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GERMANY'S DEFENSE MINISTER
UNVEILS MORE HELP FOR UKRAINE

MONEY 10
STOCK MARKETS RECOVER
FROM 2-DAY DECLINE

NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY NOVEMBER 22, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3



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Huge jolt for Congress

ED seizes ₹752 cr assets in National Herald money laundering case

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Tuesday said it has attached immovable assets and equity shares worth about ₹752 crore as part of its ongoing money laundering investigation against the Congress-promoted National Herald newspaper and companies linked to it. The immovable assets that have been attached include the National Herald's office premises at ITO in Delhi, the Nehru Bhawan at Mall Avenue near Kaiserbagh in Lucknow and the Herald House in Mumbai, sources said. The provisional attachment order came at a time Assembly elections in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and Mizoram are in progress and the counting of votes is scheduled to be held on December 3. The Congress called the agency action as "petty vendetta tactics" and dubbed the ED a "coalition partner" of the BJP which, it claimed, is staring at a certain defeat in the assembly polls. The federal probe agency alleged in a statement that in this case the shareholders and donors of the Congress were "cheated" by the office-bearers of AJL and the party. A provisional attachment order has been issued by the federal probe agency under the



Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) against Associated Journals Ltd (AJL) and Young Indian (YI). The National Herald is published by AJL and owned by Young Indian Private Limited. Congress leaders Sonia Gandhi and Rahul Gandhi are majority shareholders of Young Indian, holding 38 per cent shares each. In the statement, the ED said it has issued the order to provisionally attach properties worth ₹751.9 crore in the money laundering case being

investigated by it under the PMLA. Under the law, such a provisional order has to be approved by the Adjudicating Authority of the IPC, including cheating and dishonestly inducing delivery of property, dishonest misappropriation of property and criminal conspiracy, the ED said. "The accused persons hatched a criminal conspiracy to acquire properties worth hundreds of crores of AJL through a special purpose vehicle—Young Indian. AJL was given

land on concessional rates in various cities of India for the purpose of publishing newspapers," the agency said. It added that AJL closed its publishing operations in 2008 and started "using" the properties for commercial purposes, it alleged. It said AJL had to repay a loan of ₹90.21 crore to All India Congress Committee (AICC), however AICC treated the said loan of ₹90.21 crore as non-recoverable from AJL and sold it for ₹50 lakh to a newly incorporated company Young Indian "without" any source of income to pay even ₹50 lakh. "By their action, the shareholders of AJL as well as donors of Congress party were cheated by the office bearers of AJL and Congress party," the agency claimed. After purchasing the loan of ₹90.21 crore from AICC, YI demanded either re-payment of loan or allotment of equity shares of AJL to it, the ED said. AJL, it added, held an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) and passed a resolution to increase share capital and issue fresh shares worth ₹90.21 crore to YI. "With this fresh allotment of shares, shareholding of more than 1,000 shareholders was reduced to a mere 1 per cent and AJL became a subsidiary company of YI. YI also took control over properties of AJL," the agency said.

Uttarkashi: A hope reignited

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ DEHRADUN

As the first visuals of the 41 workers trapped inside the Silkyara tunnel emerged ON Tuesday, officials said the focus of the multiple-agency rescue mission remains on digging horizontally through the debris of the collapsed stretch. However, rescue workers continued to prepare for other options, including drilling from above the tunnel, to reach the workers trapped inside for nine days. Horizontal drilling through the debris was put on hold last Friday afternoon after the heavy duty auger machine encountered a hard boulder, making rescue agency consider other approaches as well. But on Tuesday, remarks by National Disaster Management Authority member Lt General (retd) Syed Ata Hasnain, Road Transport and Highways secretary Anurag Jain and Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami made it clear that resuming the operation was the main priority. At the disaster site in Uttarakhand's Uttarkashi district, a video clip captured by an endoscopic camera sent in through a new six-inch wide pipeline brought hope to relatives who are camping there for days. The pipeline was pushed late Monday through 53 metres

of debris, the collapsed stretch of the under-construction tunnel on the Char Dham route. In the video released by the rescue agencies, the workers wearing yellow and white helmets are seen receiving food items sent to them through the pipeline and talking to each other. Officials watching them on a

the trapped workers through the four-inch compressor tube that already existed. Food items like dry fruit were also being sent through that thinner pipe. But the new "lifeline" has come as a morale booster. Communication is much better and larger quantities of food can now be sent in.



Visuals of workers trapped inside the Silkyara tunnel in Uttarkashi district, released by rescuers on Tuesday. The visuals were captured using an endoscopic camera sent in through the alternative 6-inch food pipeline PTI

screen are heard giving instructions, asking them to clean the lens. The workers are told to come near the camera and use walkie-talkies, apparently sent down earlier. The camera is then pulled back up so that water can be released under pressure to clean the pipeline. Relatives have talked earlier to

"I talked to him this morning," Sunita Hembrum, whose brother-in-law Pradeep Kisku is among the trapped labourers, told PTI. She has come to Silkyara from Banka in Bihar. "Oranges have been supplied to them through the new food pipe. Efforts are also underway to send khichdi to them. He was fine," she said.

Israel labels LeT terror group

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

In a gesture of solidarity with India in its fight against terrorism, Israel on Tuesday listed Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) as a terror organisation ahead of the 15th year anniversary of the 26/11 terror attack on Mumbai that killed over 160 people, including a number of Israeli nationals. "Despite not being requested by the Government of India to do so, the state of Israel has formally completed all necessary procedures and has satisfied all required checks and regulations to the result of introducing Lashkar-e-Taiba into the Israeli list of illegal terror organisations," the Israel Embassy said in a statement in New Delhi. Ten Pakistani terrorists entered south Mumbai areas through sea route, attacked a number of places, including Chabad House, a Jewish centre, and indiscriminately killed 166 people, including 18 security personnel, and a number of Israelis on November 26, 2008. "Lashkar-e-Taiba is a deadly

and reprehensible terror organisation, responsible for the murder of hundreds of Indian civilians as well as others. "Its heinous actions on November 26, 2008 still reverberate in force, through all peace seeking nations and societies," the statement added. "Yes, I can confirm it. It's not a new thing and it is actually from 2013. "It was recently re-published because of a bureaucratic error but it is not a new thing," Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesperson, Lior Haiat, told PTI. Incidentally, the re-affirmation comes weeks after Israel said the time had come for India to declare Hamas a terror organisation. Hamas, which controls the Gaza Strip since 2007, used land, sea and air routes to launch an attack on Israel territories that killed more than 1,200 people, mostly civilians on October 7. It prompted Jerusalem to declare war on the Islamic outfit, killing more than 11,000 people.

In almost a similar manner, on November 26, 2008, ten Pakistani terrorists entered the south Mumbai areas through a sea route and attacked a number of places, including Chabad House, a Jewish centre. The indiscriminate attack killed 166 people, including six Jews and 18 security personnel. Six Jews were killed at Nariman House, more popularly known as the Chabad House, considered by many Israelis as a "shared pain." "While Israel only lists terror organisations who are actively operating against it from within or around its borders, or in a similar manner to India - those globally recognised by UNSC or the US State Department; the Israeli Ministries of Defence and Foreign Affairs, have jointly worked in the last few months towards an expedited and extraordinary listing of the Lashkar-e-Taiba organisation on this date, to highlight the importance of a Unified Global Front in combating terrorism," the release stressed.

₹4.7 lakh crore wedding windfall

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

After the record-breaking sales during the Diwali festive season, which concluded with Chhath Puja, the upcoming wedding season from Dev Uthan Ekadashi on November 23 to December 15 is expected to generate business worth ₹4.74 lakh crore, with around 38 lakh weddings likely to be solemnised during this period. Delhi region alone may host 3.5 lakh weddings, generating ₹1 lakh crore in the region. According to the survey by the Research & Trade Development Society of the Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT), popular wedding destinations in India encompass sought-after locations such as Goa, Jaipur, Kerala, and Shimla. The prevailing wedding trends in India encompass destination weddings, themed weddings, and an increasing emphasis on eco-friendly celebrations. Last year, about 35 lakh weddings took place during the same



period, generating business worth ₹3.75 lakh crore. According to the CAIT national president BC Bhartia and secretary general Praveen Khandelwal, about seven lakh weddings will be performed with an expense of ₹3 lakh, 8 lakh weddings with ₹6 lakh, 10 lakh weddings having an expense of ₹10 lakh, 7 lakh weddings with ₹15 lakh, 5 lakh weddings with ₹25 lakh,

50,000 weddings with ₹50 lakh, and next 50,000 weddings with an expense of ₹1 crore and above. According to the calculation of stars, wedding dates in November are 23, 24, 27, 28, and 29, whereas in December, the auspicious wedding dates are 3, 4, 7, 8, 9 and 15. These dates are considered favourable for holding marriages. Afterward, there will be

a one-month period when the stars are less auspicious, lasting until mid-January. Then, auspicious wedding days will resume from mid-January, marking the beginning of another phase of the wedding season continuing until July 2023. In the realm of goods, the estimated trade distribution includes 10 per cent in textiles, sarees, lehnga, and garments, 15 per cent in jewellery articles, 5 per cent in electronics, electricals, and consumer durables, 5 per cent in dry fruits, fruits, sweets, and nankeen, 5 per cent in food grain, grocery, and vegetables, 4 per cent in gift items, and the remaining 6 per cent in miscellaneous items. The services sector is also expected to flourish, with allocations of 5 per cent for banquet halls, hotels, and other marriage venues, 5 per cent for event management, 12 per cent for tent decoration, 10 per cent for catering services, 4 per cent for flower decoration, 3 per cent for travel and cab services, 2 per cent for photo and

video shoots, 3 per cent for orchestra and band services, 3 per cent for lights and sound, and the remaining 3 per cent for miscellaneous services. Khandelwal said the retail markets have witnessed a record trade of over ₹8,000 crore during the four day Chhath puja across the country. "From Navratri to Diwali, there was a business of ₹3.75 lakh crore in the mainline retail trade of the country. At the same time, during Durga Puja and other festivals around the country, business worth about ₹50,000 crore was done. During the ten-day celebrations of Ganesh Chaturthi, business worth ₹20-25,000 crore was executed. "These figures are for only three festivals. Similarly, if the purchases made in the markets on many other festivals like Holi, Janmashtami, Mahashivratri, Rakhi are also included, then several hundred lakh crore rupees will be added to the economy of Bharat," Khandelwal added.

A century of tribal dream chugs in Australia, India juggle China ties

DEEPAK KUMAR JHA ■ BADAMPANHAR (ODISHA)

The tribal-dominated region at the Odisha-Jharkhand borders had to wait for over a century to catch a glimpse of trains and realise their dreams until the land's daughter, as well as daughter-in-law, was enthroned as the President of India. President Draupadi Murmu benevolently flagged off the operation of trains on Tuesday, connecting her native place, Rairangpur, with her in-law's place, Badampahar, a mere distance of 32 km. Moreover, the region gained connectivity in one go with important cities, including neighbouring Jamshedpur, Ranchi and Kolkata, providing ample scope for the economic development of the entire fossil and mineral-rich region. Before embarking on her first train ride as President between her Sasural and Maika, the President graciously flagged off three trains: Badampahar-Tatanagar local EMU, Badampahar-Rourkela

Weekly Express, and Badampahar-Shalimar Weekly Express. On the occasion, Murmu said the development of any area depends on its connectivity. "Be it rail, roads, or postal services, all these services make people's lives easier," the President said, addressing the gathering at Badampahar Railway station. The project received a boost due to the understanding of the region's needs by Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, who had previously served the State as an Odisha cadre IAS officer. Besides Vaishnaw, Odisha Governor Raghuraj Das, Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, and top functionaries of the Odisha Government graced the emotional moment for the area. All these trains pass through Murmu's native town, Rairangpur, in the Mayurbhanj district of Odisha. There was not been a single mail/express train to Rairangpur station except for freight mobilisation by the national transporter. Local people had been demanding mail/express trains



connecting Badampahar and Rairangpur for over decades. "Isi ko Sapna Sakar Hona Boltey Hai Hum. (We have realised our dreams). Jo koi Nahi kar paya aaj hamari ghar ki beti ne kar diya (Our daughter has done what none could do)," said Shailendra Patra, a resident near the station, who had come to watch the glimpse of Murmu as well as the trains. It has come as a boon for stu-

dents and job aspirants of Badampahar/Rairangpur area who will now have easy access to premier educational institutes and corporate houses in West Bengal and further connectivity to other cities of opportunities like Pune, Mumbai, Delhi, etc. "These trains will pass through the mineral-rich areas of Odisha, industrial areas of Jharkhand, and will facilitate

faster connectivity with the State of West Bengal. People from nearby areas will also be able to avail this train service for visiting Kolkata and Howrah for various purposes," said a railway spokesman. "Better connectivity will boost the growth and development of Mayurbhanj District of Odisha. This new train will also encourage tourists from West Bengal and Jharkhand to explore and

enjoy the picturesque landscape and dense jungles," added the railways in a statement. Making a departure from convention, Murmu became the first President of India not to take the Special President Suite Train but travelled in a normal passenger train. She also laid the foundation stone for the redevelopment of Badampahar Railway station. Historically, a rail line was built by the Tatas in 1922 for the transportation of iron ore from Badampahar ore area to the steel production unit at Jamshedpur. The same tracks have now been upgraded for use by passenger services. In other separate events, Murmu also virtually inaugurated the new Rairangpur Postal Division and released a Commemorative Special Cover of Rairangpur Postal Division. The President further said that despite the increasing trend of cell phones and courier services, India Post has not lost its relevance. She added that the Union Government is taking various initiatives for the development of tribal communities.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In an effort to further strengthen the bilateral ties between the two countries, India and Australia on Tuesday vowed here to deepen their economic and security partnership and stressed their shared commitment to a "free, open, inclusive and rules-based" Indo-Pacific region. China is flexing its muscles there leading to tension. For both Australia and India, China is the biggest trading partner, and China is also the biggest security concern. Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong said this is a partnership which is "crucial for our region." "China is doing what all great powers do, using its state power to advance its interests. It uses economic leverage over other countries in the Indo

Pacific region to its advantage," Wong said. "The Indo-Pacific region requires partnerships to ensure a free and open order and to ensure that it is not dominated by any power. That is the vision of a region that is grounded in sovereignty," she said. Addressing a press conference after participating in the India-Australia Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue with his Australian counterpart Penny Wong, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said India is preparing for a meeting of Quad sometime next year. The External Affairs Minister said the two leaders also discussed the situation in West Asia in detail. Asked about the Israel-Hamas conflict, Jaishankar talked about India's position and said there are different aspects of the "very complex and challenging situation".

Maratha quota stir turns violent

TN RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Amid the ongoing agitation over reservations for Marathas, scores of activists belonging to the Dhangar community hurled stones at the district collector's office and damaged vehicles there at Jalna in Marathwada after the Collector refused to meet them and receive a memorandum from their leaders demanding Scheduled Tribe (ST) status for the Dhangar community.

The protests by the Dhangar community activists turned violent when they — as part of the protests organised in various districts of the state to press for their long-standing demand — had taken out morcha to the Jalna district collectorate to submit a memorandum rooting for various demands, including the grant of ST status for their community.

The Dhangar activists — whose morcha taken out through the



main thoroughfares of Jalna town culminated into an impromptu public meeting near the district collector's office — were halted near the Collector's gate when they tried to enter the place to submit a memorandum to the collector. Upset by the refusal to allow them inside the collectorate, the activists demanded that the Collector, Dr. Shrikrishnanath Panchal come to meet them and accept their memorandum of demands.

However, the activists' demand went unheeded, despite their repeated pleas to the officials present. By then, the activists gathered there had got restless. Some of the activists forcefully managed to gain entry inside the Collectorate.

The angry activists hurled stones at the collectorate's office, broke window panes and also damaged vehicles parked inside the premises.

Currently, the Dhangar community — better known as

Sheppard community — gets 3.5 per cent reservation under the Vimukta Jati & Nomadic Tribes (VJNT) category of Maharashtra.

The Dhangar community groups had been demanding reservation in ST category in Maharashtra — as the "Dhangad" got reservation in other parts of India in SC category. A topographical error Dhangar (Dhangad) has led to the problem and they get reservation in VJNT category in Maharashtra. Of the total 52 per cent reservation in the state, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes account for 13 and 7 per cent, respectively, OBCs get 19 per cent, VJNT, Special Backward Class and Nomadic Tribes account for 13 per cent.

Apart from the grant of ST status, the Dhangar community is demanding the conduct of a Caste Census and allotment of a plot for a memorial to the legendary Queen Ahilyabai Holkar in Jalna town.

Their Other demands include: free hostel facilities for Dhangar community students in all districts of the state, arms licence should be issued to shepherds who graze their flock in the forests, at least one government job per Dhangar family, loans at concessional rates through the government and setting up a corporation for Dhangar welfare with a corpus fund of Rs 10,000-crore.

Early this month, the Maharashtra government set up an empowered committee headed by chief minister Eknath Shinde to ensure that Dhangars, classified as a nomadic tribe under Other Backward Classes (OBC), get the benefits of government-run welfare schemes.

The 13-member committee — comprising eight ministers and five representatives from the Dhangar community, each representing a region of the state — has been assigned the task of speedily implementing 13 dedicated schemes for the Dhangar community.



NIA arrests another accused in Pak-backed terror case

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ JAMMU

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has arrested another accused in the Pak-backed terrorism case involving the delivery of weapons through drones to militants active in Jammu and Kashmir.

According to official sources, a team from the NIA Jammu Branch arrested 22-year-old Zakir Hussain of district Kathua, J&K, on Monday.

He is the 8th accused to be arrested in the case (RC-06/2022/NIA/JMU), registered by the NIA on 30th July 2022 after taking over the case from Kathua Police.

One of the seven accused arrested earlier had died due to cardiac arrest while in judicial custody while two Pakistan-based terror operatives are absconding. The seven arrested accused and the two absconders were earlier charged by NIA on 12th January 2023, under Sec 16, 17, 18, 18B, 20, 23, 38, 39 & 40 of

UA (P) Act, 1967, sections 25(1)(a) & 25(1AA) of the Arms Act, sections 4 & 5 of the Explosive Substances Act and sections 120B, 121A & 122 of the IPC. According to NIA investigations, the accused were working on the directions of their Pakistani handler, identified as Sajjad Gul. The accused were involved in collecting, receiving and transporting the weapons dropped through drones to militants active in the Kashmir valley. The weapons were used to commit terrorist attacks in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. The local police had initially registered the case following the interception of a drone (Hexacopter) and seizure of several rounds of UBGL / Magnetic Bombs near the Dhalli area of PS Rajbagh in District Kathua. NIA is continuing with its investigations in the matter to unravel the bigger conspiracy of Pakistan-backed terrorist groups to carry out acts of terror and violence in the Kashmir valley and across India.

Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee President Ajay Rai reiterated here on Tuesday that Rahul Gandhi would contest the 2024 Lok Sabha elections from Amethi constituency. Addressing a news conference during his visit to the city, Rai said: "They (Gandhis) have been working for the people of Amethi for generations. Rahul ji will definitely contest from Amethi".

It may be recalled that Smriti Irani of the BJP had defeated Rahul Gandhi in Amethi constituency during the 2019 Lok Sabha by a margin of 55,120 votes. However, Gandhi — who had also contested from Wayanad Lok Sabha constituency in Kerala — won and became an MP in 2019.

Tuesday was the second occasion when Rai spoke about Gandhi contesting the 2024 Lok Sabha polls from Amethi constituency. He had made a similar statement in Lucknow in August this year.

Ambani pledges ₹20K cr more investment in Bengal

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

The Reliance Industries Chairman and MD Mukesh Ambani whose company has invested ₹45,000 crore in West Bengal, mainly in telecom business, on Tuesday announced an additional ₹20,000-crore investment over the next three years.

Ambani said the fresh investment will be in the areas of digital life solutions, retail and bio-energy. "Bengal has been one of the largest investment destinations for Reliance... We plan to invest an additional ₹20,000 crore in Bengal in the next three years for enhancing digital life solutions, augmenting Reliance Retail footprint and on bio-energy," he said, adding, "Reliance will leave no stone unturned to accelerate Bengal's growth."

Meanwhile politics invaded the realms of economics with Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Tuesday choosing to accuse the BJP Government of depriving Bengal of its dues even as she plunked the topic on an international podium meant to draw business investment in Bengal.

Even as the who's who of world business including delegates from 35 countries listened to her impromptu speech at the much-touted Bengal Global Business Summit the Chief Minister said how her State had become a victim of arbitrary implementation of the GST regime.

"Though I should not tell it here... I am sorry to say that we are not getting our share in the GST which is a tax collected from our State but does not return to us... the poor people have worked in the 100-days' work scheme



but are not getting paid for their labour... still we are helping them out from our" limited resources, Banerjee said even as she listed the "game changers," (read achievements) that make Bengal an automatic choice for the investors.

The Chief Minister on Tuesday inaugurated the seventh two-day world business summit in an apparent bid to draw investment in what the critics call an industry-starved State that thrive not on employment creation but on social schemes and doles.

Speaking about a divisive "narrative" being created by some political parties the Chief Minister in her bid to market Bengal's inclusive and progressive culture said, "in Bengal we live together and there is no divide-and-rule politics here," invoking Poet Laureate Rabindranath Tagore who said "where the land is not broken up into fragments for domestic quarrels."

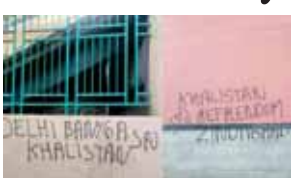
Playing up Bengal's business-friendly atmosphere — with an upcoming deep sea port at Tajpur, newly discovered world's second biggest coal reserve at Deucha Pachami that will solve the power issues 100 years, eastern freight corridor, Bengal Silicon Valley a replica of its American counterpart, the Asia's biggest leather complex etc — Banerjee reminded how in Bengal people were not divided along religious lines.

Man held for pro-Khalistani graffiti at ISBT flyover

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Police's Special Cell has arrested a 38-year-old man from Haryana in connection with the pro-Khalistan graffiti on the walls of ISBT flyover in September. The accused has been identified as Malik Singh alias Malik, a resident of Kurukshetra in Haryana. With the arrest of the accused, Delhi Police has averted the untoward incidents on the day of the final match of the Cricket World Cup on November 19, as he was tasked by Pannun to paint pro-Khalistan slogans at different venues, including Delhi Airport on that day.

He painted the graffiti in Delhi and other parts of the country at the behest of Gurpatwant Singh Pannu, the chief of banned organisation Sikhs for Justice, police said. On



September 27, 2023, multiple pro-Khalistan graffiti mentioning "Delhi banega Khalistan SF)" and "Khalistan Zindabad SF)" were found sprayed under and over Yudhister Setu, Kashmir Gate, a senior police officer said.

Later, a video also appeared over the internet where Pannun claimed that Khalistani Sikhs from Canada have reached Delhi to target the Parliament House to avenge the assassination of Nijjar, and various graffiti have been sprayed in Delhi, the officer said.

"During investigation, a person wearing a turban was spotted

near the spots. The suspect boarded a Punjab-bound bus and de-boarded it at Pipli, Kurukshetra. Later, the alleged person was identified as Malik Singh.

"On Sunday, police arrested Singh who was involved in the painting of graffiti on the walls of Yudhister Setu, near the Kashmir Gate Metro Station on the direction of SF) handler Pannun," Special Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) HGS Dhaliwal said. He was also involved in three other incidents of pro-Khalistan graffiti in Haryana before the G-20 Summit, Dhaliwal said.

