update. The AAP government in the Municipal Corporation is making every possible effort so that the people of Delhi get clean air and environment. Citizens of Delhi are also participating and using MCD 311 and Green Delhi App," she posted on X earlier on the day.

INBRIEF

TATA POWER-DDL, IIT ROORKEE SIGN MOU
New Delhi: Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited, and Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee, signed a MoU to research and develop pioneering solutions for optimal use of energy, leading to greener and sustainable future through its 'UrjaArpan' initiative. The MoU was signed by Ganesh Srinivasan, CEO of Tata Power-DDL and Professor M.K. Singhal, HoD, Hydro & Renewable Energy at IIT Roorkee, in the presence of senior officials from both organisations in New Delhi.

DPS INDIRAPURAM ANNUAL FUNCTION DAZZLES AUDIENCE
New Delhi: DPS Indrapuram set the stage on fire with its magnificent Annual Function 2023-24, 'Ashoka-Ehsas Se Aagaz Tak,' a theatrical extravaganza that left the audience spellbound. The event spanned across three days- 4th, 5th and 6th November 2023. The event featured over 1100 students from classes VI-XII, 100 choir members, more than 100 theatre enthusiasts, and 20 captivating performances, all woven together with immense hard work and dedication.

GARGI COLLEGE ORGANISES 2-DAY NATIONAL CONFERENCE
New Delhi: Delhi University Gargi College organized a two-day National Conference on "NEP2020: Perspectives, Challenges, and Way Forward" on November 3-4, 2023 under the aegis of IQAC, along with the Delhi School of Public Policy & Governance Institution of Eminence. The first day of the conference was set in motion with the auspicious lamp lighting accompanied by the Deepjyoti mantra in the presence of the esteemed Chief Guest, Prof. Jagadeesh Kumar, Chairman of the UGC. The sessions were on the themes- Indian Knowledge System: Ethics and Values, Language, Literature and Culture, Skill/Startups and Policy Making, Teaching, Learning and Research Methodology, Interdisciplinarity in NEP and Academic Bank of Credit, Continuous Evaluation and Examination.

Centre places additional security checks at Delhi, Punjab airports

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

Passengers travelling on Air India flights from airports in the national capital and Punjab will undergo additional security frisking and issuance of visitor entry tickets has been stopped at the Delhi airport till November 30 according to the latest order issued after a video threat by designated Khalistani terrorist Gur Patwant Singh Pannun. The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) issued a circular in this regard. The BCAS also sent the order to the Home affairs ministry (MHA). All Air India passengers at Delhi and Punjab airports will be put through a "secondary ladder point check", under which the airline staff frisk travellers and their hand luggage after the security clearance from

the CISF and just before boarding the aircraft, according to an order issued by the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security on Monday. Entry of visitors to the terminal building of the Indira Gandhi International Airport and the sale of visitor entry tickets will also be banned. "Issue of TAEP's (temporary airport entry pass) entry of visitors to the terminal building of the IGI (Indira Gandhi International) airport (in Delhi) and sale of visitors entry tickets will be banned," the BCAS said in its order.

The BCAS said that the step was being taken as a precautionary measure following continuous threat messages shared by the central agencies regarding "threat to civil aviation installations over all India airport like airports, airstrips, airfields, air



force stations, helipads, flying schools and aviation training schools."

The regulatory authority said the security agency at the airport will have to mandatorily have the secondary ladder point check (SLPC). Its order stated, "100% SLPC for all Air India flights at 161 Airport and airports in Punjab."

The SLPC protocol is a mandatory check conducted on the BCAS instructions under which airline staff members are required to frisk passengers and their hand-luggage after the security clearance from the airport security Agency - Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) is done, just before boarding the aircraft.

Additionally, a pre-existing security alert issued on October 13 for the festive season for all civil aviation installations has been extended till November 30. These include airports, airstrips, airfields, air force stations, helipads, flying schools, and aviation training institutes. With respect to temporary airport entry passes at the Delhi airport, there will be relaxation for operational purposes for government functionaries, the sources said. The measures will be in place till November 30.

The SLPC protocol is a mandatory check conducted on the BCAS instructions under which airline staff members are required to frisk passengers and their hand-luggage after the security clearance from the airport security Agency - Central

Industrial Security Force (CISF) is done, just before boarding the aircraft.

Separatist leader Gurupatwant Singh Pannun, the founder of the banned Sikhs for Justice (SFJ), released a video on Sunday warning Sikhs against flying aboard Air India as their life could be in danger and also sought to convey that flight operations on November 19 at Delhi's Indira Gandhi International airport could also be impacted.

In the video SFJ's general-counsel Gurpatwant Pannun warns Sikhs, in Punjabi, "Don't fly Air India after November 19, your lives may be in danger." That sentence is repeated twice. In a statement issued along with the video, Pannun called for a 'Global blockade' of the airline from Vancouver to London.

Centre's selective 'pick and choose' of names cleared by collegium troublesome: SC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday said it is "troublesome" that the Centre is selectively picking, choosing and appointing judges whose names were recommended by the collegium for appointment to higher judiciary.

A bench of justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Sudhanshu Dhulia also expressed its concern over the pendency of names recommended for transfer from one high court to another.

"...We hope that a situation would not come where this court or the collegium have to take some decision which may not be palatable (to the government)," the bench said.

The court was hearing two pleas including one alleging delay by the Centre in clearing the names recommended by the collegium for appointment and transfer of judges. Justice Kaul also flagged the issue of names, recommended by the collegium, pending with the government.

"We have put to the Attorney General that this is again a matter of concern as emphasized on numerous occasion that if some appointments are made and some are not, the inter-se seniority is disturbed," the bench said, adding that it was hardly conducive to persuade successful lawyers to join the bench. Justice Kaul also appreciated that some appointment process was expedited.

"But this pick and choose has created a lot of problem," he said, adding, "Don't do this". "Selectively picking, choosing and appointing is the troublesome aspect," Justice Kaul told



Attorney General R Venkataramani.

The bench said this pick and choose affects the seniority of those whose names have been recommended for appointment by the collegium and why a person, having reasonable practice as a lawyer, would put his neck on the block and hope that the government will clear it.

On the issue of transfer, it said whether a judge should work in a high court or other high court should be left to the judiciary. "I am not on individuals. I am saying transfer should take place immediately," Justice Kaul said.

Advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for one of the petitioners, said the apex court has given a long rope to the government on this issue and there were instances where reiteration of names were done years ago.

"Instead, the time has come for your lordships to crack the whip otherwise the government is getting the impression that it can do away with anything," he said, adding that the court may summon the law secretary for contempt otherwise it will never be sorted out. "We have expressed our concern to the Attorney General over the lack of progress since the last date. The pendency of transfer matter is an issue of great concern as it has been selectively done," the bench said.

Dec 3 results will act like fevicol for INDIA alliance: Congress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav continuing to attack Congress leading to more strains in the opposition bloc INDIA ahead of the assembly elections in five states, Congress said the December 3 results would act as "Fevicol" for the alliance and the way forward would be chalked out soon after.

Party sources said the Congress is the binding force for the opposition bloc and the stronger the Congress emerges the better for the alliance. The Congress is hoping to do well in the assembly polls in Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Telangana and Mizoram.

Strains have cropped up in the INDIA bloc after Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav blamed the Congress over seat-sharing for the Madhya Pradesh assembly polls. Earlier, Bihar Chief Minister and JDU supreme Nitish Kumar had referred to the Congress in a sarcastic manner.

On Akhilesh Yadav's outburst on the Congress, a senior party leader said Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge is likely to speak to the Samajwadi Party leader and Ramgopal Yadav, but maintained that Yadav should not have used "harsh words" against the Congress. The former Uttar Pradesh CM claimed the Congress wants the "Samajwadi ideology" to perish, but his party's resolve is to spread it further. A day earlier Yadav had called the grand old party as 'cheat'.

"Due to some circumstances, we were with the Congress. But the Congressmen realised that there was no need of socialists. That's why we were turned away," the former chief minister of Uttar Pradesh said.

"If Congress wins, it will strengthen INDIA bloc. Planning for the next meeting and the way forward for the alliance would be taken up after campaigning for the state polls ends on November 28," a senior party leader said. After December 3, everyone will come together and "align like Fevicol", he said.

Internationalisation of education essential for India's future growth, says Pradhan

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI/GANDHINAGAR

Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan on Tuesday stressed the need for "internationalisation" of education, saying it was essential for India's future growth and development. He was addressing a gathering after visiting the sites of the upcoming campuses of the Australian universities of Deakin and Wollongong at the Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) along with his Australian coun-

terpart Jason Clare.

The two Australian universities' move of setting up their international campuses at the GIFT City align with the vision outlined in the country's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which focuses on internationalisation of education, and the presence of renowned educational institutions in India will not only elevate the quality of education but also empower students with global prospects, Pradhan said.

"Internationalisation of education is essential for India's future growth and develop-

ment. It allows Indian students to access world class education and research opportunities and helps build bridges with other countries, as it also exposes students to new ideas and prospects and enhances the country's soft power potential," the Union minister said. Deakin and Wollongong are the first universities in the world to open international campuses in India.

Both the universities announced they will begin courses from July next year, with the former launching its admission process from

Tuesday.

On the occasion Australian Education Minister Clare said while Australia and India are different countries with different challenges, they have the shared vision as they both understand the inherent power of education.

The two Australian universities are contributing towards the transformative power of India's new education policy, he said. Pradhan said the introduction of these foreign university campuses perfectly align with the vision outlined in the NEP 2020.

UK set to restrict marketing, sale of vapes to kids

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Taking cue from India, the United Kingdom is all set to restrict the marketing and sale of vapes and similar products such as e-cigarettes and new age gateway products targeted at children. Applauding the move, experts, including doctors and child psychologists pinned hope that other countries will too follow the suit and save the users, mostly youth and teenagers from the deadly trap.

Earlier this month, the Union Health Ministry had issued a clarification to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, emphasizing the imperative for rigorous enforcement of the Prohibition of Electronic Cigarettes Act (PECA), 2019.

While PECA may not explicitly state the prohibition of individual e-cigarette or vaping device use, its overarching intention is to ban all aspects of these products including its consumption. PECA enforces a sweeping ban that encom-



passes all categories of electronic nicotine delivery systems, heat-not-burn products, e-hookahs and similar devices, said the experts. Sushant Kalra, Parenting Coach & TEDx Speaker, said "The lack of awareness surrounding the risks associated with vaping is a huge concern in many countries including India. Many school-going children are taking up vaping under the false assumption that it carries no risks or dangers. This alarming trend is

troubling because young individuals may unknowingly become addicted.

"Both children and their parents often remain unaware of the severe health consequences of vaping, as they perceive it as a harmless activity involving the inhalation of flavours like apple or strawberry."

Dr Rajesh Gupta, Additional Director Pulmonology & Critical Care - Fortis Healthcare Noida added, "Although India's effort in implementing the ban on vap-

ing is laudable there is a need for more measures. While curtailing the availability of vapes through the grey market, both physically and online is crucial, demand side controls are also crucial."

He pointed out that the addictive nature of vaping poses a growing threat to our children and youth in a post-Covid world. It is imperative for all countries to take strict measures to ensure that vapes do not reach the hands of children," added Dr Gupta.

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

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

Whereas A housing loan facility was granted pursuant to a loan agreement entered into between ICICI Bank Limited ("Secured Creditor, which term shall include its successors and assigns) and the borrower & co-borrower, mentioned below ("Borrower(s)", which term shall include his/ its/ their respective [successors, assigns, heirs]). The undersigned being the authorized officer of the Secured Creditor ("Authorized Officer") under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 ("Act") and in exercise of powers conferred under Section 13(12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, ("Rules") has issued demand notices under Section 13(2) of the Act calling upon the borrowers / co-borrowers mentioned below to repay the amount payable pursuant to the loan agreement and as specifically mentioned in the said respective demand notices within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notices.

The borrowers / co-borrower, having failed and neglected to repay the amount as claimed in the said demand notices, a notice is hereby given to the borrowers / co-borrowers and the public in general that the undersigned has taken Symbolic possession of the properties described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him under Section 13 (4) of the Act read with Rule 8 of the Rules. The details including date of symbolic possession of the properties are as mentioned below

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Amit Kumar Sharma/ Sudesh Sharma/ LBMRT00001452478	Old House No. 103/ 1 B, New House No-1110, Indra Nagar Brahm Puri, Extension Delhi Road Meerut- 250002 Uttar Pradesh/ November 04, 2023	February 29, 2016 Rs. 6,35,999/-	Meerut/ Ghaziabad

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

Date : November 08, 2023 Place: Ghaziabad Authorized Officer Secured Creditor

ICICI Bank Regd. Office: ICICI Bank Limited, ICICI Bank Tower, Near Chakki Circle, Old Padra Road, Vadodara, Gujarat. Pin - 390 007. Corporate/Branch Office: ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai - 400 051.

PUBLIC NOTICE - SALE OF FINANCIAL ASSET

In terms of the policy of ICICI Bank Limited ("the Bank") on Sale of Financial Assets and in line with the regulatory guidelines, the Bank hereby invites Expression of Interest (EOI) from interested Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC)/ Securitization Company (SC)/ Non-Banking Financial Company /Financial Institutions for purchase of a Non-Performing Asset ("Financial Asset") on below-mentioned terms and conditions.

Reserve Price	Term of Sale	Minimum Mark Up
Rs.266.5 million	100% in Cash	Rs. 1.0 million

Schedule for E-Auction

Sr. No.	Activity	Date & Time
1.	Submission of EOI	November 15, 2023, latest by 5.00 PM
2.	Execution of Non-Disclosure Agreement ("NDA") (if not already executed with ICICI Bank)	November 18, 2023, latest by 5.00 PM
3.	Release of Offer Document along with Preliminary Information Memorandum ("PIM")	November 18, 2023
4.	Access to data room for due diligence	Till December 02, 2023
5.	Submission of Bid Form	December 06, 2023 latest by 5.00 PM
6.	Process of e-bidding	December 08, 2023 from 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM with auto extension of 5 minutes till sale is completed

The sale of aforesaid Financial Asset is on "As is where is basis", "As is what is basis", "Whatever there is basis" and "Without recourse basis". Interested buyers are requested to submit EOI via email to jignesh.shelani@icicibank.com or vijay.kumar@icicibank.com and/or by post at ICICI Bank Limited, ICICI Bank Towers, Bandra-Kurla Complex, Bandra (E), Mumbai- 400 051 before November 15, 2023 at 5.00 PM. The Bank will not be liable for non-receipt of EOI for any reason. Interested buyers are expected to take efforts to find out the status of communication sent by them to the Bank to ensure their participation in the auction process.

The e-auction would be conducted at a reserve price as per schedule above on the terms & conditions of the Offer Document, which will be shared with interested buyers on execution of Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA) with the Bank.

For any further clarifications with regard to access to data room, due-diligence, terms & conditions of the auction and/or submission of EOI/BID, kindly contact Mr. Jignesh Shelani (+91 75748 21846) or Mr. Vijay Kumar (+91 98208 03292). Date : November 08, 2023 Place : Delhi/NCR Authorized Officer ICICI Bank Limited

SRF LIMITED

Regd. Office: The Galleria, DLF Mayur Vihar, Unit No. 236 & 237, 2nd Floor, Mayur Vihar Phase I, Noida Link Road, Mayur Vihar Phase I Extn, Delhi-110091 Corporate Office: Block-C, Sector 45, Gurugram, Haryana-122 003 Tel. No (Regd office) : (+91-11) 49482870; Fax : (+91-11) 49482900 E-mail: cs@srf.com, Website: www.srf.com; CIN: L18101DL1970PLC005197

NOTICE

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

Sl. No.	Folio No.	Name of the Share Holder / Legal Heir (Claimant)	Cert-No.	Dist-No.	Lost Shares
1	SRF01342405	S R PERUMAL	130388	310186274-7473	1200
2	B 0000450	BANNAMPALLY BALAKRISHNA HEGDE	97306	4145910-42	33
			975178	18546952-67	16
			1128201	309332238-433	196
3	A 0004210	APARNA SUDHAKAR GOKHALE	96606	4123935-84	50
			1128733	309559606-60005	400
4	S 0008030	MR SUDHAKAR VISHNU GOKHALE	90151394	10423070-119	50
			51501	2743276-300	25
4	S 0008030	SUNIL TRIKHA	51562	2744876-900	25
			81203	3631760-70	11
			81210	3631869-79	11
			146783	5851748-83	36
			342603-5	16566875-936	62
			491603-5	24586667-728	62

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

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

Place: Gurugram Date: 07-11-2023

SYMBOLIC POSSESSION NOTICE

ICICI Bank Branch Office: ICICI Bank Ltd, Landmark Building, 4th Floor, 228A, A/C Bose Road, Kolkata 700020 CIN No: L65190GJ1994PLC021012, www.icicibank.com

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

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

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Symbolic Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
1.	Kumar Karan Toppo/ Lolas Toppo/ Omega Eunies Toppo/ H-6 First Floor Sale Tax Colony Shankar Nagar Raipur Raipur- 492001/ LBRPR00005321685/ LBRPR00006167037/ LBRPR00005634998	Plot No. H.I.G. Delux 79, Scheme of The Under 17 H.I.G. Duplex Self Finance Scheme Situated in Sant Kabir Nagar, Sondongari Raipur Circle, Raipur Division, Raipur, Tahasil And District Raipur, Chhattisgarh. (Admeasuring an area of 216 Sq. Mtr./ Date of Symbolic 04.11.2023	June 22, 2023 Rs. 38,51,829/-	Raipur/ Delhi

The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as per the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002. Date: November 08, 2023 Place: Delhi/ NCR Authorized Officer ICICI Bank Limited

India to bring secondary care hospitals under AMRSN ambit

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Realising that Antimicrobial Resistance Surveillance and Research Network (AMRSN) deployed in the tertiary care hospitals is failing to yield desired results as there has been no let up in the AMR cases being reported from clinical establishments across the country, India has decided to bring the secondary care hospitals too under the ambit of such a mechanism.

