

OPINION 6
RAMASWAMY MAKES WAVES IN US ELECTIONS

WORLD 8
DUBLIN ERUPTS IN VIOLENCE FOLLOWING KNIFE ATTACK

MONEY 10
MARKETS CLOSE MODESTLY LOWER; IT STOCKS WEIGH

NEW DELHI, SATURDAY NOVEMBER 25, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3

the pioneer

www.dailypioneer.com



RINKU ON HIS FINISHER'S ROLE IN T20Is
12 SPORT

SC slams doubt over SEBI Adani probe

Court blasts Bhushan for claiming 'conflict of interest' in SC expert committee

PTI ■ NEW DELHI
The Supreme Court on Friday said it has no reason to "discredit" SEBI, which probed allegations against the Adani group, as there was no material before it to doubt what the market regulator has done and the court does not have to treat what was set out in the Hindenburg report as a "true state of affairs". While asking the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) what it intends to do in future to ensure investors don't lose wealth due to volatility in stock market or short-selling, the apex court observed it would not be proper for it to set up a special investigation team (SIT) on its own without any material before it. A bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud, which reserved its order on a batch of pleas concerning the Adani-Hindenburg row on allegations of stock price manipulation, said it cannot ask a statutory regulator to take as a "gospel truth" something which

was published in the media. "We don't have to treat what is set out in the Hindenburg report as ipso facto (automatically) a true state of affairs. That is why we directed the SEBI to investigate. Because for us to accept something which is in the report of an entity, which is not before us and whose veracity we have no means of testing, would really be unfair," the bench, also comprising justices JB Pardiwala and Manoj Misra, told advocate Prashant Bhushan, who was appearing for one of the petitioners. Bhushan argued that SEBI's role in the matter was "suspect" for several reasons because a lot of information was available to the regulator way back in 2014. "They have completed their investigations. They are saying that is now in their quasi-judicial power. Should they disclose the investigation before they issue a notice to show cause," the bench asked. Bhushan said it was for the apex court to see whether the probe done by the SEBI was



credible or not and whether some other independent organisation or an SIT was needed to be formed to investigate it. "Where is the material before us for us to doubt what SEBI has done," the bench observed. It also took serious note of Bhushan's claim that two of the members of the SC appointed expert committee have serious "conflict of interest". The bench said there has to be some responsibility about the allegations being made as it was easy to level allegations. "You have to also be very careful. It

is very easy to make allegations. We are not here giving a character certificate. But equally we have to be conscious about fundamental principles of fairness," the bench observed. Dealing with the submissions relating to SEBI probe, it said, "We have to be also conscious that SEBI is a statutory body exclusively entrusted with the jurisdiction to investigate into stock market violations. Today, is it proper for a court, the highest court, to just without any material to say that we will not let you investigate and

will constitute a SIT of our own? This has to be done with a great deal of calibration." Bhushan referred to the Hindenburg report as also some media report to buttress his arguments that SEBI's probe was not credible. "I don't think you can ask a statutory regulator to take as a gospel truth something which is filed in a newspaper, whether in the Guardian or the Financial Times. We have no reason to discredit them..." the bench said. "Therefore, should SEBI be following up journalists and ask a journalist, who is not subject to their jurisdiction, to disclose the underlying materials," it said. Bhushan argued that if a journalist can get hold of documents, how can the SEBI, with all its vast powers of investigation, not being able to get hold of these materials. The bench said there was always a correct way of looking at it for a simple reason that when "you are dealing with a body which is governed by evi-

dentiary requirements... Somebody who publishes something in the public realm, is not bound by the evidentiary standards with which a statutory body is bound". "They are amenable to jurisdiction of the security appellate tribunal. You can't pick out and say well, I will rely on newspaper report and issue a notice of show cause. That notice will be quashed by a judicial body," it said. Bhushan said the show cause notice would not be quashed if it was based on credible information which leads to suspicion. "As a court, how do we treat it as credible? We will have to rely on our investigative agencies to investigate it," the bench said, adding, "We can't make that assumption that it is either credible or lacking in credibility". Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the SEBI, told the bench that there was "a growing tendency of planting stories outside India to influence things and policies inside India".

More trouble for Moitra

ID accessed from US, Dubai, Bengaluru

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Amid the ongoing "cash for Aquery" investigation against TMC MP Mahua Moitra, sources in the Government said her Parliament login ID was not just accessed from Dubai, but also from New Jersey, the United States, and Bengaluru. Sources from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology said her login credentials were used from New Jersey and Bengaluru when the TMC MP was in Kolkata and then in Delhi on the same day. Moitra admitted to sharing her Parliament login ID and password with businessman Darshan Hiranandani so that someone in the latter's office could type in the questions to be asked in the Lok Sabha. The Lok Sabha Ethics Committee, headed by BJP MP Vinod Kumar Sonkar, has already submitted its report on the allegation against Moitra to the Speaker's office. The report, adopted by a majority in the Committee, recommended Moitra's expulsion from the House, accusing her of accepting "illegal gratifications" to raise questions in Parliament at the behest of the businessman. BJP MP Nishikant Dubey had forwarded a complaint against the TMC member by lawyer Jai Anant Dehadrai to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, accusing her of taking bribes for asking questions in the House at the behest of Hiranandani to target the Adani Group and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The TMC MP, however, has refuted the allegations against her, calling them "defamatory, false, baseless, and not supported by even a shred of evidence". "Someone in Hiranandani's office typed the question, which I gave on Parliament website. After putting the question, they would call me to inform, and I would read all the questions in one go as I am always busy in my constituency," Moitra said. "After putting the question, an OTP (one-time password) comes on my mobile phone. I would give that OTP and only then is the question submitted. So, the idea that Hiranandani would log in to my ID and put in questions of his own is ludicrous," the TMC MP had said. The Lok Sabha Secretariat has already made changes on the confidentiality of Government's replies to MPs during the Question Hour in the House and asked them to access their portal only for their exclusive use. Under this new initiative, the secretariat said replies to 'Starred Questions', a term for queries where Ministers con-



cerned answer to related supplementaries in the House, are being uploaded on members' portal by 9 am on the day of reply. With Parliament's Winter Session scheduled to begin from December 4, members have begun putting in their questions. The House is likely to take a decision on the Ethics Committee's recommendation for Moitra's expulsion during the session, with the Trinamool Congress (TMC) rallying around her after its initial "wait and watch" approach. "It may be noted that since the replies are log-in and password protected on the Members' portal, they are exclusively for the use of Members only," the Lok Sabha secretariat said in its bulletin dated November 10, a day after the House's Ethics Committee recommended Moitra's expulsion. Members are, therefore, requested to maintain confidentiality of the replies and not to share the contents with others until the Question Hour is over, it added. It informed MPs that the contents of reply made in response to a question is "strictly confidential" until the question for oral answer has been asked and answered in the House. In case a question could not come up for oral answer, the reply to the question should not be released till the conclusion of Question Hour, the Lok Sabha secretariat added. "Questions included in the lists of written answers are also to be treated as confidential until the same have been laid on the Table of the House after the Question Hour is over," it said. Sources said the Lok Sabha has merely reiterated the same set of existing rules about confidentiality in the wake of the episode involving Moitra. She was accused by Dubey of letting the businessman to access her parliamentary portal in lieu of bribes, and the Lok Sabha's Ethics Committee has recommended her expulsion.

Qatar court accepts India plea to review death to 8 Navy veterans

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A Qatar court has accepted India's appeal against the death sentence awarded to eight former Indian Navy personnel in an alleged case of espionage. The appeal was reportedly accepted on Thursday and it was learnt the Qatari court will set a hearing date after examining the appeal. The death sentence was given last month. The eight men were identified as Captain Navtej Singh Gill, Captain Birendra Kumar Verma, Captain Saurabh Vasishth, Commander Amit Nagpal, Commander Purnendu Tiwari, Commander Sugunakar Pakala, Commander Sanjeev Gupta and Sailor Ragesh — all former Indian Navy personnel, employed by Dahra Global. India on November 16 had said the appeal process against the death sentence was under process and it was hopeful of a positive outcome from it. External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi had then said India is engaged with the Qatari authorities on the matter and that the Government would continue to extend all legal and consular assistance to the Indian nationals. "The case is currently in a legal process there. As we mentioned, an appeal has been

filed in Qatar's Court of Appeal. We are also engaged with the Qatari authorities on the matter and we will continue to extend all legal and consular assistance (to them)," Bagchi said. "I would again urge everyone not to engage in speculation considering the sensitive nature of the case," he said. The judgment in the entire process has been made confidential by the Qatari side. "The appeal process is underway and we would hope for a positive outcome," Bagchi said, replying to a question on the matter at his weekly media briefing. He also described as "factually incorrect" some reports that suggested the appeal in the case has been adjudicated. The Indian nationals, who worked with private company Al Dahra, were arrested in August last year reportedly in an alleged case of espionage. Neither the Qatari authorities nor New Delhi made the charges against the Indian nationals public. All of the former Navy officers had "unblemished stints" of up to 20 years in the Indian Navy and had held important positions including that of instructors in the force, former military officials had said. In May Al-Dhara Global closed its operations in Doha and all those working there (primarily Indians) have since returned

home. In the past, the Navy had taken up the case of the former naval personnel with top brass of the government for securing their release. The eight men were arrested in August 2022 by Qatar's intelligence agency for allegedly spying. However, the Qatari authorities have not made the charges against them public yet. Their bail petitions were rejected several times and the verdict against them was pronounced last month by the Court of First Instance in Qatar. The Ministry of External Affairs has urged everyone to refrain from "engaging in speculation" due to the sensitive nature of the case. All of the former Navy officers have a distinguished service record of up to 20 years in the Indian Navy and have held important positions, including that of instructors in the force. Meetu Bhargava, the sister of one of the former officers detained, had sought help from the government to bring her brother back. In a post on X on June 8, she had appealed to Prime Minister Narendra Modi to intervene. "These Ex-Navy officers are the pride of the nation & again I request our Hon'ble Prime Minister with folded hands that it is high time that they all be brought back to India immediately without any further delay," read her post.

Afghanistan closes down Delhi



RAHUL DATTA ■ NEW DELHI

Two months after it announced the shutting down of its operations here, the Afghanistan Embassy on Friday announced its permanent closure, citing "persistent challenges from the Indian Government". "Given the constant pressure from both the Taliban and the Indian government to relinquish control, the embassy faced a difficult choice," said the Embassy in a statement issued on Friday. The Embassy said it regrets announcing the permanent closure of its diplomatic mission in New Delhi, effective from November 23, "owing to persistent challenges from the Indian government". "This decision follows the embassy's earlier cessation of operations on 30th September

2023, a move made in the hope that the Indian Government's stance would evolve favourably for the normal continuation of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in New Delhi," the statement said. In September, the mission had cited a lack of support from the host government, failure to meet expectations in serving Afghanistan's interests and reduction in personnel and resources. Unfortunately, despite an eight-week wait, the objectives of visa extension for diplomats and a shift in the Indian Government's conduct were not realised, the Afghan embassy said. There are no diplomats from the Afghan Republic remaining in India, the mission stressed. Those who served the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of

Afghanistan have safely reached third countries, it said. The only individuals present in India are diplomats affiliated with the Taliban, visibly attending their regular online meetings, it said. The diplomats of the Afghan Republic have handed over the mission solely to the Indian government, the mission said. "It now rests upon the Indian Government to decide the fate of the mission, whether to maintain its closure or consider alternatives, including the possibility of handing it over to Taliban diplomats. The responsibility of diplomats appointed by the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan has officially come to an end," it said. The unfortunate end of the Republic mission marks the conclusion of the Afghan Republic in India, the statement said. "We have considered the historic events and current circumstances carefully in arriving at this conclusion. We also extend their heartfelt gratitude to the people of India for their support and assistance to Afghanistan over the past 22 years," the statement said. The Afghan Embassy asserted that India has been a steadfast strategic partner of the erstwhile Afghan Republic since 2001, and "we acknowledge the limitations and concerns that govern the realm of realpolitik and the balancing act required at a difficult time in a geo-politically sensitive region".

Delhiites vent ire against blanket ban on vehicles under GRAP

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

The complete ban on certain kinds of vehicles under stage three of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP) in Delhi is taking a toll on citizens, particularly the elderly, single women, and medical professionals who are unable to commute in emergencies. Satyawati Narula, a resident of Sangam Vihar in South Delhi, said, "A blanket ban on vehicles of a certain category is mindless. I am a widow with no help, no driver to take me around. I drive myself to save money, but now I am marooned in my home and unable to move for my medical needs and, at times, banking requirements. I support the Government's move in containing pollution but would urge them to tweak their rules to help people like me who must be in large numbers in Delhi-NCR so that their commuting needs are allowed." She said the government, after issuing pollution clearance certificates for BS-III petrol and BS-IV diesel vehicles, is now imposing heavy fines of

₹20,000 on them in the name of pollution, causing harassment to the people. As air quality turned severe again in the national capital, Delhi Environment Minister Gopal Rai held a review meeting on Friday with officials from the Environment Department and the Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC). He directed the concerned agencies and departments to ensure the strict implementation of restrictions on polluting vehicles and to monitor the increasing incidents of biomass burning. Rai said the Transport Department and the Delhi Traffic Police have been instructed to rigorously oversee the implementation of restrictions on BS III petrol and BS IV diesel vehicles under Stage III of the Centre's air pollution control plan, known as the Graded Response Action Plan. To achieve this, the Transport Department has deployed 84 teams, and the Delhi Police have deployed 284 teams, according to Rai. Biomass burning, vehicular pollution, and dust are the



reasons for the increasing pollution levels in winter. Additionally, the wind speed is lower during winter due to meteorological conditions. When there is a change in these conditions, the wind speed increases, and the wind direction changes," he said. GRAP Stage III requires a total halt to all building and demolition operations, with the exception of critical government projects, mining, and stone crushing. It also prohibits the admission of light commercial vehicles registered outside of Delhi, as well as diesel-powered trucks, medium and heavy freight vehicles (excluding those participating in critical activities). The Minister mentioned that the restrictions under GRAP IV have been modified and now include a ban on BS 3 petrol and BS 4 diesel vehicles, which were allowed to enter Delhi earlier. If Delhi air quality deteriorates in the future and GRAP IV is invoked again, such vehicles will be banned from entering the national Capital, said the

Minister, adding that the State Government may impose more stringent measures to curb air pollution in the city if rules are flouted. Rai appealed to the residents to comply with rules on a day when Delhiites woke up to a thick layer of smog engulfing the city on Friday. The air quality, categorised as "severe" in most parts, worsened due to a dip in temperatures and slow wind speed at night, allowing the accumulation of pollutants. The average Air Quality Index (AQI) was recorded at 401 at 9 am, settling at 415 by 4 pm. At 11 am, the AQI readings for specific areas were alarming: Anand Vihar at 848, Jahangirpuri at 808, Shahdara at 762, Mother Dairy at 676, and Bawana at 638. According to scientists, 36 per cent of pollution in Delhi and NCR is due to vehicles, and 31 per cent to biomass burning. The AQI in Wazirpur was recorded at 454, Jahangirpuri 453, Vivek Vihar 447, Rohini 447, Punjabi Bagh 437, Ashok Vihar 433, Anand Vihar 849, Patparganj 422, North Campus

420, Sonia Vihar 420, Burari Crossing 402, Moti Bagh 399, National Stadium 387, and Lodhi Road 347. Delhi has been witnessing a gradual increase in AQI levels after a marginal improvement on Sunday. The 24-hour average AQI, recorded at 4 pm every day, was 390 on Thursday, 394 on Wednesday, 365 on Tuesday, 348 on Monday, and 301 on Sunday. The Municipal Corporation of Delhi and the revenue department have been instructed to check the incidents of biomass burning. The increase in AQI levels comes after the Centre on Saturday removed stringent curbs, including a ban on construction work related to linear projects and the entry of polluting trucks in Delhi, following a drop in pollution levels due to a favourable wind speed and direction. Neighbouring Ghaziabad (386), Gurugram (321), Greater Noida (345), Noida (344), and Faridabad (410) also recorded "very poor" to "severe" air quality.

1 year needed to kill two dozen active terrorists in Rajouri, Poonch: General

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU

General Officer Commanding-in-Chief (GOC-in-C) Northern Command Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi has set a deadline of at least one long year to control the security situation in the areas South of Pir Panjal region for eliminating around two dozen active terrorists roaming freely in the twin districts of Rajouri and Poonch. Interacting with the reporters on the premises of the Military hospital near Satwari, soon after paying homage to the fallen soldiers who attained martyrdom in the Bajimaal area of Dharmsal, Rajouri Lt-Gen Dwivedi said "Pakistan is making attempts to push foreign terrorists into this region due to lack of support from the local population, especially the youth who are reluctant to get recruited in terrorist ranks. Our efforts are on to neutralize the foreign terrorists".



Sharing his assessment of the number of active terrorists in the area south of Pir Panjal, the Northern Army commander said the number of terrorists in the Rajouri-Poonch belt fluctuates as the area is connected with the national highway. "Roughly there is a possibility of 20 to 25 terrorists operating in the area but the way army, police, and other intelligence

killings in Dhangri and TCP in Rajouri town besides masterminding attacks on security forces at Kandi in which five army personnel lost their lives, Lt-Gen Dwivedi said. The army commander said it was possible that they were trained in several countries, including Pakistan and Afghanistan. "They were highly trained foreign terrorists and our brave soldiers without paying attention to their safety got into the operation and eliminated them. The troops have done a laudable job," he said. Asked about the presence of some special forces personnel of Pakistan among terrorist ranks, the Lt General said "When we tried to seek identification of terrorists, we came to know that some of them are retired army personnel (of Pakistan)". Lt General Dwivedi, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha, General Officer Commanding of the Jammu-based White Knight Corps, Lt General Sandeep Jain, Director General of Police R R Swain, Additional Director General of Police, Law and Order, Vijay Kumar, and Inspector General of Police, Jammu Zone, Anand Jain, were among those who laid wreaths on the coffins of the fallen soldiers of the Bajimaal encounter.

"I bow to our army bravehearts, Captain MV Pranjali, Captain Shubham Gupta, Havaldar Abdul Majid, Lance Naik Sanjay Bisht, Paratrooper Sachin Laur martyred while protecting the motherland during an anti-terror operation in Rajouri. Their valour and sacrifice will never be forgotten. Condolences to their families," the Lt Governor posted on X after the wreath laying ceremony. "The killing of Quari is not only a big achievement for the security forces, but also a morale booster for the civilians who were living under fear. This fear has now gone and more people will come forward to help in neutralization of the active terrorists," he said. He also lauded the local populace for their support and said the latest success was because of their support for the army. In Rajouri, Brigadier Soumeet Patnaik, Commander 14 Sector RR briefing media persons said it is evident from the war-like stores recovered from both the terrorists that they were planning to initiate terror-related activities to bring fear in the civilian population and cause unrest in the area. He said during the operation the terrorists took advantage of the thick undergrowth, large boulders and inhospitable terrain

India, Australia can make difference through cooperation: Jaishankar

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI



In the backdrop of China flexing its muscle in the strategically important Indo-Pacific, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Friday said in this complicated world, it is the trust between like-minded partners such as India and Australia that is helping in efforts to secure a free, open, peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific region along with a rules-based international order. In his virtual address at the sixth edition of the Australia-India Leadership Dialogue (AILD), Jaishankar said a driving force of the relationship is the convergence in understanding of, and approach to, the geo-strategic environment, particularly in the common Indo-Pacific region. The AILD has quite aptly used the phrase 'Bridges of Bharosa (trust)' as one of its themes, he noted.

"In this complicated world, it is the bhariosa or trust between like-minded partners such as India and Australia, along with others, that is helping us in our efforts to secure a free, open, peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific region along with a rules-based international order," Jaishankar said. As strong democracies and dynamic economies of the Indo-Pacific, India and Australia can make a difference through cooperation on a practical, progressive and sustainable agenda, he said, adding that it makes them a force for global good. Jaishankar said India and Australia share a deep friendship and this year has turned out to be a defining one for our 'dosti'. "We have witnessed many firsts: the First Annual Leaders Summit, two visits to India by Australia's Prime Minister, which is a first, an entry into force of our Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA), record high bilateral trade, the establishment of a Little India in Sydney, new Consulates General in Bengaluru and Brisbane,

more flight connections, Australian university campuses in India, recognition of educational qualifications, mobility agreements, and dare I say, seven meetings between our foreign ministers in 2023," he said. It is also particularly reassuring to see the strong bipartisan support that India-Australia relations enjoy in both the countries, Jaishankar said. "That conviction and continuity among the political leadership, backed by an equally strong popular support will surely make this 21st century partnership succeed," he said. Jaishankar said a wide array of bilateral frameworks such as Foreign Ministers' Framework Dialogue, 2+2 Defence and Foreign Ministers meeting, Trade Ministers Commission, Education and Skills Council, CEOs Forum, Renewable Energy Partnership and several subject-specific working groups, are features of the two countries' wide-ranging Comprehensive Strategic Partnership. "Our engagements extend from sea to space, covering all possible areas such as defence and security, cyber and critical technology, trade and economic science and technology and innovations, education and people to people ties," Jaishankar said. "Even our bonds of cricket have strengthened further, though not always to India's advantage. It was fantastic to see so many Australian women cricketers take part, some even captain

teams, in the first-ever and hugely-successful Women's IPL this year," he said. Jaishankar said the AILD has established itself as a key Track 1.5 engagement between the two countries, bringing together many friends, thinkers and advocates of the India-Australia partnership. The themes chosen this year are contemporary, relevant and outcome-oriented, he said. "As it should be in time of so much flux and realignment. There are so many challenges and opportunities that India and Australia are addressing jointly. Our Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, or CSP, was announced in June 2020. In such a short time frame, we have achieved not only a major rise in our level and frequency of engagement, but also in the scope, scale and pace of our ambition," Jaishankar said. The theme 'Skill for Success' is also apt as India's skilled workforce can contribute to Australia's needs and shortages, he said. "Simply put, the many complementarities between us make a compelling case for so much more than that the two of us can do together. There is far more potential for actual integration of our economies and businesses and for creating new supply chains. How to materialize all this, is the subject of your discussions and deliberations," the external affairs minister said. Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong also virtually addressed the 6th edition of the Australia-India Leadership Dialogue (AILD).

Aaditya Thackeray to inaugurate rejuvenated 5-century-old temple

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Shiv Sena (UBI) leader Aaditya Thackeray will inaugurate the rejuvenated five-century-old Thakur Shyama Shyam Temple at Mathura in Uttar Pradesh on the auspicious occasion of Kartik Purnima on November 27. Prior to inaugurating the refurbished Thakur Shyama Shyam Temple, Aaditya will offer prayers at the Krishna Janmabhoomi temple and other important temples at Mathura on Monday. Situated at Mathura's Shyam Ghat, the Thakur Shyama Shyam Temple is a venerable heritage temple with a rich history of 500 years. Located on the banks of the River Yamuna, the Shyam temple is rooted in Pushtimarg tradition. It is also recognised as the Vallabha Sampradaya within Vaishnavism, this temple holds a unique place as a sub-tradition of the Rudra Sampradaya. Established in the early 16th century by Shri Vallabhacharya (1479-1531), the temple was expanded by his successors, including Vithalnath. Shri Vallabhacharya (1479-1531 AD), founder of Pushti Marg had designated 8 ashta-sakhas (8

gems) to add to the Bhakti movement of Lord Krishna and promote the language of Braj, Brij Bhasha. Dedicated to Yugal form of Ashta-Sakha, Shri Cheet Swamiji, the temple is maintained by the Cheet Swami lineage, reminiscent of Banke Bihari at Nathdwara), and it part of the very first step in every Vaishnav's 84 Kosi Braj pilgrimage. Shiv Sena (UBT) Rajya Sabha member Priyanka Chaturvedi, who has taken the initiative to rejuvenate the Thakur Shyama Shyam Temple at Mathura, said here on Friday: "The temple had fallen into a state of disrepair, prompting efforts to secure funding for its restoration." "Neither the MPLADS funds nor the CSR funds can be used for the restoration of historical and culturally important places of worship. Fortunately, I received help from N.R. Alluri of Nagarjuna Foundation in my effort to restore the ancient temple," the Sena (UBT) MP said. "It is a moment of pride and happiness that the temple now stands complete and it will continue to play a cultural and historical role in the holy city of Mathura," Priyanka said.