Singh inclined towards Khalistan ideology since childhood. In 2018, after the announcement of Referendum 2020 by Pannun, he started following SF) videos and messages, police said.

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER : PWD: BUILDING: ASSAM: CHANDMARI: GUWAHATI-3.

No. CE/TB-III/95/2023/6

Press Notice

The Spl. Chief Engineer, P.W.D. (Health & Education), Assam, on behalf of the Governor of Assam invites bids through Engineering Procurement and Construction (EPC) Mode-1 of contract (single stage two-part bidding system) for the following work from eligible contractors having experience of similar nature of work.

Details of the bid may be seen at e-procurement portal website i.e. www.assamtenders.gov.in.

The bidders must be enrolled in www.assamtenders.gov.in.

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Bid Value	Bid Security	Tender Cost (Rs.)	Time of Completion
1.	Construction of 50 Bedded New CCB Hospital at Bokolia CHC in Karbi Anglong District under NHM, Assam.	Rs. 19,26,33,262.00	(2% for General and 1% for Reserved category)	20,000/-	24 Months

Note :-

- The Bid Price may vary at the time of uploading of DNIT for which no claim will be admissible.
- All terms and conditions will be as per the bidding document. Press Notice will be a part of bidding document.

Sd/-
SPl. Chief Engineer, P.W.D. (Building),
Health & Education, Assam, Chandmari,
Guwahati-3.

Janasanyog/C/12446/23/22 November 2023

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that my client Alsh Sharma is availing the LAP from Pramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited against his Property bearing No. K/705, having land area measuring 100 Sq. Yds. pertaining to the Khasra No. 682, situated at Plot No. 2, in the abadi known as Nehru Marg, Gautam Vihar, in the area of Village Ghonda Guram Khadar, Block Shalida, Delhi purchased vide sale deed dated 27-10-2023 (file No. 2468) executed by Mr. Sunil Mishra. 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, whatsoever, 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, Mahatma Metro Tower, Sec-4, Vasthali, Gzb., U.P., Mob. 9810063351

Chief Engineer, Uttarakhand Rural Roads Development Agency, First Floor, Directorate of Panchayatraj, Opp-IT Park, Sahasradhara Road, Dehradun.

Ref.No. 1675/11-02(xix)-2/ITCO/URRDA/23 Dated : 21-11-2023

PRADHAN MANTRI GRAM SADAK YOJANA (PMGSY) e-Procurement Notice-19(RW)/2023-24

The Chief Engineer, URRDA on behalf of Governor of Uttarakhand invites the item rate bids in electronic tendering system for construction of Bridges under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana in the Districts of Dehradun for 01 number of package with estimated cost totaling to Rs.3.36 Crore including their maintenance for five years from the eligible contractors registered with PWD/CPWD or equivalent".

Date of release of Invitation for Bids through e-procurement: 25-11-2023.

Availability of Bid Documents and mode of submission: The bid documents are available online and should be submitted online in www.pmgstendersuk.gov.in. The bidder would be required to register in the web-site which is free of cost. For submission of the bids, the bidder is required to have Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) from one of the authorized Certifying Authorities.

The bidders are required to submit original affidavit regarding correctness of information furnished with bid document as per provisions of Clause 4.4 B (ii) of ITB with **CONCERNED CIRCLE OFFICES, mentioned in SBD/MBD only up to or before the time and date of the submission of the Bids (for World Bank funded works) and on a date not later than three working days after the opening of technical qualification part of the bid (for Regular PMGSY Works)**, either by registered post or by hand, failing which the bids shall be declared non-responsive. No physical documents will be accepted after the closing date and time of submission of bids.

Last Date/Time for receipt of bids through e-procurement: 23-12-2023 01:00 PM.

For further details please log on to www.pmgstendersuk.gov.in

Chief Engineer, URRDA, Dehradun

* Non Registered bidders may submit bids, however, the successful bidders must get registered in appropriate class with appropriate authorities before signing the contract.

Note : For e-Procurement for any sort of queries 0135-2608125 number may be contacted 10:00 AM to 05:00 PM.

GOVERNMENT OF ASSAM
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER: PWD: BUILDING: ASSAM: CHANDMARI: GUWAHATI-3

No. CE /TB-IV/43/2023/5

PRESS NOTICE

The Special Chief Engineer, P.W.D. (Bids) (Health & Education), Assam, on behalf of the Governor of Assam invites online EPC Mode-1 e-tenders in two bid system (Eligibility and Financial) on Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) Mode-1 basis from eligible firms/contractors of repute for the following work.

Details of the bid may be seen at e-procurement portal website i.e. www.assamtenders.gov.in.

Sl. No	State/Package	Name of Work	Approx. Value of Work	Time of completion	Bid Security	Tender Processing Fees
1	NMC-KARIMGANGA NJ	Establishment of New Medical College and Hospital at R.K. Nagar, Karimganj, Assam	Rs. 5,24,29,65,300.00	36 (thirty six) months	2% of value of work for General and 1% of value of work for Reserved category	Rs. 30,000/-

Note :-

- The Work will be allotted on receipt of A/A from the competent authority.
- NIT value may be changed during uploading of tender in the website, which may be seen in Detailed NIT of the bid document.
- The bidders must be enrolled in www.assamtenders.gov.in

Sd/-
Spl. Chief Engineer, P.W.D. (Bldg.),
(Health & Education)
Assam, Chandmari, Guwahati-3.

Janasanyog/C/12443/23/22 November 2023

Saurav made brand ambassador of Bengal by Mamata

PNS ■ KOLKATA

In what the political critics saw as an entrepreneur investing in steel business owning three steel factories in Bihar and Bengal.

"As everyone knows that Sourav Ganguly is a popular figure and he can work for the young generation in a very good manner... I would like to involve him as Bengal's Brand Ambassador," Banerjee said.

"We must be positive and constructive," Banerjee said as she handed over the certificate to Ganguly, a former India south-paw and ex-president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). She would not however, spare a word whether her new decision would end Khan's inning or whether she would let him bat at the non-striker's end.

In a move that many a critic saw as an end of Khan's two-decade-old batting for Team Bengal, Banerjee handed the Brand Ambassador baton to Ganguly.

'Poor diet ups risk of type 2 diabetes'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Poor nutrition or in other words unhealthy diet plays a dual role, contributing to both the risk of developing type 2 diabetes and impacting mental health, including anxiety and depression cause, a team of researchers has said as they batted for nutrition interventions that can aid in both of these health issues.

Though as per the US Centers for Disease Control, people with diabetes are two-to-three times more likely to have depression than people without, the understanding of the multifaceted relationship between nutrition, mental health, and DM has been revealed by the George Mason University researchers.

Two literature reviews from assistant professor Raedeh Basiri from the University show that poor nutrition plays a dual role, contributing to both the risk of developing type 2 diabetes and impacting mental health, including anxiety and depression. Conversely, a diet with a large number of processed foods was found to have a negative effect, increasing the susceptibility to type 2 diabetes, depression, and anxiety.

"Our findings underscore the pivotal role of dietary choices in reducing the risks associated with both diabetes and



mental health. The implications of these findings extend beyond the scientific community, as they hold promise for informing public health policies, health care practices, and dietary recommendations that can positively impact the general population, said Basiri, the lead author of the papers.

"Exploring the Interrelationships between Diabetes, Nutrition, Anxiety, and Depression: Implications for Treatment and Prevention Strategies" was published in Nutrients in September 2023 with Mason Master of Science in Nutrition students Blessing Seidu and Mark Rudich as co-authors.

"Ultimately, the research seeks to empower individuals to make informed and health-promoting dietary choices that can serve as a proactive strategy for the prevention and management of diabetes, as well as anxiety and depression," Basiri said.

Belly fat connected with Alzheimer's: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

If you have been coming up with many excuses to avoid physical activities that can help cut down fat around your belly, then this study may serve you as a wakeup call. A team of researchers has found that visceral fat around the internal organs located deep within the abdomen has been linked to alterations in the brain that can develop up to 15 years before the first signs of Alzheimer's disease.

To identify Alzheimer's risks earlier, researchers assessed the association between brain MRI volumes, as well as amyloid and tau uptake on positron emission tomography (PET) scans, with body mass index (BMI), obesity, insulin resistance and abdominal adipose (fatty) tissue in a cognitively normal midlife population.

Amyloid and tau are proteins thought to interfere with the communication between brain cells.

"Even though there have been other studies linking BMI with brain atrophy or even a higher dementia risk, no prior study has linked a specific type of fat to the actual Alzheimer's disease protein in cognitively normal people," said Mahsa Dolatshahi, post-doctoral research fellow



with Mallinckrodt Institute of Radiology (MIR) at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis.

"Similar studies have not investigated the differential role of visceral and subcutaneous fat, especially in terms of Alzheimer's amyloid pathology, as early as midlife," Dr. Dolatshahi said.

For this cross-sectional study, researchers analysed data from 54 cognitively healthy participants, ranging in age from 40 to 60 years old, with an average BMI of 32.

The participants underwent glucose and insulin measurements, as well as glucose tolerance tests. The volume of subcutaneous fat (fat under the skin) and visceral fat were measured using abdominal MRI.

Brain MRI measures the cortical thickness of brain regions that are affected in Alzheimer's disease. PET was used to examine disease pathology in a subset of 32 participants, focusing on amyloid plaques and tau tangles that accumulate in Alzheimer's disease.

The researchers found that a higher visceral to subcutaneous fat ratio was associated with higher amyloid PET tracer uptake in the precuneus cortex, the region known to be affected early by amyloid pathology in Alzheimer's disease. This relationship was worse in men than in women.

The researchers also found that higher visceral fat measurements are related to an increased burden of inflammation in the brain.

Capital stares at water crisis

DJB not getting funds, severe water crisis looming over Delhi: Atishi to LG

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Amid tussle with the Delhi Government officials, the national Capital may soon face severe water shortage, Water Minister Atishi warned on Tuesday, alleging that the finance department was not releasing funds to the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) despite several written orders. Seeking suspension and disciplinary action against Principal Secretary (Finance) Ashish C Chandra for stopping the funds, the Minister has appealed to Lieutenant Governor (LG) Vinai Kumar Saxena to intervene immediately and release the funds to the DJB.

Opening up yet another front against Chief Secretary Naresh Kumar, she accused him of not releasing funds to the DJB. Atishi in a letter to LG said the national capital might plunge

into a 'man-made' severe water crisis. Finance Secretary Ashish C Verma has stopped all funds of DJB since August upon the Chief Secretary's advice. "Because of this funds aren't being released; no money for salaries and routine work is being sanctioned, and all contractors have refused to work. This might lead to severe water crisis, dirty water, and sewer overflow in many areas; threat of epidemic & emergency-like conditions in the national capital," she said.

The allegation has set up the stage for a fresh bout of confrontation between the bureaucracy and the AAP government in Delhi. No immediate reaction was available from the chief secretary or the finance secretary over allegations by Atishi. However, sources in the planning department said that ₹1,598 crore was released to the



DJB in June. More funds will be released based on evidence of the progress of works and geotagging for ensuring that public funds are not being misappropriated, a source said.

According to sources in the finance department, the Government does not give funds to the DJB for salaries or repairs and maintenance. "These are to be met from the DJB's own revenues. Also, run-

ning water and sewage treatment plants is the DJB's responsibility. "So it is wrong to say that water supply or sewage treatment will stop," a source claimed. Delhi government provides loans and grants only for new works and funds are to be released based on the progress on the ground, the sources added.

"It is a very alarming turn of events that the Finance department of the Delhi Government has refused to release the funds that have already been allotted to the DJB in the Budget 2023-24 passed by the Delhi Legislative Assembly. "This is a routine governance procedure and never in the past has the Finance department raised so many objections to stall the release of routine instalments of the Grant-in-aid and Loan to DJB. "Yet, this time, under the leadership of Ashish C. Verma, the Finance and Planning departments have been repeatedly posing new and different objections each time the previous objection is resolved.

"It is clear as day that Ashish C Verma has malafide intent and plans to prevent the release of the 2nd instalment of the Grant-in-aid and loan to the DJB," reads the letter. "Due to the unavailability of adequate funds in DJB and delay in receipt of the second instalment, the DJB is currently not in a position to release demands/ payments to contractors for the work that they have already done," she said. Atishi mentioned in the letter that this is not the first instance when complaints have come up against Ashish C Verma. "I have myself previously complained about his insubordinate behaviour in the past, and his unwillingness to follow clear, written instructions of the Minister-in-charge. "It is a matter of grave concern that he has adopted this alarming obstructionist attitude and is intent on stalling and halting important works of the public. This unnecessary delay in releasing routine Grant-in-aid, however, is the most shocking of his actions and has far-reaching consequences for

Delhiites". The minister further claimed that many officers have approached her in confidence and said that they have been threatened by the Chief Secretary that if they cooperate with the elected government then a vigilance enquiry would be initiated against them and they would be suspended. "This has created policy paralysis within the Delhi Government across departments as no officer is willing to work or sign any files," she said. Sharing a timeline of events, she said for the financial year 2023-24, a Budget Estimate (Plan) of ₹4,839.50 crores were approved as a grant in aid to the DJB, and the first instalment of Rs 1,598 crore was released in May. In August 2023, DJB requested for release of the second instalment of the grant in aid, of which the amount pending as of October 31 is ₹910 crore. Subsequently, the finance and planning departments have been putting up queries and "delaying" the funds, Atishi said.

Cong, BJP slam AAP over RRTS fund delay

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The BJP and the Congress on Tuesday criticised the AAP Government here following the Supreme Court remarks and claimed it was running only based on propaganda and there was no development work in its model. Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri said strict action by the apex court to seize the advertising budget of the Kejriwal government is a significant blow to the Delhi government. Bidhuri said in July, after the reprimand from the Supreme Court, the Delhi government had assured that it would contribute to the construction of the rail transit transport system between Delhi and Meerut. The BJP leader said it is surprising that even after the assurance given in court, the Delhi government has not released funds of Rs. 565 crores for this project this year, he said. "This is not only the contempt of court but also shows how the Delhi government is acting recklessly and against the rules. Therefore, the court had to



decide that if funds were not released within a week, the advertising budget would be seized. On November 28, the Delhi government will have to explain in court what it has done in this direction, Bidhuri said. Delhi Congress president Arvinder Singh Lovely said it was shocking that the Supreme Court had to scold the Delhi Government for non-payment of the state's contribution of Rs 415 crore to the Rapid Rail project, and threatened to transfer Delhi's advertisement funds to the project, if the Delhi Government did not fulfil its financial obligation to the Rapid Rail project.

App-based bus aggregator scheme for Capital notified

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Government has notified its app-based bus aggregator scheme aiming at reducing intra-city usage of private vehicles and pollution. The Delhi Motor Vehicles Licensing of Aggregator (Premium Buses) Scheme was notified after the approval of Lt Governor VK Saxena. Through the scheme, the government seeks to encourage the middle and upper-middle class to switch to public transport. Under the scheme, an aggregator will be required to ensure the safety and security of women passengers and provide a rapid response mechanism, including a panic button on its app that should be functional at all times and have modalities of API-based integration with law enforcement agencies. "The license holder shall ensure that the acquisition of CNG buses shall not be more than three years old from the date of notification of the scheme. "Subsequently induction of any new bus, the prevailing emission norms, BS-VI must be compli-



ant, either Air-Conditioned CNG or electric buses. After January 1, 2025 the induction of electric buses only shall be allowed, no CNG operated bus even if having BS-VI compliance shall be allowed to induct under this scheme," reads the gazette notification. The scheme will permit dynamic pricing of the base fare that will not be less than the peak fare of Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) air-conditioned buses. "The notification of the Delhi Motor Vehicles Licensing of Aggregator (Premium Buses) Scheme, 2023, marks a historic moment for the national capital," Delhi Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot said while commenting on the notification.

Air remains in very poor category



Traffic policemen wearing an anti-pollution mask regulate vehicular movement, in New Delhi, on Tuesday. PTI

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhiites woke up to a thick layer of smog blanketing the national Capital on Tuesday as the overall air quality of Delhi remained in the 'very poor' category. The average air quality index of Delhi was recorded at 365 at 9 am which rose to 378 on Tuesday, according to the Central Pollution Control Board. AQI in Pusa was recorded at 497, in Satyawati College at 478, in Anand Vihar at 440, in Punjabi Bagh at 404, in Delhi Institute of Too Engineering at 401, in Jahangirpuri at 433, in Shahdara at 402, in East Patel Nagar at 382, in Kohat Enclave at 366, in Lodhi Road at 315, in New Moti Bagh at 370. NCR regions including Ghaziabad (321), Gurugram (261), Greater Noida (318), Noida (331) and Faridabad (329) also recorded a dip in air quality. Expressing dissatisfaction with the action taken by authorities to control air pollution, the National Green Tribunal had directed them to "take all possible measures to ensure that the quality of air improves in Delhi". The tribunal, while taking suo

motu (on its own) cognisance about a media report regarding the worsening air quality in Delhi and the National Capital Region (NCR), directed the filing of further action taken report within a week. "It is difficult to accept the stand of different authorities that they taking all possible measures to control air pollution and improve the quality of air because the air quality index of Delhi does not indicate any significant improvement," it said on Monday. The NGT observed that considering the health of the citizens of the national capital, the authorities concerned are expected to take the best possible measures to improve the air quality. In the last hearing on November 9, it had sought a fresh action taken report from the authorities, including the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC), Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) and the Commission for Air Quality Management for NCR and Adjoining Areas (CAQM).

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NCERT panel wants Ramayana, Mahabharata in school textbooks

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A high-level committee constituted by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) to revise the school curriculum for social sciences, has recommended to include epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata in textbooks, and to write the Preamble of the Constitution on classroom walls.

The seven-member committee headed by CI Issac constituted last year, has made several recommendations for its final position paper on social sciences, which is a key prescriptive document for laying down the foundation for the development of new NCERT textbooks.

The committee's recommendation may now be taken into consideration by the 19-member National Syllabi and Teaching Learning Material Committee (NSTC) notified in July to finalise the curriculum, textbooks and learning material for these classes. The NSTC has also recently formed a Curricular Area



Group (CAG) for Social Science to develop Syllabi and Teaching-Learning material for the subject. Emphasising that it is significant to teach Ramayana and Mahabharata to students in classes 7 to 12, Issac said the committee has insisted on teaching epics like Ramayana and Mahabharata in the social

science syllabus to students. "We think that students in their teenage years build their self-esteem, patriotism and pride for their nation. Every year thousands of students leave the country and seek citizenship in other countries because of the lack of patriotism among them. Therefore, it is important for them to

understand their roots and develop love for their country and their culture," he said. "Although some education boards presently teach Ramayana to students, they teach it as a myth. What is a myth? There is no purpose of the education system if the students are not taught these epics, and it will not be nation

servant," he added.

Issac had earlier said that the panel had also recommended replacing the name 'India' with 'Bharat' in textbooks, introducing 'classical History' instead of ancient History in the curriculum of textbooks for classes 3 to 12.

"The recommendation to include Ramayana and Mahabharata in the syllabus was also made earlier. The committee has not made any fresh recommendations," he said.

Explaining the idea behind recommending writing the Preamble of the Constitution on the walls of the classrooms, Issac said, "Our Preamble is noble. It gives importance to social values including democracy and secularism. Therefore, we have recommended writing it on the walls of the classrooms so that everyone can understand and learn from it," Issac added. NCERT is revising the school curriculum in line with the national education policy (NEP) 2020. The new NCERT textbooks are likely to be ready by the next academic session.

Shared India's perspective with Australia on issues with Canada: Jaishankar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Tuesday shared with Australia India's perspective on the strain in its relationship with Canada following Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations of potential links between Indian agents and the killing of Sikh extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. Jaishankar briefed Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong on the issues between India and Canada during the India-Australia Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue.

"From our point of view, the key issue is really the space which is being given to extremism and radicalism in Canada," Jaishankar told reporters at a joint press conference with Wong. He noted that Australia had a good and strong relationship with both India and Canada. "So, it was important that Australia get our perspective on the issue," Jaishankar said. The ties between India and Canada came under severe strain following Trudeau's allegations in September of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of

Khalistani separatist Nijjar on June 18 in British Columbia. India had designated Nijjar as a terrorist in 2020. India has rejected Trudeau's allegations as "absurd" and "motivated".

Since Trudeau's remarks in the Canadian Parliament, India and Canada have expelled a senior diplomat each. India has also forced "parity" in diplomatic presence at Canadian missions here leading to withdrawal for 41 diplomats. India has said Canada had not provided any evidence to back Trudeau's claims.

"If you have a reason to make such an allegation, please share the evidence with us. We are not ruling out an investigation and looking at anything which they may have to offer. They haven't done so," Jaishankar said during a visit to the UK last week.



Electric propulsion partnership discussed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The 2nd India-UK Electric Propulsion Capability Partnership Joint Working Group meeting took place here on Tuesday. The meeting was co-chaired by Joint Secretary (Naval Systems), Department of Defence Production Rajeev Prakash and Director, Ships Operations and Capability Integration, Defence Equipment and Support Rear Admiral Steve McCarthy, defence ministry said. During the meeting, both sides discussed issues of the Electric Propulsion Partnership like finalisation of Statement of Technical Requirements (SOTR), Factory Acceptance Test (FAT) procedures, maintenance, Manning Philosophy and System Integration requirement.

NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

Palika Kendra, New Delhi
A&H Establishment

PUBLIC NOTICE

Shri Pawan Kumar, S/o Shri Rameshwar Das Jain [Resident of Flat No. 297, Ground Floor, Golden Jubilee Apartments, Sector-11, Rohini, Delhi-110085] and Home Town:- "2/345, Arya Nagar, Sonapat, Haryana-131001] is working as Assistant Architect in New Delhi Municipal Council since 10.07.2006, but he is absent from his duty since 22.08.2014 till date.

Therefore, Shri Pawan Kumar is informed through "Public Notice" that he should report for duty within 15 days, failing which, a "unilateral" action will be taken by the New Delhi Municipal Council regarding termination of his service as per the rules.

Sd/-
Sanjay Prasad
Director (Personnel)

PUBLIC NOTICE

It is to inform to the public at large that Mrs. Sunita Rathaur who is purchasing the Built-up Third Floor, with roof rights, out of Property bearing Plot No. E-53-A, area admeasuring 122.172 Sq Yards, Khasra No. 36, along with one bike parking, situated in the area of Noida colony known as Shiv Vihar Block E, Noida Ext., New Delhi-110041; from S. Darshan Singh S/o. Mahender Singh, who is co-owner/holder of (1) Mr. Ashish Anand (2) Mr. Jasvinder Singh vide noida/REGD/GPA, SPA, ATS and Will dated 11.08.2021; and same to be financed & mortgaged by Shubham Housing Development Finance Co. Limited. To comply the requirements of BANK/NBFC, we give this public notice that if any person having any type of claim/right/title/interest/creating mortgage over the said property, may inform in writing, at the address mentioned below, about his objections within 07 days from today, failing which it shall be presumed that the said property is free from all type of Encumbrances, lien etc. Lucem Legal LLP Plot No. 136, (Basement) Uday Park, New Delhi-110049. Contact: 911-40946316

BSES

BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, New Delhi
NOTICE INVITING TENDER FOR SHORT TERM PURCHASE OF POWER FOR THE PERIOD 01st April 2024 to 30th SEPTEMBER 2024
Tender No. Head (PMGS)/B/E/ender/2023/24/169
In accordance with the guidelines for short term procurement of power notified by the Ministry of Power and directions issued by Hon'ble DERC, BPL has floated power procurement tender with the General Terms and Conditions for purchase of power and same is available on e-Bidding portal www.mssteecommerce.com www.bsesdelhi.com.
Bidders are requested to kindly visit above website and submit the competitive purchase offers on www.mssteecommerce.com.
Last date of bid submission is 11th December 2023 up to 15:00 hrs & Opening of non financial technical bids is 12th December 2023 at 11:00 HRS
Address:- Head PMG, BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd., BSES Bhawan, 2nd Floor, D-Block, Nehru Place, New Delhi - 110019 Tel: 011 49209037

Regd. Off. - BSES Rajdhani Power Limited, BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi-110019 Corporate Identification No. 161912019PLC111527 Telephone No. 011 4910 7255 Website: www.bsesdelhi.com

FORM NO. 5

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Temple, Lucknow - 226007
(Area of Jurisdiction- Part of Uttar Pradesh)

SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION

O.A. NO. 1075/2022
[Summons to defendant under Section 19(4), of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]

ICICI BANK LTD. ...Applicant
Versus
Mr. Mandeep Singh Nain & Others ...Defendant

To, Defendants:-
1) Mr. Mandeep Singh Nain S/o. Shri Shashu Ram, Resident of Flat No. C1/601, Plot No. GH-01, Sector- 16B, Greater Noida- 201301, (U.P.)
2) Mrs. Poonam Singh Nain W/o Mr. Mandeep Singh Nain, Resident of Flat No. C1/601, Plot No. GH-01, Sector- 16B, Greater Noida- 201301 (U.P.)
3) M/s. Future World Green Homes Pvt. Ltd., Office at Plot No. GH-16E, Sector-1, Greater Noida (West)- 201301 (U.P.)