"The Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has taken the initiative to address the health issues posed by the antibiotic resistance superbugs by establishing AMRSN and implementing AMS programs in tertiary care hospitals. There are 20 regional laboratories from tertiary care hospitals in India to provide data and fix the number of isolates for each pathogenic group. However, it has been realized that such steps have been limited to tertiary care hospitals.

"Hence, the data collected through these initiatives do not adequately reflect the comprehensive picture of AMR in the country, particularly from community healthcare settings. Hence, it's crucial to extend the reach of the existing initiatives to secondary care settings also," explained a scientist from the ICMR.

However, since secondary care hospitals in India are not well equipped to document the patterns of local antibiograms and monitor antibiotic usage due to various factors like absence of good clinical microbiology lab, absence of skilled staff etc, it has therefore decided to expand the AMR surveillance and strengthen the AMS and infection prevention and control

(IPC) components in secondary care hospitals with support and facilitation from local or regional tertiary care hospitals already having surveillance system.

As per the plan, the tertiary care hospitals will work with the secondary level public and private sector hospitals and support their participation in the AMR surveillance and in implementing ICMR's AMS and IPC initiatives in the secondary level hospitals. In India, the health centres for secondary health care include District hospitals and Community Health Centre at block level.

To ensure real time monitoring and track progress of data, a centralized platform for data collection would be provided by the ICMR. The selected researchers shall be invited to develop a full research proposal and roll out the research project under the guidance of the ICMR, pointed out by the scientist.

In its National Health Policy 2017, India has identified managing AMR as a key priority and since then various measures have been taken to curb the epidemic that is growing fast domestically as well as globally. According to a Lancet study, an estimated 1.2 million people died in 2019 from antibiotic-resistant bacterial infections.

India faces a significant burden from infectious diseases and ranks second in global antibiotic consumption, increasing by 47% from 2010 to 2020. Misuse and abuse of antibiotics is a key driver for development of AMR. Free over-the-counter availability and self-medication by the patients fuel this rise, said Dr Sangeeta Sharma, President, Delhi Society for Promotion of Rational Use of Drugs (DSPRUD).

Health dept alert for Diwali, Chhath

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The district administration is busy completing preparations for the successful organisation of upcoming festivals like Diwali, Bhai Dooj, Chhath and Dev Deepawali. Along with this, the Health department has also directed the district level government hospitals to ensure medical arrangements in case of emergency. In this regard, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary held a virtual meeting with the superintendents of divisional hospital and government hospitals here on Tuesday.



CMO Dr Sandeep Chaudhary

taken on the basis of the guidelines given earlier for the control of communicable diseases, inter-departmental coordination, public participation, immunisation, surveillance and case based activities.

According to him, medical and health arrangements should be ensured. "Wide publicity should be given through various mediums like social media, print and electronic media regarding measures to prevent various communicable and infectious diseases and

safe celebration of the upcoming festivals," he said.

In accordance with the instructions received from Principal Secretary (Health), Uttar Pradesh, the CMO said that emergency services should operate smoothly 24 hours in all hospitals and an adequate number of doctors and staff should be deployed for emergency services. "In particular, cases of burns due to firecrackers, road accidents due to consumption of alcohol, food poisoning and eye injuries etc may occur. Arrangements for proper treatment etc may be made for such cases. Along with this, beds should be reserved for respiratory and burn patients," he said.

Dr Chaudhary further said that all necessary testing and pathology equipment should be kept functional. Also, the programme managers of 108, 102 and Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance services were directed to ensure timely avail-

ability of ambulances in case of any emergency. All doctors and paramedical staff should not be granted leave during festivals except for unavoidable reasons. Necessary action should be taken in full coordination with the district administration. Availability of doctors at Community Health Centres (CHCs) should be ensured. All doctors will maintain mutual coordination on the units, so that referral up and referral down can be done smoothly, he added.

The CMO asked to ensure in advance the functioning of adequate quantities of medicines and necessary equipment in all government hospitals. The doctors and paramedical staff engaged in emergency duty were directed to ensure that they perform medical work by being present in the hospital as per the prescribed dress code and time, so that no adverse situation arises in view of any emergency.

History is soul of nation: RSS leader

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

National organisation secretary of Akhil Bharatiya Itihas Sankalan Yojana (ABISY), a subsidiary of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), Dr Balmukund Pandey said that history has an important role in building a strong nation because history is the soul of the nation. He was addressing a planning meeting as the chief guest on history knowledge competition, organised by Kashi Prant unit of ABISY at CM Anglo Bengali Intermediate College, Bheulapur here on Monday. In the meeting, there was a wide discussion on the development of national consciousness through history.



RSS leader Dr Balmukund Pandey at a meeting on history in Varanasi on Monday.

National president of ABISY Prof Devi Prasad Singh called upon the youth to awaken love and interest in the great achievements of their ancestors. He gave suggestions to all the provincial office-bearers and coordinators for further expanding contacts in the district. The meeting was presided over by Dr Vishwanath Dubey, Principal of CM Anglo Bengali Intermediate College. He described history knowledge competition as important for secondary level students. Founder President of Kashi

Prant Prof Suman Jain (Head of the Department of Ancient Indian History, Culture and Archaeology, Banaras Hindu University) also said that the history knowledge competition is useful.

The subject of the meeting was introduced by Prof Praveesh Bhardwaj, senior professor of the Department of History at BHU. He gave information about the importance of the three-tier history knowledge competition and the time of organising the competition between December 26 and

January 13 next.

The meeting was conducted by Dr Hemant Singh, while the vote of thanks was proposed by Dr Archana Goswami.

The event was also attended by Prof Onkar Nath Singh, Prof Anil Kumar Dubey, Prof Abha Mishra Pathak, Dr Anuradha Singh, Dr Sheetal Rana, Dr Umesh Kumar Singh, Dr Urjasvita Singh, Dr Aarti Pandey, Dr Indra Bahadur Singh, Prof Prashant Kashyap, Dr Priyanka Singh and Dr Praveen Tripathi.

IM-BHU students visit handicraft industry

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Institute of Management Studies, Banaras Hindu University (IM-BHU) became the flag bearers for the 'peoples choice campaign', an initiative of the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry to promote local One District One Product (ODOP) and Geographical Identification (GI) products. Under the guidance of the ministries of Commerce and Textiles and IM-BHU's Student Advisor Dr Sashi Srivastava, the students of IM-BHU held an industry visit to Balaji Handicrafts, a family run business specialising in beautiful wooden toys, an age old art of Varanasi.



IM-BHU students visiting a handicraft industry in Varanasi on Monday.

Headed by two times national awardee Rameshwaram Singh and alumnus of BHU, who has not only made the art stand out in the nation but also has taken it to various nations like China and Australia to unfurl the art across borders, the students were given insights into the rich history of the art. Varanasi as the centre of learning also nurtured many arts such as silk production, brocades with gold and silver threadwork, glass bangles, ivory work, brassware and wooden toys in which the

family of Rameshwaram specialises. During his long journey, Rameshwaram gave insights into how they adopted change, government initiatives protected the art form and it thrives today where he can't find enough artisans to fulfill the demand, to which he swayed to the declining number of artisans to where there are only 500 each left in the three art form namely of toy making with Korean and Eucalyptus wood, statues with Gular wood and single wood carving in Kama wood;

demonstrations by the experts in making toys in front of the students eyes by just estimation and then adding beautiful colours with lakha. The management students not only got to learn about Rameshwaram, the artisan but also learned Rameshwaram, the entrepreneur and businessman.

The acclaimed artist answered students' queries articulately on the subjects of business scaling, logistical challenges, packaging, e-commerce and marketing to name a few. Rameshwaram also gave

students insight into how to keep a business afloat during tough times, keep patience which is important in a business and achieve the edge in solving multidimensional problems so as to pass through problems efficiently. He also emphasised how it is important for everyone to adopt one art style, learn it at one's own pace and monetise it in view to ensure the optimum and consistent growth of creativity, preservation of art forms and further the agenda of make in India.

Karigar Bazaar held at MMV BHU

VARANASI (PNS): 'Karigar Bazaar' was organised at Mahila Mahavidyalaya (MMV) in Banaras Hindu University (BHU) here on Tuesday under an excellent programme 'Tyohar Ke Rang Karigar Ke Sang' in which the artisans from nine states were present and they displayed their traditional products including bangles, garments, lamps, decorative items etc. The women artisans Rumpa, Aarti, Madhavi and Renu presented decorative lamps and other items, while Sriram wood artwork and Badri Singh stone work articles were well appreciated by all the visitors. The most attractive stall was that of the blind people who presented decorative candles, diyas and some homemade namkeens. Speaking on the occasion, MMV Principal Prof Rita Singh said that on October 29

last, Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasised on being 'vocal for local' in his 'Mann Ki Baat' programme, appealing and encouraging the girl students to do something for the local artisans. The programme was inaugurated by 'Sant Kabir Handloom Award' winning veteran Shaheed Junaid. The students said that it was indeed a very happy moment for them that they got the certificates from an artisan like Junaid and it was a true appreciation for them. During his inaugural address, Junaid inspired all the artisans who displayed their wares and asked them to work hard and always strive to improve their talent. He said that prosperity will come only by honing talent. The stall was

inspected by Registrar Prof Arun Kumar Singh, Prof Meenakshi Singh, Prof Jyotsna Srivastava and the teachers of MMV. The Registrar said that this is a very commendable effort to make the girl students aware about handicrafts and workmanship. Prof Neelam Srivastava (Student Advisor, MMV) said that it was an excellent experience for the students to interact with the artisans (craftsmen) and understand their art. Such activities enhance the organisational skills of girl students and also provide an opportunity to explore potential collaborations and do something bigger. The students said that such events have greatly enhanced their understanding of various items and they see possibility of starting a business with such artisans in the future. Prof Neelam emphasised that it

should be the duty of every institution to take the energy of girl students in a positive direction by giving them opportunities to think big, work in the interest of society and be sensitive towards fellow countrymen. Prof Neelam especially appreciated the hard work of the third year students of MMV Lipika, Deepshikha, Misba Kausar, Srishti Gupta, Sakshi Sultania, Aparna Sharma, Mansi Rajput, Juhi Gupta, Amita Verma and Aditi Singh) were selected for the slogan writing competition held earlier.

Door-to-door distribution of 'akshat' to start from Jan 1

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Ahead of the consecration ceremony of Ram temple in Ayodhya in January next year, a group of Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) members on Monday brought the 'akshat kalash' from Ayodhya to Sangam city.

The VHP members while carrying 'kalash' also took out a 'yatra' towards Kesar Bhawan from Bhardwaj Ashram crossing.

VHP prant secretary (Gau Raksha) Lal Mani Tiwari told mediapersons 'Ahead of the 'pran prathisha' at Ayodhya temple, 'akshat kalash' has been brought to Sangam city from Ayodhya on Monday. VHP has chalked out a strategy to invite devotees to visit the temple at Ayodhya and for that

VHP will be reaching out to five lakh villages."

In the same regard Ram Mandir Trust has planned to reach out to every mutt and temple ahead of the ceremony and is distributing 'akshat'. The door-to-door distribution of 'akshat' will start from January 1 and continue till January 15. It will also be distributed among visitors arriving at Magh Mela next year," he said.

After performing special puja, the VHP volunteers kept the 'kalash' at Kesar Bhawan in city. Recently, the 'akshat puja' was performed at the temple in Ayodhya with about 100 quintals of whole rice mixed with turmeric and desi ghee. This 'pujit akshat' (worshipped rice) was distributed among members of VHP who had gathered in Ayodhya from 45 organisa-

tional provinces of the country.

These members then sent 'akshat kalash' to different cities and will distribute the rice across the nation before January 22. The 'pujit akshat' will be distributed in five lakh villages from January 1 to 15, 2024. The trust has also published pamphlets containing information about the Ram temple. These pamphlets will be distributed with the 'akshat'. The VHP leaders said they will appeal every Ram devotee to light five lamps in the evening on the day of the consecration.

MISHAP: Shiksha mitra Santosh Yadav died after being knocked down by a bus here. Yadav was returning home from a funeral but was hit by a speeding bus near Maharana Pratap intersection and died on the spot.

The police have filed a case on the complaint given by his Soni Yadav. The police of Colonelganj police station have taken the driver into custody and impounded the bus.

According to eyewitnesses, the bus driver was driving at very high speed. A home guard present there also suffered injuries. Assistant teacher Mukesh was present on the same vehicle with Santosh Yadav. The injured have been admitted to Swaroop Rani Nehru Hospital for treatment.

Santosh Yadav of Jairampur village under Dhoomanganj police station was posted in Chak Niratul Primary School. On Tuesday he had gone to Rasulabad Ghat along with his friend to attend a funeral. While returning from there, he was hit by the bus.

Railway gate closed for construction of underpass

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The Lucknow division of Northern Railways (NR) shut the railway gate connecting Allenganj locality to Chhota Baghada. It will be closed for next 115 days for construction of a railway underpass by the Lucknow division of NR.

Following the closing of this railway gate, commuters will have to take a longer route as people from these localities will have to use gate number 78A (at Bakshi bund) or gate number 76A (the one near the IERT).

The construction of this rail underpass is being taken up as part of preparations for Mahakumbh 2025. In view of it rail over bridges and rail under bridges are being constructed in many areas of the city and construction of a rail underpass at Annie Besant rail gate number 77 (near Prayag railway station) was a priority for NR.

The project was sanc-

tioned by NR in view of the regular traffic jam at the rail gate connecting Allenganj to Chhota Baghada. The decision to build a rail underpass here was taken last year, work for which commenced on Monday. During this period, this railway gate will remain completely closed till February 28, 2024. According to railway officials of the NR, people of the affected localities will have to use the alternative routes and once the railway underpass is ready, the locals of these areas will get a huge sigh of relief from the problem of traffic jams.

FESTIVAL RUSH: In view of the possible rush of passengers during Diwali on November 12 and Chhath festival on November 19, the Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) has decided to increase the frequency of buses. As many as 148 additional buses will be operated and additional trips of buses will continue from November 10 to

20.

In view of Diwali and Chhath additional facilities will be provided to the passengers by the UPSRTC here

According to Regional Roadways Manager of Prayagraj Zone, MK Trivedi, the frequency of roadways buses will be increased from on the Prayagraj to Lucknow, Ayodhya, Kanpur, Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Mirzapur and Banda routes on Diwali and Chhath. He said 34 trips will be increased on the Prayagraj-Lucknow route. Besides 20 trips on Prayagraj-Ayodhya route, 24 on Prayagraj-Kanpur route, 24 on Prayagraj-Varanasi route, 26 on Prayagraj-Gorakhpur route, 10 on Prayagraj-Mirzapur route and 10 trips on Prayagraj-Banda route in view of the festival rush are being increased. In view of the pressure on the Transport department employees during these two festivals, the roadways has also decided to give them additional incentive. Trivedi said during this

period such drivers or operators, including contract and outsourced drivers or operators, who are present for a minimum of 10 days and drive an average of 300 kilometers, will be given a lump sum payment of Rs 3500 incentive.

Such drivers and operators, including contract and outsourced drivers or operators, who will be present for the entire 11 days and drive an average of 300 kilometers, will be given a lump sum incentive of Rs 4400 at the rate of Rs 400 per day.

Contract and outsourced drivers will have to be paid an additional amount of 55 paise per kilometre if they earn more kilometres than the standard during this period.

He said that the employees of the depot and regional workshop who are present for duty for 11 days during this period will be given a lump sum incentive of Rs 1800 and if they are present for 10 days of duty, a lump sum incentive of Rs 1500 will be given.

Students to study smart managerial decisions of top industrialists

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The Faculty of Commerce of Allahabad University (AU) has started a five-year integrated BBA-MBA course from this academic session in which students can learn management mantras of Lord Krishna through 'Bhagavad Gita', 'Ramayana' and Upanishads as well as those of Chanakya.

Also, for the first time, students will study the smart

managerial decisions of top industrialists like JRD Tata, Azim Premji, Dhirubhai Ambani, Narayan Murthy, Sunil Mittal and Birla.

Besides, they will also be taught Ashtanga yoga that will help them remain calm in adverse situations. The department has started the course with 26 students from last month. It will have 10 semesters which will be for 220 credits. Multiple entry, exit systems will be implemented in this.

That means if one leaves studies in the first year, they will get a one-year certificate, diploma in the second year, BBA degree in third year and MBA degree in the fifth year.

TALKS: State President of State Employees Joint Council JN Tiwari during a press conference said the chief minister of the state is sensitive towards the problems of the employees. Emphasis is being laid on quick disposal of problems presented before him but the depart-

mental officers are creating hurdles in solution to the demands of the employees. He said on November 17 under the chairmanship of Additional Chief Secretary (Personnel) talks on the demands of the Joint Council have been fixed. It is expected that this dialogue will yield promising results. If the government does not take a positive decision on the pending demands of the employees, then a huge protest will be held in Lucknow on November 30.

Two criminals arrested after encounter

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

The Dehat Kotwali police arrested two criminals after an encounter. Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP/City) Niteshwar Singh said Station House Officer (SHO) Shailesh Rai on Monday was being tipped off by an informer about the presence of criminals near Bokariya fall under Karanpur police outpost. The SHO informed the authorities and raided the place along with the team of surveillance and SOG. On seeing the police the criminals opened fire and the police also retaliated in self-defence. As a result two miscreants Alok Yadav and Vaibhav Bind of Jasovar Pahadi village under Dehat Kotwali police station received bullet injuries in their legs and were arrested.

Several cases, including under the Gangsters Act, were registered against Alok Yadav, the ASP said. After the arrest of the criminals were brought to the hospital for treatment, he added. Arms and cartridges were recovered from the possession of the criminals, the police said.

GIRL DROWNS: A girl drowned in a canal under Halia police station on Monday. Arati Devi of Chakghat under Chakghat police station, Rewa, MP, had come to her maternal home in Ahugi Kala village under Halia police station. On Monday her daughter Naina

(4) fell into the canal while playing and drowned. On getting the information the police rushed to the spot, took the body into possession and completed the legal formalities.