TMC spokesman remark triggers schism rumour in party

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA

A statement by senior Trinamool Congress leader and party spokesperson Kunal Ghosh has sparked a row and speculations as to whether the Bengal ruling outfit is getting vertically divided between the camps showing allegiance to Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and the one led by her nephew and TMC national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee. Insiders however trashed suggestions that the party was moving towards NCP-like situation. A day after the Chief Minister backed the party veterans directing lesser leaders in an intra-party organisational meeting to show adequate respect to the seniors Ghosh on Friday said

as big as this." The Chief Minister had on Thursday directed the youth leadership mostly drawn from Abhishek's group to show respect and work in guidance of the likes of Saugato Roy, Sudip Bandopadhyay, Sobhandeb Chattopadhyay and others. The Chief Minister's assertions came against speculations that many senior leaders considered close to the party supreme might not get tickets in the Lok Sabha elections. "The young generation will have to work and show respect to the old generation," the Chief Minister had on Thursday said at the party mass meeting where Abhishek Banerjee's cut-outs were conspicuous by their absence.

HC bins police order, okays BJP meet in Kolkata

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ KOLKATA

The ruling Trinamool Congress suffered yet another judicial embarrassment with the Division Bench of Chief TS Sivagnanam on Friday striking down a Calcutta Police order denying Opposition BJP the permission to hold a rally at central Kolkata's Victoria House on

November 29. The meeting is likely to be addressed by senior BJP leader and Home Minister Amit Shah. Victoria House is the place where the Trinamool organises its yearly TMC Martyrs' Day rally essentially addressed by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. The Division Bench order came following a State Government appeal against single Bench order dismissing Calcutta Police order rejecting permission for the saffron rally. Upholding the single Bench directive the Court held that if one party could organise a rally at the place then there was no reason why another party should not be allowed to do so. The Court however directed organisers of the rally to exercise reasonable restraint while organising the meeting.

PUBLIC NOTICE
To be known to all that I, Veena Batra S/o Gulshan Kumar Batra R/o DDA MIG Flat No 44-B, First Floor, Pocket-A9, Kalkaji Extn, New Delhi-110019. I am the Owner/Purchaser of DDA MIG Flat No 44-B, First Floor, Pocket-A9, Kalkaji Extn, New Delhi-110019 vide DDA file no F21(1063)82/MIG.

Congress, BJP throw barbs over Rahul jibe at Modi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The political slugfest over Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's 'panauti' barb at Prime Minister Narendra Modi escalated into a poster war on social media on Friday with the Congress referring to the PM as "Panauti-e-Azam" and the BJP hitting back, calling the Gandhi family the "real panauti" of the country. A Hindi slang, "panauti" loosely refers to someone who brings bad luck. The poster battle comes a day after the Election Commission (EC) issued a show-cause notice to Rahul Gandhi for his "panauti", "pickpocket" and "loan waiver for the super rich" jibes at Prime Minister Modi, and asked him to respond by

Man arrested for threatening to blow up Mumbai airport

T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI

Within 24 hours after he allegedly handed out a threat through an email that he would blow up the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (CSMIA) in Mumbai, Maharashtra Anti Terrorist Squad (ATS) Cyber Cell sleuths traced him to Kerala and arrested him on Friday. The CSMIA authorities had on Thursday received an anonymous email threatening to "blow up Terminal 2 within 48 hours" if he was not paid an amount of USD One Million in Bitcoin. The CSMIA had received the email in its feedback box from id quaidacrosol@gmail.com at 11 am on Thursday. "Subject: Blast. This is a final warning to your airport. We

will blast Terminal 2 within 48 hours unless one million dollars in bitcoin are transferred to the address. Another alert will be after 24 hours," the email read. Working in tandem with the Mumbai Police, the ATS deployed tech-intel and managed to track down the sender of the email to Kerala. Having traced him to the southern state, an ATS team flew to Kerala on Friday morning, located him using the technical intel and arrested him. The team is bringing the arrested the email sender to Mumbai. The ATS has not disclosed the identity of the arrested email sender. "After we bring him to Mumbai, we will hand over the accused to the Sahara police," a senior ATS official said.

Drug overdose deaths rose in 3 years: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A study by researchers at National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) has found that drug overdose deaths rose markedly between January to June 2018 and July to December 2021 among 10 to 44-year-old girls and women who were pregnant or pregnant within the previous 12 months. The study published in JAMA Psychiatry suggests that, while treatment is available to pregnant women with substance use disorders, significant barriers - such as penalisation, stigma, dis-

crimination, and limited socioeconomic resources - may obstruct the path to care. "The stigma and punitive policies that burden pregnant women with substance use disorder increase overdose risk by making it harder to access life-saving treatment and resources," said Nora Volkow, NIDA director and senior author on the study. "Reducing barriers and the stigma that surrounds addiction can open the door for pregnant individuals to seek and receive evidence-based treatments and social support to sustain their health as well as their child's health." While it's well documented that

overdose mortality rose sharply in association with the Covid-19 pandemic, little is known about the specifics of pregnancy-associated overdose mortality during this time. Moreover, the differences in the characteristics of pregnant and postpartum women who died from a drug overdose and those who died of childbirth-related, or obstetric, causes are unknown. NIDA scientists analysed US data on multiple causes of death, county-level area health resources, county health rankings, and US births before and during the Covid-19 pandemic - January to June 2018 and July to December 2021.

The researchers found that overdose mortality ratios increased substantially for women who were pregnant or postpartum during the study period, across almost all examined age, racial/ethnic, educational, and marital status groups. The largest increase was observed in pregnant and postpartum women aged 35 to 44, for whom overdose mortality ratios tripled from 4.9 in the 2018 period to 15.8 in 2021 period. Among those aged 10 to 44 who died between 43 days and one year after pregnancy, overdose mortality ratios almost doubled from 3.1 in the 2018 period to 6.1 in the 2021 period.

Health underfunded in plans to tackle climate change: WHO report

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

Even as sustainable climate finance is essential for health adaptation, mitigation, and climate-resilient development, health remains chronically underfunded in national plans to tackle climate change with just 2% of adaptation funding and 0.5% of overall climate funding is currently allocated to projects that explicitly aim to protect or improve human health. In its report released ahead of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP-28) slated next month in Dubai, the World Health Organisation (WHO) pointed out this glaring gap in the action taken at the ground level by the countries against impact of climate change on health sector that ranged from the illness caused by extreme climate events to the surging vector-borne diseases and the rise in cardiovascular and respiratory diseases caused by extreme heat and air pollution respectively - the impacts of climate on human health are inescapable. Reminding the nations participating at the Summit, the report "2023 review of health in nationally determined contributions and long-term strategies" by the world global health agency also highlighted the actions needed to ensure that people's health is fully prioritised and integrated into national plans to fight climate change. On its part, the WHO is working with the COP28 Presidency to lead the first-ever day dedicated to health at COP on 3 December 2023 and the meeting of Health and Climate Ministers, underlining the urgent need to accelerate health-focused climate action at every

level. "The health of humans and our planet are inextricably linked, and after years of promises rapid action is needed urgently to protect both," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General. "Only climate policies driven by health outcomes will result in the action needed to save lives, prevent disease, and build healthier, fairer societies." Significant progress has been made in the integration of health into nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and long-term low emissions and development strategies (LT-LEDS), the main policy instruments to reduce emissions and build climate resilience as set out by the Paris Agreement. The report said that 91% of the available NDCs now include health considerations, compared to 70% of those reporting in 2019. "Compared to previous rounds of national climate plans, health-inclusive and health-promoting climate targets and policies are increasingly being developed for mitigation, adaptation, means of implementation, Loss and Damage, and long-term sustainable development strategies," said the report. Countries have made significant progress in recognising climate change's threat to human and planetary health in their national plans to tackle climate change, but we need to see these commitments scaled up, accelerated, and adequately funded to ensure an equitable response that protects the health and livelihoods of current and future generations, said Dr Maria Neira, WHO Director of Department of Environment, Climate Change and Health.

17th edition of India-Nepal joint military exercise Surya Kiran held



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Nepal Army contingent comprising 334 personnel arrived in India to participate in 17th edition of joint military exercise 'Surya Kiran' in Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand from November 24 to December seven. It is an annual event and conducted alternatively in the two countries, defence ministry said here on Friday. The Indian Army contingent comprising of 354 personnel is being led by a battalion from the Kumaon Regiment. The Nepal Army contingent is represented by Tara Dal Battalion. Aim of the exercise is to enhance interoperability in jungle warfare, counter terrorism operations in mountainous terrain and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief under United Nations Charter on peace keeping operations, officials said. The exercise will focus on employment of drones and counter drone measures, medical training, aviation aspects and also environment conservation. Through these activities, the troops will enhance their operational capabilities, refine their combat skills and strengthen their coordination in challenging situations. The drill will provide a platform for soldiers from India and Nepal to exchange ideas and experiences; share best practices and foster a deeper understanding of each other's operational procedures. Exercise Surya Kiran signifies the strong bonds of friendship, trust, common cultural linkages that exist between India and Nepal. It sets the stage for a productive and fruitful engagement, showcasing the unwavering commitment of both nations towards broader defence cooperation. The exercise aims to achieve shared security objectives and foster bilateral relations between two friendly neighbours.

Suggest five names for Delhi chief secy post: SC to Centre

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Friday asked the Centre to suggest names of five senior bureaucrats to be considered for the post of new Delhi chief secretary by 10.30 am on November 28 and said the Delhi government will have to respond the same day to facilitate adjudication on the vexed issue.

The appointment of the chief secretary is the latest bone of contention between Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal-led Delhi government and Lieutenant Governor (LG) V K Saxena who have been involved in a series of run-ins over various issues.

A bench comprising Chief Justice DY Chandrachud and justices JB Pardiwala and

Manoj Misra which was hearing the AAP government's plea asked why the LG and the chief minister cannot meet to amicably decide on names.

Earlier on July 17, the top court had taken note of the differences over the appointment of the new DERC chairperson and asked Kejriwal and the LG to discuss names of former judges who could head the national capital's power regulator, saying the two constitutional functionaries have to rise above "political bickering".

However, the deadlock remained despite the two functionaries meeting and finally the top court appointed the DERC chairperson.

In the brief hearing on Friday, the bench said the names of five senior bureaucrats, to be suggested by the Union Ministry

of Home Affairs, for the post of chief secretary will be submitted at 10.30 AM on Tuesday to it.

Senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for the Delhi government, said the city dispensation will revert back within a few minutes.

The bench then said it would try to give the orders on the name for appointment of the chief secretary the same day, saying any delay may affect the reputation of senior officers.

The bench was hearing a plea of the Delhi government against any move by the Centre to appoint, without any consultation with it, the new chief secretary or extend the tenure of the current top civil servant Naresh Kumar who, otherwise, is set to demit office on November 30.



The Delhi government has questioned how the Centre could proceed with the appointment of the chief secretary without any consultation with it while the new law is under challenge.

"Why can't the LG and the CM meet? Last time we said that for

will pick up one name," the bench proposed.

At the outset, Singhvi said that the law dealing with services is under challenge before the top court and "there cannot be a unilateral exercise of power by the LG".

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, said the stand has always been that the chief secretary was appointed by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs. Singhvi said the chief secretary has been appointed on the recommendation of the chief minister.

The top law officer said, "Never. I can put this on the affidavit." "We must have a modality in which the government functions. I am sure both of you can give us a way out," the CJ said. Senior advocate Harish Salve,

appearing for the office of LG, said, "I am very sorry to say that there is a running commentary against the chief secretary and he had to approach the court against scurrilous allegations."

The bench has now posted the plea for hearing on Tuesday.

The Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act, notified in August, gives the Centre control over bureaucracy in the national capital and an authority was created under it for the transfer and posting of Group-A officers.

The plea alleged the 2023 Amendment Act is in violation of the 2023 Constitution Bench Judgment "This renders the government of NCT of Delhi a mere observer in the appointment of the most crucial mem-

ber of the permanent executive, the Chief Secretary," the Delhi government said in its plea.

For effective and smooth governance, it is the state government, which enjoys the mandate of the local people, that appoints the Chief Secretary, it said.

"Accordingly, the relevant rules and regulations under the All India Services Act, 1951 vest the discretion of appointing officers of State Cadres with the state government.

"Rule 7(2) of the Indian Administrative Service (Cadre) Rules, 1954 clearly stipulates that all appointments to cadre posts in a State Cadre shall be made by the state government.

The rationale behind this arrangement has been repeatedly upheld by this court," the plea said.

Delhi Government releases ₹415 cr for RRTS after SC rap

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

After a rap from the Supreme Court, the Delhi government has released a payment of Rs 415 crore to National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) for the Rapid Rail Transit System (RRTS) project. This comes after the Supreme Court had pulled up the Delhi government for not coming up with funds for the Regional Rapid Transit System corridors to Alwar and Panipat, warning it if the dues were not paid within a week, the funds allocated by the AAP government for ads will be transferred to the project.

"The payment of Rs 415 crore has been made to the National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) by the transport department today," Gahlot said. The government had released the first tranche of funds, approx Rs 80 crore, a few months back. The RRTS project involves construction of semi-high speed rail corridors connecting Delhi to Meerut in



Uttar Pradesh, Alwar in Rajasthan, and Panipat in Haryana. Prime Minister Narendra Modi had inaugurated the 17-km long priority section of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) Corridor at the Sahibabad RapidX Station in Uttar Pradesh last month.

Earlier the Supreme Court had pulled up the Arvind Kejriwal for the "breach" of an undertaking given to pay its share of funds for the Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) and directed that the government's

advertising budget be transferred to the project. A bench of Justices S K Kaul and Sudhanshu Dhulia, which was hearing petitions filed in the wake of the spike in air pollution in the capital, told the government that it "can't take this court for granted".

The bench said, "The details before the court show that the 3-year budget provisions were almost Rs 1,100 crore. And the budget for the current financial year was about Rs 550 crore." The NCRTC is executing the RRTS project which is a joint

venture between the Centre and the states involved. A total of eight RRTS corridors have been identified for development in the National Capital Region (NCR). Out of these, three corridors have been prioritized for implementation in Phase I. These include the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Corridor, the Delhi-Gurugram-SNB-Alwar Corridor, and the Delhi-Panipat Corridor. The Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS, with a total project cost exceeding Rs 30,000 crore, will bridge the gap between Delhi and Meerut in less than an hour, traversing the urban centres of Ghaziabad, Muradnagar, and Modinagar.

With a design speed of 180 kilometres per hour, RRTS will provide high-speed intercity commuting trains every 15 minutes, with the flexibility to increase the frequency to as little as every 5 minutes as needed. The foundation stone for the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor was laid by Prime Minister Modi on March 8, 2019.

Singapore envoy alerts police about car with fake diplomatic corps plates



STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Singapore envoy to New India Simon Wong alerted the Delhi Police and the Ministry of External Affairs regarding a car with fake diplomatic corps number plates of his country on Friday. He also shared the photographs of the vehicle.

Singapore High Commissioner Wong took to microblogging site X to post

several images of a silver-coloured car, saying, "This is NOT our Embassy car."

He also urged people to be "extra careful" when they spot this car parked unattended "especially at the Indra Gandhi International Airport." The envoy also said he has alerted the Ministry of External Affairs as well as the police about the matter.

Alert "The car below bearing 63 CD plate is FAKE. This is NOT our Embassy car. We



have alerted MEA & the Police. With so many threats around, be extra careful when you see this car parked unattended. Especially at the IGI," posted Wong.

In India, diplomatic vehicles have blue number plates with white lettering. The plates bear the letters "CD" followed by a two-digit code and a registration number.

Foreign diplomatic missions and organisations, such as

embassies and consulates, are the only ones who can own vehicles with CD number plates. The CD stands for "Corps Diplomatique".

In October, Wong pointed out an error in the signage near the Singapore high commission in Chanakyapuri. In the post, where Wong shares two photographs, the signage incorrectly spells the name of the country as "Singapur" instead of "Singapore".

350 registrations on 1st day of DDA new housing scheme

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The first day of the DDA's new housing scheme registration saw 350 consumers registering on its portal towards the allotment scheme of flats in the national Capital on Friday. The registration commenced for the allotment of 32,000 newly constructed flats in Delhi under the Festival Housing Scheme 2023.

"The first day of the registration saw an encouraging prospective home buyers and this is growing fast. DDA appeal to the customers to keep the necessary documents handy after going through the details before beginning of the registration process. The portable is user friendly and hence there is no need to get into trap of tout property dealers or any employees of the DDA. The entire process is quite transparent," a DDA official said.

Out of 32,000 houses, a total of 27,000 DDA flats will be allotted to EWS and LIG category households. The houses are dis-



tributed across localities of Dwarka, Narela and Lok Nayak Puram in the national capital. The DDA flats will be sold through an e-auction method in a first come first serve basis. There will be a minute registration fee for all the applicants, and they will get a chance to manually inspect the flat after the allotment.

Six categories have been allotted for the distribution of the flats, according to the price range. The 32,000 new apartments have been split into the categories - Penthouse, super high-income group, high-income group, middle-income group, low-income group,

EWS.

The registration for the scheme is to be done online, by downloading and filling the application form on DDA's official website - dda.gov.in. The applicant will have to give their Aadhaar card and other documents at the time of registration.

LIG and EWS flats will be located in Narela to make sure that there are enough occupants on the block so that providing common facilities is not an issue for DDA. Further, the 1100 luxury flats (including penthouses) will be located in Sector 19B Dwarka, overlooking DDA's golf course.

LG approves scheme for regulation of aggregators, delivery service providers

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena has approved a scheme for the regulation and licensing of delivery service providers and aggregators offering passenger transport services in the national capital.

The scheme also paves the way for bike taxis and mandates that the transport aggregators should onboard electric two-wheelers for passenger services.

"The file pertaining to the Delhi Motor Vehicle Aggregator and Delivery Service Provider Scheme 2023 has been approved. The policy is likely to be notified soon," said an official.

This scheme was cleared by the Delhi government on October 18 and its file was submitted to the LG. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal had said the scheme "marks a significant milestone in Delhi's fight against pollution".

The scheme intends to bring

the aggregator platforms under the ambit of the government to ensure the safety of the passengers and customers.

It mandates commercial vehicle fleets to ensure a phased conversion to electric mobility to reduce air pollution and enhance green mobility.

Under the Delhi Motor Vehicle Aggregator and Delivery Service Provider Scheme-2023, the entire vehicle fleet of all the aggregators, delivery service providers and e-commerce entities in Delhi has to transition to electric by April 1, 2030.

The target for introduction of EVs in the new fleet of aggregators has been set at 100 per cent for two-wheelers. Aggregators with three-wheelers have to achieve the target of 10 per cent EVs in their new fleet within six months of the implementation of the scheme, 50 per cent in two years and 100 per cent in four years.

The aggregators with four-wheelers have to achieve the

target of 5 per cent EVs in new fleet in six months, 50 per cent in three years and 100 per cent in five years.

For delivery service providers, the scheme has set the EV targets in new fleet of two-wheelers and three-wheelers at 10 per cent in six months, 50 per cent in two years and 100 per cent in four years.

Those with four-wheelers have to achieve the target of 5 per cent EVs in new fleet in six months, 50 per cent in three years and 100 per cent in five years.

Aggregators will be permitted to operate electric vehicle-only bike taxi services, with operational guidelines outlined in the scheme.

Earlier this week, the Delhi government had notified the Delhi Motor Vehicles Licensing of Aggregator (Premium Buses) Scheme, 2023, marking a historic milestone in India's transportation sector, the government said in an official statement Tuesday.

Court to decide on sentence of Soumya murderers on Nov 25

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A city court on Friday reserved for November 25 its order on the quantum of punishment for those convicted for killing TV journalist Soumya Vishwanathan in 2008.

Vishwanathan, who was working with a leading English news channel, was shot dead in the early hours of September 30, 2008, on south Delhi's Nelson Mandela Marg while she was returning home from work. Police claimed the motive was robbery.

"The additional report regarding verification of the affidavits of all the convicts has been received from the Secretary, Delhi State Legal Services Authority (DLSA), South, Saket Courts. A copy of the same is supplied to the public prosecutor for the state as well as to the respective counsel for the convicts," Additional Sessions Judge (ASJ) Ravindra Kumar Pandey said.

He noted that arguments on the sentencing by the prosecutor and the counsels for the convicts were complete. "Be put up for order on sentence on November 25," the court said.

On November 7, the court adjourned the matter after noting that the verification of the affidavits filed by the convicts was not complete.

Earlier, on October 18, it had convicted Ravi Kapoor, Amit Shukla, Baljeet Malik, and Ajay Kumar under Indian Penal Code (IPC) section 302 (murder) and Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA) provisions for committing organised crime resulting in the death of a person.

The fifth accused in the case, Ajay Sethi, was convicted under IPC section 411 (dishonestly receiving stolen property) and MCOCA provisions for conspiring to abetting, aiding in, or knowingly facilitating organised crime and receiving proceeds of organised crime.

2 Delhi Govt schools bag top positions in Youth Ideathon 2023

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Two Delhi government schools have bagged top positions in a nationwide and global competition 'Youth Ideathon 2023' for student entrepreneurs. The two schools are Rashtriya Pratibha Vikas Vikas Vidyalaya (RPVV) Surajmal Vihar and Ambedkar School of Specialised Excellence (ASOSE) Rohini.

Giving details of this achievement, officials said here on Friday, 1.5 lakh students from schools in India and abroad participated in the 'Youth Ideathon,' organized by the government of India and the two Delhi government schools selected among top 10. Team TranQR and Ahilya from Delhi

secured incubation grant of Rs 1 lakh.

In TranQR's product QR code is applied like fast tag on school uniform, which, when scanned by scanner, eliminates need for manual attendance register, saving teachers' time. The Siksha app by Ahilya for children with special needs helps them explore their surroundings and learn through various activities. Lauding the feat, Education Minister Atishi said once again, our 'Young Entrepreneurs' have proven their mettle and demonstrated that they are second to none.

With such outstanding business ideas, our students will not only eradicate unemployment from the country but also make India's economy no.1 globally, she said.

Killer teen relished dinner with booty remorselessly

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The boy who stabbed a 17-year-old youth more than 55 times in east Delhi's Welcome was found having dinner remorselessly from the dinner he robbed from his victim at the time he was caught, a senior police officer said on Friday.

"He, during questioning, did not show any remorse about the incident. He was having dinner when our team apprehended him," Deputy Commissioner of Police (northeast) Joy Tirkey said.

Another officer privy to the probe said police had formed several teams to nab the culprit immediately after the murder was reported.

"We collected information from our local sources and



from the area where the crime took place. Some of the locals identified him. When we arrested him, he was not far from the crime scene and was having dinner from the robbed Rs 350," said the officer.

Tirkey said police have written to the Juvenile Justice Board and magistrate to try him as an adult having established his criminal antecedents.

The 16-year-old is being interrogated for two other murders,

two snatchings, and one robbery, police said.

On Tuesday night, a boy was caught on CCTV choking another teen and then stabbing him more than 55 times as he lay on the ground, killing him on the spot. The killer also did a jig in front of the camera in defiance to authority and dragged the victim's body.

The killing in Welcome's Janta Mazdoor Colony was captured in a 2.23 minute footage, which also showed the killer threatening those who dared to witness the crime.

According to police, the boy in his confession said he did not know the 17-year-old who he had accosted for money to buy biryani. Family members of the slain teenager have demanded capital punishment for the minor.

Blue Line metro services to be hit due to maintenance work

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi's Blue Line Metro service will remain shut for a while between Karol Bagh and Rajiv Chowk due to the scheduled routine maintenance work this weekend. The maintenance work will be taken on the intervening night of 25-26 November. Due to the work, there have been minor changes in the timing of the Blue Line Metro train service on Saturday night and Sunday morning, said Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC).