In the above noted application, you are required to file reply in paper book form in two sets along with documents and affidavits (if any), personally or through your duly authorized agent or legal practitioner in this Tribunal, after serving copy of the same on the applicant or his counsel/ duly authorized agent after publication of the summons, and thereafter to appear before the Tribunal on 07/03/2024 at 10:30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your absence.

Application fee Rs.71,000/-
Advocate fees Rs.
Publication charges Rs.
Miscellaneous Expenses Rs.
Given under my hand and seal at Lucknow this 31st day of October, 2023.

Recovery Officer
Debts Recovery Tribunal,
Lucknow

Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal,
Lucknow

Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal,
Lucknow

PUBLIC NOTICE

My Client Smt. Subhashini Sharma W/o Lt. Prem Prakash Sharma R/o H.No. 22, Paryatan Vihar B-4, Vasundhara Enclave, East Delhi, Delhi-96 has disowned/debarred her son Manish Sharma, Daughter-in-law Avneet Ahluwalia and grand daughter Samaira Sharma from all her moveable and immovable properties because they are not control of my client and shall not be responsible for any act of omission or commission of above said persons, as they have not been under the control of my client for the past long time. Anybody dealing with them shall be going to at his/her own risk and responsibility.
Kunal Punj, Advocate, New Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE

General public is hereby informed that Smt. Kusum Lata is intending to sell house No. 112 & 113, FWS-Category, Phase-1, Housing Board Colony, Pawal, Sector-2, Faridabad, Haryana 121102, to Mr. Saurabh Singh to be financed & mortgaged by my client i.e. Ms. IFL Home Finance Ltd. The Original Allotment Letter dt. 23.12.2003, Conveyance Deed dt. 09.23.05 regd. vide doc. No. 5551 and Conveyance Deed dt. 19.09.2005 regd. vide doc. No. 5249, pertaining to the aforesaid property have been lost and complaint bearing Application No. 132600/12301425 was registered with Haryana Police. Any person(s) found in possession of aforesaid original property documents, then kindly contact the undersigned along with original property document, within 7 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid documents shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.
Raghav Tiwari, Advocate
Ch. 830, Patliata House Courts,
New Delhi - 110001 Mob.:- 91-987619323

THE PIONEER CLASSIFIEDS

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Ishbiliya Handoo D/o Sh. Bihari Lal Handoo & W/o Sh. Rakesh Bhat R/o E-1/14, DLF Phase -I, Gurugram, Haryana Have changed Name after Marriage Ishbiliya Handoo Bhat.
PD(199)A

FORM NO. 5

DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow - 226007
(Area of Jurisdiction-Part of Uttar Pradesh)

Summons for filing & Appearance by Publication

O.A. No. 760/2023
Date 30.10.2023
[Summons to defendant under section 19(3) of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]

ICICI BANK LTD. ...Applicant
Versus
AJIT KUMAR & OTHERS ...Defendants

To, Defendants:-
1. AJIT KUMAR S/o. ANANT ROY R/o. Flat No.- 02191, Tower No-2, Floor No.- 19, ATS Advantage Ahinsha Khand-1, Near Aditya Mall, Indirapuram Shipra Suncity, Ghaziabad- 201014
2. SHIPRA SINGH W/o AJIT KUMAR R/o Flat No.-02191, Tower No.- 2, Floor No.-19, ATS Advantage Ahinsha Khand-1, Near Aditya Mall, Indirapuram Shipra Suncity, Ghaziabad- 201014.
3. MAHAGUN REAL ESTATE PVT. LTD.
Registered office: B-66 (1st Floor), Vivek Vihar, Delhi- 110095

In the above noted application, you are required to file in Paper Book form in two sets along with documents and affidavits (if any), personally or through your duly authorized agent or legal practitioner in this Tribunal, after serving copy of the same on the applicant or his counsel/duly authorized agent after publication of the summons, and thereafter to appear before the Tribunal on 06/05/2024 at 10:30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decide in your absence.

Application fee Rs.71,000/-
Advocate fees Rs.
Publication charges Rs.
Miscellaneous Expenses Rs.
Given under my hand and seal at Lucknow this 31st day of October, 2023.

Recovery Officer
Debts Recovery Tribunal,
Lucknow

Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal,
Lucknow

Registrar
Debts Recovery Tribunal,
Lucknow

Vajra Prahar 2023 begins

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

The 14th Edition of the India-US Joint Special Forces exercise "Vajra Prahar 2023" commenced at the Joint Training Node, Umroi, Shillong on Tuesday. The US contingent is represented by personnel from the 1st Special Forces Group (SFG) of US Special Forces. The Indian Army contingent is led by Special Forces personnel from the Eastern Command, army said here. Exercise Vajra Prahar is a joint exercise conducted between Indian Army and US Army Special Forces. It aims at sharing best practices and experiences in areas such as joint mission planning and operational tactics. The first edition was conducted in the year 2010 in India and the 13th edition of the Indo-US Joint Special Forces exercise was conducted at the Special Forces Training School (SFTS), Bakloh (Himachal Pradesh). The current edition is being conducted in Umroi Cantonment, Meghalaya from 21st November to 11th December 2023. During the course of the next three weeks, both sides will jointly plan and rehearse a series of Special Operations, Counter Terrorist Operations, Air



Borne operations in simulated conventional and unconventional scenarios in mountainous terrain. Key highlights include 'Combat free fall insertion of troops from stand-off distances', 'Water borne insertion of troops', 'Precision engagement of targets at long ranges', 'Combat air controlling of fixed wing and rotary wing aircraft besides 'Airborne insertion and sustenance of troops'. Exercise Vajra Prahar has evolved as a mechanism to exchange ideas and share best practices between the Special Forces of both the nations. It is also a platform to enhance inter-operability and strengthen defence cooperation between the armies of India and the US.

RRTS PROJECT

SC pulls up Delhi Govt for not providing its share of funds

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Tuesday pulled up the Delhi government for not providing funds for the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) corridors to Alwar and Panipat, and said if the dues were not paid within a week, the funds allocated by the AAP government for advertisements will be transferred to the project.

The RRTS project entails semi-high speed rail corridors connecting Delhi to Meerut in Uttar Pradesh, Alwar in Rajasthan, and Panipat in Haryana. The apex court said budgetary provision was something which the state government should look into but if such national projects were to be affected and money was spent on advertisements, it would be inclined to direct that those funds be transferred for this project.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Sudhanshu Dhulia observed that on July 24, the counsel representing the Delhi government had assured the top court that payment would be made towards the project. "We are thus constrained to direct that funds allocated for



advertisement purposes will be transferred to the project in question," the bench said. "At the request of the counsel for Delhi government, we keep this order in abeyance for one week and if the funds are not transferred, the order will come into operation," it said. While hearing the matter on July 24, the apex court had berated the Delhi government for "throwing its hands up" over contributing its share towards the two RRTS corridors and directed it to provide Rs 415 crore for the project within two months. On Tuesday, the bench was hearing an application raising the issue of non-payment of funds by the Delhi government for the project. When the counsel representing the Delhi government said they needed to file a reply in the mat-

ter, the bench shot back, "What reply? You have not complied?" "Why did you not comply? I told you that day, I will attach your advertising revenue. I am going to stay the advertising budget," Justice Kaul told the lawyer. The bench, which posted the matter for hearing on November 28, expressed its displeasure that the Delhi government has not complied with the assurance given to the court in July. It said the Delhi government did not even come to the court to seek extension of time for making the payment for the project. "You can't take this court for granted," the bench said.

The Delhi government had earlier expressed its inability to contribute funds for the RRTS project after which the apex court had directed it to place on record funds spent on advertisements in the last three years.

COVID jab did not increase risk of sudden death, says ICMR study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A study by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has said that COVID-19 vaccination did not increase the risk of sudden deaths among young adults in India reported in the past one year. Instead, it blamed factors such as being in the hospital for Covid in the past and certain behaviours like binge drinking and intense physical activity shortly before death for such mortalities, the study has said. Titled "Factors associated with sudden deaths among adults

aged 18-45 years in India -- a multicentric matched case-control study", the study is under peer review and yet to be published. It was completed earlier this month, official sources said recently. Citing the ICMR study, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviva said at Gujarat's Bhavnagar had said that those who had earlier suffered a severe bout of Covid must not overexert themselves for a year or two to avoid heart attacks and cardiac arrests. Anecdotal reports of sudden deaths among healthy young

adults in India led the researchers to conduct the investigation. The deaths raised concerns that they might be related to COVID-19 or the vaccination against the disease, the sources said. The study was conducted to investigate the factors contributing to sudden unexplained deaths among healthy young adults in India. The study included cases of apparently healthy individuals aged 18-45 years with no

underlying health issues who died suddenly from unexplained causes between October 1, 2021 and March 31, 2023. For each case, four matched controls were selected based on age, gender and locality, the sources said. Investigators enrolled 729 cases and 2,916 controls and collected information from both the cases and controls about aspects, such as their medical history, behaviours like smoking, alcohol use and intense physical activity, whether they were hospitalised due to Covid and whether they were administered any vaccine

dose. "COVID-19 vaccination did not increase the risk of sudden deaths among young adults in India. In fact, COVID-19 vaccination reduced the risk of sudden deaths among adults. "Factors that did increase the chances of sudden deaths included being in the hospital for COVID-19 in the past and certain behaviours like binge drinking and intense physical activity shortly before death. In summary, this research provides important insights into the factors contributing to sudden deaths among young adults in India," the study said.

Climate change poses threat to women, kids: UN

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Ahead of the global Conference of the Parties (COP28) negotiations on climate change in Dubai, UN agencies have sought to remind the countries, particularly the developed nations to put lives and livelihood first during negotiations, given that global warming can also have severe impact on the health of the pregnant women, babies and children besides causing

many other health hazards. According to a Call for Action report released by United Nations (UN) agencies, protecting maternal, newborn and child health from the impacts of climate change is vital but so far these have been neglected, underreported and underestimated. It highlighted that very few countries' climate change response plans mention maternal or child health, describing this as "a glaring omission and emblematic of the inadequate

attention to the needs of women, newborns, and children in the climate change discourse". The Call to Action was released by WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA at an online launch event, alongside an advocacy brief by the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH). "Climate change poses an existential threat to all of us, but pregnant women, babies and

children face some of the gravest consequences of all," said Bruce Aylward, Assistant Director General for Universal Health Coverage, Life Course at the WHO. "Children's futures need to be consciously protected, which means taking climate action now for the sake of their health and survival, while ensuring their unique needs are recognized in the climate response. The document cited various studies that said climate

change harm can begin even in the womb, leading to pregnancy-related complications, preterm birth, low birthweight and stillbirth. For children, consequences can last a lifetime, affecting the development of their bodies and brains as they grow. "Action on climate change often ignores that children's bodies and minds are uniquely vulnerable to pollution, deadly diseases and extreme weather," said UNICEF.

BJP appoints incharges of all 16 districts in Kashi region

....ahead of parliamentary election

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

In an effort to strengthen the party organisation in Kashi Region ahead of the 2024 parliamentary election, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has appointed the incharges of all 16 districts coming in the region. Former Mayor of Varanasi Kaushlendra Patel has been appointed as the incharge of Pratapgarh district, while Arun Pathak has been appointed the incharge of Varanasi.

The BJP has divided the state into regions in view of the organisational structure and as many as 16 districts have been included in Kashi Region. To strengthen the party organ-



Ex-Mayor of Varanasi who has been appointed as party incharge of Pratapgarh district by BJP UP chief Bhupendra Chaudhary.

isation and repeat its previous performance in the forthcoming parliamentary election next year, the BJP UP chief Bhupendra Chaudhary has

appointed new faces in all 16 districts coming in Kashi Region as incharge keeping all equations to win the election in view.

The former Mayor of Varanasi Kaushlendra Patel has been given the responsibility of Pratapgarh district as incharge. Patel has discharged his responsibility on various posts in the party organisation and also is ex-Member of National Commission for Backward Class. He was elected as Mayor in 2006 as the youngest Mayor of Varanasi.

Arun Pathak has been appointed as the incharge of Varanasi, the parliamentary constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi while Rakesh

Trivedi, Nagendra Raghuvanshi, Ashok Chaurasia, Santosh Patel, Meena Chaubey, Shankar Giri and Mahesh Chandra Srivastava (all belong to Varanasi) have been made the incharges of Ghazipur, Bhadohi, Jaunpur, Machhlishahr, Sultanpur, Amethi and Prayagraj City respectively.

Similarly, Uttar Maurya, Sushil Tripathi, Anamika Chaudhary, Saroj Kushwaha, Awadhesh Gupta and Amar Nath Yadav have been made the incharges of Prayagraj Trans-Ganga, Prayagraj Trans-Yamuna, Chandauli, Mirzapur, Kaushambi and Sonbhadra district respectively.

Joint secy reviews preparations of Gramin Samvad Yatra

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Joint secretary in the Union Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) Vipul Goyal reviewed the preparations of the Gramin Samvad Yatra for effective implementation of central government schemes. Holding a meeting with the district level officers at Circuit House here on Tuesday, Goyal said that to spread awareness about government schemes and ensure 100 per cent coverage of central schemes, the central government will organise such yatra.

He asked all the responsible officers to generate their login ID and password and ensure to upload their daily activities. In compliance with the government orders, he directed the concerned district level officers to ensure five types of stalls - pension schemes, health services, agricultural stalls, self-help group stalls, banking sector stalls. "Through this Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra, the central and state governments aim to provide various public welfare basic facilities and make essential services accessible to the people of the district," he said, adding that the objective of this programme is to reach the benefits of the schemes to the last person of the society and to saturate the schemes with eligible beneficiaries.

The joint secretary said that under this campaign, the benefits of major schemes will reach the targeted beneficiaries, especially the deprived and dissatisfied people, in a timely manner and by making the general public aware, it will be ensured that the benefits of the



Joint secretary Vipul Goyal reviewing preparations of Gramin Samvad Yatra in Varanasi on Tuesday.

schemes reach the deprived people.

Speaking on the occasion, District Magistrate (DM) S Rajalingam informed the joint secretary that three meetings have already been held for the effective implementation of Gramin Samvad Yatra and a committee and task force have been formed at the tehsil and block level. "Every day, six LED vans received by the district will rotate in two gram panchayats and two urban wards. Of the six LED vans received, five will ensure publicity in rural areas and one in urban areas," the DM said. He also informed about the non-availability of registration facility on the website to ensure housing to the beneficiaries left in the housing allotment and the technical problems faced in the Ayushman Golden Cards.

Chief Development Officer (CDO) Himanshu Nagpal informed the joint secretary through the power-point pre-

sentation that by giving major responsibility to 18 district level officers, a festival and welcome committee has also been formed inside the village. "The Sankalp Yatra will be organised in the district from November 22 to January 26, 2024. IEC Vans will be used to increase dissemination of information through audio visual aids, brochures, pamphlets, booklets etc.

For this, IT portal and app have been developed, on which daily progress, photos and videos related to the journey will be uploaded," the CDO said, adding that for the successful organisation, implementation and monitoring of Vikas Bharat Sankalp Yatra at the Gram Panchayat level, nodal officers and supervisory officers have been nominated.

He said that a total of 27 schemes of central and state governments have been included in it. By conducting door-to-door surveys, a cluster has

been formed by combining several gram panchayats. In these, separate health camps, TB screening, sickle cell anaemia, PM Ujjwala, My Bharat Yuva Swayamsevak, Meri Kahani Meri Jubani, Dharti Kare Pukar, Kashi Samridhhi Campaign Anemia Free will also be ensured. The officials from various departments related to Gramin Samvad Yatra were also present in the meeting.

The yatra will also involve local communities by organising cultural programmes a day before the arrival of the chariot in a village. With the theme 'Dharti Kahe Pukar Ke', the programmes will promote judicious use of chemical fertilizers and adoption of organic fertilizers.

The Culture Ministry will train around 7,500 artistes for these cultural events, which will provide both entertainment and knowledge to the attendees.

Congress extends support to Seth

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Congress Party has extended its support to party former corporator and senior leader Dr Jitendra Seth against whom an FIR has been lodged in other district as he has been continuing his fight for last more than two decades to protect the historical and mythological important Shivpur Talab, one of places where devotees take a halt to rest during Panchkoshi Yatra, from the land mafias.

Former vice chairman of Cantonment Board and senior Congress leader Shailendra Singh flayed the state government for the FIR lodged against Dr Seth in Hardoi district because he has been fighting for the last more than two decades to protect Shivpur Talab, where devotees take their fourth halt to rest during the auspicious Panchkoshi Parikrama, from land mafias. The state government claims of being only well wisher of



Historically and Mythologically important Shivpur Talab covered with clay in an attempt to grab it.

Hindus but also allows the police to lodge FIR against a person who has devoted his entire life to protect this historical and mythological important talab from the land mafia, he charged. Dr Seth informed that the Shivpur Talab is at the 31st number in the list of 63 talabs of the Varanasi Municipal Corporation (VMC) and it is historically and mythologically important talab where the devotees take halt to rest during the Panchkoshi Parikrama. Earlier this talab was covered

with clay by the land mafias with the nexus of the local officers and also got registered their names as owners but he along with locals fought against it and moved the court, he informed and added that the court constituted a four-member committee to conduct an inquiry into the matter which mentioned it as a talab in its report. An FIR was also lodged at Shivpur police station on April 20 in 2008 against a company on the directive of them DM Veena to cover the

talab and change its original nature, he informed and added that this talab was covered with clay by the land mafias but no construction was made on it because of the fight to protect it since 2002.

Now, the manager of same company against which the FIR was lodged on April 20 in 2008, has lodged FIR against him in Hardoi district as he has been fighting to protect the talab for the last more than two decades and he is big hurdle on the way of land mafias to grab it illegally, Dr Seth said and urged the PM Narendra Modi to restore the talab as its original nature by getting restoration of water body. He apprehended the threat to his life and demanded the district administration to take the matter seriously. He also demanded the government to direct the administration of Hardoi district to withdraw the FIR lodged against him with ill intention and mount pressure so that he left his fight to protect the talab.

Human rights keep democracy alike: Danish scholar

VARANASI (PNS): A scholar from the School of Culture and Society, Aarhus University, Denmark, Dr Christian O Christiansen said that today the entire world community is concerned about human rights. Human rights are the only force that keeps democracy alive and helps it survive around the world. He was

delivering a special lecture organised under the aegis of the Department of Political Science at DAV PG College here on Tuesday. Addressing the lecture organised on the topic 'Justification of Socio-Economic Human Rights', the keynote speaker, Dr Christian O Christiansen said that a healthy democracy is the pillar

of strong social and economic human rights. He said that human rights cannot be kept within limited limits, just as democracy is not limited to the rights to vote. Similarly, he added that human rights reflect the real condition of the society more than the freedom of an individual.

He also explained the con-

tributions of American political scientist Ralph Bunche in the context of socio-economic human rights.

According to him, America is full of contradictions and even today he seems to be in a state of dilemma regarding human rights. After this, Dr Christian also interacted with the students.

Ashes of Sahara Shri immersed in Sangam

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Sahara Shri Subrata Roy's Sasthi visarjan was performed in the Sangam at Prayagraj by Joybroto Roy, younger brother of Sahara Shri & Deputy Managing Worker of Sahara India Pariwar, along with OP Srivastava, Deputy Managing Worker, and other senior members of Sahara India Pariwar.

A large number of people and Sahara workers proceeded with the asthi kalash from KP Inter College at around 12 noon and reached Sangam at 1 pm for the ritual.

Apart from Prayagraj,



Sahasrasi's asthi visarjan was also done at Varanasi by the nephews of Sahara Shri, Samrat Neogi and Shrojuganto Roy. asthi visarjan will also be done at Haridwar and at Aamby Valley tomorrow.

Sahara Shri passed away on 14th November 2023 at 10.30 pm due to cardiorespiratory arrest following an extended battle with complications arising from metastatic malignancy, hypertension, and diabetes at Kokilaben Dhirubhai Ambani Hospital & Medical Research Institute in Mumbai.

Rape victim done to death

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

A rape victim was done to death by the brother of the accused in Kaushambi. She had gone to the police station to lodge a complaint, but could not reach home.

A 20-year-old girl was raped allegedly by a youth of the same community in May last year. A panchayat was called and the boy was asked to marry the girl. When he refused to marry her, an FIR was lodged and the accused Pawan Nishad was sent to jail.

Recently Pawan came out of the jail on bail and allegedly pressurised the girl's family to withdraw the case against him. He also threatened the girl. On Monday Ashok Nishad, brother of Pawan consumed liquor and showered abuses on the girl, who went to the police station to lodge a complaint with her sister-in-law. She tried to capture the

behaviour of Ashok on her mobile phone but was attacked with an axe. She died on the spot. After the incident Ashok, Pawan and other members of the family ran away. Officials said Ashok had a criminal record and a murder case was pending against him.

SHOT AT: A truck driver standing on Bhopatpur Sahaso national highway was shot at and injured by miscreants.

The police sent the truck driver and the injured cleaner to the SRN Hospital. The truck has been parked at the police station.

Driver Brijesh Kumar (30) of Jangipur Sarpatahiya, Jaunpur and cleaner Manoj Yadav of Bihar were bringing yarn from Punjab to Bangladesh. The cleaner was present in the truck and the driver Brijesh Kumar got down to defecate.

Meanwhile, two miscreants entered the truck. A fight

took place between the cleaner and the two miscreants. The miscreants beat the cleaner with the butt of his gun and left him bleeding. The truck driver was also targeted and shot at. Even after being shot at, the driver did not stop the truck and the miscreant ran away with the bag containing documents and cash. When he reached the petrol pump with the truck, he informed the police. The police admitted the injured to SRN Hospital.

Inspector Tharwai said a case has been registered and efforts are being made to nab the miscreants. Assistant Police Commissioner Tharwai Jang Bahadur Yadav said information was received about the truck driver being shot near Bhopatpur national highway under the Tharwai police station area.

The complaint of robbery has not been given by the victim. Legal action is being taken

by registering a case under appropriate sections.