WORKSHOP: Union Minister of State for Commerce

and Industry Anupriya Patel can prove to be a boon, she added. Enumerating the new schemes introduced by the government she said 18 types of traditional artisans belonging to the rural area were covered under PM Vishwakarma Shram

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Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel addressing the workshop on Monday

and Industry Anupriya Patel at a workshop related to government schemes on Monday said the village pradhan was a link between the government machinery and the rural people. She said still due to lack of literacy several persons are still deprived of the benefits of government schemes hence the responsibility of the pradhans is more to help the eligible persons. To strengthen the rural economy the govern-

ment schemes can prove to be a boon, she added. Enumerating the new schemes introduced by the government she said 18 types of traditional artisans belonging to the rural area were covered under PM Vishwakarma Shram

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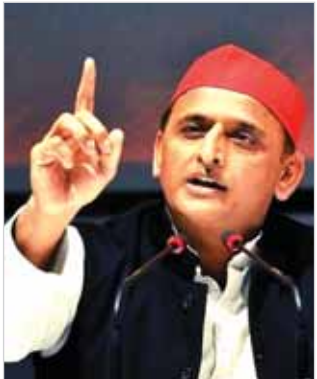
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PAPER WITH PASSION

Unsafe bet?

Akhilesh Yadav targets Congress again; are the cracks in INDIA moving beyond repair?

In India, alliances are seen as a good move for political parties to pool their resources and increase their chances of electoral success. But INDIA, the 28-party Opposition alliance formed to unseat the ruling BJP from the Centre in the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, seems to be going the exact opposite way. Not only is it still far away from chalking out a comprehensive strategy and seat-sharing plan against the saffron behemoth, its cohesion is actually waning and the differences within are growing. It is, however, no secret that keeping such alliances together can be a challenging task, especially if the member parties have only one thing in common — to make it to the Treasury benches. The recent fissures within INDIA, which include seat-sharing disputes, sharp criticism and name-calling, have raised questions about the prospects of it holding together. One of the early signs of trouble was the contentious issue of seat-sharing; even the third meeting for the purpose could not reach an understanding.



Though the Congress enjoys a national presence, it is unavoidably juxtaposed to regional parties in most States such as UP, Bihar, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. The Congress and these regional parties see each other as their main challengers. Now, if the Congress cannot downsize its seat share, the regional parties would not like it as it is their base and *raison d'être*.

A noticeable instance of discord within the INDIA bloc surfaced after JDU leader Nitish Kumar criticised the Congress for being so preoccupied with the Assembly elections in five States that it had little time to get the newly formed bloc moving. His criticism

can be seen as a manifestation of the frustration that regional leaders sometimes feel within national alliances. Another blow came when former UP Chief Minister and Samajwadi Party leader Akhilesh Yadav referred to the Congress as a "chaalu party." The use of such derogatory terms for a partner not only reflects the bitterness in the relationship but also serves as political ammunition for the ruling party. As regional leaders aim to assert themselves, they may resort to public criticism of their partners. These internal conflicts can erode the alliance's credibility and give voters a reason to doubt its ability to provide stable and effective governance. But when there is no escaping such challenges, only a positive approach and determined effort can tidy up mutual differences. A realistic approach is indeed required on the part of all parties concerned. The electoral math suggests that they have a better shot in 2024 if they can make the contest one-on-one by giving a common candidate. The constituent parties must strike a balance between accommodating each other's regional and caste-based strengths while ensuring that the distribution of seats remains equitable. Disagreements over seat allocation can lead to frustration and mistrust among the alliance partners.

PICTALK



Mahant of Baghbari Math with Akhara sadhus perform a 'hawan' on 'Hanuman Janmotsav', in Prayagraj. PTI

Language: Emotional connect and more



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM

Languages growing simultaneously in any society are a binding force. Language cannot be a reason for mutual exclusion and antipathy

Communication is central to all living entities. Plants communicate; creatures and animals communicate; and, of course, human beings communicate. They communicate not only amongst themselves but also across different categories and species. The examples are many, the illustrations are numerous, hence, there is no need to over-emphasise this aspect of communication. The big concern is not with the act of communication but with the modes of communication. For example, the uses and anatomy of communication among plants are well mapped, but there are not many who attempted an extensive research study of plant communication.

There are some exceptions, especially in the form of references and awareness. Illustratively, Kalidasa, in his epic drama 'Abhigyan Shakuntalam', would have us believe that when Shakuntala was leaving the 'Tapovana' (the hermitage) of Sage 'Kanva', the creepers of the jungle wrapped themselves around Shakuntala to bid an emotional farewell. What Shakuntala said would probably never be known, but it was obvious that sentiments and expressions were involved. The creepers wrapped themselves around Shakuntala as a kind of embrace and communication medium. Like an electronic system, the system of communication points requires encoding and decoding, and there is a thought process behind it.

Plants don't make sound in the way that animals, insects or some other creatures do. This makes the act of communication between insects and animals somewhat more sophisticated. The chirp of the insects of one variety or another is an act of communication, as indeed is the howling, barking, whining, and such acts of the animals among themselves and across species. All these creatures make sounds through their throats and mouths, and depending on the kind of noise that comes out of the animal, it is encoded and decoded. There are sounds of fear, just as there are sounds of



invitation. There are sounds of anger and the sounds of nothing more but peace and the invitation of an attempt to put together a group or give an alert about a danger. All put together, the derivation is obvious: 'communication' is not just a human phenomenon. It is as rich as the mind of the entity.

A dog, for example, communicates in multiple ways and is capable of sounds of aggression, mating, warning, and more. The sound of a dog varies from species to species and from one breed to another. It is another matter that not many texts have been scripted on this theme, and hence there is little available on the language of the dogs. Amongst human beings too, all races don't have a script, yet within the race, they communicate. The matter does not end there.

Amongst human beings too, as indicated, there are a large number of variations among those of human species that don't have a script for their language but still communicate with each other. The difficulty with such a situation is the lack of standardisation



IN MOST PARTS OF THE WORLD, AMONG ALL HUMAN BEINGS, THERE MAY BE A STRUGGLE BETWEEN HUMAN GROUPS FOR DOMINANCE, BUT CERTAINLY NO STRUGGLE OVER THE VALUE OF ANY LANGUAGE

and communication that the group needs when dealing with a new group. Thus, there is a geographical limit to the expanse and range of languages. In the more evolved type of human species, a script is available, and after a period of practice, the script is comparatively evaluated. In the times of yore, there was a Roman script, there was a Dravidian script, a Devanagari script, and there were Chinese scripts; there may have been a few other scripts that are no longer alive but must have existed. As time passed and the human species moved, mother scripts of Latin, and Sanskrit, acquired prominence and thus many modern languages were sprouted under their impact. It is not clear how many human languages exist on the planet today or, for that matter, how many languages are dead today.

Literature, as we understand it, is available in some of the languages.

The coming of writing was another phenomenon. It is reported that in the earlier stages of writing, the writing

was on palm leaves, and pointed tips of hard material like bamboo branches were used to sketch an imprint on the leaves. The growth of writing is a specialisation in its own right, it is not feasible to attempt to document different stages of writing here. Put one clear thing, if that is the only clear thing, that the writing of the language adds to its durability. Language is a binding force between individuals and groups. It also attempts to integrate a range beyond the sounds of languages and written scripts of languages.

In most parts of the world, among all human beings, there may be a struggle between human groups for dominance, but certainly no struggle over the value of any language. Any language within its range, growing along with each other, should be a binding force. It cannot be a force for mutual exclusion and antipathy. Put simply language is the vehicle of the mind.

(The writer is an internationally acclaimed management consultant. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

ADVANTAGE SHARIF IN PAKISTAN

Sir —Former Pakistan Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, who has returned to Islamabad after a four-year exile, is leaving nothing to chance as he prepares to embark on a whirlwind tour of Pakistan's provinces this month. While Sharif's nine-year tenure as Prime Minister failed to inspire his countrymen, the pressing question now is whether he can rally his supporters to regain power in the upcoming January 2024 elections. All signs indicate that the PML (N) leader is starting on the front foot, given his main rival, Imran Khan, is currently languishing in jail. The caretaker government is making every effort to ensure there is no relief for Khan, preventing him from contesting the elections. On the other hand, legal cases against Sharif are seemingly faltering to boost his candidacy. Sharif intends to connect with the people regarding the sinking economy, which is in dire straits. Upon his return from Dubai, Sharif described Pakistan's current socio-political scenario as "chaotic," underscoring his commitment to be a messiah on a mission. The question remains whether he can emerge victorious in the upcoming elections and, more crucially, whether his newfound cooperation with the Pakistan army will withstand the test of time, given his history of a "love-hate" relationship with them. With all that said, it appears to be an advantage for Sharif at this moment.

Ganapathi Bhat|Akola

HISTORICAL BASIS OF THE CONFLICT

Sir —In the current turmoil of the Middle East, the bitterness between Jews and Palestinians can be traced back to the decisions made by the then American President Harry Truman and the United Nations in 1945. Without consulting Palestinians and Arabs, both entities declared the formation of the nation of Israel in Arab territory. Hamas' attack on October 7 was a response to this forceful occupation and bullying.

Dependency syndrome



Politically motivated freebies create a dependency syndrome, where entitled recipients expect more in the future. Every election season, political parties make ambitious commitments across the board in their pursuit of electoral success. Freebies play a significant role in gaining public trust in the government, increasing engagement, and fostering a positive voter turnout, bridging disparities among marginalized sections of society to access essential resources like health and food.

It's crucial to understand the old saying, "Give a man a fish, and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish, and you feed him for a lifetime." The government should shift its focus from temporary freebies towards long-term "Welfare Schemes" aimed at benefiting the target population, improving their standard of living, and ensuring access to resources. This approach aligns with constitutional obligations of equity and human development while discouraging a culture of dependency.

There is only a marginal difference between freebie policies and welfare programs, and the government should emphasize the latter. As India celebrates its 75th year of Independence and embraces the spirit of Atma Nirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India), it's essential for the government to avoid perpetuating a culture of dependency. Such a culture can lead to economic distrust, misallocation of resources, and compromises in quality.

Dimple Wadhawan | Kanpur

MOUNTING CASUALTIES

Sir — Mounting casualties among Palestinian civilians, along with acute shortages of food, water, medicine and fuel, have intensified calls by global leaders for a pause in fighting or a ceasefire. Israel is crossing all the limits of humanity and it has even rebelled against calls by global leaders and set to genocide. By now more than 20,000 Hamas people including innocent children and women have been annihilated. Israel has dismissed those calls, only saying it targets Hamas fighters whom it accuses of intentionally hiding among the population and civilian buildings while the main target is indigenous people. That is so disgraceful in human history. However, at least, all adjoining Arab countries should boycott Israeli products, halt exports and make all efforts to stop the war whatsoever that can.

TKR Noori | Mumbai

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Do not bomb the medical neutrality

The growing tendency of nation-states to ignore medical neutrality will bring a dark age upon human civilization



SIDHARTH TARA

Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital in Gaza was bombed on the evening of October 17, 2023, killing between 100 and 300 individuals including caregivers and civilians who were either patients or escorting them. Just like in Yemen and Ukraine before no one was held accountable. No official was legally or administratively disciplined even for the sake of optics. Just a hollow and shallow performance of grief not even a condemnation from leaders of nation-states. In Gaza, multiple health care facilities have been hit by airstrikes. Danger looms over every hospital that is still functioning, including Al-Shifa Hospital, the largest in Gaza. Electric, fuel, drugs and water supply have been cut off to hospitals that have not been bombed yet. Strategic targeting of medical infrastructure is being used as a force multiplier to increase casualties of war.



Violating the rules universally agreed upon and established in the Geneva Conventions, this attack goes against the most sacred of the laws of men, that is the law of Medical Neutrality and Immunity. Hospitals and medical centres have always been a refuge for the injured seeking help and escaping the violence in surrounding conflict zones, it is important for the future of humanity that they remain so. This is not an isolated incident but only the recent one in the long list of brutal deaths of civilians like medical personnel and journalists that resulted from the direct actions of official government militaries instead of nonstate entities, either due to malfunction or malintent. More than 8000 are dead, more than 70% of that number are children, women and elderly. More than 20000 injured need trauma care. This number is additional to the regular disease load that exists in any population like infants requiring incubators, kidney patients requiring

ing dialysis, diabetics requiring insulin and various conditions requiring emergency surgeries in addition to the trauma cases being brought in because of airstrikes. Medical resources are stretched thin and grossly inadequate concerning increased needs. Medical workers have been working without respite, clean water, developing skin and gastrointestinal infections. Killing of Medical workers and bombings of hospitals further aggravate the situation. The blood of the injured who survived the bombing of their houses only to be killed in airstrikes on ambulances and hospitals will stain our collective conscience for a long time to come, as will the decision of the Indian government to abstain from the resolution of the ceasefire forwarded by Jordan. Collateral damage is not a magical word that makes the wanton murder of non-combatants trapped in a conflict zone legitimate or any less abhorrent. All human life is precious, more so to those who swore an oath to save it. Medical communities across the globe

should question this growing tendency of governments to ignore these old but wise laws of humanity. Citizens of the world need to hold their elected representatives accountable who are letting it happen, lest Gaza become another Auschwitz. These governments are carelessly and irresponsibly attacking this foundational pillar of human ethics and values on which human civilization as we know it stands. Terrorists are non-state actors but when nation-states and countries ignore established rules of engagement that keep us devolving into savages during conflicts, it brings us one step closer to a dark age that may be high-tech but still darker than any that mankind has suffered before. An age when the red cross of hospitaliers, a shared symbol of identity and purpose for medical caregivers across the world and a sign of hope and relief for the sick and injured, a symbol holier to us than any God will cease to have any meaning.

(Dr Siddharth Tara is from Progressive Medicos and Scientists Forum, views are personal)



FIRST COLUMN

OVERCOMING LUST,
THE SPIRITUAL WAYStay away from sense objects which
invoke lusty feelings in us

AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

It must be, otherwise, you are in denial. Our bodies have been made such that lust of all kinds will affect us. The Bhagavad-Geeta has plenty of information about this very important subject, "The senses, the mind and the intelligence are said to be lust's seats. Through them, this bewilders an embodied person, covering his wisdom." (3.40), "The senses are said to be powerful, but the mind is more powerful than the senses.

The intelligence is more powerful than the mind, but that which is more powerful than even the intelligence is lust. (3.42) Sample some of our weaknesses: for sex, for tasty foods, for attractive sights, for hearing what pleases us, for talking unnecessarily, etc. Yes, a few of these will be dominant in a person, while others will be dormant. Males will most likely have a weakness for sex, while women may be/will be more attracted to clothes, jewellery, etc. Unfortunately, no one will be free from these.

A question may be asked: "Why were we made in this fashion?" For two reasons. The first is that the creation has to go on. These shortcomings keep us attracted to the material world. The second is our wanting it. It will be difficult, if not impossible, to find someone, who doesn't have a deep desire for some kind of lust, be it for power, fame, beauty, wealth, etc. We really cannot fault God.

This article is for those, who are troubled by this ever-present 'kama,' and, most importantly, who are honest enough to admit their weakness. They can be helped. Before I go into specifics of it, let us understand the true nature of kama from the Geeta. "It is lust only; it is anger only, born of the mode of passion. Lust is the one that devours, and is a great sinner.



Know this to be the enemy of the world." (3.37) "Just as fire is covered with smoke; just as a mirror is covered with dirt; and just as an embryo is covered with a womb, similarly, knowledge is covered with lust." Lord Krishna leaves no doubt about how dangerous lust is, when He states, "Lust, anger and greed are three doors to hell, which cause ruination of the soul. (16.21)

Having got a fair idea about the nature of kama, lets us understand how to deal with it. The very first lesson is to never underestimate lust. Rather we should err on the side of caution and overestimate it. Therefore, stay away from sense objects, which invoke lusty feelings in us.

As it is, we are highly susceptible to being corrupted. Why, then have anything to do with it? Yes, it is not possible to do so always but we must. External attractions make the mind weak, which is already highly vulnerable.

These and many other ideas will help somewhat, but all will fall woefully short. Why? Because the mind is seated inside us. One thinks that we are not hurting anyone and no one is wiser about our thoughts. This is a big mistake; we hurt ourselves quite badly. The mind, already a big enemy, becomes worse. The reality is that only God can help. I mean it. God has counselled us to kill this formidable enemy; He has stated, "Thus knowing this lust to be more powerful than the intelligence and steadying self by self, kill this difficult to conquer enemy in the form of lust." (3.43) Yes, but it is practically impossible to do it by oneself. We need God's help to get rid of the lust, which covers knowledge/wisdom.

(Bishnoi is a spiritual guide, views are personal)

Sanctions on Russia
are counterproductive

UTTAM GUPTA

In a globally interdependent world, actions that severely restrict the flow of goods and services across national boundaries are bound to be counter-productive



In a bid to punish Russia for its military action against Ukraine, in June 2022, leaders of G7 viz., the United States, Germany, France, Britain, Italy, Canada and Japan had vowed to explore the feasibility of measures to bar imports of Russian oil at price above a certain level. In September 2022, their finance ministers (FMs) said:

"We confirm our joint political intention to finalise and implement a comprehensive prohibition of services, which enable maritime transportation of Russian-origin crude oil and petroleum products globally. Providing those services would only be allowed if the oil and petroleum products are purchased at or below a price (the price cap) determined by the broad coalition of countries adhering to and implementing the price cap."

On December 5, 2022, they set the price ceiling at US\$60 per barrel. It was meant to weaken Russia financially by undermining its ability to generate revenue from the export of petroleum products while ensuring that supplies to them (read: G7/EU) are not impacted. Unfortunately, things haven't panned out as intended.

Russia is a dominant player in the global energy landscape.

It is the third-largest producer of crude oil with over 12 per cent share in global crude production and the second-largest exporter. In the case of natural gas (NG), it is the world's second-largest producer with a share of 10 per cent. In world export, its contribution is even higher at 25 per cent. When it comes to EU countries, their dependence on Russia is even higher, drawing 40 per cent of their NG supplies and 25 per cent of crude from it. Some countries in the bloc viz. Germany, the Netherlands and Poland, source a much higher percentage of their requirements from Russia.