To undertake the scheduled maintenance work between Karol Bagh and Rajiv Chowk section of Blue Line (Dwarka Sec-21 to Noida Electronic City/Vaishali) on the intervening night of 25/26th



November 2023, train services on the Line will be briefly regulated on early Sunday morning (26th Nov.) as per the following plan:- "Train services will not be available from Karol Bagh to Rajiv Chowk section till 06:00 AM from the routine start time of revenue services in this section. Hence,

Jhandewalan and Rama Krishna Ashram Marg-two Metro stations falling in this section will remain closed till 06:00 AM. Services on this section/stations will commence from 6:00 AM onwards," the DMRC said in a statement.

"Services on either side of this maintenance section of Blue Line i.e., from Dwarka Sec-21 to Karol Bagh and Rajiv Chowk to Noida Electronic City/Vaishali, will continue to remain available as per weekday time table during this period. To inform commuters about the same, regular announcements will also be made at the stations and inside the trains and additional staff will also be deployed to facilitate the commuters," it said.

Govt to soon appoint officer to act against deepfakes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Amid concern raised by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the netizens' outrage over a series of deepfake videos on social media, the Centre on Friday said the Government will soon appoint an officer to take appropriate action against such content.

A day after his senior Cabinet colleague Ashwini Vaishnaw announced for stringent norms to curb the menace of deepfakes, Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology Rajeev Chandrasekhar said the

Ministry will develop a website on which users can flag their concerns about IT rule violation. "Meity will assist users to notify it about violation of IT rules and assist them in filing a First Information Report or FIR," Chandrasekhar said. The FIR will be registered against the intermediary and if they disclose the details from where the content has originated then the case will be filed against the entity that has posted the content, the minister said. Chandrasekhar said that the existing laws and Rules have clear provisions to deal with Deepfake. He said that social media plat-

forms have been given seven days time to align their terms of use as per the IT rules. "From today onwards, there is zero tolerance for violation of IT rules," Chandrasekhar added. Vaishnaw described deepfakes as "a threat to democracy." "Deepfakes have emerged as a new threat to democracy. These (can) weaken trust in society and its institutions. We will start drafting the regulations today itself and within a very short timeframe, we will have a separate regulation for deepfakes," Vaishnaw said at a Press conference on Thursday following a meeting with various



stakeholders, including social media platforms, Nasscom and other professors from the field of artificial intelligence (AI). Asked if there will be a change in the existing rule or new law may be brought, he said, "We can bring this in the form of making amendments to the existing rules or we can bring

a new set of regulations. India has over 80 crore internet users, which are projected to cross 120 crore in two years. Deepfake is a piece of technology that leverages AI to alter a person's appearance, voice, or actions in a way that can be realistic and challenging to discern from authentic, unaltered content. Recent deepfakes have brought to the fore the urgency of a regulatory framework for AI in the new Digital India law. Last week, Modi had also flagged the misuse of AI or artificial intelligence for creating deepfake videos and called it a "big concern." "During the

times of Artificial Intelligence, it is important that technology should be used responsibly," he cautioned. The Centre has said that the creation and circulation of deepfakes carry a strong penalty of Rs one lakh in fine and three years in jail. The videos have sparked massive worry about fake videos targeting public figures and the power of AI to create deepfakes that can mislead the world. The revelation sparked concerns over the ramifications of such tinkering, especially for public figures, who may get in trouble over visuals their faces are doctored into.

Meity earlier this month issued an advisory to social media platforms underlining the legal provisions that cover such deepfakes and the penalties their creation and circulation may attract. Chandrasekhar had said that it is a "legal obligation" for online platforms to prevent the spread of misinformation. "Remove any such content when reported within 36 hours of such reporting and ensure expeditious action, well within the timeframes stipulated under the IT Rules 2021, and disable access to the content or information," the statement said

Keeping watch on H9N2 outbreak in China: India

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

A mysterious pneumonia-like respiratory illness cases affecting children overwhelm hospitals in northern China, India on Friday said it is keeping a watch on the outbreak of H9N2 in the neighbouring country and that it is prepared for any kind of exigency that may emerge from the current medical emergency type situation there. There is a low risk to India from both the avian influenza — H9N2 — case reported in China as well as the clusters of respiratory illness, the Union Health Ministry said a day after the WHO claimed to have sought detailed information on the spike in respiratory illnesses in China after their health authorities reported multiple infectious respiratory diseases with surging cases of mycoplasma pneumonia and influenza flu among children. Some media reports have indicated clustering of cases of respiratory illness in chil-



children in northern China for which the World Health Organization (WHO) has also issued a statement, said the Union Health Ministry in a statement here. Based on available information, an increase in incidence of respiratory diseases in China has been reported in the last few weeks. "The usual causes of respiratory illness in children have been implicated and there has been no identification of an unusual pathogen or any unexpected clinical manifestations," the statement said. Recently, a meeting was held under the Directorate General

of Health Services to discuss the preparedness measures against human cases of avian influenza in the country against the backdrop of a human case of H9N2 (avian influenza virus) in October in China that was reported to the WHO, it said. "The overall risk assessment by the WHO indicates a low probability of human-to-human spread and low case fatality rate among human cases of H9N2 reported to the WHO so far. The need for strengthening surveillance among human, animal husbandry and wildlife sectors and improving coordination was recognised. India is prepared for any kind of public health exigency," the ministry added. It said India is embarking on a 'One Health' approach to adopt a holistic and integrated roadmap towards addressing such public health issues. There has also been a significant strengthening of health infrastructure especially since the Covid pandemic, it said. The PM-Ayushman Bharat

Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM) is developing capacities of health systems and institutions across the continuum of care at all levels, primary, secondary and tertiary, to prepare health systems in responding effectively to the current and future pandemics and disasters, the ministry said. In addition, India's surveillance and detection networks under Integrated Disease Surveillance Programme (IDSP) have rich experience of dealing with challenging health situations during the Covid pandemic, the Ministry said. Chinese authorities have attributed increase to the respiratory illness cases among kids to lifting of COVID-19 restrictions and the circulation of known pathogens such as influenza, mycoplasma pneumoniae (a common bacterial infection which typically affects younger children), respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19).

India, Bangladesh conduct foreign office consultations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

India and Bangladesh on Friday here reviewed the entire spectrum of their bilateral ties during the "India-Bangladesh Foreign Office Consultations," between the two countries. Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra represented India while Foreign Secretary Masud Bin Momen led the Bangladesh delegation. The comprehensive discussions covered a wide range of issues including border and security, trade, connectivity and the power and energy sectors. The Indian side appreciated the participation in the recently held Virtual G20 summit and the Voice of Global South Summit 2.0, a statement issued by the Ministry of External Affairs said. Besides trade and security,



both sides held comprehensive discussions on people to people ties and development cooperation in Bangladesh, the statement said. The two countries also exchanged views on sub regional, regional, and multilateral issues, it said. Foreign Office Consultation (FOC) is an institutional dialogue mechanism between the two foreign secretaries to review the entire gamut of bilateral relationship. It was agreed that the next FOC will be hosted in Bangladesh.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that my client Anil Kumar Mourya is in process to purchase the property bearing number 270 ward number XVIII area measuring 17.3 sq yards situated at gali school wali bag kare Khan Kishanganj Delhi 07 (having loan from TCFPI from Kamlesh Kalra, who acquired the same via relinquishment deed dated 3 May 2016 (Doc. No. 3950) executed by Sayeev Kalra, Hitesh Kalra, Kavita Anora and Jyoti Bodi (all are the legal heirs of late sudarshan Lal Kalra). All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, 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. F1-2, First floor, Mahalaxmi Metro Tower Sec-4, Vashi, G.D., U.P., Mob. 9810083351

PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that my client Palak is in process to avail the LAP from Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited against her Residential Land area measuring 5 Marla, out of Khewat/Khata No. 433/505, Kharsa No. 14610-10, Situated at wala moga Jawa, Sub Tehsil Mohra, Distt. Faridabad, Haryana having acquired vide Transfer deed dated 05.08.2023 executed by Mr. Navvir as Doc No. 469, she confirmed that she is not having the below documents pertaining to the property in question for that she has lodged an FIR dated 25/12/2023. Original dated 27/05/2022 executed by Mr. Ram Prasad S/o Mr. Rati Ram in favour of Mr. Navvir Doc No. 97. 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. F1-2, First floor, Mahalaxmi Metro Tower Sec-4, Vashi, G.D., U.P., Mob. 9810083351

PUBLIC NOTICE
To be known to all that I, Nalini Tripathi W/o Sh. Mangla Pati Tripathi R/o. 28B, MIG Flat, FF, Shekhar, Ph-1 Malviya Nagar, N. Delhi 110017, Mobile- 9721088800, Email: someshpatitripathi@gmail.com, has applied for the conversion of aforesaid property. The original demand-cum-allotment letter of my File No. F.48/563/HB/MIG/General issued by DDA of aforesaid property has been lost. An FIR to this effect has been lodged to police station dt. 6/7/2023. Any persons claiming any right, having any objection or found in possession of original document may write/contact with above named person at above address within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice & can personally contact: Deputy Director (IAB) housing, D-Block, IIIrd Floor, MIG, DDA Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi

PUBLIC NOTICE
This is for notice of the general public that a political party is proposed to be registered by the name of Bahujan National Party (Ambedkar). The office of the party is located at RZ-35 (3rd Floor), Sita Puri, Parkha Road, Near Dabri Mohr Metro Gate No. 3, New Delhi-110045. This Party has submitted application to the Election Commission of India, New Delhi for its registration as Political Party under Section 29A of the Representation of People Act, 1951. Names/Address of the office bearers of the Party are as given below: President : Pramod Kureel, R/o CSID, 115A, Janak Puri, New Delhi-110058 General Secretary : Surjit Singh, R/o H.No. 7A, Wara-16, Pusho Vihar, Bhatlu Road, Fatehabad, Haryana- 125051 Treasurer : Aditya Gautam, R/o Village Alampur, Teh./Post/P.S. Lalganj, Rae Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh-229206 If anyone has any objection to the registration of Bahujan National Party (Ambedkar) they may send their Objection with reasons thereof, to the Secretary (Political Party), Election Commission of India, Nirvachan Sadan, Ashoka Road, New Delhi-110001 within 30 days of the publication of this notice.

PUBLIC NOTICE
NOTICE is hereby given that Gurbir Singh Khera & Sukhbir Singh Khera claims to be owner and in possession of Property Bearing No. 141P in Sector-14, Faridabad, Haryana. (hereinafter called 'said property') by virtue of Two Transfer Deeds (In Blood Relation) Doc. No. 2462 dated. 30.05.2019 & Doc. No. 3670, dated 06.07.2022, SR Faridabad r/w Conveyance Deed dated 05.04.1976 Doc. No. 36, Said Original Conveyance deed is mistakenly marked as cancelled as per the current owners and Said Gurbir Singh Khera & Sukhbir Singh Khera has agreed to sell the said Property to Kapil Kukreja And Said Kapil Kukreja has agreed to create a mortgage in favour of our clients. IDFC First Bank Ltd, ITO Branch, New Delhi 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, lien 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 and our client shall proceed with the disbursement of loan against the said property and subsequent creation of mortgage in respect thereof. Vishal Diwan (Advocate) For Diwan and Company LLP H. No.2 (LGF), NRI Complex New Delhi-19 Mobile No. 9818399999

PUBLIC NOTICE
Public at large hereby informed that House No.675 A, Nyay Khand 2, Indrapuram Ghaziabad U P is owned by Smt. Shandhi Chacko alias Shandhi Anil by virtue of Sale Deed which is duly registered as Doc No. 15285 dated 17.09.2002. Original Allotment Letter issued by Ghaziabad Authority in favour of Sh. Madan Lal Khurana & Original Sale Deed in favour of Smt. Shandhi Chacko vide Doc No. 15285 dated 17.09.2002 in respect of the captioned property is informed as lost and lost report filed with P.S. Crime Branch vide LR No. 2023000787662 dated 24.11.2023. It is hereby notified that any person or entity, firm/ company, Bank, financial institution having claim any charge, interest or lien or claim on the basis of documents mentioned above or otherwise and/or objection thereof, he/she/they may lodge/notify the same to the undersigned with documentary proof within 15 days from the day of publication, failing which the title shall be deemed to be clear and marketable without any defect, encumbrance, flaw and impediment. NIRMAL KUMAR (ADVOCATE) Ch. No.599, Patiala House Court, New Delhi

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

The following borrowers have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

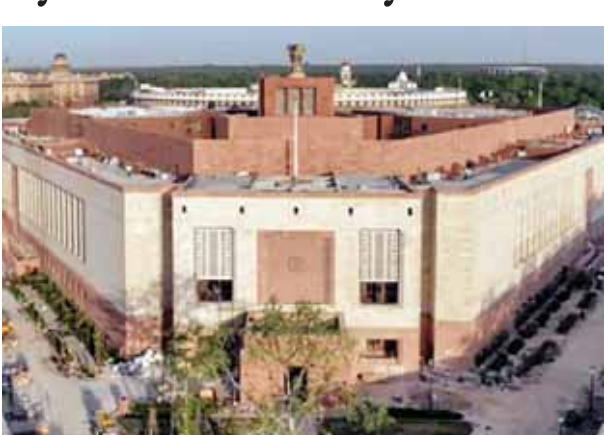
Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Rs Kraft, Saurabh Nehru, Reena Nehru, Saurabh Nehru, Saurabh Nehru, 31405500646 & 31455000013 1236, Floor Jmd, Megapolish 12th Building, Sohna Road. Gurgaon Haryana- 122001	Unit No.524, 5th Floor Silverton Tower Sector 50, Village Badshahpur Gurgaon Haryana- 122001	20-10-2023 Rs. 40,70, 188,00/- & 3,96,296.00/-	25-09-2023
2.	Anp Atelier & Associates Company Private Limited, Partap Singh Parmar, Prabh Paul Parmar, Partap Singh Parmar, Prabh Paul Parmar, 244505000615 & 244555000003, Represented By Directors Partap Singh Parmar, Prabh Paul Parmar, Partap Singh Parmar & Prabh Paul Parmar 1106, Pocket Asector A, Vasant Kunj Delhi- 110070	Dda Sfs Category III, Flat No.1106 Second & Third Floor, Duplex With Scooter Garage, Pocket A, Sector A, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi, Delhi- 110070	21-10-2023 Rs. 1,99,03, 168,00/- & 832061.00	08-08-2023
3.	M/s. Sun Girl Enterprises, Vijay Kumar (Proprietor), Vijay Kumar, Vijay Kumar, Kiran 663405500020, S1, 2375 To 2378 Ground Floor, Gali No.12 and 13, Karol Bagh, Beadonpura, Central Delhi- 110005	Dda Mig Flat 276, Third Floor, Prasad Nagar, Near Police Station, Central Delhi, Delhi- 110005	23-10-2023 Rs. 23,39, 291,00/-	01-06-2023
4.	Sanjeev Fruit Agency, Vinod Sharma, Vinod Sharma, Hariom Sharma, Vinod Kumar Sharma, Kamlesh, Kamlesh, 042305000845, Represented By Partners Vinod Kumar Sharma & Hari Om Sharma C- 595 New Subzi Mandi Azadpur Delhi 110003	Residential Scheme Bearing Plot No.98 Block No F-1 Sector 11 Rohini Delhi	18-09-2023 Rs. 34,20, 959,00/-	12-09-2022
5.	Vrinda Associates, Hemant Kumar Singhal (Partner), Vandana Singhal(partner), Vandana Singhal, Vipin Singhal, Vandana Singhal, Vipin Singhal, Vrinda Associates , Rashmi Singhal, 125405001540 & 125455000005 306,mukand Nagar, 306B Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh Ghaziabad-201001	House/plot No.271-A, Old and New No.306-A, Mukund Nagar, Pargana-Loni, Tehsil & District- Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh, 201001, & House/plot No.306-B Old and New No.306-B, Mukund Nagar, Pargana-Loni, Tehsil & District- Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh-201001.	20-10-2023 Rs. 1,14, 01,323.00/- & 27,63, 996,00/-	28-08-2023

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002. Date : November 24, 2023 Place : Delhi NCR Authorized Officer ICICI Bank Limited

MPs raise cyber security concern in new Parliament

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Parliamentarians on Friday raised concerns over cyber security in the new Parliament building and called upon banks to take adequate steps to secure the financial assets of the public at large. The MPs also stressed on the need to increase cyber security awareness in the country and called for developing a "cyber consciousness index" to gauge it. Addressing a meeting of the Committee on Information and Communication Technology Management in the Rajya Sabha in the Parliament House Annex Building, the members heard top officials of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) and the



public sector Punjab National Bank. The committee had met under the chairmanship of AAP member N D Gupta, where the secretary, MeitY gave a presentation to the members on

the new building of the Parliament were also listed during the presentation and panel members raised their concerns and queries to the officials. Secretary, the Department of Financial Services (DFS) and representatives of the Punjab National Bank were also present to express their views on the regulatory framework and the measures being taken by them on implementing mechanisms for cyber security and digital identity/digital payment mechanisms and the steps being taken to enhance the same. Sources said panel members told top officials of the bank to ensure that the financial assets of the public at large are secured and raised several

queries to them on the issue. Amid growing cases of cyber security breaches and frauds coming to the fore, the panel is likely to call top officials of private banks in the near future and members would soon undertake field visits to bank headquarters in Mumbai to check the steps taken by banks in this regard, the sources said. So far, the panel has called officials of the State Bank of India and the Punjab National Bank and raised their concerns on the issue. Steps taken to ensure the security of the members of Parliament at the new Parliament building by the National Informatics Centre (NIC) were also listed by officials and they replied to the members' concerns on the issue.

Modi to visit HAL



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit public sector aerospace conglomerate Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Bengaluru on Saturday and will review the manufacturing facilities including Tejas light combat aircraft(LCA). The HAL inked a Rs 47,000 crore deal in 2021 to supply 83 Tejas jets to IAF and is likely to get the nod for another 97 Tejas jets worth over Rs 55,000 crores in the coming days. "The prime minister will review and visit the HAL's manufacturing facility, including the facility for Tejas jets," sources said. Modi has been pushing for indigenous production of defence products and has highlighted as to how his government has boosted their manufacturing in India and also their exports. Several countries have shown interest in buying Tejas, a light combat aircraft, and US defence giant GE Aerospace had inked a pact with HAL to jointly pro-

Indian planes face GPS spoofing, jamming over West Asia, DGCA issues circular

RAJESH KUMAR ■ NEW DELHI

ANSP, and air traffic controllers also come under it. The planes flying over parts of the Middle East initially receive a spoofed GPS signal. The primary area of concern is a busy airway in Northern Iraq and Azerbaijan with several incidents being reported near Erbil. GPS signal spoofing, which involves replacing a true satellite signal with a manipulated one, has been used to target civilian passenger flights. While GPS jamming is more common and easily detected, spoofing is not immediately apparent and can redirect aircraft off their intended course. Pilots are advised to disable GPS inputs if they suspect spoofing. Generally, GNSS spoofing and jamming refers to attempts to manipulate a user's navigation system by giving false signals. The circular provides comprehensive mitigation measures and action plans for aircraft operators, pilots, Air Navigation Service Providers (ANSP) and air traffic controllers. This includes the development of contingency procedures in coordination with equipment manufacturers and assessing operational risk by conducting a safety risk assessment. On October 4, 2023, the DGCA has constituted a committee for monitoring Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) spoofing in Indian air-

space. The committee took stock of the situation, sensitised operators, and started discussions with leading experts from around the world on the subject. In a statement, the DGCA said it has released an advisory circular on GNSS interference in the airspace. It said the circular highlights the emerging threats of GNSS jamming and spoofing, the various geographical areas where it has been observed, and its potential impact on aircraft and ground-based systems. After taking the inputs into account, DGCA said recommendations have been included in the circular for tackling the emerging threat considering the best practices, latest developments and ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organisation) guidance on the matter. It also provides for a mechanism for ANSP to establish a Threat monitoring and Analysis network in close coordination with DGCA for preventive as well as reactive threat monitoring and analysis of reports of GNSS interference to generate valuable insights with data and new developments so as to have a robust and immediate threat response. According to DGCA, the aviation industry is grappling with uncertainties due to new threats and reports of GNSS jamming and spoofing.

duce engines for the Mk-II Tejas during the prime minister's state visit to the US. Defence Minister Rajnath Singh had noted in April this year that India's defence exports have reached an all-time high of Rs 15,920 crore in FY 2022-2023. It is a remarkable achievement for the country, he had said. Prime Minister Modi last year in February dedicated the HAL Helicopter Factory to the nation in Tumakuru, Karnataka. He took a walkthrough of the helicopter facility and structure hangar and unveiled the Light Utility Helicopter. He emphasized that hundreds of helicopters are going to be manufactured in this facility itself in the near future which will give rise to businesses worth 4 lakh crore. "When such manufacturing units are set up, it does not just strengthen the armed forces but also creates employment and self-employment opportunities", Modi remarked as he underlined that small businesses near the helicopter manufacturing facility in Tumkuru will get empowered.

Minister reviews progress of underground cabling works

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

A review meeting of the energy sector was held under the chairmanship of Union Minister of Power, New and Renewable Energy RK Singh at Circuit House here on Thursday in which he issued necessary guidelines to various departments related to the energy sector. He asked to adopt the process of open tender for all works and directed to adopt the rate by matching it with the neighbouring states. He also instructed to change the supervision and inspection system and directed senior officers to prepare a schedule and take checking action.

While reviewing the progress of underground cabling works in the city, Singh informed about the benefits derived from it. The chief engineer of Purvanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited (PVVNL) said through the Integrated Power Development Scheme (IPDS), power loss has been reduced in Varanasi, connections have increased and from the point of view of social security, there is also relief in accidents. In reply, the minister directed to complete the remaining underground cabling works with quality.

"The energy loss in the city should be further reduced and the loss percentage should be brought down further. For



Union minister RK Singh reviewing progress of power sector in Varanasi on Thursday.

making the city get freedom from the tangle of wires, adopt this system by making good use of poles. No tangle of wires should be seen in his next visit to Banaras," Singh said.

Chairman of Uttar Pradesh Power Corporation Limited (UPPCL) Dr Ashish Kumar Goel informed that the total power connections are 3.62 crore in the state and the outstanding is approximately ₹1.8 lakh crore. In reply, the union minister talked about changes in the system for improvement and directed to adopt the process of automatic power cut regarding electricity dues. "No matter should be left out of the electrical connection," he

said, and instructed the officers to quickly provide electricity connections to all the 21,000 remaining houses in different areas.

The UPPCL chairman also informed the energy minister about the meter reading done by the Electricity department run by UPPCL and said in the last two months 700 MW electricity theft was detected in the state and the revenue also increased by about 25 per cent. He informed that a total of 2,735 works worth ₹108 crore have been done in Purvanchal (eastern UP) and 19,315 works worth about ₹1,030 crore are in progress which will be completed by

March next year and various works worth about ₹5,000 crore are also being carried out in the state.

Managing Director (MD) of Purvanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam Limited (PVVNL) Shambhu Kumar told the union minister about the need for 16,000 steel poles in the Varanasi City area on which the energy minister gave his approval. Kumar informed that the total connections in PVVNL are around one crore. Divisional Commissioner Kaushal Raj Sharma, District Magistrate S Rajalingam and other officers were also present in the meeting.

Youth kills stepmother over property dispute

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAVAGRAJ

A youth allegedly killed his stepmother in Kaushambi district over some property dispute. He made no attempt to escape from the spot and surrendered.

Reports said that Rajendra Prasad of Uchawanaseerpur, Sandeepanghat Kotwali had a son Dharendra from his first wife. After the death of his wife, Rajendra married Saroja. Rajendra had no issue from Saroja. When Rajendra died, Saroja went to another person.

On Thursday Saroja arrived and asked Dharendra to sell a property. Dharendra objected to it and an altercation

took place then. In a fit of anger Dharendra attacked his stepmother with the handle of an axe and later hammered her head with a brick. He then sat by the side of Saroja's body. There was no member in the family to lodge an FIR against Dharendra, so an application was taken from the village watchman by the police to initiate action.