SUMMONED: The Prayagraj Commissionerate Police has tightened the noose on Abhishek Singh Michael, former general secretary of Allahabad University Students' Union. The police have served him a notice under the Goonda Act and summoned him to the Commissioner Court. Goonda Act was invoked against Michael in 2020.

Michael had contested the election for the post of general secretary in 2012 while in jail. Nineteen cases are registered against Michael.

He has also been accused of collecting goonda tax from contractors.

In October 2020 on the basis of the challan report of Colonelganj police, the then Additional Municipal Magistrate Court had taken action under the Goonda Act.

Two illegal constructions of Atiq's henchman sealed

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The Prayagraj Development Authority (PDA) sealed two illegal constructions of Asad Kalia, henchman of mafia Atiq Ahmed, lodged in Naini jail. The process of preparing documents for demolition has been started by the PDA. A few years ago Asad's illegal construction in Chakia was demolished with bulldozers.

Illegal construction was being done by Afzal and others in 2,550 square feet near 60 feet road. Despite the illegal construction being stopped several times by the PDA construction was still going on. On the instructions of Zonal Officer Ajay Kumar, the illegal construction was sealed in the presence of junior engineer Anil Singh.

PDA Vice-Chairman Arvind Chauhan said action will be taken against anyone

who does illegal construction without getting the map passed from PDA. Action to seal and demolish illegal construction will be taken rapidly in the coming days.

UMESH PAL MURDER CASE: The location of Nafees Biryani, accused of conspiracy to murder Umesh Pal and his two government security personnel, has been found in Delhi. On Monday a police team conducted a raid in Delhi, but he was not arrested.

The police is investigating the information about property, bank account, income tax return and other sources of income of Nafees of Gulabbari Khuldabad. Help is also being taken from municipal corporation, PDA etc regarding the property.

Further action will be taken after the complete report is ready. The police has got the footage of a five-star hotel

located in Delhi. A woman is also seen in it along with Nafees. On this basis it is believed that Nafees may be hiding in Delhi, for whose arrest two teams of Prayagraj police are conducting raids.

It has also been said that the complete details of employees and associates working in the restaurant of Nafees, carrying a reward of Rs 50,000, are also being scrutinised.

DCP City Deepak Bhukar said Nafees' location has been found in Delhi after which the teams are searching.

PNG FACILITY: People living in the expanded areas of the municipal corporation will soon get the facility of pipe natural gas (PNG). Work has started in that direction. The work of laying the pipeline on behalf of Indian Oil Adani Gas will be started soon. So far 650 kilometers of pipeline has been laid in the city. Due to it

20,000 people have taken PNG connections. Plans to lay pipelines up to 200 kilometres are being made for the expanded areas.

This includes Jhalwa, Transport Nagar, Pritam Nagar, Sulemansarai, Maheva, Puramufti, Malakar, Gaddopur and other areas. Due to the expansion of the urban limits, the number of wards in the municipal corporation has now increased to 100 and 20 new wards have been created. This includes most of the rural areas. In all these areas food is prepared using wood or LPG.

Associate Manager, Indian Oil Adani Gas, Pankaj Kumar, said plans are being made to lay pipelines in every area of the city. Pipeline has been laid towards Jhansi, Phaphamau and Rajrooppur. It will be further expanded in the coming days.

Sansad Rojgar Mela to be held on Dec 12

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The district administration has so far received a total of 14,359 vacancies in as many as 108 companies. Chairing a meeting held at his camp office here on Monday to review the preparations for the proposed Sansad Rojgar Mela to be held at ITI,

Karoundi here on December 12, the District Magistrate (DM) S Rajalingam directed the officers concerned to get maximum registration on the portal to make the job opportunity to maximum youths through Sansad Rojgar Mela. A

target has been set to provide the jobs to about 20,000 youths through the proposed Rojgar Mela, he informed. The District Employment Officer informed that a total of 14,359 vacancies has so far been received in 108 companies.

Minister reviews law & order

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

Uttar Pradesh Minister of Industrial Development and minister incharge of the district Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi' while reviewing the law and order situation and progress in developmental works at the Collectorate on Monday expressed discontent over the rising graph of crime against women.

During the review of progress in works related to development the minister said works under the schemes AMRUT and Jal Jeevan Mission should be completed by January next year. The minister took the police authorities to the task for increased crime in the current year. He directed the authorities to increase foot patrolling in markets. The SP was directed to monitor the situation if crime was increasing in any area.

The minister directed the officials concerned to facilitate the eligible persons with the welfare schemes. He reviewed all schemes pointwise and



UP Minister Minister of Industrial Development Nand Gopal Gupta 'Nandi' holding the meeting of the district officials at the Collectorate on Monday

issued necessary directions. In Shahpur Chausa village under city block the minister held a chaupal and interacted with people. He directed the official concerned to withhold the salary of five officials who were absent during the chaupal despite prior information. He took meal at a house along with officials and party workers and handed over the cash gift to girls and others.

MISHAP: A 24-year-old youth died in a road accident in an area under Dehat Kotwali

police station on Monday. Pankaj Maurya of Narthua village under Aurai police station, Bhadohi, was preparing for IAS examination by staying in the house of his relative located in Lohiya Talab under Katra Kotwali police station in Mirzapur town. On Monday he was going to the hospital his motorcycle collided with another one in Bharuhna under Dehat Kotwali police station. He was brought to the trauma centre, Mirzapur, in a serious condition where the

doctors declared him as brought dead. On information the police reached the spot and sent the body for the post-mortem examination.

DIRECTIVES: Union joint secretary and nominated nodal officer Govind Jaiswal in a meeting held at the Collectorate on Monday issued necessary directions to the officials for the successful conduct of the Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra. He said the yatra had to play the role of a bridge between the eligible people and government. He said as per the route chart the yatra was to touch all rural as well as urban areas. He said the success story of those who availed the benefits of any scheme should be shared.

District Magistrate Priyanka Niranjan, Chief Development Officer (CDO) Srilaxmi VS, Superintendent of Police (SP) Abhinandan, Additional District Magistrate Finance and Revenue (ADM/F&R) Shiv Pratap Shukla and other officials concerned were present.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Pointing the finger

Modi's poll campaign focuses on corruption and dynastic mindset of the Congress

As the time for polling in the next round of Assembly elections grows shorter, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has intensified his election campaign and is focusing on issues of corruption, dynastic rule and development. Recently, he took the Congress Government in Rajasthan to task, accusing it of putting corruption and dynasty over development. Modi's scathing attack on the Congress Government centered on allegations of corruption, appeasement politics and family succession. He asserted that the Congress has been engrossed in appeasement politics, leading to the flourishing of individuals with a mentality inclined towards riots and terrorism. He linked the 'grand old party' and its allies to a campaign against women, especially after the introduction of reservation for women in legislative bodies. Highlighting the party's alleged anti-women stance, Modi labelled the Opposition grouping, the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA), as "ghamandiya" or arrogant; this term has become a recurring theme



in his speeches. It is customary and an accepted fact that any party would attack its opponents in election rallies. In fact, sometimes election campaigns turn venomous, which is taken with a pinch of salt, but these days it is a no-holds barred fight where no one is immune or sacrosanct. While lambasting the Congress for dynastic politics, however, Modi inadvertently drew attention to the presence of similar elements in his own party.

The BJP has not been immune to dynastic succession, and this observation adds a layer of complexity to his narrative. Critics argue that both major political parties in India grapple with dynastic tendencies, making it a systemic issue rather than one confined to a specific party. If one were to analyse today's party organisation, several examples can fit the description of dynastic mindset. Rajnath's son Pankaj Singh, Amit Shah's son Jay Shah and Prem Kumar Dhumal's son Anurag Thakur can fit the description well. The latest in this regard is BY Vijayendra, the son of former Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa, who has been appointed the BJP's Karnataka unit president. Modi also emphasised the reduction in direct taxes during the BJP's tenure, claiming significant savings for the taxpayer; he highlighted reduced mobile data prices. Underscoring the need for a Government prioritising development, Modi urged the people of Rajasthan to vote for a Government that would work towards progress. He positioned the BJP as the party that would lead Rajasthan to new heights in the 21st century. His attack on the Congress Government's alleged shortcomings might be true to an extent but he should also remember that people could like to draw parallels with the BJP-ruled States where things are no better. It is only for the voters to take a call on who they deem fit to rule them for the next five years. The States' electorate now faces the task of weighing such political claims and deciding the future trajectory of governance.

PICTALK



Women take part in a 'Kalash Yatra' on the occasion of 'Akshaya Navami', in Mirzapur

Adopt a realistic approach to infiltration

Illegal migrations can lead to social and political tensions in the host country which can be a real problem in the long run



PRAFULL GORADIA

The current times are not merely of wars and armed conflicts, but also of infiltration. Britain hosts illegal immigrants, which costs the country 8 million pounds a day merely to feed them. Due to a clash between Burma's rebels and the country's army, reportedly at least 50,000 if not a lakh Burmese have entered India and have penetrated up to Manipur and Mizoram, some up to as far as Delhi. One estimate says there are up to 175,000 illegal immigrants in the UK.

Ukrainians by the thousands have rushed into Poland over the last year and a half, while many others are knocking on Germany's doors. Being of European stock, they are not unwelcome, whereas the immigrants entering the UK are from Rwanda, and are positively unwanted. A third category of potential migrants are ready to flee the West Bank and the Gaza Strip in Israel and Hamas, but they are scrupulously unwanted by even the most zealous Islamic countries.

Europe, over the last decade or more, has been talked about as possibly becoming 'Eurabia' shortly. Yet, when many Syrians were fleeing their own country to escape bombing by their regime, several member countries of the European Union led by Germany, and then Chancellor Angela Merkel were ready to welcome them. Merkel might have perhaps been moved to sympathy by her own experience as an East German whose government killed thousands of its citizens for wanting to flee to the West.

India has suffered illegal immigrants from Bangladesh to the tune of some 20 million of the latter's citizens living illegally in India. As if this was not troubling enough, Pakistan has lately become sick with impending bankruptcy. It is reported that its not so well-off citizens survive on one meal a day. When even that meal disappears, would they not be tempted to dash the Indian border? The citizens of Pakistan-occupied Kashmir feel oppressed, and some of them feel that it is their right to become Indian citizens because their Maharaja



(Hari Singh, the erstwhile princely ruler of Jammu & Kashmir had acceded to India in 1947. It was the Pakistani Mujahideen who had occupied their territory forcibly. There is no counter-answer to this claim.

Books have been written on migration, some of which contend that most peoples of the world have migrated from somewhere at some stage of history. One notable book is Migrants by Sam Miller. India certainly attracted waves of migration over the centuries due to its prosperity compared with Central Asia. However, that does not justify further illegal entry into India. An almost uninterrupted flow of migration into the European Union has been changing Europe's domestic politics since the last decade or even more. Today, Europe, and particularly Southern Europe is exposed and vulnerable to pressure to migration from the Middle East and North Africa, a region referred to as MENA.

Unlike the Republican Party and its leader Donald Trump, not everyone in the USA objects to migration from Cuba or Mexico. The reason may be that they are predominantly white. Nationality is



EUROPE, OVER THE LAST DECADE OR MORE, HAS BEEN TALKED ABOUT AS POSSIBLY BECOMING 'EURABIA' SHORTLY

often defined as those people whose hearts can beat together. On the other hand, there are US citizens who realize that allowing migration from any sundry country with varying racial stock will lead to conflict. Consequently, there is a growing reluctance to further immigration. But again, there is a divide between the Republicans and the Democrats, the latter generally favouring immigration as an addition to their votebanks.

The United Kingdom, in the aftermath of World War II, allowed free immigration from their Asian colonies as well as their Caribbean ones. In recent years they have begun to regret what their predecessors did in response to their temptation to procure cheaper labour. The French experience has been bitterer because up to ten per cent of the immigrants into the country are Algerians whose hearts beat often in contradiction to those of the European French.

The Netherlands and Belgium are also inconvenienced by immigrants of a similar kind, while Germany has a large number of people from Turkey, who are not welcome. Although they have been called guest workers, the truth is that once an outsider settles

in a host country for a few months, it is virtually impossible to make him or her quit. Canada and Australia have virtually limitless space, and to expand their economies, have liberal policies on immigration. What the cost of building multiracial or multicultural societies will be, only time will tell.

A political scientist would take a political view that in due course, two or three communities in the same country can lead to not only social tension but also political competition. The current clash in West Asia is not the only example. The Indian experience of 75 years ago led to a partition, whereby 35 per cent of the land area became another country. Years ago, Nigeria fought a bitter civil war between the North Muslims and Southern Biafra Christians. The Christian East Timor separated from the rest of Islamic Indonesia because of a clash of cultures. Those dealing with migrants should bear these undeniable aspects of history in mind before framing policies.

(The writer is a well-known columnist, an author and a former member of the Rajya Sabha. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

EXIT OF SAM ALTMAN

Sir—The departure of Sam Altman as CEO of OpenAI has sent shockwaves across the tech industry. Arguably, the rapid transformation from a research-oriented company to a commercially viable one is the handiwork of Altman, who has helped it reach higher levels since its inception in 2015. Moreover, his departure comes at an opportune time when the global AI race is growing by leaps and bounds, with significant investments from countries like China, the U.S., and India. The impact of one significant player can have ripple effects on other companies like Anthropic, Nvidia, and Notion-based AI startups. His sudden removal could either pose challenges or, conversely, encourage Indian startups to design their paths and find solutions to local problems, catering to the ever-growing demands of the Indian market. The multibillion-dollar A.I. chatbot launched last year with much fanfare, receiving widespread attention as the outcome of a substantial investment in Open AI by Microsoft. Altman's shift to Microsoft is likely to add a new chapter in AI's realm, and Open AI's trajectory in the evolving AI landscape is undergoing a makeover that raises more questions than offers solutions. The paradigm shift, such as bringing G.P.T.3 into the social milieu, is a never-ending saga of ethical questions, commercialisation, and the need to strike a perfect balance between the two. For rapidly evolving artificial intelligence, it is time to pause, recalibrate, and introspect and innovate responsibly concerning ethical and moral grounds.

Vijay Singh Adhikari | Namital

IS ISRAEL'S CLAIM CORRECT?

Sir—The claim made by Israel, as per a video released by the Israeli army on November 19, 2023, states that the footage appears to have been shot on the morning when Hamas gunmen began storming southern Israel, resulting in around 1,200 deaths, mostly civilians, and the kidnapping of some 240 others, according to Israeli authorities.

Challenges faced by Railways



Railways are one of the most affordable modes of transportation. They are the cheapest means of transport, preferred

by poor and middle-class people for travel to places covered by the railway map. A train journey is best suited for long distances, with minimal bodily strain provided passengers can secure seats and the bogeys are not excessively crowded.

However, there are challenges, including longer halting hours in passenger trains, especially where there are no double tracks. The journey for unreserved passengers has improved but still requires attention to make it more comfortable. Adequate general compartments should be attached to express trains to prevent overcrowding and ensure passenger safety.

Safety concerns, including accidents and acts of sabotage, are on the rise, emphasising the need for timely repair and replacement of old bridges. Railways must meet public expectations as a reliable mode of travel, focusing on safety and punctuality.

KV Seetharamiah | Bengaluru

However, it's crucial to note that the veracity of these claims is disputed. Hamas and medical staff have denied the existence of a command center under the Al-Shifa hospital, and the situation remains complex and contentious.

The conflict between Hamas and Israel has caused significant difficulties for both groups, with financial and material challenges being faced amid global mediation attempts. Since then, Israel has continued its military actions in Gaza, resulting in a significant number of casualties, mostly civilians. It is essential to prioritise justice for citizens and take strong steps to address and resolve the ongoing conflict.

Md Mofidul Islam | Howrah

LAW STUDENTS SHOULD CHOOSE WISELY

Sir—The statement that law is an instrument of social change is frequently repeated, and new law graduates play a crucial role in shaping societal discourse. While India has seen brilliant lawyers in its polit-

ical spectrum since independence, there's a boardroom discussion about the liveliness and utility of the legal profession. With 26 national law schools imparting legal education, there is a sign of change, although the gap between theory and practice in the law curriculum needs further attention. The digital revolution, described as the "fourth industrial revolution," is a crucial focus for law graduates as it has the potential to expedite legal processes.

Despite the abundance of laws in the country and opportunities for foreign law firms, law graduates often face confusion about becoming full-fledged lawyers, considering corporate and academic careers. International internships can help tune up young minds, but the profession's dynamic nature requires a careful and wise choice by law students.

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Bhagat: Reviving the dying artform of folk drama



MANEESHA SHUKLA

To revive Bhagat – the traditional drama – is to revive traditional values and wisdom which are now giving in to the modern modes of entertainment

Agra, a city renowned for the majestic Taj Mahal, is also home to a rich cultural heritage that extends far beyond the iconic monument. One such gem of Agra's cultural tapestry is Bhagat, a traditional form of drama that has deep-rooted historical and cultural significance. Bhagat has, unfortunately, been fading into obscurity over the years, but there are concerted efforts being made to revive this art form and keep it alive for future generations. Bhagat is a traditional folk theatre that has been performed in Agra and the surrounding regions for centuries. This art form combines elements of music, dance, and drama to tell stories from mythology, history, and everyday life. The performances are characterized by vibrant costumes, traditional musical instruments, and a unique style of storytelling that captivates audiences.



Historically, Bhagat was not just entertainment; it served as a medium for social and cultural expression. It provided a platform for local communities to narrate stories that were integral to their identity, customs, and traditions. The themes often revolved around tales of gods and goddesses, heroes and villains, love and devotion, and the ever-evolving human experience. While Bhagat thrived for generations, the rise of modern entertainment, changes in audience preferences, and a lack of institutional support led to its decline. As more contemporary forms of entertainment like television, cinema, and the internet became prevalent, Bhagat gradually lost its appeal. With fewer people attending performances and a lack of interest from younger generations, the tradition began to wane. Recognizing the cultural and historical significance of Bhagat, several initiatives

and organisations have taken the initiative to revive this traditional art form. The UP government is also promoting it by organising the Bhagat shows and supporting the actors and people involved. Agra and surrounding regions have started incorporating Bhagat performances into cultural festivals. These festivals draw attention to the art form and create platforms for Bhagat artists to showcase their talents to larger audiences. Agra is a popular tourist destination, and efforts are being made to promote Bhagat as part of the city's cultural tourism. It was recently featured in Agra Mahotsav and drew huge crowds. This not only increases awareness but also provides livelihood opportunities for Bhagat artists.

To speak of its stalwarts credit must go to Khaleefa, the actor, writer and an ardent lover of the art form who single-handedly popularised it by organising Bhagat shows at shoestring budget. Anil Shukla took over from him and today is making concerted efforts to promote it. "What drew me into Bhagat was its appeal to capture masses and deliver the message. To revive it is not just to revive a dying art-form but to revive our rich tradition of secularism, inclusivity and values that take us forward in the troubled times," Says Anil Shukla.

Reviving Bhagat is a challenging endeavour, but the efforts being made are a testament to the dedication and commitment of those who value Agra's cultural heritage. With a combination of support from the government, cultural organisations, and the people, there is hope that Bhagat will see a resurgence in the coming years

(The writer is a social activist, based in Uttar Pradesh; views are personal)



FIRST COLUMN

COOPERATION IS THE KEY TO A BETTER LIFE

Cooperation begets cooperation, so in 'giving,' 'getting' is automatically reciprocated



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR NIKUNJ JI

Cooperation or teamwork is the art of working in unison towards a common purpose, knowing fully well that we can achieve more together than alone. The word cooperation is so magical that the mere thought of it has a mind-soothing effect on us. It does not require a philosopher to tell us that cooperation is a divine virtue that is the key to success and accomplishment in every sphere of life. It leads to co-creation & it makes possible symphonies, bridges, and communities. One must remember the fact that human beings cannot lead a happy and comfortable life without cooperation, nor do animals can survive without this magical virtue. Hence cooperation is the foundation for living animals and so also for human society. A society exists because of cooperation, therefore it is both a psychological and social necessity for human beings; for they cannot lead a solitary life. Can they? In modern society, progress in the fields of science and technology, agriculture and industry, transportation and communication, trade and commerce etc. would not have been possible in the absence of cooperation. Similarly, social unity and integration also depend upon cooperation because it is co-operation that mitigates mutual differences, and mental conflicts and inspires people to render possible help to maintain solidarity. In short, cooperation is essential in every sphere of individual and social life. However, after reading so much positive about something mandatory to life, one can't help but ask this question: when there is so much to gain from cooperation, why is there so much competition, confrontation and lack of cooperation, prevalent in every field of activity in modern society? Today mass degeneration of human values is seen in modern society, where everything is measured in terms of money and power. Accordingly, most of the human activity is guided by greed for money and lust for power. This has led to cut-throat competition in all fields including business and industry. Most of us have become so conditioned as to believe that competition brings out the best in us and it is the competition and not cooperation, which is the key to success.



The truth however is that intensely competitive structures cause high stress and moral corruption which damages physical, mental and social health. Besides, they foster a dehumanizing mentality causing distrust, rivalry and unfriendliness. A comparative study of competitive and cooperative effort situations made by experts has revealed that cooperation works far better than competition. How? Well!! it's quite simple. Competition tends to drive wedges between human beings whereas cooperation builds bridges. Under competitive structures, the very same specialisation tends to become a tool for exploitation. In a climate of cooperation, both encouragement and helpful criticism can be given and received. Cooperation stimulates communication. Relationships and endeavors based on cooperation are more successful and lasting.

Over the centuries, it has been forgotten that there is another philosophy of life which is that of 'giving' rather than 'taking'. Remember! if we give more to the community than we take from it, we shall always have a 'plus' balance to draw upon. The well-known law of action begetting an equal re-action applies to cooperation also. Bhagwad Gita also says "Perform noble actions without expecting reward, Reward will automatically follow." In reality, even one's long-term self-interest is best served by working for the maximum common good of all. This is because, in the Universe, there is so much interdependence. Hence whatever a person does is bound to recoil or bounce back on him, sooner or later. So why not practise the art of "giving" like our ancestors and become Devta i.e. the giver?

