

'Digital Doctor Clinics' in UP villages soon

PNS ■ LUCKNOW The Uttar Pradesh Government will establish 'Digital Doctor Clinics' in villages to improve healthcare services in rural and remote areas of the state.

Group CEO Sanjai Kumar said that currently five doctors had been hired for this, while 10 other doctors were being lined up. He further said that they were in talks with some other investors regarding the startup, and their goal was to scale this MoU up to a size of Rs 1,000 crore.



intelligence technology, the best MBBS doctors will reach patients in villages and remote rural areas through technology and will provide the right treat-

ment and necessary medicines. During treatment in these clinics, all types of medicines will be made available to the patients at very low rates.

Additionally, blood tests will be done in just 3 to 5 minutes on prescription of doctors at a cost of only Rs 30-40. This test includes various fever profiles like malaria, dengue, chikungunya, liver function, jaundice, sugar etc.

Raghubar made Odisha governor, Indra Sena Reddy Nallu of Tripura

PTI ■ NEW DELHI Former Jharkhand chief minister Raghubar Das and BJP leader Indra Sena Reddy Nallu have been appointed as the governors of Odisha and Tripura, respectively, according to a Rashtrapati Bhavan communique on Wednesday.



chief minister of Jharkhand from 2014 to 2019. Indra Sena Reddy Nallu is a BJP leader from Telangana.

Centre hikes DA by 4 per cent; bonus for non-gazetted Railways employees

PTI ■ NEW DELHI Ahead of the festive season, the central government on Wednesday decided to hike the dearness allowance for its employees by 4 percentage points to 46 per cent of the basic salary and pay 78 days of salaries as bonus for non-gazetted railway staff.

allowance and dearness relief will benefit 48.67 lakh central government employees and 67.95 lakh pensioners, respectively. The release of the additional instalment of Dearness Allowance (DA) and Dearness Relief (DR) will be applicable from July 1, 2023. DA and DR are given twice a year to compensate employees and pensioners, respectively, for price rise.

DA and DR would be Rs 12,857 crore per annum. In March this year and September last year also, the increase in DA and DR was 4 percentage points. The DA and DR hikes are applicable from January 1 and July 1. Thakur also informed that railway employees will receive a bonus equivalent to their 78 days' salaries, benefiting more than 11.07 lakh non-gazetted staff of the national transporter.

TMC hails HC media guidelines for covering school jobs scam

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA The Trinamool Congress leadership has hailed the Calcutta High Court order setting media guidelines for covering news related to party general secretary Abhishek Banerjee, his wife Rujira Banerjee and similarly placed persons who were presently being interrogated for their alleged roles in the school level recruitment scam.

Court summons to board head

SAUGAR SENGUPTA ■ KOLKATA In yet another blow to Mamata Banerjee Government the Calcutta High Court on Wednesday directed the Central Bureau of Investigation to immediately interrogate West Bengal Primary Education Board Chairman Gautam Pal and the Board's Deputy Secretary Partha Karmakar for their alleged role in suppressing facts related to cash-for-job scam. The Court ordered Pal to appear before the CBI officials by six pm on Wednesday. In his stinging order Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay also directed the Agency to even arrest Pal should he not cooperate with the officials. The Court order came subse-

quent to a submission by the CBI that Pal's office was misleading the Court and the investigating agency and trying to delay the investigation process by providing wrong copies of the digitized OMR sheets relevant to the Teachers' Eligibility Test (TET) examinations. The recruitment scam however had taken place during Pal's predecessor and then TET Chairman Manik Bhattacharya, also a Trinamool Congress MLA who is presently in jail. After assuming charge Pal a former Pro-Vice Chancellor of Kalyani University had assured that though he would not be answerable for the acts of his predecessors he would ensure a transparent recruitment process.