In this backdrop, huge disruption in supplies from Russia caused by a deadly cocktail of economic and financial sanctions imposed by the EU countries (besides the USA); physical incapacitation in the supply chain and clogging of sea transportation routes – in the wake of military action



WHAT IF THE BUYER REFUSES TO PROVIDE REQUESTED PRICE INFORMATION OR GIVES A FUDGED DOCUMENT MENTIONING A PRICE LESS THAN THE CAP EVEN THOUGH THE PURCHASE IS AT A HIGHER PRICE OR HIDES THE TRUE ORIGIN OF RUSSIAN OIL?

(The writer is a policy analyst, views are personal)

by the former against Ukraine in February - led to steep increase in the price of both crude oil and NG. As a result, the EU countries bought all their requirements at elevated prices as during that period, the price cap wasn't in force. This led to a huge increase in their import bill. According to the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air, Russia received about 158 billion euros in revenue for the sale of oil, NG and coal from February to August 2022, more than half of which - some 85 billion euros worth - was from the EU. Russia's revenue increased even as overall export volumes dropped by 18 per cent compared with the corresponding period before the invasion of Ukraine.

Even after the cap came into force on December 5, 2022, the G7 bloc has achieved little in restricting Russia's earnings. As it is, fixing the ceiling price at US\$60 per barrel is laughable considering that the cost of producing oil is substantially lower, in fact, a fraction of this number. Even if exports were made at this price (between December 2022 and June 2023, most of Russia's crude was selling at less than this price implying no violation), it would still be generating a lot of surpluses to keep its war machinery well-oiled.

Since, July 2023, the price has been above the cap, courtesy of reduced availability of oil worldwide as a result of Saudi Arabia and Russia cutting production by one million barrels per day (mbd) and 0.3 mbd respectively over and above the cut agreed to in the meeting of OPEC + in April 2023. Russia has been able to benefit from this as well. For instance, according to S&P Global Platts, its key export grade crude sold at around US\$75 per barrel enabling it to garner oil income of US\$211 million a day during September 2023.

What has come in the way of G7 enforcing the cap?

The G7 wanted to enforce it by requiring the participating countries to deny Western-dominated services, including insurance, finance, brokering and navigation to oil cargoes priced above the cap. To secure those services, buyers would make "attestations" to service providers, saying they bought Russian petroleum at or below the cap. However, service providers won't be held liable for false pricing information provided by buyers and sellers of Russian petroleum.

Put simply, the buyer (say, a trader in Germany) needs to give a piece of paper to the service provider saying 'it has bought Russian crude at or below the cap'. If the latter doesn't have this document, the G7 country will impose sanctions on that service provider. They feel confident, it will work because many vessel owners, traders and most insurers are based in the EU/USA; hence amenable to sanction.

What if the buyer refuses to provide requested price information or gives a fudged document mentioning a price less than the cap even though the purchase is at a higher price or hides the true origin of Russian oil, etc? In any of these scenarios, the G7 country won't be able to take any action as per their agreement 'Services providers can't be held liable for false pricing information provided by buyers and sellers'.

The sellers and buyers of Russian oil can use a host of other methods to circumvent the cap. For instance, the price can be set as oil leaves a Russian port, not what's paid by a refinery in, say, India. While the former can stay well within the US\$ 60 per barrel level, transportation costs and margins of trading companies (albeit Russian-affiliated) in countries

not participating in sanctions are inflated to yield the desired net back in Russian hands.

Given the above, it is no surprise that despite numerous instances of 'loading Russian oil at all ports within Russia' by vessels owned or insured by Western nations - in the wake of a surge in crude price, there has been little sign of enforcement action initiated by the G7 authorities. Reports of the U.S. Treasury Department sanctioning two ship owners (in October 2023) accused of carrying Russian oil priced at US\$75 and \$80 per barrel while relying on US-connected service providers is the tip of the iceberg. This apart, there are unmet parallel fleets and insurance companies - under non-Western ownership - which can be used for handling, shipping and insuring Russian oil. To conclude, ever since the start of the Ukraine war, the USA and EU countries have been on a dangerous course of imposing economic sanctions on Russia. Far from hurting, their acts have ended up bolstering its coffers. It happened on a mammoth scale through most of 2022 when there was no cap and continued to swell during the first half of CY 2023 when the cap was symbolic. Since July 2023, the swelling of coffers has accelerated. Meanwhile, the actions of G7 continue to bring more misery to the people in these countries due to soaring energy bills, high inflation and economic slowdown.

The G7/EU should shun the chosen path. They need to recognise that in a globally interdependent world, actions that severely restrict the flow of goods and services across national boundaries are bound to be counter-productive. The damage will be much greater when a crucial commodity such as oil is the target and the quantum involved is huge.

Gauging the political mood of Bihar is not easy

Bihar has historically been the land of political experiments, whose experiment will work this time is not easy to predict

Though the general elections are still months ahead, the states of UP and Bihar are already abuzz with political activity. The BJP knows very well that like Abhimanyu, it is alone in this election. A new political equation will have to be tested and prepared every day. It is obvious that now BJP has to fight with an alliance in which JDU, RJD, Congress and Left parties will also support. And in such a situation, Bihar has historically been the land of many political experiments. However, there are more challenges for the BJP here and there are fewer people with good worker turnover skills. If we trace the political history of Bihar, there are three areas where socialist politics has been



RAJESH KUMAR SINGH

(The writer is a senior Journalist, views are personal)

dominant and more or less these areas have been deciding the future outline of the political ground of Bihar. These are Munger, Muzaffarpur and Nalanda. The JP movement epicentre was also around this area. Madhu Limaye, Madhu Dandwate, George Fernandes, Nitish Kumar, and Lalan Singh all tried their luck and success. Even now the center of the fight is visible here. Yes, it has happened that Mithilanchal emerged as an important pocket in the Mandal politics and social engineering of Lalu Yadav. Where later minority politics also came to fruition. BJP is trying to take its Ashwamedha Rath to these places once again. Under this strategy, BJP's

Chanakya Amit Shah has visited this area five times. BJP's campaign 'No More' may increase the tension of Chief Minister Nitish Kumar. Therefore, senior party leaders are trying to make Bihar Sharif the centre of the 'No More' campaign. There is talk of involving a large number of workers in this campaign. Through this campaign in Nalanda, the 'Samvad Yatra' will go to other areas including Rajgir, Giriyak, Pawapuri, Asthawan, Rahui, and Harnaut, for which preparations are going on in full swing. In Nalanda, there is a plan to harness the anger and growing dissatisfaction among youth, farmers, labourers, women, workers and other groups in our favour. Including Bihar in

their priority is not a wish of Amit Shah and BJP but a compulsion. This is because the Nitish-led NDA had 39 MPs from Bihar in the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. The loss of 16 MPs directly due to JDU's withdrawal has greatly affected the numerical strength of Bihar BJP. As a result, it has become a Herculean task for Amit Shah to remain firm on his strong seat and find possibilities for new Lok Sabha seats. Amit Shah's election strategy journey started in February. Then Shah sounded the election trumpet in West Champaran. He Came to Nawada on 2nd April. It was speculated that an eye was being placed on a deal with LJP and Nawada. Which was given to LJP in 2019. On June 29, Amit Shah

again went to Lakhisarai, a Bhumihar-dominated area. Challenged Munger MP and Nitish Kumar's Chanakya Lalan Singh. It was said that the BJP is also planning to contest elections here. Shah came to Jhanjharpur for the fourth time in 16 September. Jhanjharpur Lok Sabha seat was won by BJP in the 2014 elections. Now Shah held a meeting in Jhanjharpur to regain this seat. Now, Amit Shah's objective behind coming to Muzaffarpur for the fifth time is to find some new places besides Muzaffarpur Lok Sabha. For example, understanding Sitamarhi and Shivhar closely. In a strange political development, the Sitamarhi Lok Sabha seat was won by JDU within the NDA in the year 2019.

It is said that this Thakur leader has a lot of influence in many Lok Sabha constituencies around Muzaffarpur. Especially in Sheohar Lok Sabha. The same fear is haunting the JDU supremo also. By reaching Anand Mohan's native village on the pretext of a program, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar has increased the political value of this seat. Anand Mohan was also MP from this seat in 1996 and 1998. Now this seat has become a matter of prestige for BJP. That too because BJP had won from Shivhar Lok Sabha constituency in 2009, 2014 and 2019 elections with the help of Ramadevi. Now the real fight of the BJP is in Seemanchal, where Amit

Shah may go again. The 'MY' equation has a simple formula and the bonus is the support of Dalits and the backward vote bank. Barring Purnia, RJD has laid siege to the rest of the places. In the last assembly elections, Owaisi had tried to break into the Muslim vote bank, but the success was partial. Indeed, the changing times have more or less changed the economic condition of Seemanchal. Renu no longer has that Seemanchal. If not just change the old style of leadership. In such a situation, the BJP will ignore the old leadership and focus on the new face, which can be Amit Shah's favourite political move. So that BJP's new Bihar can be formed.

Netanyahu: Israel will take 'overall security responsibility' in Gaza

AP ■ KHAN YOUNIS (GAZA STRIP)

Israel will take "overall security responsibility" in Gaza indefinitely after its war with Hamas, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said, the clearest indication yet that Israel plans to maintain control over the coastal enclave one month into a conflict that has claimed thousands of lives and levelled whole swaths of the territory.

In an interview with ABC News that aired late Monday, Netanyahu expressed openness to "little pauses" in the fighting to facilitate the delivery of aid to Gaza or the release of some of the more than 240 hostages seized by Hamas in its Oct 7 attack into Israel that triggered the war.

But he ruled out any general cease-fire without the release of all the hostages, and the White House said there was no agreement on US President Joe Biden's call for a broader humanitarian pause after a phone call between the leaders.

The war has come at a staggering cost. Airstrikes have reduced entire city



Police officers evacuate a woman and a child from a site hit by a rocket fired from the Gaza Strip in Ashkelon, southern Israel, Saturday. AP/PTI

blocks to rubble, and around 70% of Gaza's 2.3 million people have fled their homes, with many heading Israeli orders to head to the southern part of the besieged territory, which is also being bombed.

Israeli troops have been battling Palestinian militants inside Gaza for over a week, and have succeeded in cutting the territory in half and encircling Gaza City. Food, medicine, fuel and water are running low, and United Nations-run schools-turned-shelters are overflowing.

The Palestinian death toll has surpassed 10,000, the Health Ministry of the Hamas-run Gaza Strip said Monday, including over 4,100 minors. More than 2,300 people are missing and believed to be buried under the rubble of destroyed buildings, the ministry said. The ministry does not distinguish between civilians and combatants, and Israel says it has killed thousands of fighters. About 1,400 people in Israel have died, mostly civilians killed in the Oct. 7 incursion by Hamas. Israelis observed a moment of silence Tuesday in memory of the victims.

Blinken seeks G7 unity on Israel-Hamas war

AP ■ TOKYO

Fresh from a whirlwind tour of the Middle East, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken shifted his intense diplomacy on the Israel-Hamas war to Asia on Tuesday with an appeal for the Group of Seven leading industrial democracies to forge consensus on how to deal with the crisis.

As he and his G7 counterparts began two days of talks in Japan, Blinken said it was critically important for the group to show unity as it has over Russia's war in Ukraine and other major issues and prevent existing differences on Gaza from deepening. "This is a very important moment as well for the G7 to come together in the face of this crisis and to speak, as we do, with one clear voice," Blinken told Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa, shortly after talks with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

The devastating month-long conflict in Gaza and efforts to ease the dire humanitarian impacts of Israel's response to the deadly Oct 7 Hamas attack will be a major focus of the meeting. Yet with the Russia-Ukraine war, fears North Korea may be readying a new nuclear test, and concerns about China's increasing global assertiveness, it is far from the only crisis on the agenda.

In Tokyo, Blinken and foreign ministers from Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Japan and Italy will be seeking common ground in part to prevent the Gaza war from further destabilising already shaky security in the broader Middle East and seeking to maintain existing consensus positions on other matters. Kamikawa said Japan "unequivocally condemns" the Hamas' attack on Israel, supports US efforts to find a way forward and said that "solid unity between Japan and the US is especially critical at this point."

"We appreciate the diplomatic efforts of the US in the recent situation between Israel and Palestine," she said. "You have our utmost support."

Those efforts include significantly expanding the amount of humanitarian aid being sent to

Gaza, pushing Israel to agree to "pauses" in its military operation to allow that assistance to get in and more civilians to get out, beginning planning for a post-conflict governance and security structure in the territory and preventing the war from spreading.

Blinken described all of these as "a work in progress" and acknowledged deep divisions over the pause concept. Israel remains unconvinced and Arab and Muslim nations are demanding an immediate full cease-fire, something the United States opposes. There has also been resistance to discussing Gaza's future, with the Arab states insisting that the immediate humanitarian crisis must be addressed first.

Securing agreement from G7 members, none of which border or are directly involved in the conflict, may be a slightly less daunting challenge for Blinken.

Yet cracks have emerged over Gaza, which has inflamed international public opinion. Democracies are not immune from intense passions that have manifested themselves in massive pro-Palestinian and anti-Israel demonstrations in G7 capitals and elsewhere.

Last month in the UN Security Council, France voted in favour of a resolution calling for a humanitarian truce in Gaza that was vetoed by the United States because it didn't go far enough in condemning Hamas' attack on Israel, which ignited the war. Britain abstained in that vote.

Several days later in the UN General Assembly, a non-binding US-Canadian resolution that would have condemned Hamas failed, while a separate resolution calling for an immediate cease-fire overwhelmingly passed. The US voted against the second resolution while France voted in favor. Britain, Canada, Germany, Italy and Japan all abstained. Britain's Foreign Secretary James Cleverly told a select group of journalists, including The Associated Press, that his government only supports a time and geographically specific "humanitarian pause" and not a wider cease-fire.

Cyprus has plan for humanitarian corridor to Gaza

Nicosia (Cyprus): Cyprus will present its plan for a humanitarian sea corridor to Gaza when the Cypriot president meets other EU heads of state in Paris at an international donor conference for the besieged Palestinian enclave on Nov 9, an official said Tuesday.

Government spokesman Constantinos Letymiotis told reporters the initiative to ship aid from the eastern Mediterranean island will be discussed at length during the conference, which will also seek to address Gaza's pressing needs including water, electricity and fuel supply.

Last week, senior UN officials said the average Palestinian in Gaza was living on two pieces of bread a day, while only one of three water supply lines from Israel was operational. More than 1.5 million Palestinians have been displaced in Gaza by the Israeli offensive launched in the wake of Oct 7, when Hamas attacked Israel, killing 1,400 people.

President Nikos Christodoulides said Tuesday the initiative aims for a "sustained, secure high-volume flow of humanitarian assistance to Gaza in the immediate, medium and long term". Ships would deliver the aid to Gaza from Cyprus' main port of Limassol, some 255 miles away (410 km).

Christodoulides said his government is working with neighboring countries including Israel, Egypt, Jordan and the Palestinian Authority as well as the US, France, the EU and the UN to set the initiative in motion.

To address Israeli security concerns, the aid would be inspected at its departure point to ensure nothing is delivered that Hamas, which runs Gaza, could weaponise in its war with Israel.

Hamas is on the EU and US lists of terrorist organisations. AP

New measures to curb migration to Germany agreed by Olaf Scholz

Berlin (AP): New, stricter measures to curb the high number of migrants coming to Germany were agreed by Chancellor Olaf Scholz and the 16 state governors in the early hours of Tuesday, reaching a compromise on an issue that has become a huge political problem for the government and a hot-button topic in society. The new measures include speeding up asylum procedures, benefit restrictions for asylum seekers and more financial aid from the federal government for the states and local communities dealing with the influx.

Speaking early Tuesday after an overnight meeting that lasted several hours, Scholz called the agreement "a historical moment" — a remark that showed how much of a burden the topic had become for the government. Shelters for migrants and refugees have been filling up in Germany for months, and Scholz, who faces enormous pressure from the opposition and elsewhere to halt that trend, has said that "too many are coming".

The number of new asylum applications for the year to date was around 73% higher at the end of September than in the same period last year, official statistics show.

Germany has also taken in more than 1 million Ukrainians arrive since the start of Russia's war in their homeland. Over recent weeks, there had been a flurry of government activity, including legislation to ease deportations of unsuccessful asylum-seekers, to stiffen punishment for smugglers, to allow asylum-seekers to start working sooner, and to introduce temporary checks on the Polish, Czech and Swiss borders.

The federal and state governments agreed early Tuesday to change the system for financing the costs for the asylum seekers. Starting next year, the federal government will pay an annual lump sum of 7,500 euros (\$8,000) for each asylum seeker and no longer a total annual sum of around 3.7 billion euros.

Civilians fleeing Gaza's combat zone

AP ■ BUREIJ REFUGEE CAMP (GAZA STRIP)

What was once Gaza's busiest thoroughfare has become a terrifying escape route for Palestinian civilians fleeing combat on foot or on donkey carts. On their way south, those running for their lives said they raised their hands and waved white flags to move past Israeli tanks along the four-lane highway. Some reported Israeli soldiers firing at them and said they passed bodies strewn alongside the road.

Many escaped with just the clothes on their back. One woman, covered head-to-toe in a black veil and robe, cradled a toddler and clutched a black purse. A man walked alongside a covered donkey cart that transported his family. It was piled high with mattresses.

In the north of the Gaza Strip, Israeli ground forces backed by relentless airstrikes have encircled Gaza City, the base of Hamas' power, since the

weekend. They cut the strip in half and sought to drive Palestinians from northern Gaza as troops advanced. From early on in the war, now in its second month, the army has urged civilians to move south, including by announcing brief windows for what it said would be safe passage through Salah al-Din, which runs through the centre of the besieged enclave.

But tens of thousands of civilians have remained in the north, many sheltering in hospitals or United Nations facilities. Those who have stayed put say they are deterred by overcrowding in the south, along with dwindling water and food supplies, and continued Israeli airstrikes in what are supposed to be safe areas. Some said fear of the treacherous journey, following reports from other travellers about coming under fire, initially made them hesitate.

On Monday, Health Ministry in Gaza spokesperson Ashraf al-Qidra dismissed the Israeli offers of safe passage as

"nothing but death corridors". He said bodies have lined the road for days, and called for the International Committee of the Red Cross to accompany local ambulances to retrieve the dead.