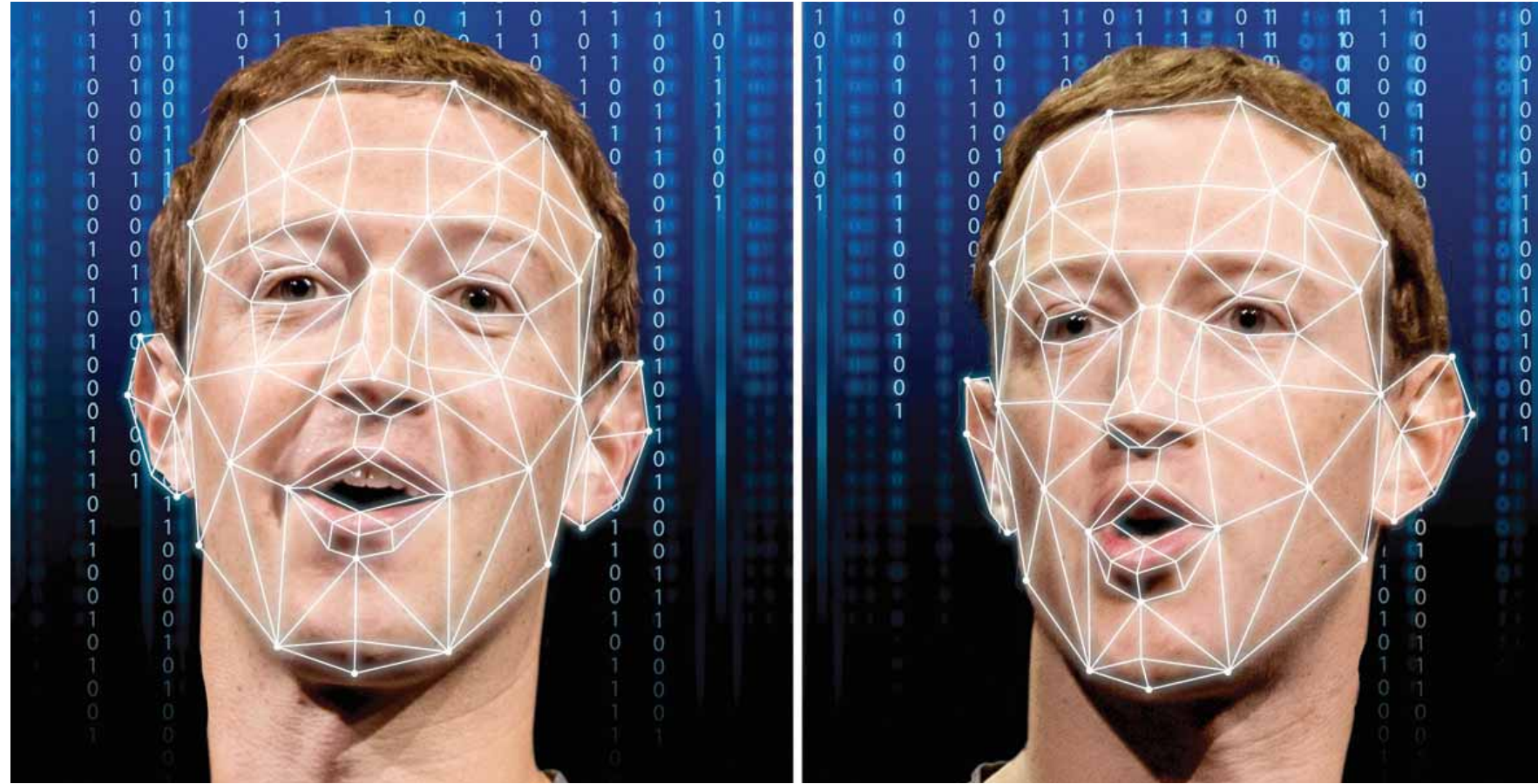
(The writer is a spiritual educator & popular columnist, views are personal)

Detecting deepfakes with digital watermarks



MONICA S GARG

With the easy availability of techniques to manipulate, copy, and share digital files, nothing is sacrosanct. What looks like a genuine photo may be a deepfake



Our recent skirmishes with deepfake videos have left us all wary of trusting our eyes. These incredibly convincing videos use advanced AI technology to morph the faces of prominent figures on top videos originally featuring other people. These videos are easy to disseminate over social media. And boy, do they seem real! There has been a radical shift in recent times over how we receive and process information. Gone are the days when we had to wait to get our news from newspapers and TV channels. Today, we feed on a constant stream of unverified information from our social networking websites and our WhatsApp forwards. This 'news' is available at our fingertips, served in palatable formats that take seconds to grasp. There is no background, no finer minutiae to discern, and definitely no verification of authenticity. One clicks to see and one click to forward. As a result, these spread like wildfire. There is global concern about deepfakes. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has called upon the media to spread awareness about the misuse of artificial intelligence (AI) to create deepfakes. He has emphasised the need of tagging digital products at source, creating accountability at the level of generation of any videos. British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has called for a joint global alliance on AI safety. The US President has issued an executive order on AI, a first-of-its-kind action from the government to tackle some challenges posed by AI, including plans on how to identify if an image is real or fake. Joe Biden's order calls for a new set of government-led standards on watermarking AI-generated content, to check deepfakes. Though deepfakes have been around for several years, the problem has become grave of



WATERMARKING TECHNOLOGY IS A SIMPLE SOLUTION THAT HOLDS PROMISE. BUT IT MAY NOT BE ENOUGH ON ITS OWN

(The writer is Additional Chief Secretary in Govt of UP. Views are personal)

late because sophisticated techniques for altering photos and videos have become so accessible that deepfakes have become commonplace. They can be used by criminals and scammers to the detriment of citizens, to spread fake news and incite hatred, even violence. AI is ubiquitous and it is changing the world very fast. It has limitless potential but also poses some unique threats. Biden said, "AI is all around us. To realise the promise of AI and avoid the risk, we need to govern this technology." His order is a first step that seeks to ensure that AI is trustworthy, not deceptive and helpful, not destructive. The order is meant to guide how AI is developed so that developers can profit without jeopardising user safety.

Using the Defense Production Act, the order directs AI companies to share safety test results and other information with the government. The National Institute of Standards and Technology has been asked to create standards to ensure that AI tools are safe and secure before they are released for public use. The Commerce Department is to issue guidelines to digitally watermark AI-generated content to help differentiate between authentic creations and those generated by software. Stamp papers, documents, currency notes and some fancy photographs and paintings carry watermarks to establish genuineness.

These are created at the wet stage of making paper. Similarly, a digital watermark is embedded at the time of creating digital content. A digital watermark is like

a digital signature that is embedded into a digital file to identify its originator or owner. This mark can be a code, logo, text or a unique sign that identifies the content's owner and also helps to prove its authenticity. A digital watermark has to be very creative, a way of altering a file that is not noticeable to the user. It might be difficult to embed a watermark within a text file. However, it is quite easy to do it for audio, video and image formats by changing a few bits, without making a noticeable difference in the music, movie or photo. Like watermarks on paper currency or documents, digital watermark helps distinguish between a real object and a fake one and also ascertain who owns it. It can track the online use of the file and warn the creator against unauthorised access and use. Digital watermarks can check the spread of fake images to some extent but cannot control it. Though digital watermark may not be a solution to deepfakes, it is an important tool to fight against piracy and unauthorised access and distribution of digital files.

With the invention of easy techniques to copy and share digital files, companies and businesses are facing a huge challenge to safeguard their valuable content and content creators. But if a watermark is embedded into the master copy of a DVD movie, then all copies of that disc carry a unique identification. If a licence holder distributes them outside his authorised jurisdiction, the watermark provides a trace. Digital watermarking also helps companies in content track-

ing and monitoring its distribution and usage across various consumers and platforms. This can help them make more informed decisions about their marketing, advertising and distribution strategies. By ensuring that their content is protected from unauthorised use, businesses can maintain greater control over their brand identity. Watermarking technology is a simple solution that holds promise. But it may not be enough on its own. It is naive to accept this as a foolproof protection against piracy and deepfakes. It is very easy to remove a watermark that is toward the edge of an image; it can simply be cropped out of the picture. Further, there are apps available that can remove most watermarks in just a few clicks. This is why a digital watermark cannot offer complete protection. The Distill scientific journal defines AI Safety as "The goal of long-term artificial intelligence (AI) safety is to ensure that advanced AI systems are reliably aligned with human values — that they reliably do things that people want them to do." A sustainable solution to deepfakes should be able to balance the needs of AI companies with consumer rights and that will require a bouquet of practical solutions like a digital watermark.

That will require cooperation from online platforms and search engines to voluntarily decide to allow only those contents that bear a watermark. This is a larger issue and calls for strict adherence to ethics in the business of AI development.

India is the emerging digital content powerhouse

New content formats are gaining popularity. With the right approach, India can become a major force to reckon with in the digital arena

In the ever-evolving landscape of global power dynamics, a new realm of influence has emerged alongside traditional forms of power. This new domain, which can be referred to as "digital power," mirrors the concept of soft power, but it operates through the vast, interconnected networks of the internet and social media platforms.

The success of Suleman Suleman, a young and charismatic content creator from Pakistan, ventured into the world of YouTube a few years ago. His initial videos were well-received within his home country, but he yearned for more substantial growth. Recognising the immense potential of the Indian audience, he made a strategic



VIPIN JUNEJA

(The writer is a senior public policy consultant, views are personal)

move—he started reacting to Indian content and speaking positively about India and its people.

In a short span, Suleman's channel began to thrive on Indian viewership. His reactions to popular Indian movies, music, and cultural events garnered millions of views. Many such stories, amongst Suleman's, are reflective of the rise of India's digital power to wilfully coerce them to design their content to suit the Indian audience.

The Reach of the Internet In 2022, India witnessed a significant milestone in its digital journey. According to a report published by the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI), 52% of the Indian population, totalling 759 million people,

had access to the Internet at least once a month. This statistic is a testament to the growing digitalization of the nation.

Out of these 759 million active internet users, 399 million hail from rural areas, while 360 million reside in urban centres. Surprisingly, rural India played a pivotal role in driving the growth of the internet in the country, with a 14% growth rate in 2022 compared to 6% in urban areas. The report also projected that 56% of all new internet users in India by 2025 would come from rural areas. This growth is expected to bridge the gender gap in internet access, with 65% of new users in 2025 being women. Moreover, the digital penetration in India goes beyond

mere access to the internet. The report highlighted the depth of digital engagement among users. While mobile phones remained the primary means of internet access, the usage of other devices like tablets and streaming devices grew from 8% in 2021 to 13% in 2022.

YouTubers in India Indians' affinity for digital entertainment is epitomised by their love for online video content. In the 15 months from January 2022 to March 2023, Indians collectively spent a staggering 6.1 trillion minutes watching online videos. What's more intriguing is that a significant portion of this time, a whopping 88%, was spent on YouTube alone. Since its launch in India in

YouTube has not only transformed the entertainment landscape in India but also the career aspirations of millions. A decade ago, working as a content creator on YouTube seemed unthinkable as a viable career option. However, recent figures shared by Google and YouTube reveal a complex reality.

According to these reports, YouTube's creative ecosystem contributed over Rs 10,000 crore to the Indian GDP in 2021 and generated more than 750,000 full-time equivalent jobs in India. On average, each content creator earned around Rs 1.3 lakh per annum in 2021, highlighting the vast potential concentrated in such mediums as YouTube.

The Digital Power As India's digital prowess con-

tinues to ascend, it finds itself at the threshold of a new frontier in global diplomacy—one where soft coercion through digital influence plays a pivotal role. Recognising the potential of this paradigm shift, India can strategically employ its digital capabilities to subtly shape international dynamics and achieve its objectives. Introducing the acronym "DIGIFORCE": Digital Influence for Global Foreign Objective Realisation and Coercive Effect.

DIGIFORCE embodies India's commitment to harnessing its digital might by exerting its digital influence on foreign nations to align with its objectives and values. It signifies a nation that understands the power of subtlety in diplomacy, leverag-

ing digital means to achieve strategic goals while maintaining amicable international relations. With DIGIFORCE as our strategic tool, India can embark on a path of digital diplomacy that empowers it to softly coerce foreign countries by showcasing its innovative strengths, global influence, and commitment to common objectives. By forging mutually beneficial partnerships and encouraging cooperation, India can lead with digital finesse on the global stage, creating a world where its digital influence promotes stability, progress, and shared prosperity. The future of diplomacy is digital, and with DIGIFORCE, India is poised to master this art, ensuring a harmonious and interconnected world.

Israeli troops battle militants across Gaza

AP ■ DEIE AL-BALAH (GAZA STRIP)

Israeli troops battled Palestinian militants in an urban refugee camp and outside the gates of a nearby hospital on Tuesday as the army expanded operations across northern Gaza, where residents have been without electricity, water or access to humanitarian aid for weeks.

The front line of the war, now in its seventh week, has shifted to the Jabaliya camp, a dense warren of concrete buildings near Gaza City that houses refugees from the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation and their descendants.

Israel has been bombarding the area for weeks, and the military said Hamas fighters have regrouped there and in other eastern districts after being pushed out of much of Gaza City.

Fighting has also intensified outside the Indonesian Hospital on the outskirts of Jabaliya, where a strike killed 12 people on Monday. Health officials said on Tuesday that hundreds of patients and displaced people are trapped inside with dwindling supplies after some 200 were evacuated the day before.

The war sparked by Hamas' surprise October 7 attack into Israel has exacted a heavy toll on Palestinian civilians, particularly those who remain in the north after Israel repeatedly called on people to flee south.

It's unclear how many people remain in the north, but the UN agency for Palestinian refugees estimates that some 160,000 people are still in its shelters there, even though it is no longer able to provide services. Some 1.7 million Palestinians, about three fourths of Gaza's population, have fled their homes.

Hundreds of thousands of displaced people have packed into UN-run schools and other facilities across southern Gaza. As the shelters have overflowed, people have been forced to sleep on the streets outdoors, with little shelter from winter rains that have hit the region in recent days.

Across Gaza, there are shortages of food, water and fuel for generators to power basic infrastructure. There has been a territory-wide blackout

since Israel cut off fuel imports at the start of the war.

Israel continues to strike what it says are militant targets across Gaza, including in the southern evacuation zone, often killing women and children, and officials have said it may soon expand its operations in the south.

FIGHTING AROUND HOSPITALS

Tens of thousands of Palestinians in the north had sheltered in hospitals, but those have steadily been emptied out as the fighting has reached their gates, and most are no longer operational.

Marwan Abdallah, a medical worker at the Indonesian Hospital near Jabaliya, said heavy fighting prevented ambulances from bringing wounded people in.

Munir al-Boursh, a senior Health Ministry official who said he was inside the hospital, told Al-Jazeera television by phone that Israeli forces had besieged it, forcing health workers to bury 50 bodies in the courtyard. "The situation is unimaginable," he said.

"We are trapped inside the hospital."

There was no immediate comment from the military.

Palestinian officials said an Israeli shell struck the hospital on Monday, killing 12 people. Israel denied shelling the hospital, but said its troops returned fire on militants who targeted them from inside.

Some 200 wounded patients and their companions were evacuated from the hospital to southern Gaza on Monday, but up to 600 wounded people and some 2,000 displaced Palestinians remain stranded there, according to Gaza's Health Ministry.

A similar standoff has played out in recent days at Shifa Hospital, Gaza's largest, where over 250 patients and medical workers are stranded after the evacuation of 31 premature babies.

Israel has provided some evidence in recent days of a militant presence at Shifa, where its troops have been operating since last week. But it has yet to substantiate its claims that Hamas had a major command centre beneath the facility, allegations denied by Hamas and hospital staff.

Michael Ryan, a senior World Health Organisation official,

said Monday that care for complex medical cases — including most cancer and kidney dialysis patients — is no longer available in Gaza and that remaining hospitals would likely be overwhelmed by some 5,500 births expected in the next month.

"The hospital situation — the primary health care system situation — in Gaza is catastrophic," he said. In the north, "it is the worst you can imagine."

RIISING TOLL

More than 12,700 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry in the West Bank. Officials there say another 4,000 are missing. Their counts do not differentiate between civilians and combatants. Israel says it has killed thousands of militants.

The Palestinian Health Ministry bases its count on information gathered by its counterpart in Hamas-ruled Gaza, which has been unable to fully update casualty figures for more than 10 days because of the breakdown in services and communications in the north.

About 1,200 people have been killed on the Israeli side, mainly civilians during the October 7 attack, in which Hamas dragged some 240 captives back into Gaza.

The military says 68 Israeli soldiers have been killed in Gaza ground operations. The military said forces are "preparing the battlefield" in the area of Jabaliya.

It said they struck three tunnel shafts where fighters were hiding and destroyed rocket launchers. Footage released by the military shows Israeli soldiers patrolling on foot as gunfire echoes around them.

Residents said there had been heavy fighting as Israeli forces tried to advance under the cover of airstrikes.

"The (Israeli) occupation is trying to besiege the camp," said Hamza Abu Mansour, a university student. "They are facing stiff resistance."

It was not possible to independently confirm details of the fighting.

Military footage from other areas in the north in recent days has shown widespread destruction, with nearly every building appearing to be damaged or destroyed.



This photo released by the Houthi Media Center shows Houthi forces boarding the cargo ship Galaxy Leader on Sunday. Yemen's Houthis have seized the ship in the Red Sea off the coast of Yemen after threatening to seize all vessels owned by Israeli companies.

Putin, Xi and Guterres to attend meeting on Israel-Hamas war

AP ■ CAPETOWN

Russian President Vladimir Putin, Chinese President Xi Jinping and other leaders from the BRICS bloc of developing countries will hold a virtual meeting on the Israel-Hamas war on Tuesday, with United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also participating.

The leaders of fellow BRICS members Brazil, India and South Africa, as well as of Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the United Arab Emirates, which are set to join the bloc in January, will also take part, according to the office of South African President Cyril Ramaphosa. Ramaphosa will chair the "extraordinary meeting" because of South Africa's position as current chair of BRICS, his office said. It said the leaders are expected to deliver statements on the "humanitarian crisis" in Gaza and will likely adopt a joint statement.

The meeting comes a day after China's top diplomat hosted the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority and Indonesia in Beijing, their first stop on a tour of UN Security Council permanent members. The meeting underlined

China's longstanding support for the Palestinians and its growing geopolitical influence.

Russia has adopted a more cautious approach to the Israel-Hamas war, but also has an opportunity to advance its role as a global power broker.

Putin has condemned the October 7 attack by Hamas militants on towns in southern Israel that sparked Israel's offensive in Gaza. More than 12,700 Palestinians have been killed in Gaza, according to the Palestinian Health Ministry in the West Bank. Officials there say another 4,000 are missing.

But Putin has also warned Israel over its response and against blockading the Gaza Strip.

Russia and China are leading voices in BRICS, which has largely cast itself in recent years as standing against the perceived dominance of the West in global affairs. But it has also struggled to adopt united policies or positions on many issues because of the differing priorities of the five current members.

India, which also wants to be seen as a leader of the developing world, has long walked a tightrope between Israel and the Palestinians and historically has close ties to both.

Israeli airstrike on southern Lebanon kills 2 journalists

AP ■ BEIRUT

An Israeli strike on southern Lebanon killed on Tuesday two journalists reporting for the Beirut-based Al-Mayadeen TV on the violence along the border with Israel, according to the Lebanese information minister and their TV station. The strike also killed a Lebanese civilian, said the station. The Pan-Arab Al-Mayadeen TV — politically allied with the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah — identified the journalists as correspondent Farah Omar and cameraman Rabih Maamari saying they were "martyred by treacherous Israeli targeting," adding it was an airstrike.

"It was direct targeting. It was not a coincidence," said Ghassan bin Jiddo, director of the TV channel, holding back his tears in a live broadcast.

They join "the martyrs of Gaza," he said.

Bin Jiddo said a man from the village, whom he identified as Hussein Akil, was also killed.

Last week, the Israeli government blocked Al-Mayadeen TV news channel from broadcasting in Israel. Lebanese Information Minister Ziad Makary called the strike on the journalists "outrageous."

The Israeli military said it was looking into the matter.

Local media reported several Israeli strikes on South Lebanon Tuesday.

Lebanese State-run National News Agency said Israel's military struck the outskirts of the villages of Teir Harfa and Majdal Zoun in South Lebanon.

It also reported that another strike on a home in the border village of Kfar Kila killed

a woman, Laiqa Serhan, 80, and wounded her granddaughter who was taken to hospital for treatment.

Israeli shelling on southern Lebanon on October 14, killed Reuters videojournalist Issam Abdullaah and wounded other journalists from France's international news agency, Agence France-Presse, and Qatar's Al-Jazeera TV.

The Lebanon-Israel border has been witnessing daily exchange of fire between members of the militant Hezbollah group and Israeli troops. The clashes began a day after the Palestinian militant Hamas group carried out a deadly attack on southern Israel on October 7, killing about 1,200 people and taking more than 240 hostages.

Israel has since carried out a wide-scale military campaign in the Gaza Strip killing more than 12,700 people.

Congo: Stampede during military recruitment drive kills over 30 aspirants

AP ■ BRAZAVILLE (REPUBLIC OF CONGO)

A stampede at a military stadium has left at least 37 people dead in Republic of Congo after large crowds of young people responded to a recruitment appeal, authorities said Tuesday.

Long lines have formed outside military stadium recruitment centers each day over the past week as young people have sought to join the army which is one of the few institutions offering work in Republic of Congo.

As many as 700 people in Republic of Congo in a day have registered, though there are only a total of 1,500 places available.

"The provisional toll established by the emergency services is 37 dead and many injured," according to a press release issued on Tuesday by the prime minister's office crisis unit.

Navy plane overshoots runway and ends up in ocean, all 9 aboard safe

AP ■ HONOLULU

A Navy plane flying in rainy weather overshoot a runway on Monday at a military base in Hawaii and splashed into Kaneohe Bay, but all nine aboard were uninjured, authorities said. The Coast Guard responded, but rescue operations were quickly called off, said Petty Officer Ryan Fisher, a Coast Guard spokesperson. "It sounds like all parties involved were rescued," he said.

Marine Corps spokesperson Gunnery Sgt. Orlando Perez had no information about what caused the P-8A aircraft to go off the runway at Marine Corps Base Hawaii.

A photo taken by witness Diane Dircks showed the plane in water just offshore, a sight reminiscent of the 2009 "Miracle on the Hudson" when a passenger jet piloted by Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger made an emergency landing on

the New York river. All 155 people aboard survived. The P-8A and the Airbus A320 that Sullenberger piloted are roughly the same size. Dircks and her family had just returned to the dock after rainy weather cut their pontoon boat trip short when her daughter noticed the plane in the water.

"We went running over to the end of the dock, and I took some pictures," she said.

Dircks, who is visiting from Illinois, said her daughter keeps a pair of binoculars on her for birdwatching, so she was able to see the plane and the rescue boats arriving. "It was unbelievable," she said. The Honolulu Fire Department received a 911 call for a downed aircraft shortly after 2 p.m., spokesperson Malcolm K. Medrano said in an email. It was cloudy and rainy at the time. Visibility was about 1 mile (1.6 kilometres), said Thomas Vaughan, a meteorologist in Honolulu.

N Korea launches rocket in what may be its 3rd attempt to put spy satellite into orbit

AP ■ TOKYO

North Korea has launched a rocket in what may be its third attempt to put a spy satellite into orbit, according to South Korea's military. A rocket was launched late on Tuesday, the military in Seoul said, but no further details were immediately available.

In North Korea's two previous attempts, rockets carrying satellites failed because of technical reasons.

North Korea had vowed a third launch would take place sometime in October, but failed to follow through with the plan without giving any reason.

North Korea says it needs a spy satellite to deal with what it calls increasing US-led military threats. South Korea retrieved debris from the first launch and called the satellite too crude to perform military reconnaissance. Japan's coast guard said North Korea

notified Tokyo of its plan to launch a satellite sometime between Wednesday and November 30. The notice identified three maritime zones where debris from the rocket carrying the satellite may fall. Two are in the waters between the Korean Peninsula and China and the third in the Philippine Sea, Japanese coast guard spokesperson Kazuo Ogawa said. Ogawa said the areas are the same as the ones North Korea identified for its failed satellite launches in May and August, implying the third attempt would have a similar flight path.

North Korea has given Japan the launch information because Japan's coast guard coordinates and distributes maritime safety information in East Asia.

The North's notification came a day after rival South Korea warned it to cancel its launch or face consequences.

South Korea's military suggested Seoul would suspend a 2018 inter-Korean agreement to reduce tensions and resume front-line aerial surveillance and live-firing drills in response to a North Korean satellite launch.

UN Security Council resolutions ban any satellite launches by North Korea because they are seen as a cover for testing its missile technology. North Korea says it needs a space-based surveillance system to better monitor its rivals, but South Korea says the North's launches are also designed to enhance its long-range missile program.

Since last year, North Korea has carried out about 100 missile tests as part of its efforts to modernize its arsenal of nuclear-capable weapons targeting the United States and its allies. Many foreign experts say the North still has the few remaining technological hur-

dles to overcome to possess functioning nuclear-tipped missiles.

Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida asked officials to coordinate with other countries to ask North Korea to cancel its launch. He said Japanese destroyers carrying Aegis-class radars and PAC-3 missile defense systems on Okinawa have been activated to stand by in case of an unexpected development. "Even if the purpose is to launch a satellite, if ballistic missile technology is used, it is a violation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions, and this is a matter that greatly affects the safety of the people," Kishida said.

During trilateral phone talks, senior officials from Japan, South Korea and the US affirmed their cooperation to "strongly request North Korea to cancel" its launch plan, according to Japan's Foreign Ministry.

Milei wants public companies in pvt hands, with media first to go

AP ■ BIENOS AIRES (ARGENTINA)

Argentina's right-wing president-elect gave the first indications on Monday of how he plans to start shaking up South America's second-largest economy: with a slew of privatisations. Populist Javier Milei, a libertarian economist and self-described "anarcho-capitalist", won a presidential runoff election on Sunday with 55.7 per cent of the vote.

He said on Monday that he would move quickly to privatise the country's state-owned media outlets and look to do the same with other public companies.

"Everything that can be in the hands of the private sector will be in the hands of the private sector," Milei told Buenos Aires station Radio Mitre.

Experts immediately questioned how far Milei would get in fulfilling that vision without

the support of Argentina's National Congress, where his party holds a relatively small share of seats. However, some analysts said his resounding election victory could give him leverage.

"The decisiveness of the victory — a doubt until yesterday — allows him to signal to all parties who is in control of the transition and the formation of the Cabinet," said Mariano Machado, principal analyst for the Americas at Verisk Maplecroft, a global risk intelligence firm.

In his radio comments, Milei described the public media outlets he wants to make private as amounting to "a covert ministry of propaganda". He complained during the presidential race that the coverage of his campaign in state-run outlets was highly negative. Milei also signalled that he intends to act on some of his most controversial ideas from his

campaign for slashing the size of the state and reining in Argentina's triple-digit inflation. They include reducing the number of government ministries by half, to eight. He said he still wanted to close the Central Bank of Argentina, calling it "a moral decision", but appeared to put his plans for replacing the local currency, the peso, with the US dollar on the back burner. "In conceptual terms, the central axis is to close the Central Bank, and subsequently, the currency (will be) whichever one Argentines choose freely," he said, characterising a potential change in the national currency as "a second-order issue". Milei predicted it would take him up to half of his presidential term — "between 18 and 24 months" — to decrease inflation, which polls showed was the biggest concern for Argentine voters as consumer prices have increased 140 per cent over the past year.

10 people die in Suriname Gold mine collapse

Paramaribo (AP): At least 10 people died after an illegal gold mine collapsed Monday in the South American country of Suriname, authorities said.

Police, military officials and rescue crews were dispatched to the mine, which is located in the country's rural southern region. The miners are believed to have built their own tunnels to search for gold, a common occurrence in Suriname, officials said.

It wasn't immediately clear what caused the collapse. "There's still a lot of uncertainty," said President Chan Santokhi. "It's important that we now get the situation under control." Santokhi was attending a government budget meeting when the incident occurred, forcing him to interrupt those speaking saying, "Something terrible is going on." Suriname is known for its gold mines, with US and Canadian companies.



King Charles III and President of South Korea Yoon Suk Yeol during the ceremonial welcome at Horse Guards Parade, central London, on day one of the state visit to the UK, Tuesday. AP/PTI

Police; Shooter hurts 4 at Ohio Walmart store before killing self

Beavercreek (Ohio): A shooter opened fire on Monday night at a Walmart in Ohio and wounded four people before killing himself, police said. The attack was reported at around 8:30 pm at the Walmart in Beavercreek, a town of about 50,000 in the Dayton metropolitan area. "The conditions of the victims right now is unknown" but all were taken to hospitals for treatment, police Capt. Scott Molnar said at a news conference. Police also said the gunman died after apparently shooting himself. His name, a motive for the attack and other details weren't immediately released. Police earlier said on social media that the store had been cleared and secured and there wasn't any "active threat." AP

Luxury water becoming fashionable among elite

AP ■ SAMTSE (BHUTAN)

Monsoon rains have finally passed and floods blocking the lone dirt road have retreated enough for a small truck to climb these Himalayan foothills to a gurgling spring. It spews water so fresh that people here call it nectar. Workers inside a small plant ferry sleek glass bottles along a conveyor. The bottles, filled with a whoosh of this natural mineral water, are labelled, packed into cases and placed inside a truck for a long ride.

Gainesh Iyer, who heads the operation, watches like a nervous dad, later pulling out his phone, as any proud parent might, to show the underground cavern the waters have formed in this pristine kingdom, the world's last Shangri-La.

This is no ordinary water. It will travel hundreds of miles



to some of India's luxury hotels, restaurants and richest families, who pay about USD 6 per bottle, roughly a day's wage for an Indian labourer.

Millions of people worldwide don't have clean water to drink, even though the United Nations deemed water a basic human right more than a decade ago.

Yet, even as extreme heat dries up more aquifers and wells and leaves more people thirsty, luxury water has

become fashionable among the world's privileged, who uncup and taste it like fine wine.

This "fine water" is drawn from volcanic rock in Hawaii, from icebergs that have fallen from melting glaciers in Norway, or from droplets of morning mist in Tasmania. Connoisseurs, some who study to become water sommeliers, insist this trend isn't about snobbishness. They appreciate the purest of the pure.

"Water is not just water," says Michael Mascha, a founder of the Fine Water Society, a consortium of small bottlers and distributors worldwide. He likens consumers of high-end water to foodies who'd drive miles to find heirloom tomatoes or a rare salt. Some drink fine water instead of alcohol.

"Having the right stemware, drinking at the right

temperature, pairing it with food, celebrating with water — all those kinds of things are important." As a truck rolls out of the Bhutanese bottling plant, operated by Veen Waters India, the 40-some line workers take a tea break along a short row of employee housing. They check their mobile phones and chat, while birds chirp in the background.

Laundry hung out to dry flaps in a subtle breeze. It's a steamy day, even at this higher elevation.

Up a hillside behind them is a mineral spring, once a source of fresh water for nearby villagers, who used bamboo rods as pipes to help funnel some of the steadily flowing clear current into buckets they carried home.

Now that source, which Veen purchased from the previous owner more than a decade ago, is kept behind a locked gate for

safekeeping. Veen's business slowed to a trickle during the pandemic, says Iyer, Veen's managing partner. But now the company is exporting about 20,000 cases — or 240,000 bottles — of the water into India each month, minus the occasional few that break on their bumpy multiple-day trek. He figures they've tapped only about 10 per cent of the potential market so far.

After crossing into India, the trucks carrying the bottled water run through lush green Darjeeling tea plantations, past road signs marking elephant crossings and the occasional cluster of teenage boys cooling off in a rain catchment next to rural villages dotted with banana trees. Eventually, the cases are delivered to luxury hotels and restaurants many hundreds of miles away in cities like New Delhi, Pune and Mumbai, where Veen is headquartered.

Pak court strikes down notification to keep Imran in judicial lockup

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

The Islamabad High Court on Wednesday declared null and void the official notification of the Pakistan government for the jail trial of former prime minister Imran Khan in the cipher case in which he is charged with leaking state secrets.

The two-member bench issued its reserved judgment on an intra-court appeal by the former prime minister against the single bench verdict of the same court that had turned down the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman's appeal against his trial in the Adiala Jail in Rawalpindi.

The trial is being held in the Adiala Jail, where 71-year-old Khan has been kept since September 26 when shifted there from District Jail, Attock. The Ministry of Law issued a no-objection certificate (NOC) for the jail trial of Khan as requested by the Interior Ministry and special court Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain on August 29.

Earlier in the morning, the



Islamabad High Court (IHC) panel of justices Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb and Saman Rafat Intiaz heard the intra-court appeal of Khan and reserved the judgment after completing the hearing process.

According to the short verdict, the government's notification of August 29 to hold the jail trial of Khan was declared illegal. However, the court stated that there was no bar on the jail trial of an accused in case of extraordinary circumstances and it was up to the judge to keep such trial open or in-camera. The two-member bench

said that the trial judge should give a ruling in favour of a jail trial and the government following the ruling should issue a notification for the same.

The court also upheld the appointment of Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain, who is conducting Khan's trial under the Official Secrets Act.

There was some confusion over the impact of the verdict on the fate of Khan's trial in jail as the court accepted the appeal on procedural and technical grounds.

Senior lawyer Yasin Azad told Samaa TV after the verdict that the jail trial came to a halt after the verdict but the government can address the lacunae in the procedure adopted for the trial. "The government can also file an appeal against the verdict in the Supreme Court," he said. He also said that the verdict has no impact on the proceedings adopted so far, meaning that Khan's indictment still stood intact.

However, lawyer Abid Zuberi stated that the court by rejecting the jail trial also nullified all the proceedings and

actions taken so far during the jail trial. "The verdict has rejected the jail trial right from the beginning," he said.

Jehangir Jadoon, former Advocate General of Islamabad, said that the court granted the appeal on technical grounds because it rejected the procedure adopted by the government for Khan's jail trial.

"Some of the finer details will be cleared once the detailed judgment is issued," he said.

In March 2022, Khan and his foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi were alleged to have violated the secrecy laws of the country while handling a communication (cipher) sent by Pakistan's embassy in Washington. The diplomatic cable reportedly went missing from Khan's possession.

The duo, who had claimed that the cable contained a threat from the United States to topple the PTI's government, was indicted on October 23. Their formal trial has begun with the recording of statements by the witnesses two weeks ago.

SL's Parl passes 2024 budget

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lanka's Parliament on Tuesday approved the 2024 budget, emphasising the need for tough reforms until the full recovery of the cash-strapped island nation's economy. Although Sri Lanka has managed to control its hyperinflation in the ongoing economic crisis, its economy is far from being fully recovered.

President Ranil Wickremesinghe, who is also the Finance Minister, on November 13 presented the budget emphasising awareness of the hard times that will continue until a full economic recovery can be achieved.

The Second Reading of the 2024 budget was passed in Parliament on Tuesday with 122 members voting for and 77 against it in the 225-member Assembly, Speaker Mahinda Yapa Abeywardena said.

Presenting the budget in Parliament, the President said that advancing a nation requires more than mere fairy tales. He recalled that the prolonged reliance on election promises by political parties has historically led to

the economic bankruptcy of the country.

The 2024 budget allocates funds to improve facilities for tourists, address housing issues in the country, including in the North, and improve domestic cricket.

The Second Reading debate of the Appropriation Bill (Budget) was held for 7 days from November 14th to the 21, excluding Sundays, the Colombo Gazette reported.

The voting in favour happened despite a few ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna members expressing unhappiness over the budget proposals.

Wickremesinghe with support from just three of his own, relies on the support of the Rajapaksa family for the parliamentary majority to keep his government afloat.

The SLPP had expected more relief measures in the budget for the economic slump.

All that Wickremesinghe could offer was an increase in the cost of living allowances for 1.3 million state employees and pensioners numbering 700,000.

Wickremesinghe later said the country's economic

recovery cannot be underwritten by just one government budget presentation.

While the budget was being debated, the government suffered an embarrassment in the form of the highest court ruling that the Rajapaksa brothers and their financial manager bureaucrats were responsible for the economic slump which resulted in the island declaring bankruptcy.

Wickremesinghe is yet to see a fruitful end to the ongoing external debt restructuring talks.

The IMF since mid-September has held back the release of the second tranche of the USD 2.9 billion four-year bailout pending external debt negotiations.

Sri Lanka declared economic bankruptcy in April 2022 by announcing its first-ever sovereign default. The island nation was hit by its worst financial crisis in history, with its foreign exchange reserves falling to a critical low and the public coming out on the streets to protest the shortage of fuel, fertilisers and essential commodities.

Sri Lanka's economy contracted 7.8 per cent in 2022.

'Violence in Kosovo unacceptable'

AP ■ BELGRADE

NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said Tuesday that the recent violent outbreaks in Kosovo were unacceptable and perpetrators must be brought to justice.

"I count on all sides to reduce tensions and to refrain from escalatory actions," he said during a visit to Serbia's capital Belgrade, after his stops in Bosnia and Kosovo, on the second day of his trip in Western Balkans.

Stoltenberg's trip reflects Western concerns over the stability of the volatile Balkan region that went through a series of wars in the 1990s.

Serbia and Kosovo witnessed a spike in tension following two violent incidents in May and September as the war raged in Ukraine. Western allies fear Russia could try to spur Balkan trouble to divert attention from its aggression on Ukraine.

In May, Serb demonstrators in northern Kosovo clashed with NATO peacekeeping troops. In September, a Kosovo policeman and three Serb gunmen were killed in a shootout after about 30 masked men opened fire on a police patrol near the Kosovo village of Banjska.

The two incidents have prompted NATO to beef up its peacekeeping presence in Kosovo. Stoltenberg said on Monday that NATO was considering deploying additional peacekeeping troops.

The NATO head said in Belgrade that some of the 93 troops wounded in clashes with Serb demonstrators had "life-changing injuries." "This is unacceptable, the facts must be established. The perpetrators must face justice," said Stoltenberg. "I welcome that Serbia is prepared to cooperate in these efforts."

Stoltenberg also urged Serbia and Kosovo to engage "constructively" in a European Union-mediated dialogue that is aimed at normalizing relations between the former foes. Serbia does not recognize Kosovo's 2008 declaration of independence. Both Serbia and Kosovo have been previously warned by EU diplomats that refusal to compromise jeopardized their chances of joining the EU. Serbia's President Aleksandar Vucic said at a joint press conference with Stoltenberg that tensions in Kosovo were the result of increased pressure by the government there on the ethnic Serb minority.

Pak court adjourns hearing of Nawaz's petition to revive appeals in graft cases

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

A Pakistani high court on Tuesday adjourned till November 27 the hearing of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's petitions to revive appeals against his conviction in the Avenfield and Al-Azizia corruption cases as he prepares to lead his party in the general elections.

A two-member bench of the Islamabad High Court (IHC), comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb, took up the appeals for hearing and heard Sharif's counsel Azam Tarar and the legal team of the National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

The bench then adjourned the hearing until Monday and asked Tarar to present his arguments at the next hearing.

The 73-year-old three-time prime minister returned to Pakistan on October 21 after about four years of self-imposed exile in London and was present in the court at the time of hearing. He is expect-



led to lead the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party in the general elections set to be held on February 8 next year.

Sharif arrived in court amid tight security. He was accompanied by his brother, ex-premier Shehbaz Sharif, and an entourage comprising senior PML-N leaders. The PML-N supreme was convicted and sentenced to 10 years in jail by

an accountability court in the Avenfield case in July 2018 for owning illegal properties in London.

His daughter, Maryam Nawaz, was also sentenced to seven years in jail in the case but was acquitted in September 2022 along with her husband, Muhammad Safdar.

The former premier was also convicted in the Al-Azizia Steel Mills corruption case and sentenced to seven years in jail in December 2018.

He challenged the sentence, but the appeal process was halted as he was away in London.

He was allowed to go to London in November 2019 on medical grounds, and returned about four years later in October. The IHC declared him a proclaimed offender in both cases in December 2020. The former premier returned last month from London after about four years and approached the IHC to restore his appeals, which was duly done.

Li Qiang to attend virtual G20 leaders' summit

PTI ■ BEIJING

China on Tuesday announced that Premier Li Qiang will attend the virtual G20 Leaders' Summit at India's invitation and hoped that the meeting will address global challenges through cooperation and make positive contributions to economic recovery.

The G20 virtual summit on Wednesday will take forward key outcomes and action points firmed up at the annual conclave of the grouping in September under India's presidency, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in New Delhi said in a statement.

The summit will also delve into the impact of the Russia-Ukraine war and the Israel-Hamas conflict. It is also expected to push for the effective implementation of various decisions taken at the bloc's annual summit in New Delhi over two months back.

Germany's defense minister unveils more help for Ukraine

AP ■ KYIV

German Defence Minister Boris Pistorius vowed Tuesday to keep supporting Ukraine's efforts to win its war against Russia, pledging further military aid worth 1.3 billion euros (\$1.4 billion). The new support is to include further Iris-T SLM anti-aircraft missile systems as well as anti-tank mines and 155-millimeter artillery shells, German news agency dpa reported.

"We are talking about 20,000 additional shells," Pistorius said at a joint news conference with his Ukrainian counterpart, Rustem Umerov, in Kyiv, according to dpa. Pistorius's unannounced trip to the Ukrainian capital came a day after U.S. Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin traveled to Ukraine and pledged American support "for the long haul," including an additional \$100 million in weapons from US stockpiles.

The visits appeared to be part of an international political effort to keep the war in the



public mind as other issues clamor for attention, including the Israel-Hamas conflict.

European Council President Charles Michel also arrived in Kyiv on Tuesday, which is the 10th anniversary of what Ukraine calls its Revolution of Dignity. That uprising brought momentous change for Ukraine, pushing it closer to the West and bringing confrontation with Moscow.

Pistorius paid tribute to the demonstrators who were killed during the pro-European protests 10 years ago, dpa reported. "Courageous people of all ages took to the streets for freedom, for rapprochement with Europe, and paid for it

with their lives," Pistorius said. He put down red roses at a makeshift memorial to those killed.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen, in a video message, saluted the Ukrainian desire for freedom and its application to join the 27-nation European Union. "The future of Ukraine is in the European Union," she said. "The future that the Maidan fought for has finally just begun," she said in a reference to central Kyiv's Independence Square.

For Moscow, the Ukrainian revolt was fomented by Western interests, and Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Tuesday reaffirmed the Kremlin's view that it was "a coup, a forceful coup financed from abroad." Ukraine's current fight to push out the Kremlin's forces has lasted almost 21 months. A recent Ukrainian counteroffensive apparently has yielded no major changes on the battlefield, and another tough winter of attritional warfare lies ahead.



German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, center, stands with heads of state and government of African countries, as well as the heads of the EU for a family photo at the "Compact with Africa" - G20 Investment Summit 2023 conference, in Berlin, Monday.

3 terrorists, one soldier killed in terror attacks in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province

Peshawar (PTI): At least three terrorists were killed by Pakistan's security forces during two intelligence-based operations in the restive northwest Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province while one soldier was killed in an IED explosion, the army said.

Two terrorists were killed during an intense exchange of fire in the Kulachi area of Dera Ismail Khan district on Monday. In a separate operation conducted in the Kot Azam region of South Waziristan district, one terrorist was shot dead, the Pakistan Army's information wing said in a statement.

It said the forces recovered weapons and ammunition from the possession of all three killed terrorists, who remained actively involved in numerous terrorist activities against security forces as well as civilians. In another incident that occurred in the Gharyoum region of North Waziristan district, an improvised explosive device (IED) exploded, killing a soldier.

Security forces have launched a sanitisation operation to eliminate any terrorists present in the areas.

The army said the security forces of Pakistan were determined to wipe out the menace of terrorism from the country.

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India's 4th tranche of relief materials reaches Nepal

Kathmandu (PTI): Three weeks after back-to-back earthquakes rattled the remote western mountain region killing over 150 persons, Nepal on Tuesday received the fourth tranche of emergency medical aid and equipment for the quake-affected families. As part of the continued "humanitarian efforts" as first responder to support people of the Himalayan nation in their times of need, India has regularly sent aid to Nepal since the 6.4-magnitude earthquake on November 3 that jolted Jajarkot and Rukum districts killing 153 people and injuring over 260 others. The November 3 quake caused the worst human and infrastructure losses since the

devastating jolt of April 2015. On November 7, three tremors of over magnitude 4 hit Jajarkot injuring at least 16 people.

"Fourth tranche of relief support comprising vital medicines & equipment for the earthquake-affected families reaches Nepal. India's humanitarian efforts continue to support people in Nepal," External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar posted on X along with photos of need, India has regularly sent aid to Nepal since the 6.4-magnitude earthquake on November 3 that jolted Jajarkot and Rukum districts killing 153 people and injuring over 260 others. The November 3 quake caused the worst human and infrastructure losses since the

Musk's X sues liberal advocacy group over its report on ads next to hate groups' posts

AP ■ NEW YORK

Elon Musk's social media company X filed a lawsuit against liberal advocacy group Media Matters for America on Monday, saying it manufactured a report to show advertisers' posts alongside neo-Nazi and white nationalist posts in order to "drive advertisers from the platform and destroy X Corp."

Media Matters, a Washington, DC-based nonprofit, called the lawsuit "frivolous."



owner Musk has inflamed tensions with his own posts endorsing an antisemitic conspiracy theory.

Advertisers have been fleeing the site formerly known as Twitter over concerns about their ads showing up next to pro-Nazi content - and hate speech on the site in general - while billionaire

It was a fresh setback as

the platform tries to win back big brands and their ad dollars, X's main source of revenue.

The Media Matters report pointed to ads from Apple and Oracle that also were placed next to antisemitic material on X. On Friday, it said it also found ads from Amazon, NBA Mexico, NBCUniversal and others next to white nationalist hashtags.

But San Francisco-based X says in its complaint filed in federal court in Fort Worth, Texas, that Media Matters "knowingly and maliciously" portrayed ads next to hateful material "as if they were what typical X users experience on the platform."

X's complaint claims that Media Matters manipulated

algorithms on the platform to create images of advertisers' paid posts next to racist, incendiary content. The juxtapositions, according to the complaint, were "manufactured, inorganic and extraordinarily rare."

It says Media Matters did this by using X accounts that just followed X users known to produce "extreme fringe content" and accounts owned by X's major advertisers. This, the complaint says, led to a feed aimed at producing side-by-side placements that Media Matters could then screen shot in an effort to alienate X's advertisers.

Media Matters said Monday that it stands by its reporting and expects to prevail in court.

NOTICE INVITING EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
SSA-19015/1/2023-MEDIA- (SSA)/ I/340091/2023 dated 17.11.2023
Mission Director, Samagra Shiksha Axom, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam invites EOI through e-Tendering process for Empanelment of Advertising Media Agencies.
To participate in this EOI process through e-procurement, bidder should have valid Digital Signature Certificate (DSC) and have to register in the portal <https://assamtenders.gov.in> by themselves.
The EOI document containing the details of terms and conditions may be downloaded from the website and shall submit their tender on-line on the website <https://assamtenders.gov.in>.

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is to inform the general public that Mr. Murali Lal Sharma is the unequivocal owner of Entire Third Floor, with roof terrace rights built on property bearing no. 120, area measuring 90 Sq. mtrs., in Pookhi-1, Sector-22, situated in the layout plan of Rohini Residential Scheme, Rohini, Delhi. This legal ownership was established through a Relinquishment Deed dated 24.12.2020 vide doc. No. 4146 executed by Mrs. Lata Sharma, Mr. Nand Kishore, Mrs. Jyoti Jangid, Mr. Vijay Sharma and Mr. Dewinder Kumar Sharma. Mr. Murali Lal Sharma intends to transfer the ownership by way of Sale Deed of the aforementioned property to Mr. Saurabh Arora and Mr. Virender Arora. Subsequently Mr. Saurabh Arora and Mr. Virender Arora are in the process of mortgaging the said property with RBL Bank Ltd. (Our Client). Any objections or concerns regarding this transaction should be raised within a period of 7 days from the date of this public notice. Any objections submitted after the completion of this 7-day period will not be considered binding with respect to the said property or the interests of our client. If anyone wishes to raise an objection, please do so within the stipulated 7-day period by contacting Law Veritas: North (Advocates & Legal Consultants) at Office No. 11, 1st Floor, Building No. A-4/A, Sector-16, Noida, Uttar Pradesh-201301 (Landline)-+91120-3191683 /4662809; e-mail: accounts@lvnorth.in

MUNICIPAL CORPORATION CHHATRAPATI SAMBHAJINAGAR
Executive Engineer (Building & Garden)

Tel.No (0240) 2333536-40	Address: Municipal Corporation Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar, Executive Engineer (Building & Garden)
Fax.No.(0240)-2331213	Head office : Town Hall Pin 431001 E-Tender Call AMC (For Help): Cell No. 9764999592
	No/AMC/Dy/Eng/B&G/ 422/2023 Date 21/11/2023

Sr.No	Work Name	Last Date of Tender Submission
1.	DEVELOPMENT OF VEGETABLE MARKET BY CONSTRUCTING OTAS IN THE OPEN SPACE AT N-11, HUDDO (TENDER AMT. RS. 1,17,84,666/-)	16/12 / 2023

Note:- 1. For the above started work is available on web site www.mahatenders.gov.in

Executive Engineer
(Building & Garden)
Municipal Corporation
Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar.