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP: The sixth IEEE International Workshop on Recent Advances in Photonics (WRAP 2023) will be held at the Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), Allahabad, from December 7 to 9. The WRAP is a biennial

event organised by the IEEE Photonics Society in India. The primary aim of WRAP is to provide a platform that brings together global experts and researchers to disseminate and highlight novel contributions and challenges in the field of photonics. The first edition of WRAP was organised at IIT Delhi in 2013. Prospective authors are invited to submit their original research contributions in the six tracks. The main speakers include Prof YK Mishra, Dr Habil from Mads Clausen Institute (MCI), Professor SDU Nano Syd, Prof Antonio Di Bartolomeo, University of Salerno, Fisciano, Italy, Dr

Yasushi Takahashi, Osaka Metropolitan University, Osaka, Dr Srinivas Talabattula, Dr Naresh Chand, Prof R Vijaya, Prof S Anantha Ramakrishna, Dr Brajesh Pandey and Prof Shekhar Verma. Previous editions of WRAP were held at IIT Delhi, IISc Bangalore, Mahindra University, IIT Guwahati, and IIT Bombay in 2013, 2015, 2017, 2019 and 2022 respectively. WRAP acts as a major forum for presentation of technological progress and research outcomes in the area of recent advances in photonics as a platform for exchanges between academia and industry.

Teachers told about multidimensional challenges

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Inaugurating the two-day training programme for 'Teach for BHU (TFB) Fellowship' in the committee room of Laxmandas Guest House of Banaras Hindu University (BHU), Director of the Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development (IESD) Prof Akhilesh Singh Raghuvanshi said that the teacher's profession is completely focused on self-respecting approach in which the teacher refines his/her skills according to time for excellence. In the same sequence, while talking about evaluation and testing, he said that the nature of testing determines the direction of the subject.



Training programme under TFB Fellowship being held at BHU in Varanasi on Friday.

Therefore, the overall nature of evaluation acts as a milestone in determining the standards, he said. In the subsequent sessions, BHU Assistant Information and Public

Relations Officer (APRO) Chandrashekhar said how to increase our connection with the world by using social media. In the third session, Dr Somu Singh of the Faculty of

Education explained the method of using open educational resources. In the fourth session, Prof Sanjay Kumar Sharma of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) told the teachers about multidimensional challenges and ways to solve them.

Review discussions took place after all the sessions. About 30 participants were present on the first day in the workshop focused on 'Skills for Professional Excellence in Higher Education'. The function was conducted by programme coordinator Prof Sunil Kumar Singh. Other coordinators of the programme Prof Satyapal Sharma and Prof PC Abhilash also took active participation.

Subah-e-Banaras completes 9 yrs

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The completion of nine years of Subah-e-Banaras, a spiritual and cultural organisation, was celebrated with great enthusiasm as the foundation day at Assi Ghat here on Friday in which top saints of the country graced the event with their presence. Prominent among those who attended it were Mahant of Annapurna Temple Shankar Puri Maharaj, Acharya Mahamandaleswar Niranjani Akhara Peethadhishwar Swami Kailashanand Giri Maharaj, Peethadhishwar Swami Samvidanand Maharaj of Kailash Math Nashik, Jagjitan Maharaj of Dharma Sangh (Varanasi), Peethadhishwar Balak Nath Das Maharaj of Patalpuri Math, famous 'Katha Vachak' Dr Pundarik Shastri Maharaj and Kameshwari Puri Maharaj of Haridwar.

Along with them, the representatives of Brahma Kumari, Devraha Baba Trust, Shri Ravidas Janmashali Trust, Dharmasaghar, Jagannath Temple, Dakshin Kali Math and about 25 other religious institutions also participated in the event. The rituals were



The foundation day ceremony of Subeh-e-Banaras at Assi Ghat in Varanasi on Friday.

formally started in the wee hours by the saints amidst the chanting of Vedic mantras and lighting of the lamps. Then Aarti of Maa Ganga was performed by saints and 'batuks' (Sanskrit students). They also participated in 'yagya' and offered sacred Ganagajal to the rising sun. After this the young artists of Kashi enthralled the audience presenting cultural programmes. The participating artists were Dr Shanish Gwawali on flute, Dr Sandeep Kewale on 'ghatam', Aditya Deep on 'pakhawaj', Anand Mishra on sitar and Pankaj Rai

on tabla. Dr V Satyavar Prasad on mridangam. The instrumental presentation started with a composition composed in 'Teen Taal in Raga Lalit and ended with a tune. Famous saints like Swami Kailashanand Maharaj, Swami Samvidanand Maharaj etc gave certificates to the artists. On the occasion while addressing the participants former UP minister and MLA Dr Neelkanth Tiwari described Banaras as a reflection of Indian culture and praised the dedicated people associated with the regular programme. The guests were

welcomed by Dr Ratnesh Verma, founder secretary of Subeh-e-Banaras. President Padma Shri Dr Rajeshwar Acharya and Padma Shri Dr Saroj Chooramani Gopal honoured the saints by giving them angavastram and mementos. Dr Virendra Pratap Singh welcomed the guests while Pramod Mishra introduced the participating saints. Dr Preetesh Acharya conducted the programme. On the occasion, Pandit Ramesh Tiwari, Manju Mishra, Abhay Srivastava, Vinay Tiwari and many others were also present.

Ganga Mahotsav inaugurated

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The grand opening of the world famous Ganga Mahotsav took place on Thursday evening at Rajghat and Dr Rajendra Prasad Ghat on the banks of Uttaravahini Maa Janhavi (river Ganga). Uttar Pradesh Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Stamp and Court Registration Fees, Ravindra Jaiswal inaugurated the Ganga Mahotsav by lighting the lamp. Before this, the minister also performed Ganga puja formally. Ganga Mahotsav also started at Dr Rajendra Prasad Ghat.

Speaking on the occasion, Jaiswal said music is in the DNA of the people of Kashi and it resides in their minds and hearts. "Death is also a festival in Moksha Dayini Kashi which has given knowledge of all the four branches of music. People made their name famous in the world by doing spiritual practice on the banks of Ganga," he said, adding that Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has given more grandeur to the Ganga Mahotsav programme by increasing the budget. Throwing light on the impor-



UP Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Stamp and Court Registration Fees, Ravindra Jaiswal inaugurating the Ganga Mahotsav at Rajghat in Varanasi on Thursday evening.

tance of music, he said that he believes that if music is played among the terrorists, then their minds can come back to the mainstream.

The cultural programmes organised as part of the Ganga Mahotsav at Rajghat started with the 'shehna' recital by Mahendra Prasanna. In this

series, Samit Tyagi enthralled people with sugam sangeet followed by dhruwad singing by Dr Ashish Kumar, sitar presentation by Pt Taraknath Mishra, folk dance by Parnika Srivastava and bhajan singing by Dr Shivang Balhakeshwar and Sujit Kumar Tiwari. The winning participants of Kashi

Sansad Sanskritik Mahotsav also gave their presentations in the cultural evening programme of Ganga Mahotsav organised at Dr Rajendra Prasad Ghat.

Both the programmes were attended by senior officers and music personalities apart from other dignitaries.

Yuva Sangam: Telangana team to visit BHU from Nov 27

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Under Yuva Sangam, Telangana state (IIT, Hyderabad) has been paired to Uttar Pradesh (BHU, Varanasi) to celebrate the Yuva Sangam. As many as 45 students and five faculty members from Uttar Pradesh (BHU Varanasi) will be visiting Telangana State (IIT, Hyderabad) and 45 students and five faculty members from Telangana State (IIT, Hyderabad) are slated to visit Banaras Hindu University (BHU) from November 27 to December 1.

Giving this information, while addressing a press conference here on Friday, Director of Institute of Science and Chairperson of Coordination Committee Prof Anil Kumar Tripathi and Nodal Officer of the programme Dr Nand Lal, along with members of Coordination Committee Prof Chalapathi Rao, Dr Bala Lakshendra, Dr Pravin Rana, Dr Venugopal and Ranjit Shandilya said that during the visit the participants from Telangana will have an opportunity to know and be aware of the various aspects of UP.

They said that during the visit hosted by BHU, the Telangana team will visit various iconic places in Varanasi and around and interact with different stakeholders. The visits include those to Shri Kashi



Coordination Committee chief Prof AK Tripathi telling about Yuva Sangam event at BHU in Varanasi on Friday.

Vishwanath Temple, Ramnagar Fort, Ganga ghats, Sarnath etc. The visiting delegation will also have an opportunity to familiarise with the local cuisines, lifestyle, handicraft, cultural and other aspects.

Prof Tripathi said that India is a land of diversity and this diversity, reflected in the form of different languages, cultures, lifestyles and beliefs, also binds us together as one nation that stood tall and strong over centuries.

"This unity in diversity has become a distinct identity of India that is celebrated by all Indians. The government of India has taken a key initiative

'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB)' to acknowledge and honour and further strengthen this sense of unity that defines the uniqueness of this great civilization," he said.

He further said that the idea of EBSB was conceptualised by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to create a structured and sustained cultural connect between various States/UTs of India.

"In order to strengthen people to people connect and build empathy between the youth of our nation, 'Yuva Sangam' programme was launched under the EBSB in early 2023. Yuva Sangam is an

ongoing cultural exchange with celebration of diversity at its core wherein participants gain an immersive experience of diverse facets of life, natural landforms, development landmarks, recent achievements, and youth connect in the host state through an exposure tour of 5-7 days," he said.

During these tours, participants get multi-dimensional exposure under five broad areas that are Paryatana (Tourism), Parampara (Tradition), Pragati (Development), Pradyogiki (Technology) and Paraspri Sampark (People-to-People Connect), he added.

National Lok Adalat on Dec 9

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

District Judge Anmol Pal has asked the judicial officers to work towards disposal of maximum cases through the National Lok Adalat to be held on December 9. He said besides judicial officials the officials related to revenue courts have been directed to bring maximum cases on the day on merit to reduce the burden of courts and provide relief to such litigants who were interested in compromise.

'CHAUPAL' ORGANISED: District Magistrate Priyanka Niranjan while addressing a 'chaupal' under Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra in Matwar village under Halia block on Thursday made it clear that no official found committing laxity will be spared and directed the official concerned to suspend the junior engineer. She sought application from eligible beneficiaries of different schemes. On the demand of the public for the connecting road she assured to get it started by February. She directed the PWD officials to get the NOC from the Forest department and start the process of road construction. She handed over certificates to beneficiaries of different schemes. Addressing the gathering MLA Rinki Kol said the government is committed for overall development of the deprived class and with the spirit of 'Sarkar Apke Dwar' the officials are getting applications in the village and laid



emphasis on sending children to schools as education is a strong weapon to fight any problem. Chief Development Officer (CDO) Srilaxmi VS and Additional District Magistrate (Finance & Revenue) Shiv Pratap Shukla and other officials concerned attended the chaupal.

CAMP: Uttar Pradesh Minister of Technical Education, Consumer Protection, Weights and Measures Ashish Patel while interacting with people at a registration camp organised at Jamalpur block headquarters on Thursday said the government has decided to saturate the district under Vayoshri Yojana and appealed to them to come forward to get registered in order to avail themselves of the facilities. He said what

kind of aid is required by a needy person is to be decided by experts only after examination. Giving details about the facilities the minister said for the aged persons stick, spectacles, hearing aid, etc and for the Divyangians tricycles, artificial limbs, wheel chair, etc was to be given free of cost. On the occasion 866 persons got registered through 10 counters and the equipment were to be recommended after examination by experts. In another programme organised by Tiwari Tola Bharat Milap Committee at Trimohani the minister addressing the gathering said Maryada Purushottam Ram was the ideal for life. He said that the government was committed to bring Ramrajya and was working in that direction. On the occasion he accorded a warm reception

by the organisers led by Salil Pandey.

ACCIDENT: A BJP leader from Jharkhand died in a road mishap in an area under Dramondganj police station on Thursday. According to a report received here, Vikram Singh (40) of Kadgaanvaan under Mayurhand police station, Chatara district, Jharkhand, was going by car along with his brother-in-law Kartik Singh (35) when it collided with a stationary truck near Durjanipur village. On getting information the police reached the spot and sent the injured to the trauma centre, Mirzapur, where the doctors declared Vikram Singh as brought dead. After the post-mortem examination the police handed over the body to the family.



www.dailypioneer.com

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

PAPER WITH PASSION

Virtually together

Positive global reactions to Modi's G20 virtual meet, even from China and Canada, confirm its success

If there were any doubts whatsoever about the impact India had on the G20 platform and if any validation was needed for its influence, it has been thoroughly reiterated during the bloc's virtual meeting planned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Apart from the favourable global reactions to the initiative, the responses from two significant members were especially encouraging. As one of the world's major powers, China's reaction to Modi's G20 virtual meeting was closely watched and it expressed a mix of support and constructive engagement. Chinese President Xi Jinping emphasised the need for collaboration to overcome shared obstacles such as climate change, public health crises and economic uncertainties. Also, China's emphasis on multilateralism aligns with the broader G20 agenda, which aims to foster global cooperation on common issues. However, observers noted a nuanced diplomatic dance, with both nations striving to balance cooperative



rhetoric with their strategic interests. Similarly Canada, a longstanding advocate for multilateralism and international cooperation, responded positively. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau commended the inclusive approach of the discussions, emphasising the importance of collective action. Climate change emerged as a key area of focus for Canada during the virtual summit. The Canadian leader also stressed the importance of addressing issues related to global health, economic inequality and digital transformation, aligning with the broader G20 themes. This is indeed a welcome gesture from Canadian prime minister.

Going by the reaction of these nations who are not on an even keel with India right now, it can be safely inferred that the meeting was successful. It is time the nations even at crosspurposes realise that they have to cooperate, else it would be disastrous for our planet. The issues of import to all humanity should not be used for narrow national interests. Both China and Canada expressed support for the initiative but underlying geopolitical dynamics and strategic interests coloured their responses. China's acknowledgement of the importance of collective action was tempered by its ongoing rivalry with India and other G20 nations. On the other hand, Canada's enthusiastic endorsement of the G20's objectives reflected its commitment to international cooperation, with a focus on shared values and global problem-solving. Modi's G20 virtual meeting indeed generated a spectrum of reactions from around the globe. As the world grapples with an array of challenges, the G20 remains a crucial platform for fostering international cooperation. Understanding the nuanced responses of key players like China and Canada provides valuable insights into the evolving landscape of global diplomacy and the complex interplay of national interests on the world stage.

PICTALK



Indian Army Daredevils show their skills during a reunion ceremony, in Jabalpur.

Ramaswamy makes waves in US elections



PRAFULL GORADIA

Vivek Ramaswamy, US Presidential candidate in the upcoming US elections has stirred a hornet's nest by saying that Hinduism and Christianity are not dissimilar faith

Vivek Ramaswamy, in the fray in America's Presidential contest, is making more news than almost any other candidate except perhaps Donald Trump. To draw the conservative white vote, particularly of the US Midwest, Ramaswamy has said that Hinduism and Christianity are not dissimilar faiths, and he is somewhat right. Judaism and Islam are two religions utterly faithful to what their first Prophet Abraham wanted. Christianity defers from these two religions and is a little similar to Hinduism. God, more so his son, walked the earth for 33 years until he presumably ascended to heaven. Jesus Christ performed many miracles, most notably, transforming water into wine, saving the honour of a host. Also, many were cured of their illnesses by his miracles.

Secondly, there is no bar on wishing to have a glimpse of the Almighty, whereas the other two Abrahamic religions forbid such spirituality. The second of Moses' Ten Commandments spoken on Mount Sinai, explicitly says: "Thou shalt not make any graven image of thy Lord the God". But every Christian church houses a crucifix. Every Catholic church also has a statue of the Virgin Mary. Every Hindu temple has a murti (idol) of a deity. Every traditional Hindu considers his marriage sacred while Christianity believes marriage to be divine and indivisible.

When Ramaswamy talks about God, for Christians, Jesus is the son of God. The Hindu on the other hand has the choice to be an agnostic and another Hindu at the other end can be a whole-time bhakta (devotee). The compulsory requirement for a Hindu is to have a dharma and a purpose in his life. Karma is the performance to fulfil his chosen dharma, the measure of which would spontaneously determine his 'bhagya' or fate. Beyond this minimum commitment, the Hindu is free to choose his path, including treating Jesus as a divine avatar. This is what perhaps Ramaswamy meant when he said, "My faith is what gives me my freedom".

Further, he says, "Religion is that



God resides in all of us". In Hinduism, all living beings are meteors of the Paramatma (the Supreme One). When Ramaswamy says "Patriotism is cool again in the US", he implies that unlike Judaism and Islam, which are supranational, Christianity believes in nationhood which in fact, was born and bred in Christian Europe.

The Indian experience has been that Hindus and Muslims have clashed often, frequently erupting in riots. But there is no known record of a Hindu-Christian riot. It is when some Hindus are converted to Christianity that friction is visibly felt. A lot of converts do not necessarily change their names, whereas it is compulsory for anyone converting to Islam to replace his or her name with an Islamic one. Neither Hindus nor Christians have circumcision as a religious obligation, whereas, for the Jews and the Muslims, it is an integral part of their faith. Prophet Mohammad was born a Jew, and therefore, Muslims adhere to the practice as a part of the Sunnah (the life of the Prophet).

Christianity does believe that there is only one God, who is the father of Jesus. Hinduism,

as we have seen, permits the worship of many deities, whether human-like or animals and even certain vegetations like the peepal tree.

In contrast, Christianity has limited itself to religion and hasn't opened the scope for spirituality or the attempt by worshippers to obtain a glimpse of the divine, if not try to see the divine oneself. Being familiar with the miracles of Jesus Christ and the psalms and perhaps a pilgrimage to Calvary Hill and also the Vatican, one can say these are virtually the horizons in addition to Church-going and worship.

With education and inquiry, much thinking and learning happened after Christ's advent and the enormous contribution of St. Peter and St. Paul. However, by incidentally being deductive in its logic, Christianity hasn't opened avenues of spirituality. A thinking person reaches a stage when his mind seeks spiritual avenues. Any person seeking an elevation finds deductive logic a limiting factor and an obstacle. The postulate of deductive logic is always a given premise from which its corollaries flow. The reasoning appears immaculately logical; the only weakness is that the

premise may be imaginary, such as there is only one god and that may give rise to the only one. Hinduism does not employ the deductive approach. It does not begin with any given premise. Rather, it begins on the ground and works upwards; not top-down, as in deductive logic. Dharma and its achievement, namely karma are the bedrock of this process of thought.

This resembles the law of physics, wherein every action has an opposite reaction. The conclusion that is arrived at is left to the worshipper or scholar. This is a method that would appeal to an intellectual. Therefore, once it is known and understood by those who seek spirituality, it may well appeal to any intelligent American in search of the first steps of spirituality. The latest development i.e., the grand opening of the large Akshardham Temple in New Jersey is a case in point. The function was attended in great numbers by Americans of all walks of life, including those looking for an alternative pathway in life.

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

CHRISTIANITY DOES BELIEVE THAT THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD, WHO IS THE FATHER OF JESUS. HINDUISM, AS WE HAVE SEEN, PERMITS THE WORSHIP OF MANY DEITIES, WHETHER HUMAN-LIKE OR ANIMALS AND EVEN CERTAIN VEGETATIONS LIKE THE PEEPUL TREE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

GENOCIDE IN GAZA

Sir — the ongoing situation in Gaza, particularly the alarming number of casualties, including the tragic deaths of numerous children. The current state of affairs in Gaza demands urgent attention and action from the international community. I would like to emphasize that labeling this crisis as genocide is a serious matter and requires careful consideration of the complexities involved. However, it is undeniable that the loss of innocent lives, especially among children, is a grave humanitarian issue that cannot be ignored. Furthermore, the reference to Israel's alleged use of Islamophobia in its foreign policy is a serious accusation that should be supported by concrete evidence. It is essential to approach such sensitive matters with a balanced perspective, taking into account the rights and perspectives of all parties involved.

In conclusion, I urge for a comprehensive and impartial investigation into the situation in Gaza to determine the facts and promote a just resolution. It is crucial for the international community to work towards a peaceful and lasting solution that respects the rights and dignity of all individuals in the region.

Sujit De | Kolkata

ICC'S RIDICULOUS DECISIONS

Sir — The International Cricket Council is the global governing body of cricket. It was founded in 1909 as the Imperial Cricket Conference by representatives of Australia, England, and South Africa. In 1965, its name was changed to the International Cricket Conference, and in 1987, its current name, ICC, was adopted. A week ago, it announced a ban on the Sri Lankan Cricket Board during the World Cup match when it was eliminated from the World Cup. Then that ban was also lifted within a few days. On Thursday, November 23, it announced another surprising decision and banned former West Indies team batsman Marlon Samuels for not one, not two, but six years. West Indies' two-time T20 World Cup

Vande Bharat: Overpriced



Pricing and accessibility of the Vande Bharat train services introduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. While the initiative aims to provide efficient transportation, the

exorbitant fares associated with the Vande Bharat trains have raised significant issues.

It is disheartening to note that the high costs of these train journeys make them unaffordable for a large portion of the common people. This has led to incidents of miscreants targeting the trains, resulting in damages and safety concerns. The current situation reflects a growing divide, with only the affluent being able to avail themselves of this service.

I strongly urge the authorities to reconsider the pricing strategy of the Vande Bharat trains and focus on introducing more inclusive and affordable transportation options for the majority of the common people. This would contribute to a fair and accessible public transportation system that benefits all citizens.

Bhagwan Thadani | Mumbai

winner suspended for anti-corruption breaches Marlon Samuels has been sentenced for anti-corruption breaches. If this decision of the ICC is not called ridiculous, then what else can be called ridiculous? Why should you ban a player who has made an official announcement not today but in 2020 of his retirement from all formats of cricket, including One Day, Twenty Twenty, and Test cricket? What difference will it make to him? Going to do? He will not be sentenced to jail, right? No financial penalty has been imposed on him. Then, by giving formal punishment like this, the ICC itself has become a laughing stock. Years after the snake's passing, ICC is hitting the ground with a stick.

Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

THE MELODY QUEEN

Sir — It is a matter of great pride and happiness that veteran Tamil playback singer P. Susheela has been honoured with a doctorate by Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin during the second convocation ceremony of Dr. J. Jayalalithaa Music and Fine Arts University held in Chennai a few days ago. Ms. Susheela richly deserves

the doctorate for her monumental and unparalleled contribution to Tamil films in an extraordinary singing career spanning over half a century. In fact, P. Susheela is the first female playback singer to receive a national award for her song, naalai indha velai parthuru odi vaa Nila, from the Sivaji Ganesan starrer 'Uyarnadha Manidhan'. Popularly known as "Gana Kokila" and "Gana Saraswathi," Ms. Susheela is a singer whose pronunciation of syllables has been precise in all languages she sang. Her duets, particularly with the legendary late singer T.M. Soundararajan, took the quality of Tamil film songs to dizzying heights, and their evergreen melodies were trendsetters in the industry. Susheela's mesmerising numbers like Mannavan vandhannadi thozhi, Ennuviru thozhi keluru sethi, and Maraindirundhu paarkkum marmamenna are awe-inspiring and spellbinding. What nectar is to the tongue, P. Susheela's voice is to the ears and heart.

Ranganathan Sivakumar | Chennai

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Significance of creativity in the curriculum

Creativity in education is the catalyst for transforming knowledge into innovation, encouraging learners to think, explore, and connect

As the world of education continues to evolve, a growing consensus is emerging that creativity is essential for defining the future of education. Rather than relying on textbooks and standardised assessments, a creative approach to curriculum is becoming increasingly popular as a means of unlocking students' potential. Creativity is not only an art form but also a cognitive ability that spans multiple disciplines and enables students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Educators can create an environment that encourages learners to dwell on varied innovations and skills by incorporating creative elements into the educational curriculum. A creative curriculum accommodates diverse learning styles and preferences. Students are encouraged to explore their interests, fostering a sense of autonomy and personalisation in their educational journey. All skills begin in the brain. Whether learning to swim, breaststroke or solve an equation, it all starts with neurons firing in the right area of



the brain repeatedly until you master it.