Israel's military said that, at one point, troops came under Hamas fire when trying to open the road temporarily for civilians. Israel's Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu echoed the army's claims in an interview with ABC News broadcast late Monday.

"We are fighting an enemy that is particularly brutal. They are using their civilians as human shields, and while we are asking the Palestinian civilian population to leave the war zone, they are preventing them at gunpoint," Netanyahu said.

The claims could not be verified independently.

During a four-hour evacuation window Sunday, fewer than 2,000 made the move, followed by about 5,000 on Monday, according to UN monitors. Some of those were from

Gaza City and the adjacent Shati refugee camp, fleeing Monday after heavy Israeli bombardment there overnight.

"Last night was very difficult," said Amal, a young woman who declined to give her family name due to safety concerns. She was part of a group of 17 people making the journey Monday. She said tanks fired near the group. Soldiers then ordered everyone to raise their hands and white flags before being allowed to pass.

Nour Naji Abu Nasser, 27, arrived Sunday in Khan Younis in southern Gaza. She described an hours-long frightening journey. "They fired at the sand around us," she said, adding that she saw bodies lying along the road outside Gaza City. Once those fleeing the north had reached the evacuation zone, residents from the Bureij refugee camp along the highway offered water — a scarce resource in wartime Gaza — to the evacuees.

Charles delivers first King's Speech to lay out British PM's agenda

PTI ■ LONDON

Britain's King Charles III on Tuesday delivered his first King's Speech, a tradition steeped in tradition and accompanied by royal pomp and ceremony, to lay out Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's plans for his government for the next parliamentary year. The 74-year-old monarch was joined by Queen Camilla for the ceremonial State Opening of Parliament, which symbolises the independence of the House of Commons through its royal pageantry in the House of Lords.

The speech, which Charles began with a tribute to his late mother, Queen Elizabeth II, marked several firsts — including the first under the premiership of Sunak, Britain's first Prime Minister of Indian heritage. It also marks the first time a King has opened the British Parliament in more than 70



years, the last being Charles' grandfather and Queen Elizabeth II's father George VI in 1950.

And, though the speech is delivered by the King, it is actually put together by the Prime Minister of the day to set out his legislative agenda for the coming months.

"It is mindful of the legacy of service and devotion to this country set by my beloved mother, the late Queen, that I

deliver this, the first King's Speech in over 70 years," said Charles.

"My ministers' focus is on increasing economic growth and safeguarding the health and security of the British people for generations to come. My government will continue to take action to bring down inflation, to ease the cost of living for families and help businesses fund new jobs and investment," he said.

Donald Trump lashes out at judge, as he testifies in fraud trial

AP ■ NEW YORK

A defiant Donald Trump sparred with a New York judge and slammed the state attorney general suing him Monday, using the witness stand at his civil fraud trial to defend his riches and lash out at a case that imperils his real estate empire.

The former president's barbed testimony spurred the judge to admonish. "This is not a political rally," Trump's long-awaited testimony about property valuations and financial statements was punctuated by personal jabs at state Judge Arthur Engoron, who he said was biased against him, and New York Attorney General Letitia James, whom he derided as a "political hack".

He proudly boasted of his real estate business — "I'm worth billions of dollars more than the financial statements"



— and disputed claims that he had deceived banks and insurers.

"This is the opposite of fraud," he declared. Referring to James, a Democrat whose office brought the lawsuit, he said, "The fraud is her."

The testy exchanges and frequent rebukes from the judge underscored Trump's unwillingness to adapt his famously freewheeling rhetorical style to a formal courtroom setting governed by rules of evi-

dence and legal protocol.

His presence on the stand was a vivid reminder of the legal troubles he faces as he vies to reclaim the White House in 2024.

It also functioned as a campaign platform for the former president and leading Republican presidential candidate to raise anew to supporters his claims of political persecution at the hands of government lawyers and judges.

"People are sick and tired of what's happening. I think it is a very sad day for America," Trump told reporters outside the courtroom after roughly three-and-a-half hours on the stand.

The fraud case doesn't carry the prospect of prison as Trump's upcoming criminal cases do. But its allegations of financial impropriety cut to the very heart of the brand he spent decades crafting. Engoron has

already ruled that Trump committed fraud by inflating his financial statements, putting the the ex-president's future control of Trump Tower and his other marquee properties into question.

The non-jury trial addresses other claims in the lawsuit brought by James against Trump, his company and top executives, including his eldest sons. She wants the defendants to fork over what she claims is more than USD 300 million in ill-gotten gains and to be banned from doing business in New York.

The civil trial is one of numerous legal proceedings facing Trump as he runs for a second term, including federal and state charges accusing him of crimes including illegally hoarding classified documents and scheming to overturn the 2020 presidential election.

Britain's health service rolls out breast cancer prevention pill

PTI ■ LONDON

Thousands of women at increased risk of breast cancer are set to benefit from a risk-reducing drug to be offered by Britain's National Health Service (NHS) after it was licensed for use to help prevent the disease, the state-funded health service announced on Tuesday.

Anastrozole, which has been used for many years as a breast cancer treatment, has today been licensed by the UK's Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) as a preventive option — which it is hoped could help prevent thousands of breast cancer cases in England.

The drug, which is off-patent, has been shown in trials to reduce the incidence of the disease in post-menopausal women at increased risk of the disease by almost 50 per cent.

"Breast cancer is the most common cancer in the UK, so I'm delighted that another effective drug to help to prevent this cruel disease has now been approved," said UK Health Minister Will Quince. "We've already seen the positive effect Anastrozole can have in treating the disease when it has been detected in postmenopausal women and now we can use it to stop it developing at all in some women. This is a great example of NHS England's innovative Medicines Repurposing Programme supporting the development of new ways for NHS patients to benefit from existing treatments," he said.

Around 289,000 women at moderate or high risk of breast cancer could be eligible for the drug, and while not all will choose to take it, it is estimated that if 25 per cent do, around 2,000 cases of breast cancer

could potentially be prevented in England, while saving the NHS around GBP 15 million in treatment costs.

"This is the first drug to be repurposed through a world-leading new programme to help us realise the full potential of existing medicines in new uses to save and improve more lives on the NHS. Thanks to this initiative, we hope that greater access to anastrozole could enable more women to take risk-reducing steps if they'd like to, helping them live without fear of breast cancer," said NHS chief executive Amanda Pritchard.

The treatment is taken as a 1mg tablet, once a day for five years. Anastrozole is an aromatase inhibitor, which works by cutting down the amount of the hormone oestrogen that a patient's body makes by blocking an enzyme called "aromatase".

Scotland Yard urges protesters to call off Armistice Day march

London (PTI): Scotland Yard have issued an appeal to protesters planning demonstrations against the Israel-Gaza conflict on the streets of London this weekend to postpone their plans amid fears of criminal acts by breakaway groups on Armistice Day.

The Police said on Monday that it held meetings with organisers from a range of groups to ask them to reconsider organising marches that coincide with the commemoration of Britain's war martyrs annually, on November 11.

However, the organisers have declined to postpone their plans for another demonstration in line with the past few weekends when thousands have marched through the streets of London. Several arrests have

been made for criminal offences with over 1,000 officers on duty to police the protest last weekend. "The risk of violence and disorder linked to breakaway groups is growing," said Met Police Deputy Assistant Commissioner Ade Adebakan. "This is of concern ahead of a significant and busy weekend in the capital. Our message to organisers is clear: Please, we ask you to urgently reconsider. It is not appropriate to hold any protests in London this weekend," he said. Both British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Home Secretary Suella Braverman have issued statements to say that it is "provocative and disrespectful" to hold protests as the UK marks Armistice Day — when commemorative wreaths are laid at the war memorials.



President Joe Biden arrives to speak at the Amtrak Bear Maintenance Facility on Monday in Bear. AP/PTI

NATO freezes Cold War-era security agreement after Russia pulls out

AP ■ BRUSSELS

NATO member countries that signed a key Cold War-era security treaty froze their participation in the pact on Tuesday just hours after Russia pulled out, raising fresh questions about the future of arms control agreements in Europe.

Many of NATO's 31 allies are parties to the Treaty of Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, which was aimed at preventing Cold War rivals from massing forces at or near their mutual borders. The CFE was signed in November 1990 as the Soviet bloc was crumbling but was not fully ratified until two years later.

NATO said that Tuesday's action by its signatory members was required because "a situation whereby Allied State Parties abide by the Treaty, while Russia does not, would be unsustainable".

Earlier in the day, Moscow said it had finalized its withdrawal from the treaty. The long-expected move, which the Kremlin blamed in part on NATO's continued expansion closer to Russia's borders, came after lawmakers in Moscow approved a bill proposed by President Vladimir Putin denouncing the CFE.

US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan said suspending the obligations by Washington and its allies will strengthen NATO's "deterrence and defense capacity by removing restrictions that impact planning, deployments, and exercises -- restrictions that no longer bind Russia after Moscow's withdrawal".

Russia's actions "further demonstrates Moscow's contin-



A participant dressed in Red Army World War II uniform in the role of a military traffic controller takes part in a theatrical performance at an open air interactive museum to commemorate the 82nd anniversary of the World War II-era parade, at Red Square, in Moscow, Russia, on Monday, November 6.

ued disregard for arms control," he added. The German Foreign Ministry underscored that Berlin and its allies are not pulling out of the treaty. "In the case of a fundamental change in Russia's behaviour, a renewed implementation of the CFE remains possible," it said.

The ministry said Germany intends to stick to the national limits for weapons systems in the treaty. It criticised Moscow's withdrawal, saying that "Russia is destroying another pillar of our European security and arms control architecture."

"Securing a balanced conventional potential of forces in Europe cannot be realised without the involvement of Russia," it added. The treaty was one of a number of major arms control treaties involving Russia and the US that has been crippled in recent years.

Last week, Putin signed a bill revoking Russia's ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, a move that he said was needed to establish parity with the

United States. In February, with US-Russia tensions running high over Ukraine, Moscow suspended its participation in the New START Treaty, the last arms control pact that remains between the two countries. Both countries also pulled out of the 1987 Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty in 2019, blaming each other for violations.

The INF Treaty, which was signed by US President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, banned the production, testing and deployment of land-based cruise and ballistic missiles with a range of 500 to 5,500 kilometers (310 to 3,410 miles). William Alberque, director of Strategy, Technology and Arms Control at The International Institute for Strategic Studies, expressed concern that another arms control treaty is under threat.

"What is needed right now is more transparency, more risk reduction, more what we would call guardrails on competition," he said. "We basic-

ly need to manage the competition so that it doesn't spiral into crippling arms races."

When it was signed, the CFE envisaged weapons limits for the Warsaw Pact and NATO, but the Warsaw Pact ceased to exist shortly after it was signed. Unsuccessful attempts were made to renegotiate its conditions.

Russia suspended its participation in 2007, and in 2015 announced its intention to completely withdraw. In February 2022, Putin sent hundreds of thousands of Russian troops into Ukraine, which also shares borders with NATO members that signed the CFE: Poland, Romania and Hungary.

Announcing Moscow's withdrawal from the treaty had been completed, the Russian Foreign Ministry blamed the US and its allies for the move as well as the West's allegedly "destructive position" on the treaty. "We left the door open for a dialogue on ways to restore the viability of conventional arms control in Europe," it said. "However, our opponents did not take advantage of this opportunity."

The ministry said that "even the formal preservation" of the treaty has become "unacceptable from the point of view of Russia's fundamental security interests," citing developments in Ukraine and NATO's recent expansion. NATO said its members remain committed "to reduce military risk, and prevent misperceptions and conflicts." It said the alliance will continue to "consult on and assess the implications of the current security environment and its impact on the security" of the Euro-Atlantic region.

Top aide to Ukraine's military commander is killed by grenade given as birthday gift

Kyiv (AP) A top aide to Ukraine's commander in chief was killed by a grenade given to him as a birthday gift and not in a targeted attack, the interior minister said.

Maj Hennadii Chastiakov died in the tragic accident Monday that badly injured his 13-year-old son, Interior Minister Ihor Klymenko said on Telegram.

A colleague presented six new grenades as a gift to Chastiakov, who was a top aide and close friend to commander-in-chief Gen Valerii Zaluzhnyi, for his 39th birthday, Klymenko said.

Chastiakov was showing off the grenades to his family at home when his son took one and began twisting the ring.

"The serviceman then took the grenade from the child and pulled the ring, leading to a tragic explosion," Klymenko said.

Police are investigating the incident in the village of Chaiky in the Kyiv region.

The officer's death was the second fatal tragedy in less than a week for Ukraine's military. A Ukrainian brigade holding a ceremony in Zaporizhzhia to honor troops on Friday was struck by a Russian missile that killed 19 soldiers, one of the deadliest single attacks reported by Ukrainian forces.

The commander of the 128th Separate Mountain Assault Brigade, Dmytro Lysiuk, was suspended as authorities investigate why the Rocket Forces and Artillery Day event was held near the front line, where Russian reconnaissance drones could easily spot the gathering.

Australian leader calls for free trade to resume with China

AP ■ BEIJING

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese called for the "full resumption of free and unimpeded trade" with China in a meeting Tuesday with counterpart Li Qiang that marked the return of talks after a four-year hiatus.

A joint statement said the countries agreed to resume an annual leaders meeting, which had been halted by a sharp deterioration in relations during which China slapped tariffs and other restrictions on imports from Australia.

Ties have improved in the past year, and China has lifted some trade restrictions, which are estimated to have cost Australian exporters up to 20 billion Australian dollars (\$13 billion) a year. China has been a major market for Australia in a range of goods including coal, wine, beef, barley and lobsters. "We can grow the relationship while advancing our respective interests, if we wisely navigate when there are differences," said Albanese, the first Australian leader to visit China in seven years.

Li said China is willing to work with Australia to further strengthen dialogue and properly handle differences so that cooperation will be the main feature of their relations. China's official Xinhua News Agency said. Relations spiralled downward in recent years as the Australian government began to view China as a potential security threat.

Australia's parliament banned covert foreign interference in domestic politics, a move sparked by suspicion of Chinese interference. Soon after, the government banned Chinese-owned telecommuni-



Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, right, walks with Chinese Premier Li Qiang during a ceremonial welcome at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China, on Tuesday. AP/PTI

cations giant Huawei from rolling out its 5G network in Australia due to unspecified security concerns.

China was angered by Australia's call for an inquiry into the origins of the COVID-19 virus and the country's deepening security ties with the United States, notably the AUKUS agreement that also includes Britain and will provide Australia with submarines powered by US nuclear technology. Albanese, who has acknowledged differences with China throughout his trip, named climate change, food security and transnational crime as areas in which the two nations can cooperate.

Li said China is ready to strengthen cooperation in energy and mining and in new

areas such as green development, the digital economy, scientific and technological innovation and the health industry, Xinhua reported.

He called for avoiding the politicization of economic and trade issues and "overstretching the concept of security" to those areas, Xinhua said. Ahead of Albanese's visit, Australian journalist Cheng Lei was released in October after three years in detention in China under charges of espionage, a case that became a focal point in the tensions.

Albanese finished his China visit on Tuesday and headed to the Cook Islands, where he will join a leaders meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum to discuss climate change and other issues.

40 die in heavy rains in Kenya and Somalia

Nairobi (AP) Heavy rains and flash flooding have killed at least 40 people and displaced tens of thousands in Kenya and Somalia, aid agencies have reported.

In Somalia, the government declared an emergency after the extreme weather killed at least 25 people and destroyed homes, roads and bridges. Emergency and rescue workers were trying to reach an estimated 2,400 residents trapped by floodwaters in the Luuq district of southern Somalia's Jubaland state. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs warned of a high risk of flooding along the Juba and Shabelle rivers and called for the evacuation of people living along the entire stretch of the Juba.

"The Somalia Disaster Management Agency is swiftly responding to the crisis, with plans to dispatch a flight to Dollow and transport two boats from Kismayo to Luuq and one to Baardhere to assist with evacuations," Hassan Isse, the agency's managing director, told The Associated Press.

"The magnitude of the current floods is likely to deteriorate in the next few days due to the emergence of more water from upstream in the Ethiopian Highlands," Isse said.

The heavy rains follow four consecutive years of drought that pushed Somalia to the brink of famine. In neighbouring Kenya, the Kenya Red Cross said the death toll had risen to 15 since the heavy rains began Friday, with the port city of Mombasa and the northeastern counties of Mandera and Wajir the worst affected.

Special court adjourns cipher case hearing against Imran

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

A special court in Pakistan on Tuesday adjourned the hearing of the cipher case against jailed former prime minister Imran Khan until November 10 after recording statements of witnesses.

Special court judge Abul Hasanat Zulqarnain held the trial hearing in the high-security Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi where the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman has been kept since September 26 following his shifting from the Attock jail.

According to Khan's party, the trial under a special secret act was conducted within the jail premises. "Statements (were) recorded from witnesses by prosecution, (and) hearing (was) adjourned till Friday,

November 10," the party said in a brief statement. It was not clear how many witnesses recorded their statements.

On the last hearing on October 31, ten witnesses had come to record statements against 71-year-old Khan and 67-year-old former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, who is a co-accused in the case relating to the alleged leaking of a secret diplomatic cable (cipher) sent by the country's embassy in Washington in March last year.

The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) registered the case against Khan and Qureshi in August this year for violating Pakistan's secrecy laws by allegedly divulging details of the official diplomatic communication. The FIA filed a charge sheet against Khan and Qureshi

on September 30. It has invoked sections 5 and 9 of the Official Secrets Act which may lead to a death sentence, or two to 14 years imprisonment if convicted. The charge sheet added that Qureshi "aided and abetted" Khan and therefore was liable for the act in the same manner.

Khan, a former cricketer-turned-politician, and Qureshi were indicted on October 23 in the cipher case. They have pleaded not guilty.

On October 27, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) rejected petitions by Khan seeking post-arrest bail and the quashing of the FIR in the cipher case. He had approached the IHC with the pleas for bail in the case as well as against the FIR which was registered by the FIA in August.

PML-N, MQM-P to contest polls jointly against PPP in Sindh

PTI ■ LAHORE

In a surprise development, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and Karachi-based Muttahida Qaumi Movement on Tuesday announced an electoral alliance to contest the general elections against Bhuttos' Pakistan People's Party in Sindh province.