J&K sets up panel to identify foreigners staying illegally

MOHIT KANDHARI ■ JAMMU The Jammu & Kashmir Government has once again set up a high-level panel to identify foreign nationals illegally overstaying in the Union Territory since January 01, 2011.

of 155 Rohingyas were found to be staying illegally in Jammu and all of them were lodged in the holding centre at Hiranagar. According to official sources, at present a total number of 260 Rohingyas have been camping in the holding centre out of which 50-60 are children. When Mehbooba Mufti was heading the BJP-PDP alliance government in Jammu and Kashmir a comprehensive report, prepared by the J&K Home Department, was tabled in the state legislature on February 2, 2018. According to the report, "a total number of 6523 Rohingyas were found camping across 39 different locations spread across five districts of Jammu and Kashmir". According to this report, "6461 Rohingyas were staying in Jammu division and 62 in Kashmir division. However, local activists and politicians, spearheading a campaign in support of their deportation often contest these figures claiming a large number of these illegal immigrants are scattered and even their bio metrics have not been properly collected by the security personnel. According to the report, out of 6523 Rohingyas, more than 400 were staying here without their refugee cards issued by the United National High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Recently, J&K police have booked FIR's in two cases where Rohingyas were found to be in possession of a Domicile certificate, Aadhar card, and Ration card.

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

PUBLIC NOTICE To be known to all that my client, SMT. ASHA KATYAL, W/O LATE SHRI KASHOK GROVER R/O FLAT NO. 725, GROUND FLOOR, POCKET-A, SARITA VIHAR, NEW DELHI...

PUBLIC NOTICE To be known to all that my client, SMT. PROMIL GROVER W/O SHRI KASHOK GROVER R/O FLAT NO. 725, GROUND FLOOR, POCKET-A, SARITA VIHAR, NEW DELHI...

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

IN THE HIGH COURT FOR THE STATE OF TELANGANA AT HYDERABAD ARBITRATION APPLICATION NO.- 194 of 2022 BETWEEN: Intercontinental Publications Pvt. Ltd., Having its office in Plot 1267/A Road 63/A Jubilee Hills, Hyderabad-500033, Represented by its Chairman, Mr. C.L. Rajam

New Okhla Industrial Development Authority Administrative Building, Sector-6, Noida - 201301 (U.P.) Website : www.noidaauthorityonline.com

responsibility" and directed the Agency not to "not to disclose to the public or the media" the details, reasons and circumstances of interrogations or raids or similar such things. While the Court directed the Agency not to selectively leak information it also asked the media to stick to objective and not opinionated reporting so to say. The interim order would remain in force till January 15. Rujira Banerjee had approached the Court seeking

to restrain a section of the media which were reporting on the school recruitment scam. When a news item is presented as a news item, in whatever medium - audio, visual or print - the same has to be utterly truthful and be able to be corroborated by concrete materials and sources, the Court ruled adding not only the media had freedom of speech and expression but they are bound by additional and higher standards of accuracy than an ordinary citizen.

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PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI Congress on Wednesday continued to attack BJP led Central government for allegedly going all out to support conglomerate Adani Group which has in recent times been in the thick of storm. Addressing a Press conference, former Congress president Rahul Gandhi questioned the silence of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi over reports of massive over invoicing in coal imports by the Adani group this leading to hike in electricity tariff for the

Rahul accuses BJP of silence on inflated invoicing by Adani firm

Indian consumers. "Come clean, start the investigation, defend your credibility", Rahul asked the PM in a clear and categorical message, saying his Modi's credibility was at stake. Rahul said the Congress, if voted to power, would order an investigation into the matter in 2024.