The right amount of creativity inspires children to learn new things and fosters innovation. Innovative educational environments have the power to significantly change how students learn and apply what they learn in the real world.

Emotional and Social Development: Creative activities often involve self-expression and collaboration, contributing to emotional and social skill development. Students learn to express themselves confidently and understand others' perspectives.

Enhanced Critical Thinking: It encourages students to think critically, analyse information, and develop problem-solving skills. This, in turn, improves their overall cognitive abilities.

wide range of skill development among the students. Once engaged in creative pursuits often enhance their communication skills, collaboration abilities, and adaptability.

Increased Engagement and Motivation: Creative elements in the curriculum make learning more enjoyable and relevant to students' interests. This heightened engagement fosters intrinsic motivation, leading to increased effort, participation, and a positive attitude toward academic tasks.

Personalised Learning: Being engaged in creative activities allows students to develop different forms of expression, catering to diverse learning styles. For instance, students who struggle with traditional methods can thrive when allowed to express themselves creatively, leading to a more inclusive and effective learning environment.

Retention Power: Creativity enhances the retention of information and knowledge. When students connect academic content to creative projects or real-world applications, they are more likely

to remember and apply what they have learned.

The inclusion of creativity in the curriculum has a positive impact on student performance. It makes learning a dynamic and meaningful experience that equips students for success in the classroom and lifetime.

In an era marked by rapid advancements in AI, robotics, 3D printing, AR/VR, and biotech, it's crucial to question: Are our schools truly equipping our children for this future? India is on the verge to transform the education ecosystem by adopting personalized learning concepts. We need to move with the times and create a learning ecosystem that creates future professionals and citizens who can compete and flourish anywhere in the world. Investing in a creative curriculum ensures that students are equipped to contribute meaningfully on the world stage. By embracing a curriculum that values and nurtures creativity, educators can transform education.

(The writer is the founder PoweredBy Dreamtime Learning; views are personal)



LINA ASHAR

FIRST COLUMN

WHAT AFTER ALL IS ORGANIC PRODUCE?

It is prudent to buy all produce organic and wash thoroughly, to be on safe side



SAKSHI SETHI

Has anyone ever thought about what we mean when we talk about the produce that has been grown organically? Or why is it that people today are rushing and shifting their preferences towards going organic? Well, produce can be called organic if it is certified to have grown on soil that had no prohibited substances such as synthetic fertilizers and pesticides applied for three years prior to harvest and does not contain genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

In addition to it, it also means that farmers have not used toxic and added pesticides or fertilizers that are meant to contaminate soil, air, water and ultimately the food thereby making the end product more appealing and healthy in the eyes of consumers. The chemical fertilizers such as herbicides and pesticides which used to spray conventionally grown produce have gnarly impacts such as impairing plant's natural immunity and creating dependency on chemical fertilizers as well as destroying the health and mineral content of the soil. However, the goodness of organic food stands out and is considered to be safe for consumption without artificial elements. Studies have even shown that organic farms aim to cut pollution, provide safe places for farm animals to live, and promote a self-sustaining cycle of resources on a farm. A 2014 cohort study of over fifty thousand participants concluded that a higher frequency of organic food consumption was associated with a reduced risk of cancer.



Although organic does not mean 100 percent pesticide-free, but it does mean that any farming substances used must be completely nontoxic and safe. After all, the health of the soil is equal to the health of the plants that an individual consumes which further is related to the health of the human. Such foods include more nutrients, including more antioxidants in fruits and vegetables.

Also, these foods are free from genetically modified organisms (GMOs) which may otherwise pose severe health risks and various toxic effects in the body. In addition, organic farming is also a boon towards environmental sustainability as it reduces pollution, conserves water and increases soil health and fertility. In comparison to conventional farming, the use of fertilizers and pesticides in organic farming is not applicable as organic farming is built on an ecosystem that can sustain itself without the need for chemical fertilizers.

Current times have taught every individual to be more conscious about health and even the environment around them. One needs to take a big leap to change their outlook toward a lifestyle that assures both safety and quality.

At the end of the day, it is best to purchase all produce organic and wash thoroughly since pesticides have been linked to infertility, hormone imbalances, chronic illness and much more. There is no denying the fact that organic food supersedes all types of food so in so it is nowadays being touted as a "better for you" option. But the question remains is the term "Organic" healthy or is it just a buzzword? (The write is an educator, views are personal)

Trailblazing democracy in Bangladesh

As Hasina vies for a fifth term in the January elections in Bangladesh, she is concurrently curbing opposition political parties to ensure her victory



NILANTHA LANGAMUWA

In the disconcerting theatre of global politics, the term "democratically elected" increasingly morphs into a mere façade, concealing leaders who, once in power, act more like autocrats than guardians of democratic principles. Free and fair elections, the very lifeblood of democracy, have become a tactical game for these leaders—a tool to adorn their public image while concealing a turbulent authoritarian mindset. Behind the scenes, they revel in personal indulgences such as nepotism, opulent lifestyles, and unchecked excesses. Critical thinking, constructive criticism, and nuanced approaches have given way to a culture of sycophancy, where dissent is stifled, and narratives are sculpted to please the incumbent leaders. In Bangladesh, as in many other nations, this erosion of democratic values paints a grim picture, particularly as the country grapples with the shadows of a brutal genocide and natural calamities.

The impending parliamentary election on January 7 in Bangladesh adds a critical chapter to this narrative. Sheikh Hasina, the nation's longest-serving prime minister, seeks a fifth term amidst deadly protests demanding her resignation for a fair election. The recent political upheaval, marked by the prosecution and sentencing of hundreds of members of the main opposition, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), paints a vivid tableau of a political landscape manipulated to maintain incumbency. The staggering number of 112 alleged perpetrators sentenced in a single day reveals a judiciary suddenly efficient in delivering justice, yet the irony lies in the peculiarity of the proceedings. Some of those convicted were deceased, while others had been missing for years, underscoring the inadequacy of criminal investigators who failed to update cases with current data.

In a further twist, Khaleda Zia, a former Prime Minister, finds herself under house arrest, denied the freedom even for medical treatment. The legal machinery, now operating with fervour, has led to an estimated 10,000 BNP members arrested, with trials rushed and bail sparingly granted, extending pre-trial detentions indefinitely. Meanwhile, the ruling party enjoys a stark contrast, seemingly immune to prosecution or detention. Sheikh Hasina's assertion that Khaleda Zia must return to prison before seeking medical treatment abroad echoes a tone of authority that contradicts the democratic principles ostensibly upheld.

As Hasina vies for a fifth term, her previous declarations of not desiring prolonged power crumble in the face of her persistent tenure. The absolute power she wields becomes a troubling undercurrent, echoing the age-old adage that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Consequently, the democratic fabric of Bangladesh hangs in the balance, caught between the staged theatrics of elections and the troubling realities of unchecked authority.

However, in the crucible of Bangladesh's political arena, Hasina's leadership serves as a noteworthy illustration of economic growth, social development, and transformative infrastructure projects. The Digital Bangladesh initiative, strides in women's empowerment, and adept diplomatic manoeuvring underscore the multifaceted approach she has championed. However, these accomplishments are juxtaposed against the backdrop of political polarisa-



tion and unrest, forcing a critical examination of the trajectory of Bangladesh's democracy.



IN A FURTHER TWIST, KHALEDA ZIA, A FORMER PRIME MINISTER, FINDS HERSELF UNDER HOUSE ARREST, DENIED THE FREEDOM EVEN FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT

(The writer is a Sri Lanka-born journalist and author. He was the editor of Sri Lanka Guardian and worked as a Communications Consultant for the Government of Sri Lanka; views are personal)

The glaring irony unfolds on the international stage, where the United States, the primary buyer of Bangladesh's garments, vociferously advocates for the preservation of democracy while its historical actions unveil a stark contradiction. Henry Kissinger's damning characterization of Bangladesh as a "bottomless basket" during his tenure as US Secretary of State exposes the depth of this paradox. The US, ostensibly a champion of democracy and human rights, favoured Pakistan during critical junctures in Bangladesh's history, laying bare the diplomatic hypocrisy inherent in US foreign policy.

Two pivotal reasons underscore this diplomatic dissonance. Firstly, the US exhibited a myopic focus on the political affairs of its regional neighbours, allocating resources to intervene in countries like Chile, where it actively sought the overthrow of President Salvador Allende. The CIA's substantial investment in anti-Allende propaganda exemplifies this skewed priority. The second reason unveils a covert pact engineered by Kissinger with China, where geopolitical manoeuvring took precedence over ethical considerations. Pakistani leaders, beneficiaries of this clandestine alliance, placed unshakable trust in the United States. Despite full awareness of the genocide in East Pakistan, the US callously turned a blind eye, laying bare the cynical exploitation of human rights for political gains. The people of East Pakistan, devoid of alternatives, sought refuge in India and the Soviet Union. However, the United States, once indifferent to one of the gravest genocides since World War II, now, 52 years after the proclamation of Bangladesh, audaciously demands the restoration of democracy.

Compounding historical injustices is the enduring neglect of Bengali political aspirations, evident since the pre-1947 era. The consistent dis-

regard for Bengali views set the stage for post-independence disillusionment, further exacerbated by Mujib's tragic death and years of military dictatorship. Despite attempts at course correction, under Hasina's leadership, Bangladesh's democratic trajectory has deviated from its hopeful origins.

Born out of a heroic struggle for liberation in 1971, the nation initially embraced principles of linguistic nationalism and democracy. However, the evolution since Hasina's ascent has cast shadows on this once-promising path toward democratic ideals. The 1972 Constitution of Bangladesh birthed a Parliament with a peculiar status—a dominant executive and dormant legislature. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, riding on unprecedented popularity, wielded absolute powers as the head of the party, parliament, and government. The absence of a formidable opposition accentuated this dominance, with only two opposition leaders in the parliament.

In a surprising turn in 1974, Mujibur relinquished the party chief position to AHM Qamaruzzaman. The parliament, under the overwhelming majority of the Awami League, voted for one-party rule through the 4th Amendment in January 1975. This constitutional change granted the president supremacy over the executive, judiciary, and legislature, consolidating an all-powerful presidency. Tragically, Mujibur was assassinated in August 1975, ushering in a prolonged period of military rule.

The 1991 national elections marked a shift, bringing the BNP to power and resurrecting the parliamentary form of government through the Twelfth Amendment. This restored executive powers to the prime minister, making the president the constitutional head. However, concerns arose about the unchecked powers of the prime minister, often labelled as an "autocrat" and "presidential prime minister."

The PM's office remains impervious to parliamentary committees, immune from scrutiny. Article 70 further discourages MPs from holding the PM accountable, creating a constraint on freedom of expression. This distortion of democratic principles has led to unchecked power accumulation with profound consequences. The once-envisioned purpose of a great Bangladesh, as articulated by Mujibur Rahman, has been overshadowed by the ironic reality of a ruler wielding unchecked power, far from the democratic ideals that were once aspired.

As Bangladesh stands at the precipice of another electoral outcome, the ramifications of a potential fifth term under Hasina's administration loom large. The nation, once a beacon of hope for democratic principles, now faces the daunting prospect of perpetuating a political landscape dominated by unchecked power. The election's outcome could cement a legacy marked by a concentration of authority, hindering the very democratic ideals that Bangladesh fought for in its arduous journey towards independence.

The road ahead is fraught with challenges that extend beyond the ballot box. The erosion of checks and balances, as witnessed in previous terms, threatens to deepen, casting shadows over the principles of democracy. The persistent curtailment of dissent, stifling of opposition voices, and the lack of institutional oversight have sown seeds of discontent among the populace. For Bangladesh to reclaim its democratic aspirations, there must be a concerted effort to restore balance, fostering an environment where diverse voices are not only heard but actively contribute to the nation's progress. The fifth term, if granted, carries the weight of history, presenting an opportunity for transformative change or a continuation of a trajectory that risks compromising the very essence of democratic governance.

Sustainable ways of improving indoor air quality

The Green Buildings proficiently employ sustainable strategies to harness renewable energy to curtail pollution

With the pollution shrouding the sky in shades of sepia, the plummeting state of the Air Quality Index (AQI) remains to be a matter of concern. When people are trying to protect themselves from the alarming air pollution outside, it comes as a surprise to them that Indoor Air Quality (IAQ) is also susceptible to pollution. The IAQ is more contaminated as compared to the outdoor air. The major factor contributing to the deterioration of indoor air quality is the inability of the air to find an escape outside. Conventional buildings leave no space for ventilation, and at the same time, being constructed making use of synthetic material adds to the pollution of the air within the enclosed space.



RAHUL AERON

(The writer is Vice President, Desiccant Rotors International Pvt. Ltd, views are personal)

The worst affected are commercial and industrial spaces such as offices, schools, workplaces, airports, and hotels, to name a few, which are inherently plagued by tight and complex structures. Such spaces are generally crowded by a large number of people, which further contributes to the already deteriorating state of the air inside the room. Here, it is important to note that failing to address the poor IAQ can lead to a plethora of health issues ranging from headaches to eye irritation, fatigue, chronic coughing, and allergic reactions among the occupants. In certain cases, prolonged exposure to poor IAQ can lead to the development of a phenomenon called Sick Building Syndrome. Looking at the health reper-

ussions such as breathing issues, lethargy, pain in the eye, and headaches arising from poor IAQ, it is imperative to ensure ventilation of the space to exercise improved environmental benefits along with public health. Moreover, the tight building structures, lacking fresh air, can invariably interfere with the concentration and productivity of the occupants. To curb this, industry players are continuously on the lookout for innovative solutions concerning the designs of the buildings. As a result, they are actively adopting sustainable architecture in the form of Green Building to address the issue of poor IAQ while curtailing the adverse effects of construction on the environment. The building provides innovative solutions

for a more sustainable approach to improving IAQ. The Green Buildings proficiently employ sustainable strategies to harness renewable energy to curtail pollution. At the same time, it also strives to increase the energy efficiency of the building. Minimising energy consumption in combination with the utilization of renewable resources, plays a crucial role in substantially addressing the issue of climate change. This significantly contributes to reducing the carbon footprint in the environment. The advanced buildings make use of green products ranging from highly efficient chillers to systems-enhancing drives on motors, and highly proficient fans, to name a few, which significantly decrease the pressure on the HVAC systems. In the

process, the buildings squeeze the consumption of energy while achieving the required heating/cooling of the premises. Utilising highly durable, recyclable, and renewable resources, the buildings are adept at reducing the depletion of natural resources. Such smart buildings ensure sustainability not just during the construction period but also go a long way in integrating eco-efficiency throughout the life of the building. They employ highly resilient technologies in confluence with innovative and advanced designs to enable ventilation, energy recovery, and humidity control. In addition to this, by accommodating mechanical ventilation systems into the design, it supports a continuous supply of fresh air into the

building. The alignment of the structure is in such a way that it allows for a minimum separation distance between clean and contaminated air to check the fusion of fresh air with polluted air. In the entire process, it addresses the issue of moisture in the space and consequently checks the growth of mould and mildew. On the whole, the innovative structures are adept at maintaining the hygiene of the building efficiently. All the factors together contri. Considering that Green Buildings are the way forward to achieve improved air quality within a building that too sustainably, such buildings must comply with UN SDG goals to conform to international environmental standards. Likewise, it is advisable to get the buildings certi-

fied by prominent institutions, namely, ASSOCHAM, ECBC, LEED, and Indian Green Building Council, to ensure that the building is in alignment with the council guidelines and framework for the reduction of carbon footprints. As the world is continuously working towards reducing the degradation of the environment, it is expected that Zero-energy buildings will be in demand shortly. By encouraging affordable, reliable, and sustainable access to energy, they can bring about a breakthrough transformation in the way urban spaces are built and managed. They are at the forefront of supporting a resilient and innovative infrastructure that is aimed at achieving sustainable cities and communities.

Dublin erupts in violence following a knife attack that injured 3 children

34 ARRESTED

AP ■ LONDON

Violent clashes broke out in central Dublin on Thursday evening, with vehicles torched and riot police attacked, after a 5-year-old girl was seriously injured in a knife attack earlier in the day that also saw a woman and two other young children hospitalized.

Irish police arrested 34 people following the stabbing of three children by an unidentified man earlier in the day.

The head of the Irish police, Commissioner Drew Harris, said one officer was seriously injured in the violence that began after news spread that a 5-year-old girl was receiving emergency medical treatment at a Dublin hospital following the attack outside a school.

Irish police said the girl was receiving emergency medical treatment in a Dublin hospital following the attack outside a school. Soon after that announcement, at least 100 people took to the streets, some armed with metal bars and covering their faces.

Police said over 400 officers including many in riot gear, were deployed in Dublin city centre to contain the unrest, which they said was "caused by a small group of thugs." A police cordon was also set up around the Irish Parliament building, Leinster House, and officers from the Mounted Support Unit were in nearby Grafton Street.



Irish police officers apprehend a man after a demonstration near the scene of an attack in Dublin city centre on Thursday

There were clashes with riot police as some demonstrators let off flares and fireworks, while others grabbed chairs and stools outside bars and restaurants.

A number of police vehicles and a tram were damaged during the disorder, while a bus and car were also set on fire on the city's O'Connell Bridge. Shop windows were routinely smashed and a Foot Locker store was looted. All public transport in the city — trams and buses — was suspended and many firms have urged their staff to work from home on Friday.

"We have a complete lunatic hooligan faction driven by far-right ideology, and also then this disruptive tendency

engaged in serious violence," said Ireland's top police officer, Drew Harris.

Police and politicians called for calm and warned against misinformation over the attack earlier in the day.

"The scenes we are witnessing this evening in our city centre cannot and will not be tolerated," said Justice Minister Helen McEntee. "A thuggish and manipulative element must not be allowed to use an appalling tragedy to wreak havoc."

Earlier, police said a man in his 50s, who also was seriously injured, is a "person of interest" in their investigation. No other details about his identity were revealed.

At a press briefing in the

evening, Harris was asked about a potential terrorist link, and he didn't rule it out.

"I have never ruled out any possible motive for this attack ... all lines of inquiry are open to determine the motive for this attack," he said.

That appeared to be a slight change in stance from earlier, when Superintendent Liam Geraghty said police were keeping an open mind in terms of the investigation but were "satisfied there is no terrorist link."

A woman in her 30s also suffered serious injuries during the knife attack shortly after 1:30 pm. The two other children, a 5-year-old boy and a 6-year-old girl, sustained less serious injuries.

PM condemns anti-immigrant protesters

London (AP): Ireland's prime minister on Friday condemned anti-immigrant protesters who rampaged through central Dublin after three young children were stabbed, saying the rioters simply wanted to cause chaos, not protect the country's way of life.

Prime Minister Leo Varadkar said Ireland's capital had endured two attacks — one on innocent children and the other on "our society and the rule of law."

"These criminals did not do what they did because they love Ireland, they did not do what they did because they wanted to protect Irish people, they did not do it out of any sense of patriotism, however warped," Varadkar told reporters on Friday morning. "They did so because they're filled with hate, they love violence, they love chaos, and they love causing pain to others."

Geraghty said at a media briefing that preliminary indications are that a man attacked a number of people on Parnell Square East. He said that police believe that it was "a standalone incident, not necessarily connected to any wider issues that are ongoing in the country or in the city, and we need to identify the exact reasons for that happening."

3 journalists abducted in Mexico

Mexico City (AP): Prosecutors said on Thursday that three journalists and two of their relatives have been abducted by armed men in a violence-plagued state in Mexico, which press groups say is one of the most dangerous countries in the world for journalists, outside of war zones.

The prosecutors office in southern Guerrero state said all five people were abducted between Sunday and Wednesday in Taxco, a colonial town frequented by tourists. One journalist was abducted Sunday along with his wife and adult son, and a husband-and-wife team of journalists were kidnapped on Wednesday.

The online news site The Afternoon Chronicle in the nearby city of Chilpancingo said its reporter in Taxco, Marco Antonio Toledo, had received threats earlier this year from a drug cartel, which had ordered him not to publish a story. Toledo had also recently reported on a case of local corruption.

The news site called on authorities to find Toledo, and said the area "has been silenced by the drug cartels." "Previously, other journalists have been kidnapped by drug cartels ... and have exiled themselves to other parts of the state and other states to save themselves," the new site reported.

The press freedom group Article 19 said Toledo, his wife and son had been pulled from their home by at least five armed individuals on Sunday. They have not been heard from since. The group said the kidnapped journalist couple have been identified as Silvia Nayssa Arce and Alberto Sánchez.

Sunak gets small bump in opinion polls after tax cuts

AP ■ LONDON

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and the governing Conservatives are enjoying a small bump in the opinion polls after some crowd-pleasing tax cuts were announced in the Autumn Statement budget this week, it emerged on Friday.

According to a YouGov survey for "The Times" conducted after the budget was tabled by UK Chancellor Jeremy Hunt in Parliament on Wednesday, the popularity rating for the Sunak-led Tories rose to 25 per cent — which is four points up from the previous week, the party's highest rating in recent weeks.

The Opposition Labour continues to hold on to their firm lead, with no change to their 44 per cent rating.

"It is the highest rating since mid-September and only three points below Sunak's highest-ever rating last April," the newspaper analysis notes. "Labour still holds a commanding 19-point lead over the government, however, with the poll suggesting that most voters do not believe the measures announced by Hunt will make either themselves or the country materially better off," it states.

YouGov found that Hunt's central measure — cutting 2p (pence) off the rate of National Insurance (tax) — was supported by 61 per cent of voters and 72 per cent of those who backed the Conservatives at the last election. There was overwhelming public support for raising the minimum wage to GBP 11.44 an hour, backed by 85 per cent of the public. There was also strong support (60 per cent) for requiring people who

have been out of work for 18 months to take part in a compulsory work placement or lose their benefits.

The extra points, however small, after months of lagging in the opinion polls will be welcomed by the Tories as the party prepares for general election.

There is some speculation that Sunak might decide to call this earlier than widely expected in the autumn of next year to capitalise on the next fiscal event, which is the Spring Statement budget scheduled for March 2024.

The latest a general election must be called is January 2025, but there is a very small chance that Sunak would want to delay the polls beyond next year.

Worryingly for the government, the YouGov survey shows very little optimism about the future among the voters. Only 14 per cent thought that the financial situation of their household would get better over the next 12 months, compared with 12 per cent in March. However, the proportion saying it would get worse has dropped from 51 per cent to 41 per cent.

Anthony Wells, head of European political and social research at YouGov, told the newspaper that while the Tories appeared to have received a modest bump in the polls the underlying data was less encouraging for the government. "At face value, the increase in Conservative support suggests it has done some good for the government, but it would be wise to wait to see if that increase lasts beyond the immediate headlines before putting too much weight on it," said Wells.

Nicaragua's Miss Universe title win exposes deep political divide

AP ■ MEXICO CITY

Nicaragua's increasingly isolated and repressive government thought it had scored a rare public relations victory last week when Miss Nicaragua Sheynnis Palacios won the Miss Universe competition.

But the 'legitimate joy and pride' President Daniel Ortega's government expressed in a statement on Sunday after the win quickly turned to angry condemnation, after it emerged that Palacios graduated from a college that was the centre of 2018 protests against the regime — and apparently participated in the marches.

Ordinary Nicaraguans — who are largely forbidden to protest or carry the national flag in marches — took advantage of the Saturday night Miss Universe win as a rare opportunity to celebrate in the streets. Their use of the blue-and-white national flag, as opposed to Ortega's red-and-black Sandinista banner, didn't sit well with the government.

Palacios' victory — along with photos she posted on Facebook in 2018 of herself participating in the protests — overjoyed Nicaragua's opposition.

Roman Catholic Rev. Silvio Báez, one of dozens of priests



who have been jailed or forced into exile by the government, congratulated Palacios in his social media accounts.

"Thank you for bringing joy to our long-suffering country!" Báez wrote. "Thank you for giving us hope for a better future for our beautiful country!"

With clunky rhetoric reminiscent of North Korea, Vice president and First Lady Rosario Murillo lashed out on Wednesday at opposition social media sites (many run from exile) that celebrated Palacios' win as a victory for the opposition.