Both the PML-N and MQM leadership after their meeting in Lahore on Tuesday announced that they would jointly contest the February 8, 2024 general elections.

Former prime minister Nawaz Sharif-led PML-N needs the MQM, which has a strong base in the Karachi and Hyderabad districts of Sindh, to give a tough time to the PPP in the province, a stronghold of Bhuttos. Both the PML-N and PPP were allies in the previous PDM (Pakistan Democratic Movement) coalition government in which Shehbaz Sharif was the prime minister. However, since the incumbent military establishment reportedly struck a deal with PML-N supremo Nawaz

regarding bringing his party into power after the February polls, the relations soured between the two main political parties that have been repeatedly in power when the powerful military was not ruling the country.

There are also reports that the military establishment doesn't want the PPP to form a government in Sindh which has long been its stronghold. In the wake of this, the PML-N has been given the go-ahead to form a grand alliance in Sindh to beat the PPP.

'98 pc of China's dev funding to Pak is in form of less-than-generous loans'

PTI ■ KARACHI

As much as 98 per cent of China's development funding for its all-weather ally Pakistan came in the form of "less-than-generous loans," with only two per cent coming in the form of grants between 2000 and 2021, according to a research report.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), a global infrastructure and investment initiative by Beijing, was launched in 2013. It is thought to be the largest partnership of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). It increased to over USD 62 billion over time, and at least

USD 25 billion was invested in cash-strapped Pakistan.

"Out of the total Chinese development finance portfolio of USD 70.3 billion, committed between 2000 and 2021 in Pakistan, eight per cent was official development assistance (grants and highly concessional loans) and 89 per cent was other official sector loans," said a report in The News International, quoting AidData, a US-based research lab. With USD 14.0 billion in finance commitments, 2017 was the top year for Pakistan, following a decline in 2018, the amount increased again in 2019 and 2020, even with the pandemic. With a 9.84-year

maturity and a 3.74-year grace period, the average interest rate on loans is 3.72 per cent, the AidData said.

Stating that "Pakistan and China have a long history of economic collaboration, and this year marks ten years of such ties and it has helped Pakistan through all of its tough economic downturns and crises," the report pointed out that "(But) it's worrying that Chinese less-than-generous loans coupled with Pakistan's mismanagement have made Pakistan's debt load even higher."

AidData estimates that Pakistan's outstanding public and publicly guaranteed debt

to China stands at USD 67.22 billion, which is 19.6 per cent of the GDP, and USD 21.2 billion more than what Pakistan has officially reported to the World Bank's Debtor Reporting System, the media report said. Quoting Dr Ammar A. Malik, who is a senior research scientist at AidData, the newspaper said, "In terms of the composition of debt from China, since 2018 China has pivoted away from infrastructure lending toward emergency lending in Pakistan, ensuring that the earlier debts taken on by Pakistan for energy, transport, and other CPEC projects can be repaid on time and with interest."

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that my client Shankar Sahani is in process to purchase the Plot land area measuring 50 sq. yards pertaining to Khersa No. 255 and 256 Situated at Village Sahani Pargana Loni Tehsil & District Ghazabad Uttar Pradesh (avaluing loan from Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited) from Kusum, Mayank Kumar and Rukmani Devi, they inherited the property after the death of manoj Kumar, who acquired the said property vide Sale Deed dated 29.09.2014, executed by Smt. Meenakshi (Doc No. 8233). All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate)
Unit No. FF-2, First floor, Malakhumi Metro Tower Sec-4, Vashi, G.D., U.P. Mob. 9810063351

Amar Advocate
Enrollment no: D/10884/21
E-Mail: adv.amardelhi@gmail.com

PUBLIC NOTICE
My client Shri Birju Singh S/o Shri Jugo Singh R/o B-471, Metro Vihar, Holambi Kalan, Phase-I, District North, Delhi-110082 have severed/terminated all relationship from his son Shri Vikash Kumar S/o Shri Birju Singh (Aadhar Card no: 470430371790) R/o B-517, Metro Vihar, Holambi Kalan, Phase-I, District North, Delhi-110082 and disinherited/disowned him from their all movable and immovable properties due to his misbehaviors and non-compliance. In future if any person deals with the aforesaid debarred person, that shall be his/her own risk and costs and my client will not be responsible for the same in any manner.

Amar Advocate
Enrollment no: D/10884/21
E-Mail: adv.amardelhi@gmail.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
No. SSA-12020/25/2022-MIS-SSA/1/330155/2023 Date :06.11.2023
Mission Director, Samagra Shiksha Axom , Kahilipara, Guwahati-19,
Assam invites bids vide GEM/2023/B/4173096 Dated : 04.11.2023 for
Supply of Tablet Computer through GeM portal.
Interested bidder may visit GeM portal and submit their bid in GeM portal accordingly. The bid is also available in SSA website : https://ssa.assam.gov.in

Sd/-Mission Director,
Samagra Shiksha Axom
Kahilipara, Guwahati-19

OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER, CONSTRUCTION WING, UTTARAKHAND PEYJAL NIGAM
E-32, JUDGE FARM, HALDWANI, DISTT.- NAINITAL (PIN 263139)

Letter no. 2939/Nivida-Anubandh/Ranikhet/244 Dated: 06-11-2023

E-Tender Notice

- Name of the work:- Construction of Extension of Library at Dwarahat Engineering College, Almora, Uttarakhand**
- Estimated Cost:- Rs. 127.12 Lakh (without G.S.T.)**
- Period of Completion:- 15 Months**
- Date and Time of availability of Bid documents in the portal:- 07-11-2023 (12.00 hrs)**
- Online Bid submission: End date :- 25-11-2023 (17.00 hrs)**
- Date & Time of Technical bid Opening:- 29-11-2023 (11.00 hrs)**
- Name and Address of the Officer inviting bid:- General Manager (Kumaon), Nirman Wing, Uttarakhand Pey Jal Nigam, Haldwani.**
- Pre-bid meeting details (if required) Date & Place :- 10-11-2023 (11.00 hrs) Project Manager, Construction Unit, Uttarakhand Peyjal Nigam, Ranikhet (Almora).**
- For further details, details of subsequent Amendment / correction documentation etc. may be obtained from the e-Procurement portal www.ukttenders.gov.in**

GENERAL MANAGER

verka
THE PUNJAB STATE COOPERATIVE MILK PRODUCERS FEDERATION LTD.
SCO 163-165, SECTOR 34-A, CHANDIGARH-160022. EPABX No. 0172-5041812,66

Notice Inviting Tender
www.verka.coop

e tenders are hereby invited for the supply of following items:-

Name of Work/Item	Period/Tentative Qty
For Verka Head Office, Sector-34 A, Chandigarh	Annual
1. Freezer On Wheel	
- 100-110 Ltr.	15 Units
- 200 Ltr.	85 Units
2. BOPP TAPE	
- Jumbo Tape 650 Mtr.	150 Boxes
- Bopp Tape 65 Mtr.	746 Boxes
- Bopp Tape 100 Mtr.	1490 Boxes
3. GDL	19 MT
4. Paper Gallon	
- 2 Ltr.	8 K
- 4 Ltr.	3 K
- 5 Ltr.	86 K
5. Shrink Film	23 MT

NOTE:
1. For complete details regarding above tender (NIT), please visit our website i.e. www.verka.coop & e Tendering portal i.e. eproc.punjab.gov.in.
2. Corrigendum, if any, will be uploaded on website only.

Incharge (Purchase)

PRAKASH WOOLLEN & SYNTHETIC MILLS LIMITED

Regd. office. 18th KM Stone, Delhi Moradabad Road, NH24, Village-Amhera, Distt: J.P.NAGAR-244102, U.P.
CIN-L17291UP1979PLC004804
PH: 8791001430, 9760091983, Email: info@prakashwoollen.com, Website: www.prakashwoollen.com

Extract of Standalone Unaudited Results for the Quarter And Half Year Ended 30/09/2023

Particulars	(Rs in lakhs)					
	3 months ended (30.09.2023)	Peceding 3 months ended (30.06.2023)	Corresponding 3 months ended in the previous year (30.09.2022)	Year to date figures for current period ended (30.09.2023)	Year to date figures for the previous year ended (30/09/2022)	Previous year ended (31.03.2023)
	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Unaudited)	(Audited)
Total income from operations (net)	2499.39	1640.32	2041.67	4139.71	4220.55	10371.96
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before Tax and Exceptional items	(153.74)	(16.50)	(219.58)	(170.24)	(388.92)	(515.75)
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before tax and after Exceptional items	(153.74)	(16.50)	(219.58)	(170.24)	(388.92)	(515.75)
Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after tax and Exceptional items	(92.72)	(66.10)	(215.25)	(158.82)	(381.00)	(503.90)
Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit / (Loss) for the period (after tax) and Other Comprehensive Income (after tax))	(92.72)	(66.10)	(215.25)	(158.82)	(381.00)	(503.90)
Equity Share Capital (Face value Rs 10 each)	1025.98	1025.98	1025.98	1025.98	1025.98	1025.98
Other equity	-	-	-	-	-	-
Earnings per share for discontinued & continuing operations (of Rs. 10/- each):						
(a) Basic	(0.90)	(0.64)	(2.10)	(1.55)	(3.71)	(4.91)
(b) Diluted	(0.90)	(0.64)	(2.10)	(1.55)	(3.71)	(4.91)

Notes:
1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly Unaudited Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly Unaudited Financial Results are available on the website of the Stock Exchange (www.bseindia.com) and on Company's website (www.prakashwoollen.com)

By Order of The Board
For Prakash Woollen & Synthetic Mills Limited
Sd/-
Vijay Kumar Gupta
Whole Time Director & CFO
DIN: 00333325

Place : Village Amhera (Amroha)
Date : 07-11-2023

'India needs to integrate into global value chains, adapt to emerging trading systems'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

NITI Aayog CEO B V R Subrahmanyam on Tuesday emphasised on the need for India to integrate into global value chains and adapt swiftly to emerging trading systems, according to an official statement.

While addressing a thematic workshop on 'Inclusive Trade for Growth & Prosperity' organised by NITI Aayog, Subrahmanyam also highlighted the need for a non-discriminatory and inclusive trading system which facilitates trade as an engine of growth and prosperity.

Also speaking at the event,



NITI Aayog member Arvind Virmani highlighted the need for strengthening key areas such as labour-intensive supply chains, institutional factors for policy framing and simplifying taxation system, and integrating payment, refund and export credit systems especially for MSMEs.

Virmani also pointed out the need to address various anti-dumping issues and the need to foster free trade agreements with potential partners.

NITI Aayog member Ramesh Chand stressed on the need of reducing non-tariff barriers; mobilizing resources for scaling up aid for trade, particularly for MSMEs in developing

and least-developed countries; and digital inclusion in three areas -- infrastructure, skills and data ownership.

NITI Aayog is organising a series of thematic workshops on key agendas of New Delhi Leader's Declaration (NDLD) to devise actionable strategies and plans that can be implemented to provide impetus to growth and prosperity of the country.

Other thematic workshops are focused on topics of SDGs (sustainable development goals), roadmap for tourism, digital public infrastructure, India and African Union cooperation, data for development, women-led development, etc.

DGCA issues show cause notice to Air India

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Aviation watchdog DGCA has issued a show cause notice to Air India for non-compliance with norms pertaining to facilities that are required to be provided to passengers.

Last year, the regulator imposed a penalty of Rs 10 lakh on Air India for not complying with the provisions of Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) on denied boarding of passengers.

In order to ensure compliance of passenger-centric CARs, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) on Tuesday said it has been carrying out inspections of scheduled domestic airlines at various major airports on a continuing basis since May 2023.

"During the inspections of the airlines, it was observed that Air India was not complying with the provisions of the relevant CAR.

"Accordingly, a show cause notice has been issued to Air India seeking their response for non-compliance to the provisions of the CAR," the DGCA said in a release.

There was no immediate comment from Air India about the show cause notice.

The regulator also said it is imperative to continuously strengthen the rights of the passengers and ensure that the airline operates under harmonised conditions in line with the best global practices. Domestic air passenger traffic has been rising in India, which is one of the fastest growing civil aviation markets in the world.

Air India-Vistara merger remains on course, says Singapore Airlines



PTI ■ SINGAPORE

Singapore Airlines on Tuesday said the proposed merger of Air India and Vistara "remains on course" and is subject to approvals from regulators as well as competition authorities in several jurisdictions.

Once the merger is complete, Singapore Airlines (SIA) will have a 25.1 per cent stake in Air India. Currently, Singapore Airlines owns a 49 per cent shareholding in Vistara, and the remaining 51 per cent stake is with the Tata Group.

"The proposed merger of Air India and Vistara remains on course, with the Competition Commission of India approving the transaction in September 2023.

"It remains subject to foreign direct investment approval, as well as approvals from other regulators and competition authorities in several jurisdictions including those from India's Directorate General of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Civil Aviation, and National Company Law Tribunal, and the Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore," SIA Group said in a release on Tuesday.

While announcing the group's financial performance for the first half of the financial year 2023-24, SIA also said that when the merger is complete, it will get a 25.1 per cent stake in an enlarged Air India Group with a significant presence in all key Indian airline market segments.

India is one of the world's fastest-growing civil aviation markets and Air India, which was acquired by Tata Group in January 2022, has embarked on an ambitious revival and expansion plan.

In the first half of the 2023-24 fiscal, SIA Group reported a 55.4 per cent jump in net profit to SGD 1,441 million from USD 927 million in the year-ago period. Its total revenue jumped 8.9 per cent to SGD 9,162 million from SGD 8,417 million in the same

period a year ago.

As of September 30, the group had an operating fleet of 202 aircraft comprising 195 passenger aircraft and 7 freighters. SIA's operating fleet comprised 140 passenger aircraft and 7 freighters while Scoot had 55 passenger aircraft.

The Group has 96 aircraft on order.

Industry-wide, SIA said robust demand for air travel continued into the Northern Summer travel season, led by the rebound in passenger traffic to North Asia with the full reopening of China, Hong Kong SAR, Japan, and Taiwan.

SIA and non-frill carrier Scoot carried 17.4 million passengers in the first six months of the current fiscal, an increase of 52.3 per cent year-on-year. Passenger traffic grew 38 per cent from a year before.

"For the Northern Summer 2024 operating season (31 March 2024 to 26 October 2024), SIA will ramp up services to destinations across its network. This includes restoring Airbus A380 services to Frankfurt, deploying widebody Airbus A350-900 medium-haul aircraft to Cairns and Male, and reinstating direct services between Singapore and Barcelona.

"Flight frequencies will be increased to reach or exceed pre-pandemic levels across multiple points. These include Ahmedabad (India), Beijing and Shanghai (China), Copenhagen (Denmark), Da Nang (Vietnam), Darwin, Melbourne, and Perth (Australia), Dubai (the United Arab Emirates), Tokyo-Haneda (Japan), and Seattle and Houston (the United States of America)," the release said.

According to SIA, the demand for air freight remained soft due to inventory overhang, as well as geopolitical and macroeconomic headwinds. Increased competition and softer demand also contributed to the downward pressure on cargo yields, which fell by 46.2 per cent from a year before, it added.

Over 80% businesses making partially automated payments to suppliers: Survey

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Reflecting increased automation in the payments system in India, a survey on Tuesday said 84 per cent of businesses have partially automated payments to suppliers.

The survey commissioned by American Express with the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) is based on responses from 513 entities across sectors and

industries included sole enterprises, micro businesses, small and medium businesses as well as large businesses.

As per the survey, 34 per cent of businesses that haven't fully automated their payments are seeking partners for the purpose.

"A substantial 84 per cent of Indian businesses have taken steps to partially automate payments to their suppliers, with an impressive 39 per

cent achieving full automation of their payment processes," Manish Kapoor, Vice President and Head, Global Commercial Services (GCS), American Express Banking, India, said.

As the business landscape becomes increasingly competitive, Kapoor said, "The need to adopt smarter and more efficient payment solutions becomes paramount."

"For example, corporate cards,

with their offering of extended payment terms, rewards on B2B expenditures, and seamless payment convenience, can make their spends more rewarding and efficient, effectively earning as they spend," he said.

The survey further said 58 per cent of those who have fully automated payment processes said they have seen faster and more accurate invoicing.

As per the survey, 86 per cent

of the businesses said they either plan to start automating or increase the level of automation for receiving payments from customers.

Furthermore, 83 per cent intend to increase their current level of automation of payments made to suppliers.

A total of 72 per cent of businesses are expected to increase spend on travel, entertainment, and expenses, the survey added.

Markets snap 3 days of rally; settle marginally lower

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices snapped three days of rally to settle marginally lower on Tuesday amid weak trends in Asian and European markets along with unabated foreign fund outflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dipped 16.29 points or 0.03 per cent to settle at 64,942.40. During the day, it declined 320.59 points or 0.49 per cent to 64,638.10.

The Nifty slipped 5.05 points or 0.03 per cent to 19,406.70.

Among the Sensex firms, Bajaj Finance, JSW Steel, Reliance Industries, Mahindra & Mahindra, ITC, Tata Consultancy Services, Wipro, HDFC Bank, Larsen & Toubro and Bharti Airtel were the major laggards.

Sun Pharma, NTPC, State Bank of India, IndusInd Bank and Axis Bank were the major gainers.

"The market witnessed some resistance at higher levels as caution prevails due to the start of the key state elections, and further negative global cues on account of a more than expected fall in Chinese exports, highlighting a continued slowdown in global trade.

Despite the extension of supply cuts by Saudi Arabia and Russia, crude oil prices moderated, a positive for India in the midst of geopolitical tension. This, along with the moderation in the US bond yields and the positive ongoing earnings season, will support long-term returns," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge climbed 0.53 per cent and smallcap index advanced 0.38 per cent.

Rupee falls 5 paise to close at 83.26 against US dollar on FII outflows

PTI ■ MUMBAI

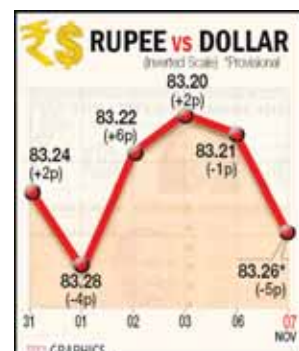
The rupee settled lower by 5 paise at 83.26 (provisional) against the US dollar in a range-bound trade on Tuesday, tracking a strong American currency overseas and sustained foreign fund outflows.