'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham': UK leader Starmer on FTA with India

PTI ■ LONDON

UK's Opposition Leader Keir Starmer has described the ups and downs of the government's negotiations towards a free trade agreement (FTA) with India as 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhie Gham' and committed the Labour Party to pursuing an "always happy" bilateral relationship.

During his speech at a Diwali celebration in the Houses of Parliament complex in London organised by the British Indian think tank 1928 Institute last week, Starmer referenced the Bollywood box-office hit which translates as sometimes happy, sometimes sad. India and the UK are currently in the 14th round of FTA negotiations to

enhance the GBP 36-billion bilateral trading partnership, with several expected completion points having passed.

"We will be rebuilding Britain's reputation on the international stage and that means a new strategic partnership with India," said Starmer.

"The Tories are working on a free trade agreement, I think. It's all a bit stop-and-start. In fact, you could almost call the negotiations 'Kabhi Kushi Kabhie Gham'. But Labour wants more than that - we want a deeper understanding. You can call it an always happy relationship. A relationship based on our shared values of democracy, aspiration and respect," he said.

The FTA talks began in January last year with Diwali



2022 set as the initial deadline by then prime minister Boris Johnson. Under the Prime Minister Rishi Sunak-led Tory government, no new timelines have been set but both sides are keen to get things signed off before a general election year in India and the UK in 2024.

Meanwhile, the Opposition Labour Party, which is leading the opinion polls over the governing Conservatives ahead of the expected polls, is keen to

reach out to Britain's estimated 1.9 million strong Indian diaspora electorate.

"To British Indians, I want to express my admiration and respect for everything you do for our country. Without your efforts, this country would be diminished in so many ways," said Starmer, who was joined by senior members of his shadow cabinet at the event last Wednesday.

His shadow foreign secretary, David Lammy, shared reflections from his wide-ranging discussions with External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar, who was in the UK on a five-day visit last week.

"We talked, of course, about the free trade agreement. We talked about development aid

and partnership across South Asia and also, Africa... About tech and digital, and the huge contribution science and tech can make in an age of AI (artificial intelligence)," he said.

In addition to leaders representing the Hindu faith, a cross-section of parliamentarians and activists joined the community cohesion-themed Diwali event which included messages of goodwill and solidarity by prominent members of the Jewish, Islamic and Christian faiths.

"In these times, the message of light over darkness, of good over evil and knowledge over ignorance is so important," said Anneliese Dodds, chair of the Labour Party and shadow women and equalities secretary.

India developing sea protocols for fresh fruits, vegetables to aid exports through ocean

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India is developing sea protocols for various fresh fruits and vegetables like bananas, mangoes, pomegranates and jackfruit to promote their exports through ocean routes, a senior government official said on Tuesday.

At present, most of these exports are happening by air route because of lower volumes and different ripening periods. The protocol includes understanding voyage time, scientifically understanding the ripening of these commodities, harvesting at a particular time and training of farmers. These protocols will be different for different fruits and vegetables.

Additional Secretary in the Commerce Ministry Rajesh Agrawal said shipments through sea route have two advantages - cost and volume. The exercise would help boost exports of fruits and vegetables as shipments through air cargo have a positive impact on the price competitiveness of these commodities. "So far, we are using air routes to export these perishable goods. But now, we are trying to see how we can use the sea route to send these agri products. Now, we have started developing sea protocols," he said.

One of the challenges in agri exports in India has been that the majority of these goods use air cargo, and because freights are high, it reduces the competitiveness of those products, he added.

To start with, the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEEDA), along with other stakeholders, has developed these protocols for bananas.

"We did dummy testing in a container, and now, for actual testing, the first container has been shipped to Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

"We are confident that it will be successful, and once this is done and importers start accepting it, the volumes will increase in a substantial way," he added.

Importing countries will also have to come on board to accept those consignments.

An increase in exports of fresh fruits and vegetables can help push shipments of agri products at a time when India has prohibited exports of non-basmati white rice and wheat. For the trial shipment of bananas, APEEDA has enlisted the support of ICAR-Central Institute for Subtropical Horticulture (CISH), Lucknow, for technical assistance, while Inl Farms has partnered with Del Monte for marketing and distribution in Europe and Maersk for logistics. Despite being the world's largest banana producer, India's export share is currently just one per cent in global market, even though the country accounts for 26.45 per cent of the world's banana production at 35.36 million metric tonnes.

In 2022-23, India exported bananas worth USD 176 million, equivalent to 0.36 MMT.

Govt cancels bid for appointing asset valuer for IDBI Bank

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The government on Tuesday cancelled the bid process for the appointment of an asset valuer for strategic sale-bound IDBI Bank on low bidder interest.

A fresh Request For Proposal (RFP) would be invited soon after a review of some of the bid criteria to enable better interest from bidders.

"It has been decided with the approval of the competent authority to cancel the present RFP and to issue a fresh RFP for selection of an asset valuer for strategic disinvestment of IDBI Bank Ltd," DIPAM said in a corrigendum.

"We had only a single bid. A fresh RFP will be issued soon after we review some of the criteria to enable better interest from bidders," a government official said.

The government, along with LIC, is selling nearly 61 per cent stake in IDBI Bank and in January received multiple Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for the same.

Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Secretary Tuhin Kanta Pandey had last week said the IDBI Bank strategic sale transaction is "on course" but the transaction would not be completed in the current fiscal.

"We practically don't think that before March we can conclude it (IDBI Bank stake sale)," Pandey had said.

As part of the strategic sale process, on September 1, DIPAM invited bids for appointing an asset valuer and the last date for submission of



bids was October 9. The deadline was later extended till October 30.

The asset valuer was mandated to identify intangibles not on the IDBI Bank balance sheet, like brand name, branch network and value them.

The terms of reference for asset valuers included describing and listing of all the properties and assets, including intangibles such as trademark(s), title to property rights being valued, as provided by the bank.

Valuation of intangibles were required to be indicated separately.

The DIPAM had earlier said the bank has 120 properties in the top seven cities. These include 68 properties in Mumbai, 20 in Pune, nine in Chennai and seven in Ahmedabad. Besides, it has six properties in Kolkata and five each in Delhi and Hyderabad.

The asset properties in the seven cities account for 94 per cent of the total written down value (after accounting for depreciation) of fixed assets of IDBI Bank.

Adani to bid for duty-free shops at Macau airport

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Adani group plans to bid for setting up duty-free shops at the Macau international airport, as India's largest airport operator spreads its wings overseas.

In a stock exchange filing, Adani Enterprises, the flagship firm of the conglomerate run by billionaire Gautam Adani, said it has completed the incorporation of a wholly-owned subsidiary, MTRPL Macau Ltd, in Macau on November 20.

The subsidiary has been incorporated for the purpose of

getting into the duty-free industry.

"MML is incorporated for the purpose of bidding for duty-free liquor and tobacco shops at Macau International Airport," it said. Macau International Airport (MFM) in August launched an open tender for a duty-free liquor and tobacco services sub-concession. Bids close on November 29, according to the tender document.

It said MFM is looking for an "operator to operate duty-free liquor and tobacco services, optionally with or without

general merchandise retail services (but no perfume and cosmetics), with the defined subconcession areas at Macau International Airport."

Macau international airport has a design capacity to handle 6 million passengers per year. Adani's ports-to-edible oil group has in recent years ventured into newer businesses including data centre, cement, telecom and media.

It ventured into airport business in 2019, after it won operation and management contracts for six airports of Ahmedabad, Lucknow,

Mangaluru, Jaipur, Guwahati and Thiruvananthapuram.

Besides, it holds 73 per cent in Mumbai International Airport Ltd, which, in turn, holds 74 per cent in Navi Mumbai International Airport Ltd.

With eight airports in its management and development portfolio, Adani Airport Holdings Ltd, a unit of Adani Enterprises, is the country's largest airport infrastructure company, accounting for 25 per cent of passenger footfalls and 33 per cent of India's air cargo traffic, according to its website.

Schneider Electric opens USD 1.7 mn battery lab in Bangalore

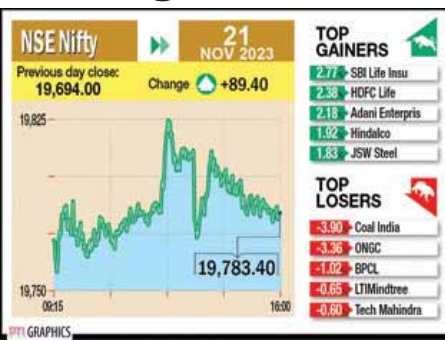
PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Energy and automation solutions provider Schneider Electric on Tuesday said it has set up a battery lab at an investment of USD 1.7 million (around Rs 14 crore) in Bangalore. The newly inaugurated lab will carry out research and development work on battery technologies to pave the way for sustainable energy solutions.

The facility will advance diagnostic equipment and have modern safety systems and dedicated testing chambers to ensure optimal performance of the batteries and adherence to safety standards, the company said in a statement.

Schneider Electric India is a subsidiary of French firm Schneider Electric. The company has 30 factories in the country. Among these, five smart factories are located in Hyderabad, Bengaluru, and Chennai.

Stock markets recover from 2-day decline on firm global cues, easing rate hike worries



PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark stock indices Sensex and Nifty rebounded on Tuesday after two days of decline following buying in select metal and banking shares and a bullish trend in the US markets on easing rate hike worries.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 275.62 points or 0.42 per cent to settle at 65,930.77 as its 18 components advanced while 12 declined. During the day, it jumped 427.21 points or

0.65 per cent to 66,082.36.

The broader Nifty went up by 89.40 points or 0.45 per cent to 19,783.40. As many as 30 NSE shares gained while 20 closed in the red.

JSW Steel was the lead gainer among Sensex shares, rising by 1.76 per cent. Tata Steel rose by 1.45 per cent, and Titan by 1.44 per cent.

Oil major Reliance Industries advanced 1.24 per cent, helping the indices snap two days of losses.

Among banking shares,

HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Axis Bank gained. Sun Pharma, Bharti Airtel, Tata Motors and Bajaj Finserv also advanced.

NTPC, Tech Mahindra, Maruti, State Bank of India and Larsen & Toubro were among the laggards.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services said, "Today, the market exhibited positive momentum, with attention centred on the minutes of the latest Fed meeting. The declining inflation and the recent cooling job

data in the US provide foundation for a dovish comment from the Fed."

The drop in bond yields and the dollar index suggests mounting speculation regarding the potential peak in the interest rate cycle.

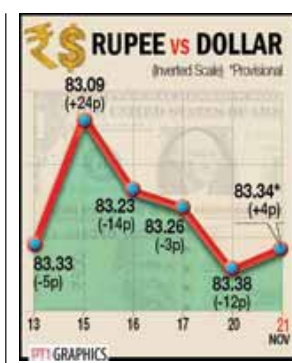
"This will attract funds to emerging markets. The gain in the broad market was led by consumer durables and realty, thanks to a strong rebound in festive demand," Nair added.

The US dollar index eased by 0.10 per cent to 103.33 ahead of the release of the Fed minutes later in the day.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge climbed 0.20 per cent and midcap index gained 0.14 per cent.

Among the indices, consumer durables jumped 1.34 per cent, commodities climbed 0.77 per cent, healthcare (0.59 per cent) and financial services (0.37 per cent).

FMCG, industrials, IT, telecommunication and oil & gas were the laggards.



Rupee settles 4 paise higher at 83.34 against \$

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The rupee recovered from its all-time low level and settled 4 paise higher at 83.34 against the US dollar on Tuesday, tracking the weakness of the American currency in the overseas market and positive domestic equities.

Forex traders said the rupee traded in a narrow range as dollar demand from oil marketing companies and sustained foreign fund outflows weighed on investor sentiments.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 83.33 and finally settled at 83.34 against the greenback, registering a gain of 4 paise from its previous close.

During the day, the rupee witnessed range-bound trade reaching an intra-day high of 83.32 and hitting a low of 83.37 against the American currency.

On Monday, the rupee declined 12 paise to settle at its all-time low of 83.38 against the US dollar.

According to Anuj Choudhary Research Analyst at Sharekhan by BNP Paribas, the rupee gained slightly on weak US dollar and positive Asian markets.

However, FII outflows capped sharp gains. The dollar declined and fell to a two-and-a-half month low amid rising expectations of a no-rate hike by the US Federal Reserve in its upcoming Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting.

"Traders may take cues from existing home sales data from the US and FOMC minutes. Rupee may also take cues from volatility in crude oil prices. USD-INR spot price is expected to trade in a range of 83 to 83.70," Choudhary added.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading lower by 0.06 per cent at 103.37.

Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, fell 0.79 per cent to USD 81.67 per barrel. On the domestic equity market front, the BSE Sensex closed 275.62 points or 0.42 per cent higher at 65,930.77 points.

IIFL Finance emerges as second largest gold loan NBFC

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) IIFL Finance has become the second largest gold loan provider surpassing Manappuram Finance.

"The gold loan portfolio has crossed Rs 23,690 crore assets under management (AUM),

surpassing Manappuram Finance at Rs 20,809 crore worth of gold loan AUM.

"This has cemented IIFL Finance's position as the second largest gold loan provider in India in terms of AUM," IIFL Finance head of Gold Loan Business Saurabh Kumar, said.

The market leader in gold

loans is Muthoot Finance with an AUM of Rs 66,089 crore, as of September 2023.

Kumar said, "the company has about 18.6 lakh customers and over 70 per cent of our customers are repeat customers helped by customer centric approaches like repayment grace period, no foreclo-

sure charges, transparency in dealings and proactive customer need identification."

The company expects a 25-27 per cent increase in gold loan in FY'24, he said. IIFL Finance provides gold loans through 1,486 towns and rural areas across 25 states and 4 Union Territories to salaried,

self-employed and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) customer segments.

Besides, gold loan, IIFL Finance offers affordable home loan, microfinance loans and business loans and has a consolidated AUM of Rs 73,066 crore

Gold climbs ₹380; silver advances ₹100

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices climbed Rs 380 to Rs 62,150 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday amid strong global cues, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal settled at Rs 61,770 per 10 grams.

Silver also edged up by Rs 100 to Rs 76,400 per kilogram.

In the global markets, both gold and silver were trading higher at USD 1,992 per ounce and USD 23.66 per ounce, respectively.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

State-owned Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) has mobilised Rs 643 crore from anchor investors.

The company has allotted 20,10,19,726 equity shares to 58 funds at Rs 32 apiece, which is also the upper-end of the price band.

Goldman Sachs, Integrated Core Strategies (Asia), Societe Generale, GAM Star Emerging Equity, BNP Paribas Arbitrage, Copthall Mauritius and Moon Capital Trading are among the anchor investors, according to a circular uploaded late night on Monday on BSE.

In addition, domestic mutual funds and insurance companies that participated in the anchor book included HDFC Mutual Fund (MF), ICICI Prudential MF, SBI MF, Kotak MF, DSP MF, Sundaram MF, SBI Life Insurance Company, SBI General Insurance Company, Max Life Insurance Company and Kotak Mahindra

State-run IREDA raises ₹643 crore from anchor investors



Life Insurance Company.

The Rs 2,150-crore maiden public issue, with a price band of Rs 30 to Rs 32 per share opened for subscription on November 21 and will conclude on November 23.

This is the first public issue by a public sector enterprise after Life Insurance Corporation's IPO in May last year.

IREDA would issue up to 40.31 crore fresh shares to

mobilise around Rs 1,290 crore at the upper-end of the price band. Besides, the government of India, currently the sole shareholder, will offer up to 26.88 crore shares in an offer-for-sale (OFS) in a bid to collect Rs 860 crore.

Proceeds from the fresh issue will be used for augmenting IREDA's capital base to meet its future capital requirements and onward lending.

BUSINESS BRIEF

VIT-AP UNIVERSITY HOLDS 56TH NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK

AMARAVATI: VIT-AP University hosted a programme on the occasion of 56th National Library Week celebration in the campus. Prof Padmini, a retired faculty member from the Department of Library and Information Science and former Principal of SV University College of Arts, Tirupati, was the chief guest at the event and she spoke about the importance of libraries and said that during the freedom struggle the libraries played a key role in motivating people towards striving for India's independence.

FICCI-META XROS FELLOWSHIP CONCLUDES

NEW DELHI: Leading industry association FICCI in association with Meta today successfully concluded its one-of-its-kind initiative the XR Open Source (XROS) Fellowship programme for Indian developers. The programme supported 100 developers working on XR technologies by enabling them to contribute to the open-source XR projects in collaboration with leading institutions and companies in XR who were project partners to the program. Over 65 per cent of the developers are from smaller cities and towns across India and about 20 per cent of the selected fellows are women developers. The fellows worked on open source metaverse projects across a number of use-cases including spatially powered smart wearable devices, 3D atlas of human anatomy helping the medical ecosystem understand the human anatomy in a 3D world, VR accessibility toolkit to aid accessibility for specially-abled individuals in immersive experiences, an Indic metaverse with heritage site tours and cultural experiences and viable web solutions for AR and VR to enable immersive experiences across a wide variety of hardware form factors.

BLUE COLLAR WORKFORCE STRUGGLES

NEW DELHI: There is a big difference between the number of people looking for blue-collar jobs and the number of job openings. 67 per cent more people are actively looking for jobs, but there has only been a 61 per cent increase in available jobs, according to data by WorkIndia, India's leading tech-enabled blue-collar recruitment platform. It is our mission to provide meaningful livelihoods to the blue-collar workers of India, and we will continue working towards the same, said Nilesh Dunganwal, co-founder and CEO of WorkIndia.

Spalletti's plan for improving Italy after securing spot at Euro 2024

AP ■ MILAN

After avoiding the dreaded playoffs, the "real work" starts now for Italy and coach Luciano Spalletti. And that includes everything from drones and smartphone apps to dinners and difficult matches.

Italy booked its spot in next year's European Championship with a 0-0 draw against Ukraine on Monday. A loss would have consigned the defending champion to the playoffs - a nightmare for a nation that missed out on the past two World Cups because of playoff defeats to Sweden and North Macedonia. Qualification was the minimum that was expected of Spalletti when he took over following Roberto Mancini's shock resignation less than a month before September's international matches.

However, he started his tenure with a disappointing draw in North Macedonia before getting Italy back on track with a victory over Ukraine and playing like the Napoli team he had led to the Serie A title a few months previously. "It's not easy to come in and immediately make the right choices, some things I learned after I started this new job and now I think I know a bit more," Spalletti said after Monday's match. "I came here to qualify,



not to find excuses if we didn't. And the real work starts now, now I can really get working. When I accepted the role, I knew that I had to qualify." With something to work toward next summer, Spalletti is planning more changes to the way the national team operates. He has already introduced an app that will allow the players to watch video lectures and tactical analysis even when they are away from the Italy training camp. He added on Monday that they will now also start training with a drone to ensure the Italy staff can upload the best possible images. Spalletti also has in mind a more

basic method for Italy to improve: getting to know his players. And he said he will not wait until the next international break in March to do so. "With the national team we want to try to get as close as possible to what happens at a club," Spalletti added. "We want to stay in contact, have the possibility to talk to each other and meet each other several times. I will go to watch team training sessions and then go for dinner with them to ask for their opinions. "We have serious players in this Italy team and I want to get to know them without that pressure of needing the result. Now I can get closer to them because they also have things to tell us."

To help his teams still further, Spalletti is hoping to schedule matches for March against tough opposition. "I will ask for difficult friendly matches, the most difficult," he said. "That's also because many of these players need to get experience of playing against top-level opponents, many of them don't play in European competition and so where would they build up this experience if not in these matches." The last time Italy went to the European Championship after failing to qualify for the World Cup, it won the tournament - beating England in the final at Wembley Stadium two years ago.

HI names 34-member core probable group for national women's coaching camp

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Hockey India on Monday named a 34-member core probable group for the senior women's national coaching camp to be held here from November 22 to December 10. India are scheduled to take part in the 5 Nations Tournament in Valencia between December 15 to December 22. Besides India, Ireland, Germany, Belgium, and hosts Spain are the other teams. It is a key step in the Indian team's preparations for the all-important FIH Hockey Olympic Qualifiers to be held in Ranchi from January 13. "It is important for us to continue to maintain our momentum and ensure we remain in the right frame of mind going into important competitions next year," Indian women's hockey team chief coach Janneke Schopman said in a release.



"Our sights are set on the Paris Olympics and to ensure a spot, we have to perform well at the FIH Hockey Olympic Qualifiers Ranchi 2024." Indian players will return to the camp after a dominating performance at the Asian Champions Trophy in Ranchi earlier this month. India claimed the gold medal, defeating Japan 4-0 in the

Final. The Indian team, which had won a bronze medal at the Asian Games, also remained unbeaten in the tournament that also saw participation from China, Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand. "The five-nation tournament is a good chance for us to test ourselves against European teams

and also plan our strategies and make modifications as and when needed," Schopman said. **INDIAN WOMEN'S HOCKEY TEAM 34-MEMBER CORE GROUP:**
GOALKEEPERS: Savita, Rajani Etimarpu, Bichu Devi Kharibam, Bansari Solanki
DEFENDERS: Deep Grace Ekka, Gurjit Kaur, Nikki Pradhan, Udita, Ishika Chaudhary, Akshata Abaso Dhakale, Jyoti Chhatrri, Mahima Chaudhary
MIDFIELDERS: Nisha, Salima Tete, Sushila Chanu Pukhrambam, Jyoti, Navjot Kaur, Monika, Mariana Kujur, Sonika, Neha, Baljeet Kaur, Reena Khokhar, Vaishnavi Vitthal Phalke, Ajmita Kujur
FORWARDS: Lalremisiami, Navneet Kaur, Vandana Kataria, Sharmila Devi, Deepika, Sangita Kumari, Mumtaz Khan, Sunelita Toppo, Beauty Dzungdung.

Atlanta to host opening game, Miami gets the final for 2024 Copa América



AP ■ ATLANTA

Mercedes-Benz Stadium in Atlanta was awarded the 2024 Copa América opener and South Florida's Hard Rock Stadium will host the final of the tournament, held outside of its home continent for only the second time. A joint announcement was made Monday by soccer's governing bodies of South America and of North and Central America and the Caribbean. Other sites and the schedule for the 16-team tournament were not revealed. The tournament is set to begin on June 20 at 71,000-seat Mercedes-Benz Stadium, where Major League Soccer's Atlanta United has set numerous attendance records. Defending Copa América champion Argentina, led by Lionel Messi, will presumably be one of the teams taking part in the opener. The retractable-roof stadium near downtown Atlanta, which opened in 2017, will install a grass field over its artificial playing surface for the tournament. Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens already has a Bermuda grass field and seats about 65,000 after a \$500 million renovation that included installation of a roof above seating areas. The 36-year-old home of the NFL's

Miami Dolphins will host the July 14 final. If Argentina advances to the championship game, it would give Messi a chance to play in the same market as his current MLS team, Inter Miami. "We expect stadiums filled with the passion of the entire American continent for the inauguration and the final," Alejandro Dominguez, president of the South American governing body CONMEBOL. Said in a statement. Both stadiums have been selected as sites for the 2026 World Cup, to be played in the United States, Mexico and Canada. "The cities have passionate sports and football fans renowned for getting behind major events," Victor Montagliani, president of the Confederation of North and Central American and Caribbean Association Football, said in a statement. Copa América is expanding this season, with six teams from North America joining the usual 10 nations from South America that compete for the continental championship. It mirrors a special tournament that was held in 2016 in the United States to mark the centennial of the event - the only previous time it was staged outside of South America.