"In these days of a new victory, we are seeing the evil, terrorist commentators making a clumsy and insulting attempt to turn what should be a beautiful and well-deserved moment

of pride into destructive coup-mongering," Murillo said.

Thousands have fled into exile since Nicaraguan security forces violently put down mass anti-government protests in 2018. Ortega says the protests were an attempted coup with foreign backing, aiming for his overthrow.

Ortega's government seized and closed the Jesuit University of Central America in Nicaragua, which was a hub for 2018 protests against the Ortega regime, along with at least 26 other Nicaraguan universities. The government has also outlawed or closed more than 3,000 civic groups and non-governmental organizations, arrested and expelled opponents, stripped them of their citizenship and confiscated their assets.

China will allow visa-free entry for France, Germany

CITIZENS OF ITALY, THE NETHERLANDS, MALAYSIA AND SPAIN WILL ALSO GET FREE VISA

AP ■ BEIJING

China announced on Friday that it will allow visa-free entry for citizens of five European countries and Malaysia as it tries to encourage more people to visit for business and tourism.

Starting December 1, citizens of France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and Malaysia will be allowed to enter China for up to 15 days without a visa. The trial pro-



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, right, and French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna shake hands during the 6th China-France high-level dialogue on people-to-people exchange at Peking University in Beijing on Friday

gram will be in effect for one year.

The aim is "to facilitate the high-quality development of

China and foreign personnel exchanges and high-level opening up to the outside world", Foreign Ministry spokesperson

Mao Ning said at a daily briefing.

China's strict pandemic measures, which included required quarantines for all arrivals, discouraged many people from visiting for nearly three years. The restrictions were lifted early this year, but international travel has yet to bounce back to pre-pandemic levels.

China previously allowed citizens of Brunei, Japan and Singapore to enter without a visa but suspended that after the COVID-19 outbreak. It resumed visa-free entry for Brunei and Singapore in July but has not done so for Japan.

In the first six months of the year, China recorded 8.4 million entries and exits by foreigners, according to immigra-

tion statistics. That compares to 977 million for all of 2019, the last year before the pandemic.

The EU Chamber of Commerce in China welcomed the announcement and expressed hope that more European nations would be given visa-free access soon. In a statement, it called it "a tangible and practical improvement, which will also increase business confidence."

The Chinese government has been seeking foreign investment to help boost a sluggish economy, and some businesspeople have been coming for trade fairs and meetings, including Tesla's Elon Musk and Apple's Tim Cook. Foreign tourists are still a rare sight compared to before the pandemic.

Indian-American doctor commits USD 4 mn for Hindu advocacy

PTI ■ FREMONT

Hinduism is not just a religion, it's a way of life, a prominent Indian-American physician, who has committed USD 4 million to advocate Hindu advocacy and awareness causes in the United States, has said.

Emergency care physician Mihir Meghani, who founded the Hindu America Foundation along with his friends two decades ago, at the annual Silicon Valley gala early this month of the organisation pledged to donate USD1.5 million more to the Hindu cause over the next eight years. This contribution will raise his total donations for the cause to USD 4 million in two decades.

The announcement by Dr Meghani possibly gives him the distinction of being the biggest Indian American donor for the Hindu cause in the United States.

UN confirms sexual spread of mpox in Congo

AP ■ LONDON

The World Health Organization said it has confirmed sexual transmission of mpox in Congo for the first time as the country experiences its biggest-ever outbreak, a worrying development that African scientists warn could make it more difficult to stop the disease.

In a statement issued on Thursday, the UN health agency said a resident of Belgium travelled to Congo in March and tested positive for mpox, or monkeypox, shortly afterward. WHO said the individual "identified himself as a man who has sexual relations with other men" and that he had gone to several underground clubs for gay and bisexual men.

Among his sexual contacts, five later tested positive for mpox, WHO said.

"This is the first definitive proof of sexual transmission of monkeypox in Africa," Oyetwale Tomori, a Nigerian virologist who sits on several WHO advisory groups, said. "The idea that this kind of transmission could not be happening here has now been

debunked."

Mpox has been endemic in parts of central and west Africa for decades, where it mostly jumped into humans from infected rodents and caused limited outbreaks. Last year, epidemics triggered mainly by sex among gay and bisexual men in Europe hit more than 100 countries. WHO declared the outbreak as a global emergency, and it has caused about 91,000 cases to date.

WHO noted there were dozens of "discrete" clubs in Congo where men have sex with other men, including members who travel to other parts of Africa and Europe. The agency described the recent mpox outbreak as "unusual" and said it highlighted the risk the disease could spread widely among sexual networks.

WHO added that the mpox outbreak this year in Congo, which has infected more than 12,500 people and killed about 580, also marked the first time the disease has been identified in the capital of Kinshasa and in the conflict-ridden province of South Kivu.

Those figures are roughly double the mpox toll in 2020,

making it Congo's biggest-ever outbreak, WHO said.

Virologist Tomori said that even those figures were likely an underestimate and had implications for the rest of Africa, given the continent's often patchy disease surveillance.

"What's happening in Congo is probably happening in other parts of Africa," he said. "Sexual transmission of monkeypox is likely established here, but (gay) communities are hiding it because of the draconian (anti-LGBTQ+) laws in several countries," he added.

He warned that driving people at risk for the virus underground would make the disease harder to curb.

The mpox virus causes fever, chills, rash and lesions on the face or genitals. Most people recover within several weeks without requiring hospitalization.

WHO said the risk of mpox spreading to other countries in Africa and globally "appears to be significant," adding that there could be "potentially more severe consequences" than the worldwide epidemic last year.

Thousands led by Cuba's president march in Havana

Havana (AP): Thousands of people led by Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel marched along Havana's iconic boardwalk Thursday in a show of solidarity with the Palestinian people and demanding an end to the war between Israel and Hamas.

Wearing a black-and-white Palestinian keffiyeh scarf, Diaz-Canel was accompanied by Cuban's main leaders, including Prime Minister Manuel Marrero and Foreign Minister Bruno Rodríguez.

The marchers walked for 2 kilometers (1.2 miles), passing in front of the US Embassy. Palestinian medical students who were in Cuba as part of a cooperation program joined the rally.

"Today we are supporting the Palestinian people, supporting all those people who feel the pain of having lost a family member, a loved one due to this massacre," said Yanquiel Cardoso, a physical culture specialist who participated.

On cusp of climate talks, Guterres visits Antarctica

AP ■ KING GEORGE ISLAND

On the cusp of the COP28 climate talks, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres visited Antarctica on Thursday, after previously saying the world must slash carbon emissions to prevent this delicate environment from melting.

Warming air and ocean temperatures are causing Antarctic ice to melt.

The frozen continent plays a significant role in regulating the Earth's climate because it reflects sunlight away and drives major ocean currents.

For years, scientists and environmentalists have kept an eye on the West Antarctic Ice Sheet as an important indicator of global warming. A study published in "Nature Climate Change" last month said warming has increased to the point that the ice sheet will now experience "unavoidable" melting regardless of how much the world reduces emissions of planet-warming gases



United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres stands outside the Chilean Eduardo Frei Air Force Base in King George Island, Antarctica on Thursday

like carbon dioxide.

The study's lead author, Kaitlin Naughten, estimated that melting ice in Antarctica's most at-risk areas could raise global sea levels by about 1.8 metres (5.9 feet) over the next few centuries.

Another study published in "Science Advances", also last month, reported that nearly 50 Antarctic ice shelves have shrunk by at least 30 per cent since 1997 and 28 of those have lost more than half their ice in that short period of time.

Instability disrupted economic growth: Pak Finance Minister

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's caretaker Finance Minister Shamshad Akhtar has said that political instability over the period of time has greatly disrupted the cash-strapped country's economic growth, which has to be backed by structural reforms.

Addressing the Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) here on Thursday, the minister said macroeconomic stability has become more difficult in the last decade because of delays in structural reforms, protracted actions and exogenous shocks.

The vulnerability of the economy has increased due to global economic shocks such as the increase in international commodity prices and tighter liquidity conditions, with Pakistan effectively priced out of the international credit markets, the Business Recorder newspaper quoted Akhtar as saying.

"Vulnerability has increased due to the unsustainable debt position... Large fiscal and trade deficits over two decades have weakened the debt position, with the cost of servicing debt rising to 74 per cent of the FBR revenue in FY23," the minister said.

She added that vulnerability has also increased due to climate shocks. The global warming model predicts that Pakistan's weather patterns will become even more volatile and extreme in the decades ahead, with an average increase in temperatures by 1.3 per cent to 4.9 per cent by 2090.

"Our fiscal policy is unsustainable not only due to the revenue gaps and unproductive expenditures but it is also unsustainable due to the scale of the climate funding gap," she said.

The minister said Pakistan

Alvi's volte-face on Palestine solution

Islamabad (PTI): After courting controversy by proposing a "one-state solution" to the Palestine problem, Pakistan President Dr Arif Alvi has now said that Islamabad supports a just and peaceful resolution of the vexed issue, based on the "two-state solution." Alvi's comments walking back on the earlier stance came during a meeting with Dr Saleh bin Abdullah Humaid, Imam Khatib at Masjid Al-Haram, and adviser at Saudi Royal Courts of Saudi Arabia on Thursday, according to a report in the newspaper Dawn. "President Dr Arif Alvi has reiterated that Pakistan firmly supports a just and peaceful resolution of the Palestine issue, based on the two-state solution. He said that the world must realise the pain of the Palestinian people and play its role in ending the Israeli atrocities in Gaza that had killed thousands of innocent people, including women and children," an official press release issued by the Presidency said on Friday.

was exploring avenues for debt for nature climate swaps with different partners.

She said that after months of hard work, Pakistan has successfully reached a staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) on the first review of the USD 3 billion bailout.

She said that the successful implementation of comprehensive stabilisation measures including lifting restrictions on the trade and investment

flows by removing bans on imports and profit repatriation of dividends by multinational companies, helped revitalise Pakistan's economy, placing it back on a positive growth trajectory.

"Keeping a watch on our spending and revenues, we have implemented a new State-owned Enterprises (SOE) policy and fast-tracked the privatisation of the loss-making SOEs," she added.

She said Pakistan has actively started to re-profile the domestic debt, with investors moving to longer tenor instruments, substantially reducing the government's borrowing cost.

Citing a World Bank report, she said Pakistan has all the requisites of being a major economic player in the region and Asia as the cash-strapped country's economy could reach USD 2 trillion by 2047 from USD 350 billion in FY23.

"However, this requires macroeconomic stability backed by structural reforms critical to the deep-rooted challenges shackling the productive sectors of the economy," she added.

The finance minister said the GDP growth rate would hover around 2 to 3 per cent in the ongoing fiscal year. She added that the business and investors' confidence had been restored.

Pakistan's economy has been reeling under pressure for the last few years and the country is battling an acute balance of payments crisis and falling foreign exchange reserves.

Pakistan is negotiating with the IMF for the release of a USD 710 million second tranche of a USD 3 billion loan to the cash-strapped country to stabilise its debt-ridden economy.

Imran 'darling of the courts': Bugti

Islamabad (PTI): Describing Imran Khan as a "darling of the courts", Pakistan's caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Ahmed Bugti has said that the facilities provided to the former prime minister in prison were not given to any premier and a common citizen cannot even imagine them.

The 71-year-old Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman is currently detained in Adiala jail in Rawalpindi after being arrested in the leakage of the cipher (secret diplomatic cable) case.

In an interview with the Independent Urdu published today, Bugti said: "The facilities provided to him (Khan) are more than those provided to an ordinary prisoner or a prime minister behind bars as he is, after all, a laadla (darling) of the courts."

"The kind of facilities being provided to him in jail, they weren't given to any prime minister and a common citizen cannot even imagine them," he said. The caretaker interior minister also mentioned former chief justice Umar Ata Bandial's "good to see you" remarks for Khan, saying that such instances strengthen his argument. "We direly need judicial reforms here," he said.

Bandial made these remarks during Khan's appearance before the Supreme Court after his arrest in the Al-Qadir Trust corruption case sparked violent protests by his supporters on May 9.

Bandial later clarified that it was part of court etiquette and carried no political connotation. Asked about the special court's directives to present the ex-premier and former foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi before the court on November 28 in the cipher case, Bugti said he would follow the court orders to the letter.



Filipino Muslims hold slogans during a demonstration in support of the Palestinian people and calling for a ceasefire in Gaza outside the Blue Mosque in Taguig, Philippines on Friday

S Korea, Japan, China to resume trilateral leaders' summit

AP ■ SEOUL

The top diplomats from South Korea, Japan and China are to gather in South Korea over the weekend to discuss resuming their leader's summit, Seoul's Foreign Ministry said on Friday.

An annual trilateral meeting among the leaders of the three Northeast Asian nations hasn't been held since 2019 due to the COVID-19 outbreak and the often touchy ties among them. The three-way summit began in 2008.

While the three nations are close economic and cultural partners with one another, their relationships have suffered on-and-off setbacks due to a mix of issues such as Japan's wartime atrocities, the

U.S.-China rivalry and North Korea's nuclear program.

The foreign ministers of the three countries are to meet in the southeastern South Korean city of Busan on Sunday to prepare for their leaders' summit and exchange views on ways to strengthen three-way cooperation and other regional and international issues, Seoul's Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

The three ministers are to hold bilateral meetings on the sidelines as well. In September, senior officials of the three nations agreed to restart the trilateral summit "at the earliest convenient time."

South Korea and Japan are key United States allies in the region and they host about 80,000 American troops on

their soils combined. Their recent push to bolster a trilateral Seoul-Tokyo-Washington security partnership triggered rebukes from Beijing, which is extremely sensitive to any moves it sees as trying to hold China back.

When North Korea launched its first military spy satellite into space Tuesday night, Seoul, Tokyo and Washington spoke with one voice in strongly condemning the launch. They said the launch involved the North's efforts improve its missile technology as well as establish a space-based surveillance system. But China, the North's major ally, asked all concerned nations to keep calm and exercise restraints, echoing statements that it previously issued

when North Korea inflamed tensions with major weapons tests.

United Nations Security Council resolutions prohibit any satellite liftoffs by North Korea, viewing them as covers for testing its long-range missile technology. The North says it has a sovereign right to launch satellites.

Ties between Seoul and Tokyo soured badly in recent years due to issues stemming from Japan's 1910-1945 colonisation of the Korean Peninsula. But bilateral relations have improved significantly recently as South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol pushes to move beyond history disputes and bolster cooperation to better deal with North Korea's nuclear threats and other issues.

Ukraine aims a major drone attack at Crimea

AP ■ KYIV

Ukraine launched one of the biggest drone attacks on the Moscow-annexed Crimean Peninsula since the full-scale war that started with Russia's invasion 21 months ago, Russian officials said on Friday.

At the same time, Ukrainian officials reported that the Kremlin's forces escalated their weeklong and costly attempt to storm Avdiivka, a strategically important city in eastern Ukraine.

The stepped-up efforts came as both sides are keen to show they are not deadlocked as the fighting approaches 2024. Neither side has gained much ground despite a Ukrainian counteroffensive that began in June, and analysts predict the war will be a long one.

With winter weather setting in, bringing snow and freezing temperatures to the battlefield, Ukraine and Russia are looking to take ground that could provide platforms for future advances.

The Moscow-appointed governor for the Russian-occupied part of southern Ukraine's Kherson region, Vladimir Saldo, said Ukraine launched a major drone attack on Crimea early on Friday. He claimed that

dozens of drones were shot down over the province and the northern part of Crimea.

Russia annexed the peninsula from Ukraine in 2014, a move that most of the world considered illegal, and has used it as a staging and supply point during the war.

The Russian Defense Ministry said air defenses downed 13 Ukrainian drones over Crimea and three more over southern Russia's Volgograd region.

It was not possible to independently verify either side's battlefield claims.

Russia has been trying to capture Avdiivka since October 10, using heavy bombardments and reportedly taking heavy losses.

The city is wrecked, and the battle has become reminiscent of the fight over the eastern Ukraine city of Bakhmut, which was largely destroyed during nine months of fighting before Russian troops eventually captured it.

Avdiivka lies in the northern suburbs of Donetsk, a city in a region of the same name that Russian forces partially occupy. Avdiivka's location grants Ukrainian forces artillery advantages over the city and could serve as a springboard for them to liberate Donetsk.

EU sends border police reinforcements to Finland over migrant influx

AP ■ HELSINKI

The European Union's border agency said on Thursday that it will send dozens of officers and equipment as reinforcements to Finland to help police its borders amid suspicion that Russia is behind an influx of migrants arriving to the country.

Frontex said that it expects a "significant reinforcement" made up of 50 border guard officers and other staff, along with patrol cars and additional equipment, to be put in place as soon as next week.

More than 800 migrants without proper visas and documentation have arrived in Finland so far since August, with more than 700 in November alone by the end of Wednesday -- compared to a few dozen in September and October. They include people from Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Kenya, Morocco and Somalia.

Finnish Prime Minister Petteri Orpo, who addressed lawmakers at Parliament on Thursday, called the situation "a serious disruption of border security" that affects the national security of Finland, whose population is 5.6 million.

"Finland cannot be influenced, Finland cannot be destabilised," Orpo said with a deci-

sive tone. "Russia started this, and Russia also can stop it."

The Kremlin denies the allegations.

On Wednesday, Finnish border guards and soldiers began erecting barriers, including concrete obstacles topped with barbed-wire at some crossing points on the Nordic country's lengthy border with Russia.

The government decided to close four busy Russia border crossings in southeastern Finland last week over suspicions of foul play by Russian border officials. It plans to only leave one Arctic crossing point open for migrants seeking asylum.

Frontex Executive Director Hans Leijtens said that sending border reinforcements is "a demonstration of the European Union's unified stand against hybrid challenges affecting one of its members."

Finland has nine crossing points on the border with Russia, which runs 1,340 kilometres and serves as the EU's easternmost frontier as well as a significant part of NATO's northeastern flank. Finnish authorities believe that Russia has become more hostile toward Finland since the country joined NATO in April.

Finnish border officials

told AP on Wednesday that there's been a remarkable change in Russia's modus operandi at the Russia-Finland border zone, which is normally under the heavy control of Russia's Federal Security Service, or FSB.

EU Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson said this week that the challenges on Finland's border gave her a feeling of 'deja vu', two years after Belarus began driving migrants into Latvia, Lithuania and Poland in what European officials said was an attempt to destabilise the 27-nation bloc.

"The Finnish border is the EU's border," Johansson told EU lawmakers in a message of support to Helsinki. "The European Union is behind you. You can count on our full support to protect the EU border and uphold fundamental rights."

Most of the migrants -- many seen wearing sneakers in Finland's harsh winter conditions -- are young men in their 20s and 30s, but some are families with children and women, border guard data and photos indicate.

Nearly all have arrived at the border zone on bicycles that Finnish and Russian media reports say were provided and sold to them.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform that General Power of attorney between Axis Bank Limited, and me (Mr Sunit Malhotra) dated 27th Feb 2008 has been lost by me on 11/08/2023 from my office at K 12 Green park Main, New Delhi branch and a complaint has been lodged with respective Police Station, Furthermore, any misuse of the said POA will not bind either party. Anybody who is in possession of the said POA should return to the Bank. Ph:9582800151

ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਦੇਵ ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ, ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤਸਰ

ਨੋਟਿਸ

ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ ਕੈਂਪਸ ਵਿਖੇ ਵੀਡੀਓ ਸਟੈਂਡ (ਮੋਨ ਗੇਟ ਅਤੇ ਬੈਂਕ ਸਾਈਡ ਗੇਟ ਪਾਰਕਿੰਗ) ਦੀ ਅਲਾਟਮੈਂਟ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਬਿਨੈ-ਪੱਤਰ ਨਿ:ਦੀ 30-11-2023 ਤੱਕ ਮੰਗੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ। ਅਲਾਟਮੈਂਟ ਸਬੰਧੀ ਵੇਰਵਾ, Term & Conditions ਯੂਨੀਵਰਸਿਟੀ ਵੈਬਸਾਈਟ www.gndu.ac.in (Tenders) ਤੋਂ download ਕੀਤੀ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਅਤੇ ਨਿਰਧਾਰਿਤ ਬਿਨੈ-ਪੱਤਰ ਜਨਰਲ ਸ਼ਾਖਾ ਤੋਂ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕੀਤੇ ਜਾਣ।

NA/12/20374/2023/30009 ਰਜਿਸਟਰਾਰ

for you **agranTE**

"KAVYAM" - AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROJECT

Advertisement is invited to inform general public at large regarding cancellation of units of already allotted customers, due to non-payment despite several reminders, in the Residential Apartments in the Affordable Group Housing Project Kavyam is being developed by Agrante Realty Ltd Sector-108, Gurugram, Haryana, as per terms and conditions of the policy prescribed by the Town & Country Planning Department, Government of Haryana vide notification no PF-27/48921 dated 19.08.2013 & amendments thereof (details available at the Department website, i.e. www.tcp.haryana.gov.in).

S.No.	Application No.	TYPE	Unit No.	Applicant Name	Co-Applicant Name
1	11045	Type-1	TA2-1002	Shruti Dansila	Sarita Jha
2	11063	Type-1	TA4-104	Archana Gautam	Adesh Kumar
3	3638	Type-1	TB-203	Paras Choudhary	N/A
4	11211	Type-1	TA2-101	Jagyasa Nayak	N/A
5	11066	Type-1	TA4-304	Yogender Punia	N/A
6	3295	Type-1	TC-505	Gunjan Gang	N/A
7	11252	Type-3	TD-1605	Daniel Kerketta	N/A
8	11070	Type-3	TD-616	Manish Chauhan	Premika
9	2546	Type-3	TD-1613	Deepak	N/A

It is to inform to all above allottees that it is last & final opportunity to restore the allotment after making the all dues till date within seven working days, otherwise it shall be considered as cancelled and the same shall be allotted to the aspiring applicants under the applicable provisions of policy prescribed by the Town & Country Planning Department, Government of Haryana vide notification no PF-27/48921 dated 19.08.2013 & amendments thereof.

Office address: Agrante Realty Ltd Unit No. 122 Suncity Trade Tower, Sector-21, Gurgaon-122016
CIN: U70101DL2013PLC248731
Contact at - website: www.kavyamhomes.com; 0124-4769500-599, 8800499383, 8800499674

No unusual or novel pathogens found in latest pneumonia outbreak, China informs WHO

PTI ■ BEIJING/GENEVA

Claiming no unusual or novel pathogens other than the seasonal ones were detected, China has sought to play down the global concerns amid surging cases of mycoplasma pneumoniae and influenza flu, especially among children, in its southern and northern provinces.

Even when China's widely-publicised exchange with the World Health Organisation (WHO) in response to the queries over the reports of surging cases of mycoplasma pneumoniae and influenza flu triggered the worldwide alert, including in India, China said the spike in respiratory diseases was due to an 'immunity gap.'

Both WHO and China have received global criticism for their non-transparent data/information sharing about COVID-19 and the world still

has apprehensions over the emergence of the deadly virus in the Chinese city of Wuhan in 2019 which later spiralled into a massive pandemic resulting in deaths of and ill-health to millions of people across countries.

In response to the media reports in China about a spike in children's hospitalisation, the WHO on Thursday made an official request to China for detailed information.

On Friday, a WHO statement issued in Geneva, quoting information it received from the Chinese health officials, said: "There has been no detection of any unusual or novel pathogens or unusual clinical presentations but only the aforementioned general increase in respiratory illnesses due to multiple known pathogens."

The WHO statement said that the requested data was

provided (by China) when its officials held a teleconference with health authorities from the Chinese Centre for Disease Control and Prevention and the Beijing Children's Hospital, facilitated by the National Health Commission and the National Administration of Disease Control and Prevention on November 23.

"The data indicated an increase in outpatient consultations and hospital admissions of children due to Mycoplasma pneumoniae since May, and RSV, adenovirus and influenza virus since October," the statement said.

After reviewing the Chinese response, the WHO said, it does not recommend any specific measures for travellers to China and advises against the application of any travel or trade restrictions based on the current information available on this

event.