Forex traders said a negative trend in domestic equities also weighed on the local unit while a correction in oil prices provided support to the currency.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.23 and touched a low of 83.27 against the greenback. It finally settled at 83.26 (provisional) against the dollar, registering a loss of 5 paise from its previous close.

On Monday, the rupee had settled lower at 83.21 against the US dollar.

Forex traders said the rupee is expected to witness range-bound trade, as investors resorted to dollar buying on account of demand from FPIs, oil and External Commercial borrowing (ECB) redemptions.



pullback by the dollar index. The dollar moved up as a US Federal Bank official indicated the need for more interest rate hikes to control inflation, said Praveen Singh - Associate VP, Fundamental Currencies and Commodities, Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

Apart from other speakers, the US Fed chairman is scheduled to speak on Wednesday and Thursday and traders may look to see if he backs up the hawkish stance, Singh said.

According to Singh, rupee is likely to trade in a small range on Wednesday also as RBI keeps a control on the rupee value after a small upside was seen on Monday. "RBI has been selling US dollars since the last two months, keeping the rupee well under control and not allowing it to cross 83.30," Singh said.

Foreign institutional investors (FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Monday as they sold shares worth Rs 549.37 crore, according to exchange data.

Eveready Q2FY'24 net profit jumps 73% on easing input cost

PTI ■ KOLKATA

Battery and flashlight major Eveready Industries India Ltd (EIL) on Tuesday reported a 73.5 per cent increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 25.44 crore for the second quarter of the current fiscal on easing input cost.

The city-based company had posted a net profit of Rs 14.73 crore in the corresponding quarter last fiscal, the company said in a regulatory filing.

Revenue from operation during the July-September quarter was lower by three per cent to Rs 364.9 crore as compared to Rs 375.7 crore in the year-ago period.

Operating EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation, and amortisation) margin improved to 12.7 per cent from 11.4 per cent in the second quarter of the 2022-23 fiscal.

Eveready Industries said the revenue performance was nearly flat owing to the distribution revamp, which is expected to normalise in the coming quarters.

Battery-operated flashlights continued to degrow despite healthy growth in rechargeable category, it said.

"Favourable trends in key raw materials and stability in exchange rate created suitable conditions for margin expansion," the company said in a statement.

"Our emphasis to grow within our existing business mix saw us successfully execute a very complex route to market in our distribution structure," Eveready Industries Managing Director Suvamoy Saha said.

The initial moderation in uptake in batteries is expected to resolve in the coming quarters as stocks get replenished via more efficient pathways, he said.

PLI disbursement for white goods likely to start from Q4: DPIIT secretary

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government is expected to start disbursement of fiscal incentives under PLI for white goods in the last quarter of this financial year as certain selected beneficiary firms have started production, DPIIT Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh said on Tuesday.

The production linked incentive (PLI) scheme on white goods seeks to encourage domestic manufacturing of air conditioners and LED light components.

"In the last quarter (January-

March), we are expecting some disbursements," Singh told reporters on the sidelines of the India Korea Business Partnership Forum meeting here. Of the 64 selected beneficiaries of the PLI scheme, 15 have started production. These 15 beneficiaries had opted for a gestation period of up to March 31, 2022. Rest of the beneficiaries who opted for gestation period of up to March 31, 2023 are at different stages of implementation.

The scheme is to be implemented over a seven-year period, from 2021-22 to 2028-29

and has an outlay of Rs 6,238 crore. Singh also said that in PLI sectors like auto and white goods, gestation period is longer and companies have to cross the investment threshold to qualify for the incentives, which takes time.

This is the design of the scheme and investments and production have to be front-loaded and then benefits are provided, the secretary said.

Till March, Rs 2,900 crore worth incentives have been disbursed under the Rs 1.98 lakh crore PLI scheme.

Approval of the Rs 1,000 crore

additional incentives for this year has been granted for companies engaged in electronics manufacturing.

He said that some of the sectors in the PLI scheme like electronics, mobile manufacturing, pharma and food processing are doing well while in some sectors like textiles, certain correction is needed.

On semiconductor manufacturing, he said the government is encouraging the private sector to come forward and take advantage of opportunities in the semiconductor sector in India.

SEZs should be allowed to sell goods in domestic market on payment of duty foregone on inputs: GTRI

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government should consider allowing the sale of products manufactured in Special Economic Zones (SEZs) in the domestic market on payment of duty foregone on inputs as that would help promote value addition, think tank GTRI said on Tuesday.

At present, units in SEZs are allowed to sell their products in the Domestic Tariff Area (DTA or domestic market) on payment of duties on an output basis (finished goods).

The Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI) said the gov-

ernment already allows DTA sales on payment of duty foregone on input basis to firms operating under the 'Manufacturing and Other Operations in Warehouse Regulations (MOOWR)' scheme.

The government can "extend the same concession to the SEZs for parity sake. This will encourage value addition within the SEZ, as in most cases, the tariff on finished products is higher than on inputs," GTRI Co-Founder Ajay Srivastava said.

He added that SEZ units could be incentivised to increase



value addition to avail the benefit of DTA sales, which could further enhance technological advancement and skill development.

These zones are treated as foreign territories for trade and

duties, with restrictions on duty-free domestic sales. Companies operating within SEZs are allowed to import materials and components duty-free, with the condition that the finished goods pro-

duced are meant to be exported out of India and sold in the Indian domestic market on payment of applicable duties on the output. On demand of units in SEZs that they should be permitted to sell their products in the domestic market without paying import duties, the GTRI said and added that this would distort the export focus as well as lead to a loss of revenue for the government.

"SEZ units are intended to be export-oriented. If goods from SEZs are allowed into the DTA on the same terms as free trade agreement imports, this might disincentivise exports and turn

these zones into back doors for importing goods duty-free for the domestic market, defeating the purpose of having export-focused zones," it said.

Such a move would also adversely affect the domestic industry by the influx of SEZ-made goods sold at lower prices due to duty exemption.

"This could lead to unfair competition and potential job losses in domestic manufacturing sectors," Srivastava said.

According to him, the government will lose customs revenue if SEZ-produced goods are sold in the domestic market without import duties.

BUSINESS BRIEF

'SIB FINATHON' ORGANISED
New Delhi: South Indian Bank (SIB), in collaboration with Enactus - Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi held recently a hackathon competition titled 'SIB Finathon' wherein students from IIT across the country participated. Team Akatsuki from IIT, Delhi bagged the first prize followed by Team Hyperpersonalizers from IIT Roorkee and Team Phantom from Coimbatore Institute of Technology (CIT) stood third position.

VIGILANCE AWARENESS WEEK CONCLUDES
New Delhi: The valedictory function of the Vigilance Awareness Week was held at POWERGRID, NR-1, RHQ, Faridabad in a remarkable manner. During the Valedictory Ceremony, distinguished Chief Guest, Sharad Kumar, DIG, CISO, Faridabad graced the occasion and AK Mishra, ED (NR-1) welcomed the Chief Guest.

PFC HOLDS VIGILANCE AWARENESS WEEK
New Delhi: Power Finance Corporation (PFC) celebrated Vigilance Awareness Week-2023 with a series of impactful events and activities that upheld the spirit of integrity, transparency, and commitment to a corruption-free nation. The week-long celebration commenced on October 30, 2023, with an Integrity Pledge administered by Parminder Chopra, CMD, PFC, in the presence of Simmi R Nakra, CVO, and Manoj Sharma, Director (Commercial), setting the tone for the week ahead.

MOU ON GREENER FUTURE SOLUTIONS INKED
New Delhi: Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited, a leading power utility supplying electricity to a populace of 7 million in North Delhi, and India's premier institution Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Roorkee, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to research and develop pioneering solutions for optimal use of energy, leading to greener and sustainable future through its 'Urja Arpan' initiative.

BURNS WARD, STROKE CENTRE AT NARUVI HOSP SOON



Chennai: Naruvi Hospitals, Vellore, will soon have its own full-fledged, dedicated Burns Ward and Stroke Centre, Dr GV Sampath, Chairman, said on Tuesday. Interacting with journalists at Naruvi Hospitals, Dr Sampath said that while they were treating people with burn injuries and also providing treatment for people suffering from stroke, they had decided to launch two new facilities to provide comprehensive, holistic care.

IGA SWIATEK NO. 1 AGAIN

AP ■ CANCUN (MEXICO)

Right after relinquishing the No. 1 ranking two months ago, Iga Swiatek couldn't help but worry about trying to regain it. "It's hard not to think about stuff like that," she explained. And then Swiatek realized it was better to set that sort of thing aside and, instead, simply focus on playing her best tennis - and her best is better than anyone else's at the moment. Swiatek earned her first WTA Finals title and clinched the year-end No. 1 ranking by overwhelming Jessica Pegula 6-1, 6-0 on Monday in the latest in a series of dominant performances. "Today was like a highlight of this mental (approach) - just being narrow with your head, only thinking about the right stuff," said Swiatek, a 22-year-old from Poland who is the youngest WTA Finals champion since Petra Kvitova was 21 in 2011. Swiatek went 5-0 at the tour's season-closing championship, winning all 10 sets she played and ceding a total of just 20 games. That's the fewest by the winner at the event for the top eight women in tennis since the round-robin format returned in 2003. "She clearly really wanted that ranking," Pegula said. "I mean, you could tell by the way she was competing here... She was, like today, crushing people." Swiatek extended her winning streak to 11 matches and improved to 68-11 in 2023 with six trophies, including her



fourth career Grand Slam title at the French Open in June. Pegula called it "an amazing year." This victory allows Swiatek to return to No. 1, a spot she held from April 2022 until this September, when Aryna

Sabalenka overtook her after the U.S. Open. In Cancun, Swiatek defeated Sabalenka in a semifinal that began Saturday, was suspended by rain, then finished on Sunday. Pegula, a 29-year-old American, had-

n't dropped a set entering Monday. By beating No. 1 Sabalenka and No. 4 Elena Rybakina in the group stage, eliminating her doubles partner, No. 3 Coco Gauff, in the semifinals and taking on No. 2 Swiatek, Pegula became the

first woman to face each of the top four players in the world at one event since the start of the WTA rankings in 1975. But Pegula's nine-match winning streak was stopped emphatically by Swiatek. Swiatek finished with more winners, 9-6, and far fewer unforced errors, 23-6. She broke Pegula five times while only facing one break point herself - and it came as Swiatek served for the match in the last game. Swiatek won 25 of 36 points in the first set, and 26 of 36 in the second. "It just was one of those days where I felt like I was going for too much," Pegula said. "And she was just playing super solid." When it ended, Swiatek dropped to her back, then sat up and yelled. Some spectators waved red-and-white Polish flags. During the trophy presentation, fans showered her with chants of "Iga!" The final was played under a mostly blue sky and with far less wind than players were forced to contend with throughout the week. And, most importantly, there wasn't a drop of rain. Laura Siegemund of Germany and Vera Zvonareva of Russia won the doubles title by beating Nicole Melichar-Martinez of the U.S. and Ellen Perez of Australia 6-4, 6-4. The singles and doubles title matches both originally were scheduled to be contested Sunday, then were pushed back after a series of showers affected play. "It hasn't hasn't been the easiest week," Pegula told the crowd, "for any of us."



Chhetri admits he's in 'bonus period' but yet to decide on retirement

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

By his own admission, Indian football talisman Sunil Chhetri is in the "bonus period" of his illustrious career but he has not set any retirement date. One thing is, however, certain that the 39-year-old Chhetri will not be playing in 2026 when the football World Cup happens. "I'm just happy that I'm here. This is the bonus period, I'm just enjoying it, I don't know when it's going to end. I just want to enjoy it," Chhetri said ahead of India's 2026 World Cup second round qualifiers matches later this month. "Because I'm 39, I don't have long-term targets as far as me being on the pitch is concerned. I think about the next three months, and then the next three months, and then we see how it goes," he was quoted as saying by fifa.com. India have been drawn in Group A along with Qatar, Kuwait and Afghanistan. They play Kuwait in an away match on November 16 before taking on Qatar in Bhubaneswar on November 21. The group winners and runners-up from each of the nine groups advance to the third round of the 2026 World Cup qualifiers. The 18 teams will be divided into three groups of six teams in the third round. The top two teams of each group qualify directly for the 2026 World Cup, while the third and fourth-placed teams advance to the fourth round, which will decide two more Asian qualifiers for the showpiece. Chhetri will be less than two months short of his 42nd birthday when the next FIFA World Cup happens in June 2026, and he is realistic enough to accept that playing at the global showpiece may be beyond him. "When I dream, I dream more as an Indian, more as a fan. Me being there in any capacity, it doesn't matter, because I know I'll be a fan. I'll be watching every game that India plays and rooting for my country. "Right now, I feel really good physically. I can see that I do contribute to the team, both for my country and my club. As long as I'm enjoying it, I will be here. "I don't know how many days, how many months, how many

years that will be. The day I stop enjoying, and the day I can't contribute, I will be done." Chhetri has played for India 143 times since making his debut in 2005 and has scored 93 goals, the most by an Indian. He is currently the third most prolific scorer in international football among active players, behind Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi. He said the national team has grown under head coach Igor Stimac, who took charge in 2019. "If you see our performances, four years back and now, anyone will tell you there is a good jump. And that is something that has happened because of Igor Stimac and the entire team. Everyone has chipped in together, and everyone has pulled each other up. "He (Stimac) is more than a coach, he is more like a father figure - or an elder brother for people like me who are fossils - to everyone. He understands and takes that part of his coaching job very seriously. "He knows the psyche, he understands what a player is going through, what he needs. That is why you will see all the players are very happy with him," said Chhetri about Stimac who helped Croatia finish third in the 1998 World Cup. Away from the football field, Chhetri and his wife Sonam Bhattacharya were blessed with their son Dhruv in August. Chhetri said that has changed his perspective on life. "For the first five days, I didn't sleep because of excitement. I was awake the whole night just looking at him and talking to him. On the sixth day, my wife told me I had to sleep in a different room as she was worried I was too tired and was going to get injured. "It's such an experience which can only be felt. Once you hold your baby, it is unbelievable. When I held my son for the first time, everything about you changes, the way you think about life changes. "I just want to go back home wherever I am. Whenever I am going for an away trip, I just want to finish the games and go back home." India is unlikely to qualify for the 2026 World Cup despite 48 teams competing with Asia getting eight direct slots, but Chhetri said it will be a humongous achievement if it happens.



Indian women's hockey team reclaims best-ever 6th position in world rankings

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Indian women's hockey team has reclaimed its best-ever sixth place ranking in the world following its stupendous show in the just-concluded Asian Champions Trophy and the Hangzhou Asian Games. India are now placed sixth ahead of England with 2368.83 rating points. The Indian women were placed eighth before the Asian Games but the bronze medal at the continental showpiece and the title triumph at Asian Champions Trophy in Ranchi, where they remained unbeaten, has catapulted the side back to its best-ever world ranking, last achieved during the FIH Pro League in June last year.

The Netherlands continued to be ranked as the best women's hockey team in the world with 3422.40 points, followed by Australia in second place with 2817.73 points and Argentina at third with 2766.90 points. The other two teams ranked above India are Belgium at fourth with 2608.77 points and Germany at fifth with 2573.72 points. The jump in world ranking is a big shot in the arm for the team in its preparation for the forthcoming FIH Hockey Olympic Qualifiers, scheduled to be held from January 13 to 19 in Ranchi. The Indians will battle it out against Germany, New Zealand, Japan, Chile, the United States, Italy and Czech Republic in a bid to qualify for next year's Paris Olympics.

PSG fan and police officer stabbed in clashes ahead of UEFA Champions League match in Milan

AP ■ MILAN

A Paris Saint-Germain fan is seriously injured and a police officer is also in hospital after both were stabbed in clashes between the supporters of the French team and AC Milan. According to Italian media, a group of around 50 Milan fans - wearing masks and helmets and throwing flares - attacked PSG supporters in the lively Navigli area of the Italian city on the eve of Tuesday's UEFA Champions League match between the teams. A PSG fan was rushed to hospital after being stabbed twice in the leg. There were also clashes between PSG supporters and police. An officer was stabbed and the alleged culprit was arrested. A Newcastle United fan was stabbed in the same area of the city before Milan's other home match in the Champions League, against the Premier League team, in September. Milan, which reached the semifinals last season, is bottom of Group F and without a win or a goal in this season's competition.

AFC Cup: Odisha FC beat Maldives' Maziya 3-2 after being two-goal down



PTI ■ MALE (MALDIVES)

Indian Super League side Odisha FC came back from a two-goal deficit to defeat Maldives Sports & Recreation of Maldives 3-2 in a Group D away match of the AFC Cup here on Tuesday. The win kept Odisha's hopes of advancing to the Inter-Zone semifinals of the AFC Cup (the continent's second tier club competition) alive while the defeat leaves Maziya on the ropes. Maziya took the lead in the second minute, following a fine team move with Aisam dribbling his way into the Odisha box before laying off for Naiz Hassan, who scored with a simple finish.

Odisha, who defeated Maziya 6-1 in the home fixture, came close to scoring in the seventh minute when Lalathanga Khawhring burst into the area before setting up Cy Goddard, who sent his shot wide. Odisha's Roy Krishna then saw his effort blocked in the 12th minute. The Indian side, however, suffered another jolt in the 25th minute when they conceded a penalty following Mourtada Fall's tackle on Vojislav Balabanovic, who coolly converted from the spot. Maziya dominated the rest of the half and came close to scoring again in the 42nd minute when Balabanovic set up Hamza Mohamed, whose shot forced a

save from Odisha keeper Amrinder Singh. Odisha came back fighting in the second half. They reduced the margin in the 65th minute off a corner kick with Mourtada Fall nodding home Ahmed Jahouh cross. The goal spurred Odisha further as they levelled the tie in the 72nd minute with Jahouh sending a fine cross for Diego Mauricio to head home from inside the six-yard-box. Odisha completed the comeback in the 85th minute with Krishna netting the winning goal. Odisha face another Indian side Mohun Bagan on November 27 in Kolkata, while Maziya meet Bangladesh's Bashundhara Kings on the same day in Dhaka.