Asked whether the Congress, if it comes to power in 2024, will probe it, he remarked, why not as it is matter of Rs 32,000 crore. "This money has been stolen from the people of the country and if anyone steals Rs 32,000 crores, it will be probed", he asserted. Rahul said, it is the question of Prime Minister Modi's credibil-

ity. He asked why the PM was not ordering a probe into it. "Why is the prime minister silent on the issue, I am only helping the prime minister and asking him to come clean by starting an investigation and defend his credibility," he added. Giving details, Rahul said, earlier the figure was Rs 20,000

crore that Adani's group had looted from the Indians and now the figure has gone to Rs 32,000 crore. He pointed out, it is the common Indians' money as they pay for the electricity that is generated from the coal imported by Adani. "Every time anyone switches on an electric switch, money goes to Mr Adani," said Rahul. He pointed out, the SEBI which was probing the charges against Adani had claimed that it did not get any documents, while the Financial Times newspaper had managed to get all the documents.

Women outnumber men in organ donation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI They may have been the victim of discrimination at various spheres of life, but when it comes to donating their organs to save their dear ones, women have outnumbered men. This was evident in Aadhar-authenticated signing up for organ donation on a recently-launched website of the National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (NOTTO) under the Union Health Ministry. More than 82,000 people have pledged for organ donation since September 16, with the 30-44 years age group constituting the bulk of the pledges, according to data from the website -- notto.abdm.gov.in. According to the latest data, 40,320 people in the 30-44 age group have pledged for organ donation, followed by 21,751 in the 18-29 age group, 18,160 in the 45-59 age group and 2,592

aged above 60 years. Also, 47,094 women, 35,726 men and 12 transgenderers have pledged for organ donation on the portal. Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Telangana have emerged as the top three states with the highest number of pledges at 23,369, 18,847 and 11,564 respectively. Maximum number of people have pledged to donate a kidney, followed by heart, liver, lungs, pancreas and intestine. People have also pledged for tissues such as cornea, skin, bone, heart valves, blood vessels and cartilage. Union health minister Mansukh Mandaviya had recently urged more people to come forward to save lives. India faces the lowest organ donation rate worldwide, with a mere 0.1% of the population donating their organs after death in stark contrast to 70-80% in Western countries, say experts.

2 arrested in mystery death of 5 of a family in Gadchiroli

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ T N RAGHUNATHA ■ MUMBAI In a significant development, the Gadchiroli police on Wednesday unravelled the mystery behind the sudden death of five members of a family and hospitalisation of three others after they arrested two women relatives who had allegedly poisoned eight persons over a property dispute. An atmosphere of mystery, fear and suspicion had gripped Mahagaon village in Aheri taluka of Gadchiroli district over the past few days, after one Shankar Piru Kumbhare and his four family members - his wife Vijaya, daughters Komal, Varsha and son Roshan suddenly fell ill and died within a span of twenty days. The two women behind the sinister murders-identified as Shankar's daughter-in-law Sanghamitra and his brother-in-law's wife Rosa Ramteke --- were arrested by the police on Wednesday.

Tirupur losing textile hub tag

KUMAR CHELLAPPAN ■ TIRUPUR Tamil Nadu has been rattled by the gains made by Bangladesh as India's tiny neighbour, and the State is losing its reputation as the textile hub and the knitwear capital of the country. The Free Trade Agreement (FTA) signed between India and Bangladesh is derailing India's textile exports as well as its share in the home market. Fabrics imported from Bangladesh are exempted from customs duty. "Imports from Bangladesh are increasing on a monthly basis and this has upset the manufacturers in Tirupur. In 2022-2023, the Knitted Fabric imports from Bangladesh increased to Rs 264 crore from Rs 212 crore recorded in 2021-2022. This is a hike of 24.3per cent and has put the domestic industry in trouble," said K M Subramanian, president, Tirupur Exporters Association, in a memorandum submitted to

Piyush Goyal, Union Minister in charge of textiles. Last year (2022-2023), the import of Knitwear Garments from Bangladesh into India crossed the Rs 2489 crore mark while it was Rs 1576 crore in 2021-2022. "This is a growth of 57.9 per cent and has put the local manufacturers in a disadvantage," said Subramanian. Bangladesh imports cheap raw materials from China and export the finished products to European Market as well as US. "Being a least developed country, products from Bangladesh do not come under any kind of tax in Europe and USA," said S Sakthivel, executive secretary, TEA. He said Indian exports are hovering around the \$16.5 billion mark while Bangladesh has already crossed \$44 billion. "We do not have a level playing field," said Sakthivel. The TEA president said only the Narendra Modi Government could help the knitwear industry to tide the present crisis.