However, the WHO also quoted the Chinese response that said: "Some of these increases are earlier in the season than historically experienced, but not unexpected given the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, as similarly experienced in other countries."

Chinese health officials, as quoted by the WHO, further stated that the rise in respiratory illness has not resulted in patient loads exceeding hospital capacities. But local media reports suggested otherwise.

State-run Global Times quoted China's National Influenza Centre as saying that in the week of November 13-19, "the positive rate of influenza virus detection continued to rise in the southern and northern provinces, with the A (H3N2) subtype predominating, followed by B (Victoria)."

Kind Attention Rail Passengers

IMPORTANT NOTICE

This is notified for the information of rail passengers that the Northern Railway has decided to change the days of operation of train no. 22447/22448 New Delhi - Amb Andaura - New Delhi Vande Bharat Express and 22439/22440 New Delhi - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - New Delhi Vande Bharat Express as per details given below:-

Train No. & Name	Existing		Revised		Date
	Days of run	Except	Days of run	Except	
22447 New Delhi - Amb Andaura Vande Bharat Express	Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Sat, Sun	Friday	Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	Tuesday	Ex. New Delhi : 21.03.2024
22448 Amb Andaura - New Delhi Vande Bharat Express	Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	Tuesday	Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	Wednesday	Ex. Amb Andaura : 21.03.2024
22439 New Delhi - Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra Vande Bharat Express	Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	Tuesday	Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	Wednesday	Ex. New Delhi : 21.03.2024
22440 Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra - New Delhi Vande Bharat Express	Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	Tuesday	Mon, Tue, Thu, Fri, Sat, Sun	Wednesday	Ex. Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Katra : 21.03.2024

For any kind of information such as arrival/departure timings and stoppages enroute etc., passengers are requested to contact RailMadad Helpline No. 139 or may visit Indian Railways website <https://enquiry.indianrail.gov.in> or NTES App.

Please join us on

RailMadad Helpline No. **139**

Visit RailMadad website: www.railmadad.indianrailways.gov.in

Download Railmadad App

NORTHERN RAILWAY

visit us at: www.nr.indianrailways.gov.in

3718/2023

SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE

Sebi proposes flexibility in framework relating to 'trading plans' under insider rules

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Friday came out with a proposal to provide flexibility in adopting trading plans by persons, who are perpetually in possession of unpublished price sensitive information.

Under the rule, 'Trading Plans' (TP) enable persons like senior management or Key Managerial Personnel (KMP), who are perpetually in possession of Unpublished Price Sensitive Information (UPSI), to trade in securities in a compliant manner.

"Since the introduction of trading plans in 2015, data and market feedback suggest that the current regulatory requirements in respect of trading plans are onerous and consequently, trading plans are not very popular," Sebi said in its consultation paper.

Accordingly, Sebi constituted a working group that was mandated to review provisions of TP under the insider trading



rules.

As per the consultation paper, the working group has recommended that a minimum cool-off period between disclosure of TP and implementation of TP should be reduced to four months from six months at present.

In addition, the minimum coverage period requirement should be slashed to two months from the current twelve months.

It has also been suggested that the requirement of black-out period for trading in TP should

be done away with.

"The insider shall have flexibility, during formulation of TP, to provide price limits i.e. Upper price limits for buy trades and lower price limits for sell trades. Such price limit shall be within +/-20 per cent of the closing price on date of submission of TP.

"If price of the security, during execution, is outside the price limit set by the insider, the trade shall not be executed. If no price limit is opted for, the trade has to be undertaken irrespective of the prevailing price,"

the working group has recommended.

It has been suggested that contra-trade provisions should be applicable on trades executed under TP as well and there should be a disclosure of TP proposed to be done in two days from the date of approval of such plan to stock exchanges.

While there is no prescribed format for disclosure of TP, it typically contains the personal details such as name and designation of the insider along with the trades planned to be undertaken.

The working group suggested to mask personal details of insider in TP or alternatively continue with the existing manner of TP disclosure with personal details of insiders.

With a view to balance the problem of potential misuse and privacy and safety concerns, a third alternative has been suggested to make two separate disclosures of TP -- full and confidential disclosure to stock exchange and disclosure without personal details to

public through the stock exchange.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) has sought public comments on the proposals till December 15.

Going by the regulatory framework, the prohibition on insider trading is based on the premise that trading in a security by a person would be influenced by the UPSI in their possession, which is not accessible to others in the market.

However, insiders are allowed to trade, provided they are not in possession of UPSI and subject to compliance with other provisions of insider trading rules. These insiders like those in senior management, who have a very small window for carrying out their trades, may need to trade for purposes such as creeping acquisitions and for compliance with minimum public shareholding norms.

Sometimes, they may wish to dispose of the shares acquired through exercising stock

Markets close modestly lower; IT stocks weigh

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed with modest losses for the second straight session on Friday, following selling in IT stocks amid a lack of fresh buying triggers.

However, buying interest in banking counters helped the bourses limit the losses, the traders said.

In a highly volatile trade, the 30-share BSE Sensex declined 47.77 points or 0.07 per cent to settle at 65,970.04. During the day, it gyrated 207.59 points, hitting a high of 66,101.64 and a low of 65,894.05. The Nifty slipped 7.30 points or 0.04 per cent to 19,794.70.

On the weekly front, the BSE benchmark climbed 175.31 points or 0.26 per cent, and the Nifty advanced 62.9 points or 0.31 per cent.

"Global shares drifted on Friday in the absence of guidance from Wall Street, which was closed for the Thanksgiving holiday on Thursday. Investors were sceptical of whether the US Federal Reserve is done with interest rate hikes that kept risk appetite in check," said Deepak Jasani, Head of Retail Research, HDFC Securities.



Among the Sensex firms, HCL Tech, Wipro, Tata Consultancy Services, Tech Mahindra, Nestle, Tata Motors, Infosys, Bharti Airtel, UltraTech Cement and Tata Steel were among the laggards.

On the other hand, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, JSW Steel, Mahindra & Mahindra and Kotak Mahindra Bank were the major gainers.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge gained

0.14 per cent, and the midcap index advanced 0.13 per cent. Among the indices, tech fell 0.89 per cent, IT declined 0.88 per cent, FMCG (0.49 per cent), consumer durables (0.36 per cent) and telecommunication (0.25 per cent).

Commodities, financial services, healthcare, industrials, bank and capital goods were among the gainers.

"The benchmark index traded on a tepid note following the weak German growth data, and trading volume was limited due to the US market holiday on Black Friday and the India market holiday on Monday next week.

RBI slaps penalties totalling ₹10.34 cr on Citibank, BoB, IOB

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The Reserve Bank on Friday imposed penalties totalling Rs 10.34 crore on Citibank, Bank of Baroda, and Indian Overseas Bank for contravention of various regulatory norms.

The highest penalty of Rs 5 crore has been imposed on Citibank NA for non-compliance of norms related to depositor education and awareness fund scheme, and code of conduct on outsourcing of financial services, the RBI said in a statement.

A fine of Rs 4.34 crore was imposed on the state-owned Bank of Baroda for violation of certain directions related to the creation of a central repository of large common exposures, and others, another release



said. Chennai-based public sector lender Indian Overseas Bank was slapped with a Rs 1 crore fine for contravention of directions concerning loans and advances. In all three cases, the Reserve Bank of India said, penalties are based on deficiencies in regulatory compliance and not intended to pronounce upon the validity of any transaction or agreement entered into by the banks with their customers.

Nissan will invest USD 1.4 billion to make EV versions of its best-selling cars at UK factory

AP ■ LONDON

Nissan will invest USD 1.4 billion to update its factory in northeast England to make electric versions of its two best-selling cars, a boost for the British government as it tries to revive the country's ailing economy.

The Japanese automaker manufactures the gasoline or gas-hybrid Qashqai and smaller Juke crossover vehicles at the factory in Sunderland, which employs 6,000 workers.

Nissan Motor Co. said it's directly investing up to 1.12 billion pounds (USD 1.4 billion) to produce electric successors to the two models. The money also will enable "wider investment in infrastructure projects and the supply chain, including a new gigafactory" for EV batteries at the site, the government said in a separate press release.



"Nissan's investment is a massive vote of confidence in the UK's automotive industry," which contributes 71 billion pounds a year to the economy, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak said.

Sunak visited the factory for the announcement, posing for photos with Treasury chief Jeremy Hunt in front of a blue Qashqai on the assembly line, meeting workers and getting a tour from plant staff.

at the factory.

The company said in 2021 that it planned to build an electric vehicle at the factory, alongside batteries made next door by supplier AESC, owned by China's Envision. AESC already has two gigafactories in Sunderland, and Friday's announcement adds a third.

EVs are "at the heart of our plans to achieve carbon neutrality," Nissan President and CEO Makoto Uchida said in a statement. "With electric versions of our core European models on the way, we are accelerating towards a new era for Nissan, for industry and for our customers."

Nissan has set a target of electrifying its entire European passenger car lineup by 2030. "With today's announcement, we are making that vision happen," Uchida said at the plant, which temporarily stopped production for the ceremony.

NSE, BSE impose fines on Power Grid Corporation

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Leading exchanges BSE and NSE have imposed a fine of Rs 5,42,800 each on state-owned Power Grid Corporation for not having the required number of independent directors, including one woman.

The NSE and BSE have imposed a fine of Rs 5,42,800 for non-compliance, Power Grid Corporation said in a regulatory filing said.

It informed that the company has received notices from NSE and BSE on November 21, 2023, regarding non-compliance with the provision of Regulation 17(1) of the Sebi (LODR) for not having a requisite number of independent directors (including one woman independent director) on the Board during the quarter ended September 30, 2023. The company said that in response to the notices, it has



requested NSE and BSE to grant a waiver of the fine with regard to non-compliance of Regulation 17(1) of the Sebi (LODR), Regulations, 2015.

Powergrid, being a government company within the meaning of Section 2(45) of the Companies Act, 2013, the power to appoint functional/Official Part-time Directors/non-official Part-time Directors (Independent Directors) vests with the President of India, it explained. The said non-compliance of Regulation 17(1) of the Sebi (LODR), Regulations, 2015, for the quarter ended Sep 30, 2023, was not a lapse on the part of the company, it pointed out.

Berkshire Hathaway exits Paytm, sells 2.46% stake for ₹1,371 crore

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Billionaire Warren Buffett-backed Berkshire Hathaway Inc on Friday divested its entire 2.46 per cent stake in Paytm's parent company One97 Communications for Rs 1,371 crore through an open market transaction. Berkshire Hathaway Inc through its affiliate BH International Holdings sold more than 1.56 crore shares of fintech company Paytm on the National Stock Exchange (NSE).

According to the bulk deal data available with the NSE, BH International Holdings offloaded 1,56,23,529 shares, amounting to a 2.46 per cent stake in Noida-headquartered Paytm.

The shares were disposed of at an average price of Rs 877.29 apiece, taking the transaction value to Rs 1,370.63 crore. Meanwhile, Cophall Mauritius Investment picked up 75,75,529

shares and Ghisallo Master Fund LP acquired 42.75 lakh shares, amounting to a 1.19 per cent and 0.67 per cent stake in Paytm, respectively.

The shares were purchased at an average price of Rs 877.20 per piece, taking the aggregate deal value to Rs 1,039.52 crore. Details of the other buyers could not be ascertained.

Shares of One97 Communications declined 3.08 per cent to close at Rs 895 apiece on the NSE on Friday. In October, Fintech company One97 Communications, which operates under the Paytm brand, reported the narrowing of consolidated loss to Rs 291.7 crore in the second quarter of the current fiscal. The company had posted a loss of Rs 571.5 crore in the year-ago period. The consolidated revenue increased about 32 per cent to Rs 2,518.6 crore during the quarter from Rs 1,914 crore a year ago.

Ampln Energy Transition plans ₹3,100 crore investment in Eastern region

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Ampln Energy Transition on Friday announced plans to invest Rs 3,100 crore in states including Bihar, Odisha and Jharkhand.

The investments will be made towards setting up renewable energy projects of about 600 MW and a 1.3 GW integrated manufacturing facility of solar cells and modules, the company said in a statement.

"Significant investments are planned in West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and the Northeastern states. The investment reflects our commitment of accelerating the renewable energy transition and adoption of clean energy solutions in the Eastern region," the company said. In the Eastern region, the company said it already has the largest solar open access portfolio of 200 MWp, the largest utility power purchase agreement (PPA) with CESC for a



250 MWp of wind solar hybrid project.

The company is serving marquee customers in the region across diverse sectors such as steel and cement, IT and data centre, heavy engineering, FMCG, utility etc through its projects.

"Our investment in the region marks a significant milestone in our mission to drive the transition to renewables in the region. With the right policy intervention like Green Energy

Open Access, the shift to renewables is unstoppable. "The integrated solar cell & module manufacturing capacity that we are establishing in the region, would strengthen the push to renewables," said Pinaki Bhattacharyya, MD and CEO, Ampln Energy Transition.

Ampln is India's leading renewable energy transition platform with a total portfolio of 3 GWp spread over 17 states of India.

India's forex reserves jump \$5.08 billion to \$595.4 billion

PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's forex reserves increased by USD 5,077 billion to USD 595.397 billion during the week ended November 17, the Reserve Bank said on Friday.

In the previous reporting week, the kitty declined USD 462 million to USD 590.321 billion. For the week ended November 17, the foreign currency assets, a major component of the reserves, increased USD 4.387 billion to USD 526.391 billion, according to the Weekly Statistical Supplement released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). It can be noted that in October 2021, the country's forex kitty had reached an all-time high of USD 645 billion. The reserves took a hit as the central bank deployed the kitty to defend the rupee amid pressures caused majorly by global developments since last year.

IBC recoveries declining, resolution timelines getting prolonged: Crisis



PTI ■ MUMBAI

Introduction of a focused bankruptcy law has helped improve the credit culture in India, but the last few years have seen a decline in recoveries and the resolution timelines getting prolonged, Crisis Ratings on Friday.

In a note to observe the seven years of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC), the rating agency said the recovery rates have fallen to 32 per cent in September 2023, from 43 per cent in March 2019.

At the same time, the average resolution time has increased from 324 days to 653 days, versus the stipulated 330 days, it said.

The IBC has helped in resolving debt worth Rs 3.16 lakh crore stuck in 808 cases in the past seven years, the leading credit rating agency said.

Its senior director Mohit Makhija said the IBC is "the most potent code" in India's corporate loan history, which has brought a "behavioural change" in borrowers. "The fear of losing companies has led to over Rs 9 lakh crore of filed debt being settled before the cases arrived at the IBC doorstep for admission. This is around three times the stressed debt resolved via the code in the past seven years, underscoring its deterrence effect," he said.

The agency also recommended solutions around the current challenges on recoveries and timelines, saying there is a need to remove some impediments.

It reasoned that there is a limited judicial bench strength and delays in identification and acknowledgement of default which is leading to some of the troubles.

The recovery rates have been suppressed because of significant delays in the pre-IBC admission stage, it said, pointing out that the same has increased to 650 days in FY22 from 450 days in FY19 increased from about 450 days in fiscal 2019, it said.

The rating agency said 90 amendments have been carried out to the law so far, including some over the last year like approval for sale of assets/resolution plan on a segregated basis, increasing the number of National Company Law Tribunal benches to 16 and extending timelines for filing claims.

Its director Sushant Sarode said Capacity augmentation, Digitalisation and Expansion of Pre-pack resolutions to large corporates can help improve the efficiency of IBC. "There is a backlog of 13,000 cases under IBC, which includes 2,073 ongoing corporate insolvency resolutions, he said.

INBRIEF

TATA POWER-DDL, PSSC INK MOU ON SKILLS TRAINING

New Delhi: TATA Power Delhi Distribution Limited (Tata Power-DDL), a leading power utility supplying electricity to a populace of 7 million in North Delhi and the Power Sector Skill Council (PSSC), have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to jointly spearhead skill development training and capacity-building programme for the Power Distribution Sector in India and abroad.



IRB INFRA ARM INKS PACT WITH NHAI FOR TOLLING PROJ

New Delhi: IRB Infrastructure Developers on Friday said that its associate IRB Lalitpur Tollway has signed a concession agreement with the NHAI for tolling and operations and maintenance of the Lalitpur-Lakhnabad stretch of NH44 in Madhya Pradesh. The project involves paying upfront Rs 4,428 crore to NHAI for tolling and O&M of 316 km stretch of NH44 for a revenue-linked concession period of 20 years, IRB Infrastructure Developers said in a statement. The project is being executed by IRB Infrastructure Trust (Private InvIT), it added.

LAB GROWN DIAMONDS NOT AS SUSTAINABLE

New Delhi: Over the past eight years, the diamond landscape has witnessed significant shifts. Laboratory-grown diamond prices have nosedived, jeopardising their long-term investment potential. Analyst Paul Zimmisky and a three decade-long study by Bain and Company reveal an illuminating trend, the costs of laboratory-grown diamonds have plummeted by over 74 per cent in the past six years, while natural diamond prices, though fluctuating at times, have over the long term exhibited a consistent annual increase of 3 per cent.

RBI supersedes board of Abhyudaya Co-op Bank for one year over poor governance

PTI ■ MUMBAI

The RBI on Friday superseded the board of Abhyudaya Cooperative Bank for one year over poor governance standards, and appointed an administrator to manage the affairs of the lender.

Satya Prakash Pathak, former Chief General Manager of State Bank of India, is the 'Administrator' to manage the affairs of the Mumbai-based bank during the one-year period, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said. Also, a committee of advisors has been appointed to assist the administrator to discharge his duties. "The action is necessitated due

to certain material concerns emanating from poor governance standards observed in the bank," the RBI said, while superseding the board of directors of Abhyudaya Cooperative Bank.

However, no business restriction has been placed by the RBI and the bank will continue to carry on its normal banking activities, under the guidance of the administrator, it added.

The members of the 'Committee of Advisors' are Venkatesh Hegde, former General Manager, SBI, Mahendra Chhajed, Chartered Accountant, and Suhas Gokhale former MD, COSMOS Co-operative Bank Ltd.

Gold drops ₹50; silver declines ₹200

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices dived Rs 50 to Rs 62,120 per 10 grams in the national capital on Friday amid fall in precious metal's price in global markets, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the yellow metal had closed at Rs 62,170 per 10 grams.

Silver also declined Rs 200 to Rs 76,200 per kilogram. Gold traded negative on Friday, with spot gold prices in the Delhi markets trading at Rs 62,120/10 gram, down by Rs 50 against its previous close, HDFC Securities' senior analyst of commodities Saamil Gandhi said.

In the international markets, gold was down at USD 1,992



per ounce while silver was flat at USD 23.65 per ounce.

Meanwhile, in futures trade, the December contract of gold jumped Rs 108 to Rs 61,180 per 10 grams on the MCX. Also, the December contract of silver bounced Rs 18 to Rs 72,916 per kilogram on the bourses.

SEHER WINS 16TH, FINAL LEG OF HERO WPGT

Sneha bags Order of Merit

PTI ■ CHENNAI

Seher Atwal holed two birdies in the last three holes to round off her season with a win in the 16th and final leg of the Hero Women's Pro Golf Tour at the Cosmo Golf Club here on Friday.

She produced the round of the week with 2-under 68 as the players finished 18 holes in a day for the first time this week.

Sneha Singh held on with one birdie and eight pars in a tense situation on the back nine and was tied for second place with Shweta Mansingh.

Neha Tripathi, however, faltered on the back nine and that allowed Sneha to walk away with the Hero Order of Merit.

The first two rounds were reduced to nine holes each, so the tournament was decided on a total of 36 holes.

Seher, with 36-37 in the first two nine-hole rounds, ended at 1-over 141 for 36 holes and was a winner by two over Sneha (71) and Shweta (71), who came close to her first-ever win on the Tour.

As Sneha managed to hold on to her top position, Neha, who needed to finish ahead of Sneha and earn at least Rs 27,792 more, ended the third round with 73. Neha was in the picture for



the title and the Order of Merit till she arrived on the 16th tee. A double bogey on 16th followed by a bogey on 17th saw her finish fourth.

Seher birdied the third and fifth but dropped a shot on the ninth to turn in 1-under. On the back she followed up a birdie with a bogey on 11th and 12th and then bogeyed the 15th but made up with a birdie on 16th. She closed the issue with a birdie on 18th.

Sneha had bogeys on fifth and ninth but that birdie on the 12th was crucial for her and she hung in for vital pars on the rest.

Shweta had two birdies against three bogeys for a 71 but fell short of the title by two.

Neha had a disappointing final day but began well with birdies on the second and the third. The back nine was a disaster as she bogeyed 10th, 12th and 14th and there was further misery with a double bogey on the 16th and a bogey on 17th. She had just one more birdie in between on the Par-3 13th.

The round of 73 also meant she stayed second on the Order of Merit as Sneha remained on top and took the honours. Seher finished third on the Order of Merit, with Khushi Khanijav and Tvesha Malik finishing in fourth and fifth spots respectively.

Khushi Khanijav (75) was fifth, while Ridhima Dilawari (73) and Ananya Datar (76) were tied sixth. Snigdha Goswami (76) was eighth, while Jasmine Shekar (73) and Durga Nittur (76) rounded off the top-10.



Sumit, Sasi refuse to travel to Pakistan for Davis Cup

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's top two singles players Sumit Nagal and Sasi Kumar Mukund have conveyed to the national tennis federation that they won't travel to Pakistan for the next Davis Cup tie and the baffled AITA has decided to discuss the players' refusal to attend its next Executive Committee meeting.

Nagal is India's best-ranked singles player at number 141 in the ATP chart and Mukund is second-best at number 477.

The two players have conveyed their unavailability for the World Group I play-off tie to be played in February but have not specified the reason behind their decision. The PTI has learnt that Nagal did not want to play because the tie will be held on grass courts, a surface that does not suit his game style. Mukund has opted out of the matches because of "personal reasons".

"Nagal had conveyed to the team management long back that he should not be considered for the tie against Pakistan because grass court is not his preferred surface," said an AITA source.

In the current scenario, India's challenge will be led by Ramkumar Ramanathan, who with his "serve and volley" style is best-suited player for the tie, the winner of which will stay in World Group I for the year 2024.

The next best choice for India will be Divyraj Pratap Singh, who had made his Davis Cup debut against Morocco in September this year.

Rohan Bopanna has already retired and India, without its top singles player Nagal will not be overwhelming favourite in the tie despite the fact that Pakistan's tennis is being carried by old and

aging horses Aqeel Khan and Aisam ul haq Quereshi.

AITA UNHAPPY WITH PLAYERS DECISION

All India Tennis Association (AITA) Secretary General reminded that the players should not think twice when it comes to national duty.

"This is wrong. When it's a question of serving the country why would you not do it? I have put the matter in the hands of the Executive Committee," Dhupar told PTI.

"There is no choice for players if they want to represent India. My theory is simple. But I am nobody to take a call. The call has to be taken by the Executive Committee. If the player is sick and injured, I can understand but this is not the first time that Mukund has made himself unavailable for national duty. He has done it twice," he added.

"Let the administrators of the country decide what's best for India," he said indicating that the AITA may come up with a Davis Cup selection policy.

Recently when Nagal had shared his financial struggles in an interview with PTI, he had got support from many quarters.

The corporates came forward and even DLTA released Rs 5 lakh assistance to him.

India skipper Rohit Rajpal was even trying to get Nagal included in the TOPS and it remains to be seen if his refusal to play for India affects that.

INDIA STILL TRYING TO GET TIE SHIFTED

India had drawn Pakistan back in 2019 also but due to "security concerns" the Asia/Oceania Group I tie was shifted to Kazakhstan, a neutral venue.

As a mark of protest, Pakistan's

Israel and Ukraine could face each other



AP ■ NYON (SWITZERLAND)

Israel and Ukraine, two countries currently fighting wars, could face each other for a spot at next year's European Championship.

The two national teams were put on the same qualifying path in Thursday's playoff draw, with a possible deciding match in March.

Israel was paired with Iceland, while Ukraine will face Bosnia-Herzegovina in the playoff semifinals. The 12 playoff teams will play the six semifinal matches on March 21. All three finals are scheduled for March 26.