AP ■ MADRID

Bellingham available for Real Madrid in Champions League match against Braga

Real Madrid will have Jude Bellingham available for the Champions League match against Braga on Wednesday, when it will go for its fourth straight win in Group C. Bellingham has been nursing an injury to his left shoulder sustained in the Spanish league match against Rayo Vallecano on Sunday, but he trained on Tuesday. Madrid leads the group with nine points, three more than Napoli and six more than Braga. Napoli hosts winless Union Berlin in the other group match on Wednesday. Madrid has qualified for the knockout rounds in all 27 of its previous campaigns. When Bellingham trained with the

rest of his teammates, he showed no apparent sign of pain. Madrid coach Carlo Ancelotti said the midfielder player was taken out for parts of the practice session to avoid any knocks on the shoulder. "I don't know if he will play, but he recovered well and didn't show any problems today," Ancelotti said. "It's probable that he plays, but he will be evaluated again tomorrow." Bellingham was hurt after a fall about 10 minutes into the 0-0 draw against Rayo Vallecano at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium. Team



doctors put wrapping on the shoulder and he continued playing. Tests conducted on Monday showed no major injury. Bellingham has been Madrid's best player since joining this season from Borussia Dortmund. The 20-year-old England international has participated in more than half of Madrid's goals. He has 13 goals in 14 matches with the Spanish club. Having Bellingham in top form is key for Madrid, which won only once in the four games in which he failed to score.

The team's forwards have somewhat struggled in attack this season, with Vinicius Junior contributing three goals and Rodrygo two. Also doubtful for the game at the Bernabeu because of muscle ailments were midfielder Dani Ceballos and defender Ferland Mendy. Ancelotti may give a debut to midfielder Arda Guler, the 18-year-old Turkish international who was signed this season but sustained a knee injury shortly after arriving. He was on the bench against Rayo Vallecano. Braga is expected to be at full strength. The Portuguese side has never advanced past the group stage. It is making its third Champions League appearance, and first in 11 seasons.

Brazil summons teenage sensation Endrick for World Cup qualifiers

AP ■ RIO DE JANEIRO

Teenage striker Endrick was summoned by Brazil for the first time for World Cup qualifiers against Colombia and Argentina this month. Casemiro and Neymar were left out due to injuries. The 17-year-old Endrick has been key for Palmeiras in its campaign to win the Brazilian championship. He will join Real Madrid next year. Brazil faces Colombia in Barranquilla on Nov. 16 and hosts World Cup champion Argentina at Maracana Stadium five days later. Argentina leads South American qualification with 12 points. Brazil is third with seven points after a home draw with Venezuela and a 2-0 loss at Uruguay last month. Coach Fernando Diniz is under pressure to hold the job until June when his hoped Carlo Ancelotti will take over.

Bayern Munich, stung by criticism after surprise cup defeat, hosts Galatasaray

AP ■ MUNICH

Bayern Munich hopes to continue its winning start to the UEFA Champions League against Galatasaray on Wednesday amid a brouhaha over coach Thomas Tuchel's reaction to criticism. Tuchel broke off from a post-game TV interview following his team's 4-0 win at Borussia Dortmund in "der Klassiker" on Saturday, when he was clearly still aggrieved by commentary from experts after Bayern's surprise loss to third-division Saarbrücken in the German Cup just days before. The coach directed his ire at former Bayern stars Lothar Matthäus and Dietmar Hamann, now pundits for Sky TV, for saying there had been no development of the team since Tuchel had taken over from the fired Julian Nagelsmann in March. "I haven't seen any development with the pair of them either," Tuchel countered at a press conference on Friday. Tuchel was snappy when talking to Sky presenter Patrick Wasserziehr before the Dortmund

game - "I don't want to disturb when the experts are speaking about us," he said and then followed up after his team's win by responding sarcastically to Matthäus' praise. "Then, it's Easter and Christmas!" Tuchel said. He later broke off from the interview, then followed up in the post-game press conference by saying, "Should I quote Didi and Lothar here? For a team that hasn't developed and with a poor relationship between players and coach, I would say it looked quite OK." Bayern chief executive Jan-Christian Dreesen defended his coach in an interview with Kicker magazine on Monday, when he said he was surprised by the level of criticism directed at Tuchel and the team. "We made our best start to the Bundesliga in seven years and won every game in the Champions League. That everything is then reduced to the cup defeat and that wins are spoken of badly is absolutely not OK," Dreesen said. "It's completely understandable that Thomas Tuchel won't let it slide, and he has our full support."



Bayern's players are unlikely to be distracted as they seek their fourth win from four games in Group A on Wednesday. They already came from behind to beat Galatasaray 3-1 in their last game in Istanbul to stretch the club's winning streak in the group stage to 16 games - a competition record. The Bavarian powerhouse is unbeaten in its last 37 group-stage games, also a record. Overall, Bayern is bidding to win Europe's premier competition for the seventh time. Its last Champions League title came at the expense of domestic rival Dortmund in 2013, when it also won the German Cup and started its record run of 11 straight Bundesliga titles. Another treble is no longer possible this season following its German Cup loss last week - the defeat that prompted Matthäus and Hamann's criticism. Bayern defender Matthijs de Ligt will miss the game with a knee injury. Galatasaray is probably fighting for second place in the group against Manchester United, which it defeated 3-2 away on the second matchday.

BRAZIL: Goalkeepers: Alisson (Liverpool), Ederson (Manchester City), Lucas Perri (Botafogo). **Defenders:** Emerson Royal (Tottenham), Carlos Augusto (Inter Milan), Renan Lodi (Marseille), Bremer (Juventus), Gabriel Magalhães (Arsenal), Nino (Fluminense), Marquinhos (Paris Saint-Germain). **Midfielders:** André (Fluminense), Bruno Guimarães (Newcastle), Douglas Luiz (Aston Villa), Joelinton (Newcastle), Raphael Veiga (Palmeiras), Rodrygo (Real Madrid). **Forwards:** Endrick (Palmeiras), Gabriel Jesus (Arsenal), Gabriel Martinelli (Arsenal), João Pedro (Brighton), Paulinho (Atlético Mineiro), Pepé (Porto), Raphinha (Barcelona), Vinicius Junior (Real Madrid).



MAXWELL SNATCHES WIN FOR AUSTRALIA

GLENN'S SENSATIONAL DOUBLE CENTURY POWERS AUSTRALIA INTO SEMIFINALS

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Battling pain and exhaustion, Glenn Maxwell conjured arguably the greatest knock (201 not out off 128 balls) in the history of limited overs cricket to singlehandedly propel Australia to a sensational three-wicket win over Afghanistan in the World Cup here on Tuesday. With this, Australia became the third team to enter the semifinals. Opting to bat, opener Ibrahim Zadran became the first Afghanistan batter to score a World Cup hundred and guided his team to 291 for five. In reply, Australia were down and out at 91 for seven in the 19th over. That's when Maxwell decided to take charge and led an incredible comeback while adding 202 runs for the eighth wicket with skipper Pat Cummins (12 not out), who watched the mayhem unfolding from the other end. In all, Maxwell smashed 21



boundaries and 10 sixes. Earlier, Zadran carried his bat through the innings and finished on 129 not out off 143 balls. Afghanistan lost opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz for a 25-ball 21 but Zadran and Rahmat Shah stitched 83 runs for the second wicket to lay a good foundation before the latter was dismissed by Glenn Maxwell for a 44-ball 30 in the 25th over with the score reading 121. Unperturbed by the loss of few wickets at the other end, Zadran continued to accumulate runs at a decent rate to prop up his team against the five-time world champions. Rashid Khan smashed unbeaten 35 off 18 balls towards the end

BRIEF SCORES:
Afghanistan: 291/5 in 50 overs (Ibrahim Zadran 129 not out; Josh Hazlewood 2/39).
Australia: 293/7 in 46.5 overs (Glenn Maxwell 201 not out).

I said before match I will bat like Sachin: Zadran

PTI ■ MUMBAI

A among all Afghan players, Ibrahim Zadran spent the longest time with Sachin Tendulkar on the eve of their World Cup match against Australia, taking batting lessons from the all-time great. The one-on-one chat with the master had its effect, for the 21-year-old opener on Tuesday became the first player from Afghanistan to record a hundred in a World Cup match. Needless to say, Zadran thanked the batting great for his invaluable tips moments after reaching the landmark. Thanks to his brilliant knock of 129, Afghanistan posted a challenging 291 for five against an attack comprising Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Adam Zampa. That he turned up in casuals on the match eve, instead of the training kit, didn't matter. "I had a good chat with Sachin Tendulkar. He shared his experience, and I said before the match that I will bat like Sachin Tendulkar. He gave me a lot of energy and confidence," he told the broadcaster following his 143-ball innings. Zadran's knock contained eight fours and three sixes, as it allowed Afghanistan to post a fighting total. "I am feeling great to score Afghanistan's maiden hundred in (World Cup). I worked really hard for this tournament. "I missed a hundred against Pakistan but made it today. I was talking to my coaching staff, and I told them I have a feeling I will get a hundred in next three matches," he added. On Monday evening, Tendulkar gave him tips about batting for longer durations and exploring more options while playing shots. The legend also told them to fix a goal (team goal).



Finch rates Zampa as premier white ball spinner across two formats

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Australian bowler Adam Zampa's ability to read the batter's mind currently makes him the premier spinner across the two white-ball formats, feels former captain Aaron Finch. Zampa has claimed at least three wickets in Australia's last five consecutive games to bring their World Cup campaign back on track with five wins on the trot. "At times, you can get caught when you play against teams or individuals so much that you just sort of go through the motions of preparation because you get comfortable but Zampa dots his 1s and crosses his 1s and every game," Finch wrote in a column for the ICC website. "That has shone through in his unbelievable consistency... He has been probably the premier white-ball spinner for a couple of years across the two white-ball formats around the world,



so this is really good recognition of the skill of his craft," the cricketer-tuned-commentator added. On a dew-laden Motera track, Zampa came on in the 12th over and claimed the big wickets of England's Jos Buttler, Ben Stokes and Moeen Ali to return with exceptional figures of 10-0-21-3, the cheapest spell of his career. Chasing 287, the defending champions folded for 253 in 48.1 overs to be knocked out of the semis race. "Zampa was outstanding... And what stands out for me is how well he is reading the batters. With spin, half the battle is knowing when to bowl your variations based on reading the batters and the conditions. He is bowling so beautifully at the moment and he has taken so many crucial wickets," Finch said. Zampa is now the second in the list of leading wicket-takers of the ongoing World Cup, with 19 scalps from seven matches at an average of 17.15.

Shakib ruled out in Bangladesh last match, Anamul to replace him

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan was on Tuesday ruled out of his side's last World Cup match against Australia owing to a fractured finger. The star all-rounder sustained the injury on his left index finger while batting during Bangladesh's three-wicket win over Sri Lanka at the Feroz Shah Kotla on Monday. An X-ray examination after the game confirmed a fracture, ruling him out of the match against Australia, to be played in Pune on Saturday. "Shakib was struck on his left index finger early in his innings but continued to bat with supportive taping and painkillers," Bangladesh team physio Bajjedul Islam Khan was quoted as saying by the ICC. "He underwent an emergency X-ray in Delhi after the game which confirmed the fracture on the left PIP joint. Recovery is estimated at three to four weeks. He will leave for Bangladesh today to begin his rehab." Anamul Haque Bijoy has been named as Shakib's

replacement in the Bangladesh squad. Anamul has played 45 ODIs for Bangladesh. The replacement of a player requires the approval of the Event Technical Committee before he can be officially added to the squad. The Event Technical committee consists of Wasim Khan (ICC General Manager - Cricket & ETC Chair), Chris Tetley (ICC Head of Events), Hemang Amin (Acting CEO - BCCI), Gaurav Saxena (General Manager - Operations, BCCI), Russel Arnold (Independent Representative) and Simon Doull (Independent Representative). Bangladesh are out of the reckoning for the semifinals. They had defeated Sri Lanka by three wickets in the inconsequential match on Monday. Shakib was at the centre of attention as it was after his appeal that veteran Sri Lankan all-rounder Angelo Mathews was given 'timed out', a first in international cricket. After snaring two wickets, Shakib returned to score a 65-ball 82 to lead his side to their second victory in the tournament.

England and Netherlands eye Champions Trophy qualification

PTI ■ PUNE

Casting aside their shattered title defence dream, England will now set sights on restoring their pride and secure a berth in the 2025 Champions Trophy when they face a plucky Netherlands in the World Cup here on Wednesday. England have cut a sorry figure, managing just one win from seven matches in the World Cup to slip to the bottom of the 10-team table. The Netherlands are a tad better on ninth with two wins and four points. Both teams are out of the reckoning for a semifinal spot. The 33-run loss to arch rivals Australia on Saturday was the final nail in the coffin for England. While the Dutch are also officially out of the race. But with ICC announcing that the top seven teams and hosts Pakistan will qualify for the 2025 Champions Trophy, there has been a scramble for the last few spots. Champions four years ago, England have hit rock-bottom in this edition. No England team has ever lost so many games at a World Cup. Whatever could go wrong has gone wrong for the Three Lions and they are no longer favourites even against minnows Netherlands. To avoid the ignominy of missing the cut for the prestigious Champions Trophy, England must win their remaining two fixtures against the Netherlands and Pakistan. But that's easier said than done as both confidence and form has deserted the ageing England side, which looked extremely dangerous on paper. The batting unit has failed miserably. Openers Jonny Bairstow and David Malan



have struggled to give the kind of start expected of them while Joe Root's famed consistency too has deserted him. Skipper Jos Buttler and the big-hitting Liam Livingstone are also woefully out of form. For England to win, their batters need to fire. The England bowling unit has performed a touch better but it is one dimensional and lacks variety. The English bowlers have been inconsistent and have struggled in the Indian conditions. Ben Stokes, who is playing as a specialist batter, not rolling his arm has compounded their woes. With Stokes set to undergo a knee surgery and David Willey retiring from international cricket after this tournament, there have been calls to give the likes of youngsters Harry Brook and Sam Curran game time. The Dutch will be eager to pounce on England's frailties. For the Netherlands, it is the golden opportunity to stake claim to the Champions Trophy spot. The 'Orange Army', has arguably overachieved having secured wins over the high-flying South Africa and Bangladesh at this World Cup. A victory against England would perhaps be the crowning glory of their wonderful campaign. Packed with a group of all-rounders, the Netherlands have shown they are capable of winning. Their top order and bowling department need to be more consistent. The Netherlands said the court order tantamounted to the SLC being restored and they would resume operations as usual. Ranatunga visited the SLC headquarters on Monday to take over the administration. The sacking of SLC was discussed at the cabinet meeting held here on Monday. President Ranil Wickremesinghe appointed

Court restores sacked Sri Lanka Cricket board

PTI ■ COLOMBO

The Court of Appeal on Tuesday restored the Sri Lanka Cricket board administration, a day after it was dismissed by the government following the national team's heavy defeat to hosts India in the ongoing World Cup. Sports Minister Roshan Ranasinghe on Monday appointed an interim seven-member committee headed by former World Cup-winning captain Arjuna Ranatunga following a public outcry after Sri Lanka's 302-run loss to India in Mumbai on November 2. But, the Court of Appeal here suspended for 14 days the notification issued by Ranasinghe after Silva approached it for relief. Officials of the Silva administration said the court order tantamounted to the SLC being restored and they would resume operations as usual. Ranatunga visited the SLC headquarters on Monday to take over the administration. The sacking of SLC was discussed at the cabinet meeting held here on Monday. President Ranil Wickremesinghe appointed a cabinet sub committee headed by foreign minister Ali Sabry to probe the dispute over the SLC administration. Ranatunga, who earlier headed the National Sports Council appointed by Ranasinghe, has been questioning the Silva administration. Since the heavy defeat of the Sri Lankan team, several demonstrations were organised opposite the SLC premises, demanding the resignation of the Silva administration. The riot police was placed to protect the building. Ranasinghe had written to the ICC full members, pointing out the government audit queries raised over Silva's handling of SLC finances. Silva was elected as SLC chief in May for his third successive term which was to run until 2025.



Santner, Ravindra return as Kiwis name spin-heavy Test squad for Bangladesh tour

PTI ■ CHRISTCHURCH

Left-arm spinner Mitchell Santner was on Tuesday recalled to the Test squad after more than two years as New Zealand selectors picked a spin-heavy side for the two-match series in Bangladesh, beginning later this month. Santner, who played the last of his 24 Tests against England at Lord's in June 2021, joins

Ajaz Patel and Ish Sodhi as the front-line spinners. Off-spinning all-rounders Rachin Ravindra and Glenn Phillips also returned to boost their spin options on the back of impressive performances at the ongoing World Cup in India. Ravindra is in stellar form, amassing 523 runs, including three centuries, in eight matches at the World Cup

while also picking three wickets. He last played in whites in the Test against Bangladesh at Bay Oval in January last year. While Phillips has been included in the touring Test squad once again after travelling to Pakistan in December/January. A fit-again Kyle Jamieson, who was instrumental in their 2021 World Test



Championship triumph, also marked a return after undergoing back surgery in February, joining skipper Tim Southee and Matt Henry in a three-pronged pace attack. The 28-year-old Jamieson has claimed 72 wickets in just 16 Tests and was named Player of the Match in their World Test Championship triumph against India in 2021. "We have a strong spin group

that will offer good variety and options during the series," Black Caps selector Sam Wells was quoted as saying by New Zealand Cricket (NZC). The first Test is slated in Sylhet from November 28, while Dhaka will host the second Test from December 6. The series will kick off the third cycle of the WTC for the Black Caps and will feature a coaching team led by Luke Ronchi. Regular head coach Gary Stead will go home following the World Cup in India. Squad: Tim Southee (c), Tom Blundell (wk), Devon Conway, Matt Henry, Kyle Jamieson, Tom Latham, Daryl Mitchell, Henry Nicholls, Ajaz Patel, Glenn Phillips, Rachin Ravindra, Mitchell Santner, Ish Sodhi, Kane Williamson and Will Young.