Former Man City defender Benjamin Mendy launches claim against club over unpaid wages

AP ■ LONDON

Former Manchester City defender Benjamin Mendy has launched a claim against the club over unpaid wages, his lawyer said. Mendy cited "unauthorized deductions from wages" after he was charged with rape and sexual assault in 2021. Mendy, a France international, was cleared in January by a jury of six counts of rape and one count of sexual assault, relating to four young women or teenagers, following a six-month trial. Jurors failed to reach verdicts on two counts, of rape and attempted rape, leading to a retrial. He was found not guilty of those two counts in July.

Nick De Marco confirmed in a statement sent to The Associated Press that he is acting on behalf of Mendy "in a multi-million pound claim for unauthorized deductions from wages." "Manchester City failed to pay Mr. Mendy any wages at all from September 2021, following Mr. Mendy being charged with various offenses(s) all of which he was subsequently acquitted of, until the end of his contract in June 2023," the statement read. "The claim will come before an employment tribunal." Mendy last played for City in August 2021. He now plays for French club Lorient. City did not immediately comment on the matter after being contacted by the AP.

Ivory Coast beats Gambia to remain unbeaten in Africa World Cup qualifying

AP ■ HARARE

Ivory Coast beat Gambia 2-0 to record consecutive wins in its first World Cup qualifying games. Forward Christian Kouamé and midfielder Seko Fofana scored at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Tanzania capital city Dar es Salaam, Gambia's adopted home. The Ivorians followed their impressive 9-0 win against the Seychelles in Abidjan on Friday, Africa's record winning margin in World Cup qualifiers. Ivory Coast's third and last appearance at the World Cup was in 2014 in Brazil. It leads Group F with maximum points on goal difference from Gabon,



which also has two wins. Meanwhile, Djibouti hosted Guinea-Bissau in Cairo and lost 1-0, four days after losing to Egypt 6-0 at the same venue. Liberia suffered back-to-back

home defeats in its first two qualifiers after it was edged by Equatorial Guinea 1-0 in Monrovia. Liberia also lost to Malawi by the same scoreline on Friday.

The Seychelles continued its awful start to the campaign after the minnow, ranked 195 in the world, was thumped by Kenya 5-0 in Abidjan. Michael Olunga netted a brace for Kenya inside the first six minutes. The team from the tiny Seychelles has leaked 14 goals in three days. Africa's smallest country has one of the worst records on the continent, having last won a competitive match in 2016 against Lesotho in an Africa Cup of Nations qualifier. Also, Mali was held to 1-1 at home by the Central African Republic, and Madagascar cruised to a 3-0 victory over host Chad in Morocco.

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow-226007 (Area of Jurisdiction-Part of Uttar Pradesh)
SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION
O.A. No. 761/2023
Date : 30.10.2023
[Summons to defendant under section 19(3) of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]
ICICI BANK LIMITED ...APPLICANT
Versus
ANURAG CHITRA & OTHERS ...DEFENDANTS

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Temple, Lucknow - 226007 (Area of Jurisdiction- Part of Uttar Pradesh)
SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION
O.A. No. 1081/2022
[Summons to defendant under Section 19(4) of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]
ICICI BANK LTD. ...APPLICANT
Versus
Mr. Azaad Babu & Others ...DEFENDANTS

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Temple, Lucknow- 226007 (Area of Jurisdiction- Part of Uttar Pradesh)
SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION
O.A. No. 1082/2022
[Summons to defendant under Section 19(4) of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]
ICICI Bank Ltd. ...Applicant
Versus
Mr. Hayat Rakim Khan & Others ...Defendants

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow- 226007 (Area of Jurisdiction-Part of Uttar Pradesh)
SUMMONS FOR FILING & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION
O.A. No. 1073/2022
Date 05.10.2023
[Summons to defendant under section 19(3) of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]
ICICI BANK LTD. ...Applicant
Versus
VIKAS BABBAR & OTHERS ...Defendants

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Temple, Lucknow - 226007 (Area of Jurisdiction- Part of Uttar Pradesh)
SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION
O.A. No. 1078/2022
[Summons to defendant under Section 19(4), of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]
ICICI BANK LIMITED ...APPLICANT
Versus
Mr. Vikas Khanna & Others ...DEFENDANTS

FORM NO.5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Temple, Lucknow - 226007 (Area of Jurisdiction- Part of Uttar Pradesh)
SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION
O.A. No. 547/2023
[Summons to defendant under Section 19(4), of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]
ICICI BANK LTD. ...APPLICANT
Versus
M/S MR. NARESH KUMAR & OTHERS ...DEFENDANT

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Temple, Lucknow- 226007 (Area of Jurisdiction- Part of Uttar Pradesh)
SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION
O.A. No. 1080/2022
[Summons to defendant under Section 19(4) of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]
ICICI Bank Ltd. ...Applicant
Versus
Mr. Pankaj Gupta & Others ...Defendants

PUBLICATION DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
(Area of Jurisdiction-Part of Uttar Pradesh)
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow- 226007
DRC NO. 190/2023 NOTICE UNDER RULE 2 OF SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961 READ WITH SECTION 29 OF THE RECOVERY OF DEBT DUE TO BANKS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ACT, 1993.
ICICI BANK LTD.
Vs
MRS. RAJANI TIPPUR SIDDARAHAIH & OTHERS.
1. MRS. RAJANI TIPPUR SIDDARAHAIH, R/O. A-160, GROUND FLOOR, SECTOR-46, NOIDA- 201301.
2. MR. UMESH NARAINAPPA SHAMANNA, R/O. A-160, GROUND FLOOR, SECTOR-46, NOIDA- 201301.
3. M/S FUTECH SHELTER, OFFICE R-19, 3RD FLOOR, NEAR SHAKARPUR, LAXMI NAGAR, VIKAS MARG, DELHI- 110092. ...Defendants
This is to notify that a sum of Rs. 56,34,414/- (Rupees Fifty Six Lacs Thirty Four Thousand Four Hundred Fourteen Only) together with pendente lite and future interest @ 9.00% per annum with monthly rest from the date of filing 04-09-2019 original application till full realization is made has become due from you as per the Certificate bearing No. 190/2023 dated 06-04-2022 in Original Application No. 1311/2019 passed against you by the D.R.T., Lucknow.
2. You are hereby directed to pay the sum within 15 days of the receipt of this Notice, failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of Debts Due to Bank and Financial Institution Act, 1993.
3. You are hereby ordered to declare on Affidavit the particulars of asset on or before 20-12-2023.
4. You are hereby ordered to appear before the undersigned on 20/12/2023 at 10:30 A.M.
5. In addition to the sum aforesaid you will also be liable to pay the following costs:
Details of costs:-
Application fee Rs. 61,000/-
Advocate fees Rs. ...
Publication charges Rs. ...
Miscellaneous Expenses Rs. ...
Given under my hand and seal at Lucknow this 31st day of October, 2023.
Recovery Officer
Debts Recovery Tribunal, Lucknow

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Temple, Lucknow - 226007 (Area of Jurisdiction- Part of Uttar Pradesh)
SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION
O.A. No. 1078/2022
[Summons to defendant under Section 19(4), of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]
ICICI BANK LIMITED ...APPLICANT
Versus
Mr. Vikas Khanna & Others ...DEFENDANTS

FORM NO.5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Temple, Lucknow - 226007 (Area of Jurisdiction- Part of Uttar Pradesh)
SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION
O.A. No. 547/2023
[Summons to defendant under Section 19(4), of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]
ICICI BANK LTD. ...APPLICANT
Versus
M/S MR. NARESH KUMAR & OTHERS ...DEFENDANT

FORM NO. 5 DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Temple, Lucknow- 226007 (Area of Jurisdiction- Part of Uttar Pradesh)
SUMMONS FOR FILING REPLY & APPEARANCE BY PUBLICATION
O.A. No. 1080/2022
[Summons to defendant under Section 19(4) of the Recovery of Debts due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 read with Rules 12 and 13 of the Debts Recovery Tribunal (Procedure) Rules, 1993]
ICICI Bank Ltd. ...Applicant
Versus
Mr. Pankaj Gupta & Others ...Defendants

PUBLICATION DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL
(Area of Jurisdiction-Part of Uttar Pradesh)
600/1, University Road, Near Hanuman Setu Mandir, Lucknow- 226007
DRC NO. 190/2023 NOTICE UNDER RULE 2 OF SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961 READ WITH SECTION 29 OF THE RECOVERY OF DEBT DUE TO BANKS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ACT, 1993.
ICICI BANK LTD.
Vs
MRS. RAJANI TIPPUR SIDDARAHAIH & OTHERS.
1. MRS. RAJANI TIPPUR SIDDARAHAIH, R/O. A-160, GROUND FLOOR, SECTOR-46, NOIDA- 201301.
2. MR. UMESH NARAINAPPA SHAMANNA, R/O. A-160, GROUND FLOOR, SECTOR-46, NOIDA- 201301.
3. M/S FUTECH SHELTER, OFFICE R-19, 3RD FLOOR, NEAR SHAKARPUR, LAXMI NAGAR, VIKAS MARG, DELHI- 110092. ...Defendants
This is to notify that a sum of Rs. 56,34,414/- (Rupees Fifty Six Lacs Thirty Four Thousand Four Hundred Fourteen Only) together with pendente lite and future interest @ 9.00% per annum with monthly rest from the date of filing 04-09-2019 original application till full realization is made has become due from you as per the Certificate bearing No. 190/2023 dated 06-04-2022 in Original Application No. 1311/2019 passed against you by the D.R.T., Lucknow.
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Application fee Rs. 61,000/-
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Publication charges Rs. ...
Miscellaneous Expenses Rs. ...
Given under my hand and seal at Lucknow this 31st day of October, 2023.
Recovery Officer
Debts Recovery Tribunal, Lucknow

Cricket attracts 1.25 million spectators

ICC introduces stop clock in men's ODI, T20Is

Five-run penalty on third offence

WORLD CUP 2023



World Cup winning skipper Pat Cummins, by his own admission, has fallen in love with 50-over cricket all over again but the jury remains out on the future of the ODI format, whose relevance in modern-day cricket is being debated for some time now.

India is the heartbeat of world cricket and near-packed stadiums for majority of World Cup games over the course of 45-day long event was expected at the spiritual home of the game. It was not a surprise that India has delivered the most attended ODI World Cup ever.

More than a record 1.25 million people thronged the stadiums but the same buzz and fanfare will most likely be missing when there is a bilateral series happening anywhere in the world including India.

The players and the purists love Test cricket while T20 is the format that enjoys unmatched popularity and is being used as a tool to spread the game globally.

The attention spans are shorter than ever in the digital age and not all have the time and zeal to spend eight hours for an ODI game.

The ICC event in India has shown that the format has plenty of takers if it is a world event but the bilateral ODIs don't inspire the same confidence going ahead.

That begs the question: Should ODIs

only be played in a World Cup year? If not, then should the format be tweaked on the advice of legends like Wasim Akram and Sachin Tendulkar.

The format is not high on priority for most teams with India featuring only in six ODIs next year and Pakistan don't have any match scheduled till November 2024 even though they host the Champions Trophy the following year.

During the World Cup, Akram opined that the format should be reduced to a 40 overs a side while Tendulkar wants to break the ODIs to four innings of 25 overs each to break the "monotony".

"I have a problem with ODI cricket right now. Very rarely do you see nowadays in One-day cricket something interesting happen in those (middle) 30 overs. Just go to 40 overs, you'll have more action during that period."

"I don't know if it's going to happen, but I think 40 overs would be more interesting, especially for bilateral series. Nowadays the audience, we do know their (attention) span is lesser than the nineties, because of T20 format and because of social media. We have to adapt," Akram told Fox Sports.

His menacing bowling partner Waqar Younis also expressed his views on the subject in the middle of the World Cup he was commentating on.

"ODI cricket is too friendly for batters. Suggestion @ICC 2 new balls to start, take away 1 ball after 30 overs, continue with the other. At the end that ball will only be 35 overs old. We'll see some reverse at the end. Save the art of #ReverseSwing," he posted on social media.

However, the comments of Cummins after the World Cup triumph on Sunday night were a good advert for the ODI format. Unlike the slam bang T20 format, ODI cricket is played in gears and does challenge the cricketers more. It is a challenge Cummins and his team enjoyed in a global event but the same can't be said about a bilateral contest.

"I must say, maybe because we won, I did fall in love with ODI again this World Cup. I think the scenario where every game really matters, it does mean a bit different to just a bilateral," he acknowledged.

"I mean, the World Cup's got such rich history, I'm sure it's going to be around for a long time. Yeah, there's so many wonderful games, so many wonderful stories within this last couple of months. So, I think there's definitely a place."



ICC introduced a stop clock in men's ODI and T20Is. A five-run penalty will be imposed if the bowler exceeds the 60 second limit of bowling the next over for the third time in an innings, the sport's governing body ICC said on Tuesday.

The decision was taken at the International Cricket Council (ICC) Board meeting here.

"The CEC agreed to introduce a stop clock on a trial basis in men's ODI and T20I cricket from December 2023 to April 2024. The clock will be used to regulate the amount of time taken between overs.

"If the bowling team is not ready to bowl the next over within 60 seconds of the previous over being completed, a 5-run penalty will be imposed the third time it happens in an innings," said the ICC in a statement.

The ICC also made a change to its process of banning a pitch from international cricket.

"Changes to the pitch and outfield monitoring regulations were also approved, including a simplification of the criteria against which a pitch is assessed and increasing the threshold for when a venue could have its international status removed from five demerit points to six demerit points over a five-year period," the ICC added.



Warner rested for T20s against India

Says his ODI World Cup career not yet finished

The selectors have decided to rest David Warner for the five-match T20 series in India following Australia's ODI World Cup triumph in Ahmedabad.

Warner, who was Australia's leading run-getter with 535 runs in the triumphant campaign, was originally part of the squad to be led by Matthew Wade. The squad, for the series beginning in Visakhapatnam on November 23, was announced last month.

All-rounder Aaron Hardie has already joined the squad as Warner's replacement.

"Selectors decided Warner would return home on the back of a successful yet demanding World Cup campaign," Cricket Australia said in a statement on Tuesday.

Earlier this year, Warner hinted that the home series against Pakistan could be the last of his Test career but remains determined to carry on in the shorter



formats.

Reacting to a post on social media signalling the southpaw had played his last ODI World Cup, the 37-year-old on Tuesday said: "Who said I am finished?"

Warner's absence from the T20s means that only seven members of Australia's World Cup winning squad will remain in India. They are Sean Abbott, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Glenn Maxwell, Steve Smith, Marcus Stoinis and Adam Zampa.

India named their squad on Monday night and only three players from the World Cup were picked for the T20s including skipper Suryakumar Yadav, Ishan Kishan and Prasad Krishna.

Shreyas Iyer will be available for the last two games in Raipur and Bengaluru.

Australia T20 squad: Matthew Wade (c), Aaron Hardie, Jason Behrendorff, Sean Abbott, Tim David, Nathan Ellis, Travis Head, Josh Inglis, Glenn Maxwell, Tanveer Sangha, Matt Short, Steve Smith, Marcus Stoinis, Kane Richardson, Adam Zampa.



Advani wins World Billiards Championship for 26th time

Indian cueist Pankaj Advani won the IBSF World Billiards Championship title here on Tuesday for a staggering 26th time, beating compatriot Sourav Kothari in the final.

Advani defeated Kothari 1000-416 in a rematch of last year's title clash in Kuala Lumpur.

He had won his first world title in this competition way back in 2005. While Advani has won the 'long format' for the ninth time, he triumphed in the 'point format' championship on eight occasions, besides winning the World Team Billiards Championship once.

In this tournament, Advani defeated fellow Indian cueist Rupesh Shah 900-273 in the semi-finals.

It saw breaks of 259 and 176 from the defending champion, while Shah managed a 62 break only in the 900-up format.

In the other half of the draw, Kothari pulled off a close win against Dhruv Sitwala, prevailing 900-756 in his semi-final match.

Kothari had breaks of 223 and 82, while Sitwala scored 199 and 188.

U19 World Cup moved from Lanka to South Africa

The ICC Board on Tuesday shifted the next year's men's Under-19 World Cup from Sri Lanka to South Africa, 11 days after the world governing body provisionally suspended the cricket body in the island nation due to government interference.

In fact it was Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) that had reached out to ICC and notified about the government interference in the running of cricket in the country. SLC and the Sports Ministry have been at loggerheads for some time. The government has accused SLC officials of being involved in corruption and mismanagement.

"The U19 World Cup has been shifted to South Africa from Sri Lanka due to SLC's suspension. In fact, participating nations were apprised some days back after SLC got suspended. South Africa hosted the U19 WC in 2020. The decision got approval at ICC Board meeting in Ahmedabad," an ICC Board member told PTI.

"Sri Lanka's bilateral and domestic cricket will not be affected by this," SLC president Shammi Silva had recently warned that the country could lose the hosting rights of the U19 World Cup, scheduled to be held from January 13 to February 4, if the government's interference continued.

In a statement released on Monday, SLC had said: "While SLC focuses on resolving the suspension issue, it appears that the minister of sports is pursuing a different agenda through media manipulation without pursuing legal avenues to address the allegations."

"This raises concerns about its intention to influence public opinion and other stakeholders to achieve its objective of taking control of SLC through the misuse of his powers."

"SLC calls for a fair and unbiased examination of the facts and remains focused on its mission to uphold the integrity of cricket in Sri Lanka and is confident that the truth will prevail in due course."

Prannoy, Satwik-Chirag enter second round of China Masters

Star Indian shuttler HS Prannoy progressed to the second round of China Masters Super 750 badminton tournament with a straight game win over Chinese Taipei's Chou Tien Chen here on Tuesday.

The 31-year-old, who had missed a couple of tournaments due to a back injury, registered a 21-18 22-20 win over the world number 12 Chen in the opening round, thus avenging the loss that he suffered last week in Japan.

The Asian Games bronze medalist will face either Hong Kong's Lee Cheuk Yiu or Denmark's Magnus Johannesen next.

Top seeds Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty, who are the reigning Asian Games gold medalists, comfortably prevailed 21-13 21-10 over England's Ben Lane and Sean Vandy to also make a good start.

The Commonwealth Games champions will meet Japan's Akira Koga and Taichi Saito next. Aakarshi Kashyap, the only Indian challenger in women's singles, found Zhang Yi Man of China too hot to handle, going down 12-21 14-21 in 33 minutes.

Prannoy, world no. 8, came into the match with a 4-7 head-to-head count but produced a gritty



show to come up trumps against Chen. Lagging 6-9 at one stage, Prannoy turned the tables with four straight points to make it 12-10. Chen came close at 12-14 but the Indian didn't give much of a chance to his rival to comfortably pocket the opening game.

Chen tried to script a comeback and was 6-3 up early in the second game but a fighting Prannoy kept him on his toes, despite lagging for most part.

The Indian had managed to eke out an 8-6 lead but Chen moved to 12-10 and kept his nose ahead till 18-16 when Prannoy surpassed him to shut the door on his opponent.

Boult backs Mitchell, Southee to try their hand at kabaddi

New Zealand pacer Trent Boult, wicket-keeper Tom Latham and Mitchell Santner were hugely impressed with kabaddi during their recent World Cup assignment in India and believe team-mates Glenn Phillips, Daryl Mitchell and Tim Southee would excel in the game of 'raiders' and 'defenders'.

Latham also saw a similarity between kabaddi and rugby — the most popular sport in New Zealand with the All Blacks players enjoying cult status back home.

India are the pioneers of kabaddi, with the men's team winning seven of the eight gold medals in Asian Games history, while the Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) has become one of the most popular franchise-based leagues in the country, attracting talented players from across the world.

Boult backed teammates Mitchell and Southee to try their hand in the sport, saying the duo is strongly

built for the rigours of a tough sport like kabaddi.

"I've watched it a couple of times. I think you need strong legs for the sport. I would put up Daryl Mitchell and Tim Southee's names for this game."

During their time in India for the World Cup, where they lost to the Rohit Sharma-led hosts in the semi-finals, Boult, Santner and Latham showed interest when they were shown PKL highlights.

"It looks like a pretty physical game. It looks similar to rugby, with guys teaming up to stop one guy getting across the line. I would nominate Glenn Phillips for this sport. He's a powerful pocket rocket," said Latham. All-rounder Santner too backed Phillips to play kabaddi for his agility.

"I've probably got the squirminess for the sport, but not the strength. You need to be agile and strong for kabaddi. Lockie Ferguson might play well. He has a strong core and big legs."

Wenger to dig out football talent in India

Legendary coach Arsene Wenger on Tuesday committed himself to "digging out talent" in India and place the country on world football map, as he inaugurated the FIFA-AIFF academy here.

Former Arsenal coach Wenger, currently serving as FIFA's chief of global football development, did not give any time frame when India would start producing "great players" but made it known that without proper grassroots development, the country will remain as it is now.

"Our project is to identify talent in India, to put the best talent together, give them a good coaching programme, give them a good education and a good level of competition and make them great players," Wenger said.

"Our huge effort is to dig out talent and make them as good as

they can be," he said after witnessing the signing of MoU between the All India Football Federation (AIFF) and the Odisha government.

Fifty under-14 players — including 15 from Odisha — will be selected by the FIFA coaches in the first batch and they will get training at the academy for two years.

Odisha government will take care of the boarding, lodging, accommodation and education of the players, and FIFA will provide the technical know how and the coaches.

FIFA has already recommended Spain's Sergi Amezua Fontrodona — who was previously involved with developing football in China as project director — to be the academy head coach for two years and an Indian will assist him for a few



months.

A foreign assistant coach will be appointed in four-five months.

"With such a huge population, the potential in India is huge, for you to be on top of the world. That is what we want to achieve together. How long will it take, I don't know," Wenger said.

"But one thing is for sure, if we don't educate we will be where we are at the moment. With the quality of education, you get great players. Our target is to develop top level players here and get India on the map among the best countries in the world," said the celebrated coach.

He emphasised the necessity of catching players young if the country wants to reach the top level.

"No country has more right over another country to be on the top of world. It's just down to edu-

ing in three-four years who can play at the top level."

Wenger and his team took stock of the facilities at the academy like the dormitories, dining area, study rooms, coaches rooms and common areas.

AIFF president Kalyan Chaubey said that India can qualify for the FIFA U-17 World Cup on merit — through the players coming out of this academy. India had featured in the 2017 FIFA U-17 World Cup as host country.

"Let us dream to qualify for the Under-17 World Cup on merit. We must try to become one of the best in the U-17 age group and thereafter we can think of becoming one of the top countries in the world."

"We will get our best national team in under-17 category in the coming three years."

Odisha Sports Minister Tusharkanti Behera said he hoped the academy will produce players who will make the state and country proud.