Neither Israel nor Ukraine can currently host games at home because of the wars. If they both advance to the playoff final, they could meet in a neutral country.

In the other playoff brackets, Wales will host Finland and the winner will then host Poland or Estonia, and Georgia or Luxembourg host either Euro 2024 champion Greece or Kazakhstan.

European soccer governing body UEFA allocated home advantage for the finals in the three brackets. The 12 teams entered the playoffs based on their results and standings in Nations League groups played last year. Their standing in Euro 2024 qualifying groups this year did not affect the seeding for Thursday's draw.

The winners of the three finals will play at the 24-team Euro 2024 tournament, joining the 20 teams that qualified directly and host Germany.

Israel, which became a UEFA member in 1994, has never qualified for the European Championship.

Ukraine is back in the playoffs for a major soccer tournament after losing at Wales 1-0 last year in a match for a spot at the World Cup in Qatar. That match had to be delayed after Russia invaded Ukraine.

Ukraine is "the strongest" of the 12 teams in the playoff semifinals, Bosnia coach Savo Milošević said.

"It's special to play against Ukraine in these days but it's also special because I think among these 12 teams maybe they are the best," Milošević told The Associated Press at UEFA headquarters.

Ukraine dropped into the playoffs after a 0-0 draw with Euro 2020 champion Italy on Monday when a win would have qualified the team alongside group winner England.

Wales coach Robert Page said it was better to avoid Ukraine this time after the emotion of their game in Cardiff in June 2022.

"This is now just down to football," Page said of facing Finland, recalling that the game against Ukraine "was really emotional at the time because the war had just broken out. How they even got the team together is commendable. To manage all that at the time was very difficult."

When the Euro 2024 draw is conducted on Dec. 2 in Hamburg, there will be three vacant slots in the lowest-ranked pot of No. 4 seeds for the play-off winners.

Neutral venues for the playoffs do not need to be confirmed until a few weeks before the games. Ukraine has played recent "home" games in Germany and Israel has gone to Hungary.

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Tej Prakash Sharma/ Goodiya Rani- LBGUR00002053376/ LBBWD00005802978- M 541, 5th Floor, Alwar Bypass, Bhiwadi, Rajasthan- 301019	Flat No. 19, 4th Floor, Tower-J, Hill View Garden, Near Ashiana Town Beta, Bhiwadi, Alwar, Rajasthan, Bhiwadi- 301019	October 18, 2023 Rs. 16,52,664.00/-	04/07/2023

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : November 24, 2023
Place : Delhi/ NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

PUBLIC NOTICE

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

The following borrower/s have defaulted in the repayment of principal and interest of the loans facility obtained by them from the Bank and the loans have been classified as Non-Performing Assets (NPA). A notice was issued to them under Section 13 (2) of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act-2002 on their last known addresses, however it was not served and hence they are hereby notified by way of this public notice.

Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantor/ (Loan Account Number) & Address	Property Address of Secured Asset/ Asset to be Enforced	Date of Notice Sent/ Outstanding as on Date of Notice	NPA Date
1.	Farhat Hashmi, Nazim Khan, 3377/C/10-610-A, Batla House, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi, Delhi- 110025 A/C:-LBGHZ00001200397	Flat No. 10/11, 2nd Floor, G.D.A & Shripra Estate Ltd, Shripra Sun City-2, Indirapuram, Ghaziabad.	18/10/2023 Rs. 1.18, 376.02/-	07-12-2021
2.	Farhat Hashmi, Nazim Khan, Imbisat Ahmed Alvi, 3377/C/10-610-A, Batla House, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi, Delhi- 110025 A/C:-LBGHZ00001200397	Flat No. 10/11, 2nd Floor, G.D.A & Shripra Estate Ltd, Shripra Sun City-2, Indirapuram, Ghaziabad.	18/10/2023 Rs. 5.11, 136.88/-	07-12-2021
3.	Vijay Kumar Singh, Arun Kumar Singh, H No-G-230 Alfa-2, Greater Noida Uttar Pradesh- 201306 A/C:-LBDEL00001995912	Plot No. 129, Block G, Sector Alpha II, Greater Noida, District Gautam Budh Nagar Noida Uttar Pradesh- 201307	19/10/2023 Rs. 12.20, 182.88/-	20-04-2023
4.	Om Prakash Arya, Rajendra Arya, Gf-3, 10/19, Rajender Nagar, Sector-3, Sahibabad, Ghaziabad- 201005 A/C:-LBDEL00001384871	Flat No. S 1, Plot No. 48 Second Floor (HIG), Sector 5, Rajender Nagar Sahibabad Ghaziabad Uttar Pradesh- 201005	19/10/2023 Rs. 1.90, 301.14/-	11-05-2023
5.	Shiv Kumar Gautam, Saijia Sharma, Siddhi Vinayak Metal Alloys, H.No.5 Gali No-1, Hanuman Nagar Khri Faridabad- 121001 A/C:-LBFBDB00001976343	Apartment Bearing Flat No. 1101, (Category-A), 11th Floor, The Royal Co-operative Group Housing Society Limited, Situated at Plot No. GH-28, Sector-2, Tehsil Ballabgarh, Faridabad, Haryana- 121001 (Along with one Car Parking (Stilt))	25/10/2023 Rs. 38.72, 700.33/-	08-06-2023
6.	R Ganeshan, Radha, Flat No.203 Block D1 Second Floor, East Sapphire Sadarpur Sector 45, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh Noida- 201301 A/C:-LBDFB00005173977	Apartment No-A3-805, Floor 8, Habitat 78, Situated at Sector 78, Faridabad- 121001 (Along With 1 Two Wheeler Parking)	25/10/2023 Rs. 19.14, 336/-	06-08-2023
7.	Debasis Roy Chowdhury, Subhasis Roy Chowdhury, 35 Siddhinath Chatterjee Road, Behala, West Bengal, Kolkata- 700034 A/C:-LBGUR0004966464	Plot No A30, Amaya Greens, Sector 3, Farrukhnagar, Gurgaon- 122001	01/11/2023 Rs. 24.14, 431/-	03-08-2023
8.	Surinder Kumar Saini, Bhagwati Devi, H.No. 677, Sector-16A, Faridabad- 121001 A/C:-LBDFB00001636567	Plot No. 677, Sector-16A Urban Estate Faridabad- 121001	01/11/2023 Rs. 5.21, 937.68/-	10-03-2023
9.	Rajesh Kumar, Rajni Jain, 27 Gali 12, Choti Anaj Mandi, Ward 12, Ganaur- 131101 A/C:-LBGUR00006061339	House No.27/12, Choti Mandi, Ganaur Mandi Inside, Hadud Nagar Palika, Ganaur Sonapat- 131101	01/11/2023 Rs. 17.02, 155/-	04-07-2023
10.	Vipul Mittal, Rekha Mittal, 97 Chandler Lok, Pitampura, Delhi- 110034 A/C:-LBDEL00002875082	Flat No.3082, 8th Floor Type A, Tower- 3, Ats Marigold, Situated at Sector- 89 A Gurgaon- 122001	1/11/2023 Rs. 67.31, 868/-	29-09-2023
11.	Niharika Mukherjee, Arti Sharma, 2519A Block C Sushant Lok 1, Gurgaon- 122001 A/C:-LBDEL00005524892	Plot No. 12-901, 9th Floor Tower 12, The Serenas, Sector-36, Sohna Gurgaon- 122103	1/11/2023 Rs. 22.42, 115/-	03-08-2023
12.	Rupesh Kumar, Sweetsy Kumari, 71 Bhawanagar, Ashram, Delhi- 110014 A/C:-LBDEL00002438444	Unit No.403 (R0190B30403/ Flat #403), 4th Floor Tower B3, Eco Village 2, Situated at Plot No GH-01, Sector-16 B, Greater Noida- 201307	1/11/2023 Rs. 7.65, 032/-	12-06-2023
13.	Rajesh Singh, Rakesh Singh, 177 3rd Floor Block B-2, Safdarjung Enclave South, West Delhi, 110029 A/C:-LBDEL00004983795, LBDEL00004983816	Property Bearing No-177, Block B-2, Entire Terrace Over And Above The Second Floor Upto Sky, Safdarjung Enclave Delhi- 110029 (Along With 25% Undivided, Indivisible And Impartible Ownership Right In The Land Underneath The Said Plot With All Rights To Common Amenities)	01/11/2023 Rs. 1,88,41, 531.86/- 8,20,940/-	01-03-2023
14.	Tarun Raj Patel, Vandana Umrao, Flat No-C8/19 Sr No.21/1, Pleasant Park 2 Off Solahpur Road, Fatima Nagar Maharashtra Pune- 411013 A/C:-LBGUR00002057438, LBGUR00002059407	Flat No. D0602, Floor No-06, Springview Heights, Crescent Park Township, Tower D, NH-24, Uttar Pradesh, Ghaziabad- 201001	04/11/2023 Rs. 39.64, 565.98/- 1,08,144/-	29-02-2020
15.	Subhash Singh, Suman, H.No-742 Gali No.1, Malerna Road Near 24, Feet Road Adarsh Nagar Ballabgarh Haryana Faridabad- 121004 A/C:-LBDEL00002068245, LBDEL00002084324	Flat No-401, 4th Floor, Block-B, Nikhil Park Royale, Mauza-Chamrauli, Jay Pee Hotel, T V Tower 125 Wide Link Road, Taj Nagri, Phase-II Agra Uttarpradesh- 202005	04/11/2023 Rs. 60.49, 566/- 1,73,461/-	31-07-2016
16.	Rajat Rastogi, Samarth Rastogi, D-147, 2nd Floor, Prashant Vihar, Delhi, Ghaziabad- 110085, A/C:-LBGHZ00001935524	Flat No. 27/10, 27th Floor, Wishtown, Garden, Isles, Jaypee Greens, Sector- 133, Noida.	04/11/2023 Rs. 36.80, 384.93/-	31-10-2017
17.	Rajat Rastogi, D-147, 2nd Floor, Prashant Vihar, Delhi, Ghaziabad, 110085, A/C:-LBGHZ00001948086	Apartment No. GD10252703, 27th Floor, Wishtown, Garden, Isles, Jaypee Greens, Sector- 133, Noida Uttar Pradesh- 201301	04/11/2023 Rs. 81,462.8/-	31-10-2017
18.	Om Parkash, Shanta, Kothi No- G-34, 1st Floor, Sector- 56, Gautam Buddha Nagar Uttar Pradesh Noida- 201301 A/C:-LBDEL00001048849	Unit No.269 Type B, Cgewho Housing Scheme, Sector 82 Noida Uttar Pradesh- 201301	04/11/2023 Rs. 2.57, 284.32/-	08-04-2014

The steps are being taken for substituted service of notice. The above borrower/s and/or their guarantors (as applicable) are advised to make the payments of outstanding within period of 60 days from the date of publication of this notice else further steps will be taken as per the provisions of Securitisation and Re-construction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002.

Date : November 24, 2023
Place : Delhi/NCR

Authorized Officer
ICICI Bank Limited

AIFF Youth Leagues set to start next month

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The first round of AIFF academy accreditation was completed with 30 academies from the elite category getting the grade on the basis of various criteria fulfilled. The criteria included factors such as residential setup, technical and administrative staff, medical and education provisions and other important requirements. The advanced and basic criteria accreditation will be completed subsequently.

The AIFF also plans to conduct surprise inspections for the accredited academies, and any discrepancies or non-compliance towards the criteria as per the accreditation policy may lead to the stripping of their accreditation.



AIFF President Kalyan Chaubey said, "This year, the leagues have been slightly delayed. After three years, the Junior and Sub-Junior National Football Championships Tier 1 and 2 for boys and girls were organised.

"Now, we are going to kickstart the national youth leagues, for which more than 30 academies have been accredited after checking all their parameters. Along with them, the I-League and the ISL junior teams will also be taking part.

"We will be starting with the U17 league first, followed by the U15 and U13. There will be spotters in most of the games of U13 leagues, to identify talents."

RINKU ON HIS FINISHER'S ROLE

PTI ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

India batter Rinku Singh credited legendary former captain MS Dhoni for helping him stay calm in crunch situations which he showed in ample measure during his knock in the first T20I against Australia here. Rinku played the role of a finisher on Thursday, hitting the winning runs in the final over and handing India a two-wicket victory.

"As for my secret to calmness, I had discussions with Mahi (Dhoni) bhai about what he does to stay calm, especially in the last over," Rinku was quoted as saying in a BCCI video after Thursday's win.

"He (Dhoni) told me to try to remain as calm as possible and try looking straight (at the bowler). That's how I tried to stay calm in the game," he said, though he did not mention when the discussions with Dhoni happened.

Chasing a stiff target of 209, India were reeling at 154 for 4 in the 15th over when Rinku walked in. With skipper Suryakumar Yadav being at the other end to support him, Rinku stayed calm and played smart cricket by rotating the strike and attacking the loose deliveries.

The 26-year-old Uttar Pradesh batter remained not out on 22 off 14 balls, hitting four fours at a strike rate of 157.14.

"Feeling good that we won. My only aim was to be perfect when I walked



out to bat, and it felt good out there to be playing alongside Surya. I was thinking of doing what I generally do in crunch situations and was trying to stay as calm as possible," he added.

With a single needed off the final delivery, Sean Abbott was deposited into the stands for a six by Rinku but it turned out to be a big no-ball. Hence, the six was not counted but only the run off the no-ball was considered.

"I didn't realise it was a no-ball until I heard it from Axar bhai in the dressing room. Although the winning six won't be considered, it doesn't matter; we won the match, that's what matters," he said.

Rinku came into the spotlight in the Indian Premier League. Initially roped in by Kings XI Punjab (now Punjab Kings) for IPL 2017, he has been playing for Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) since 2018.

He did well in the IPL 2022 and drew eyeballs in the 2023 season for hammering five sixes in an over versus Gujarat Titans.

His IPL numbers read 725 runs in 31 matches at an average of 36.25 and a strike rate of 142.16, with four half-centuries.

Eventually, he earned his Indian team call-up in August during the Ireland T20I tour.

So far, he has batted in just three T20I matches, amassing 97 at an average of 97.0 and a strike rate of 194.0.



Kerala cricketer Mani to lead India 'A' Women T20I team against England 'A' Women

PTI ■ BENGALURU

Kerala cricketer C Minnu Mani was on Friday named the India 'A' Women team captain for the three-match T20I series against their England counterparts, beginning in Mumbai on November 29. The 24-year-old off-spinner is also the first cricketer from Kerala to lead an India 'A' Women side.

Mani, who hails from Wayanad, a district in Northern Kerala, has played four matches for India taking five wickets. She made her international debut during the three-match T20I series against Bangladesh at Mirpur this July.

Minnu was also a part of India's gold medal-winning women's team during the Hangzhou Asian Games earlier this year.

India 'A' Women will play three matches against England 'A' Women on November 29, December 1 and 3, and all the matches will be played at the Wankhede Stadium, Mumbai.

India 'A' Women squad: C Minnu Mani (captain), Kanika Ahuja, Uma Chetry, Shreyanka Patil, G Trisha, Vrinda Dinesh, G Divya, Arushi Goel, Disha Kasat, Rashi Kanojia, Mannat Kashyap, Anusha Baredny, Monica Patel, G Kashavee, Jintimani Kalita, Prakashika Naik.



I don't think anyone has right to choose farewell Tests: O'Donnell on Warner

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Former Australian cricketer Simon O'Donnell is not in favour of opening batter David Warner getting a farewell Test, saying no one should have the right to pick and choose the venue and date of his choice.

Warner, 37, had indicated earlier this year that he would like to finish his Test career at his home ground in Sydney against Pakistan in January next year. The all-format player will continue playing white-ball cricket but is planning to call it a day in the longest format with the three-Test series against Pakistan beginning on December 14 and concluding with the third Test in Sydney in January.

"I don't like farewell tours. I didn't like it back in Steve Waugh's Day or Mark Taylor's Day. I think you're invited to play for Australia and it's an honour to do that," O'Donnell opined on Sen Radio on Friday.

"I don't think anyone has the right to say, 'I'll finish, on the 30th of June this year,'" O'Donnell questioned if it was right to select the left-handed batter for the Test series based on his form during the Ashes rubber earlier this year or his performance in white-ball format, O'Donnell said, there should be a discussion on the issue.

"There would be genuine debate about that. Like Cameron Bancroft, I'm not sure how much more he needs to do."

"He just keeps peeling off hundreds and if it's not 100 it's a 60. If he has one bad innings, he then makes another 100 you know, he's just been in brilliant form the last 18 months," said O'Donnell, who played six Tests and 87 ODIs for Australia.

Bancroft, along with then skipper Steve Smith and Warner, was banned for a year for his involvement in the 'sandpaper-gate' scandal during Australia's third Test against South Africa in Cape Town in 2018.

O'Donnell questioned the selectors how long will Bancroft have to wait for his turn to play Tests following the 2018 episode.

"Do you make him wait another summer? Because that's what he's going to have to do if that plan (to play Warner) goes ahead."

"I think the game is always bigger than the individual. There's a lot to take in. But the first thing Australia's got to do is win their Test match. If David Warner is the best at number one at the top of the order, so be it," he added.

O'Donnell felt it's time for Warner to call it a day in Tests.

"I do in the white ball (format), no problem at all. But with the red ball, I think it's time. But we're in this corner, we're just coming off a World Cup, and that's going to muddy the waters. "Everyone will say, 'Oh yeah, what about his World Cup?' So that buys some more time (for Warner), I think."

PTI ■ VISAKHAPATNAM

Fearless" is how middle-order batter Suryakumar Yadav described his hurricane knock in the first T20I against Australia here and said he felt "proud" to lead the country to victory on his captaincy debut.

Suryakumar smashed a 42-ball 80 and shared a 112-run partnership with Ishan Kishan as India chased down Australia's massive 208 for 3 off the penultimate ball of the match on Thursday for a two-wicket victory.

Surya had contributed just 18 runs in the World Cup final against Australia on Sunday as India lost by six wickets on the big stage.

But playing in his favourite format and leading the side in the absence of an injured Hardik Pandya, Suryakumar was menacing, scooping four sixes and hitting nine boundaries on way to overshadowing Josh Inglis's 50-ball 110 and helping the hosts take a 1-0 lead in the five-match series.

Asked to describe his game in one word, 'Mr 360 degrees' said, 'fearless'.

The skipper complimented Ishan Kishan for helping the

Just played fearless cricket, Ishan helped me really well: Suryakumar



team overhaul the huge target. Kishan's 39-ball 58 following the departure of opener Ruturaj Gaikwad for duck had set the

platform for the gutsy chase. "I think, he (Ishan) helped me really well. For me to be fearless, him staying there and his knock

was very important," said Suryakumar, whose strike rate of 190.47 was the key to the chase.

Finally, Rinku Singh drove India to victory with an unbeaten 22 off 14 deliveries.

"I think he (Rinku) was very calm, though it was a pressure situation. When he came in to bat, he was very calm and the composure which he showed, I think, that was great to see," Suryakumar told the BCCI.

On whether there were tense moments in the dressing room after seeing Australia's 200-plus total on the board, the skipper said, "Little bit. Itna experience nahin hai dressing room mein (there isn't that much experience in the dressing room) but all the boys were excited."

"When they saw the score on the board, they only said one thing, 'if we win this game it will be truly enjoyable'."

"Very proud to lead the country and very happy to contribute in my first game as captain. Looking forward to the next game and how it goes," added Suryakumar.

It was Pat Cummins' best day with ball: Labuschagne on WC final

PTI ■ SYDNEY

Australia batter Marnus Labuschagne said he had "never seen" someone bowl like the way Pat Cummins did during the World Cup final against India, which they won by six wickets for a record-extending sixth title.

Cummins had the best economy rate in the 10 overs he had bowled and also grabbed two wickets to restrict Rohit Sharma's side to 240.

With an economy rate of 3.40 to go with the wickets of Virat Kohli and Shreyas Iyer, Cummins put the skids on India.

"I think that was certainly Pat's best day with the ball," Labuschagne told Sen Radio.

"I think I've never seen someone bowl the sequence he (Cummins) did, bowling the right balls at the right time that he did. I haven't seen that from a middle overs bowler, a pace bowler especially in a long time. A lot of credit has to go to him," said Labuschagne, who scored an unbeaten half-century in the final.



Labuschagne also praised the tactical acumen of coach Andrew McDonald, saying he and the team analyst prepared the blueprint to put India under pressure.

"Tactically, Andrew McDonald and our analyst really got it right with the toss firstly and then navigating the different scenarios and putting pressure on the Indian bowlers to get those early wickets," said Labuschagne.

"Then the thoughts were to have them five down at 30 (overs) and that's exactly what they (Australian bowlers) did."

"The bowlers did an excellent job and Pat led from the front there."

Labuschagne added that the coach had full faith in the players, which created a great atmosphere in the dressing room.

"I mean his coaching record speaks for itself. He's never doubted us, I think he's created such a good environment, he and Pat work really well together."

"From a team perspective, we obviously rate him very highly and respect him a lot, his ability as a player and a coach and I think this is the icing on the cake for someone like him," he said.

Women's Premier League auction to be held in Mumbai on December 9

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The players' auction ahead of the 2024 edition of the Women's Premier League (WPL) will be held on December 9 in Mumbai, the BCCI announced on Friday.

The second edition of the WPL could take place in February-March next year.

Mumbai Indians are the defending WPL champions, as they had beaten Delhi Capitals by seven wickets in the final on March 26 at the Brabourne Stadium earlier this year.

Mumbai were led by Harmanpreet Kaur, while the recently-retired Meg Lanning captained Delhi in 2023.

The five franchises — Mumbai, Delhi, Royal Challengers Bangalore, Gujarat Giants and UP Warriorz — had retained 60 cricketers, including 21 from overseas, ahead of the auction. A total of 29 players were released from contract from the existing squads.

These are the following players from the five WPL franchises who were retained and released from the squads:

Delhi Capitals: Retained Players: Alice Capsey, Arundhati Reddy, Jemimah Rodrigues, Jess Jonassen, Laura Harris, Marizanne Kapp, Meg Lanning, Minnu Mani, Poonam Yadav, Radha Yadav, Shafali Verma, Shikha Pandey, Sneha Deepthi, Taniyaa Bhatia, Titas Sadhu.

Released Players: Aparna Mondal, Jasia Akhter, Tara Norris.

Gujarat Giants: Retained Players: Ashleigh Gardner, Beth Mooney, Dayalana Hemalatha, Harleen Deol, Laura Wolvaardt, Shabnam Shakil, Sneha Rana, Tanuja Kanver.

Released Players: Annabel Sutherland, Ashwani Kumari, Georgia Wareham, Hurley Gala, Kim Garth, Mansi Joshi, Monica



Patel, Parunika Sisodia, Sabbineni Meghana, Sophia Dunkley, Sushma Verma.

Mumbai Indians: Retained Players: Amanjot Kaur, Amelia Kerr, Chloe Tryon, Harmanpreet Kaur, Hayley Matthews, Humairaa Kaazi, Isabelle Wong, Jintimani Kalita, Natalie Sciver, Pooja Vastrakar, Priyanka Bala, Saika Ishaque, Yastika Bhatia.

Released Players: Dhara Gajjar, Heather Graham, Neelam Bisht, Sonam

Royal Challengers Bangalore: Retained Players: Asha Shobana, Disha Kasat, Ellyse Perry, Heather Knight, Indrani Roy, Kanika Ahuja, Renuka Singh, Richa Ghosh, Shreyanka Patil, Smriti Mandhana, Sophie Devine.

Released Players: Dane Van Niekerk, Erin Burns, Komal Zanzad, Megan Schutt, Poonam Khemnar, Preeti Bose, Sahana Pawar.

UP Warriorz: Retained Players: Alyssa Healy, Anjali Sarvani, Deepti Sharma, Grace Harris, Kiran Navgire, Lauren Bell, Laxmi Yadav, Parshavi Chopra, Rajeshwari Gayakwad, S. Yashasri, Shweta Shrivastava, Sophie Ecclestone, Tahlia McGrath.

Released Players: Devika Vaidya, Shabnim Ismail, Shivali Shinde, Simran Shaikh.