In a first, Rapid rail to have AI enabled door frame

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The 17-km priority section of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) Corridor is slated to be opened for passengers on October 21. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate this section on October 20. For the first time, state-of-the-art Artificial Intelligence (AI)-enabled Door Frame Metal Detector (DFMD) are being used for the security screening of commuters at the soon-to-open Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) Corridor stations. This system, by screening the commuters, will help prevent any suspicious item from reaching the station. The luggage scanners installed at the station entry gates are also equipped with artificial intelligence. "A day after the inauguration of the priority section, passengers services will begin from October 21 morning. RAPIDX trains will be operational between 6 am and 11 pm. Initially, trains will be available

every 15 minutes, though the frequency can be increased on a requirement basis in the future," officials of National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) said on Tuesday. The priority section, between Sahibabad and Duhai Depot, has five stations -- Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, Guldhar, Duhai and Duhai Depot. The segment from Duhai to Duhai Depot is a spur from the main corridor. Every RAPIDX train will have six coaches, including a premium coach. One coach in every train is reserved for women and it is the coach next to the premium coach. Also, there are reserved seats for women, specially-abled and senior citizens in other coaches, the sources said. According to officials, the scanners installed at the RRTS stations have a dual-view generator X-ray baggage inspection system that will enable the dual screening of the luggage passing through the scanner. The images of both the upper and lower parts of the bag will appear on the computer screen.



If any suspicious or prohibited item is scanned in the bag of a commuter, the conveyor belt will automatically stop. The Security Control Centre (SCC) at the Depot is a crucial element for the safe and smooth commute of people. It monitors the entire section of the Priority Section 24x7 through the CCTV cameras, gathers information and ensures quick response by contacting the respective stations, field officers, local units etc. where required in undesired situations. Closed circuit TV screens will be installed in the stations through which CCTV footage will be visible to the commuters. With an operational speed of 160 kmph, these fully-

airconditioned RAPIDX trains will have a host of commuter-centric features for a safe and comfortable regional commute like ergonomically designed 2x2 transverse seating, wide standing space, luggage racks, CCTV cameras, laptop/mobile charging facility, dynamic route maps, auto control ambient lighting system, Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning System (HVAC) and other amenities. "These trains will also facilitate the movement of patients and one general coach (the last general coach) in each train will have the facility to accommodate a medical stretcher and a wheelchair. This is because many people travel from Meerut to Delhi for treatment, such as at the AIIMS or other hospitals. The RRTS will facilitate their movement," a senior official said. This way, they will also save time and beat the vehicular traffic on roads, he said. The RRTS ticketing system is compliant with the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC), the officials said.

Modi to inaugurate priority section of rapid rail corridor at Sahibabad tomorrow

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI



Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the priority section of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS) Corridor at the Sahibabad RAPIDX station in Uttar Pradesh on Friday. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said he will flag off a RAPIDX train connecting Sahibabad and Duhai Depot, marking the launch of the RRTS in India. Modi will also address a public meeting to mark the occasion and later inaugurate two stretches of the east-west corridor of the Bengaluru Metro. The PMO said the 17-km priority section of the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS corridor, which will be inaugurated, will connect Sahibabad to Duhai Depot through stations

at Ghaziabad, Guldhar and Duhai. The foundation stone for the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor was laid by him on March 8, 2019. In line with his vision to transform regional connectivity in the country through construction of new world-class transport infrastructure, the RRTS project is being developed, the PMO said in a statement. The RRTS is a new rail-based, semi-high-speed, high-frequency commuter transit system with a design speed of 180 kmph. It is a "transformational"

regional development initiative, which is designed to provide high-speed trains for intercity commuting every 15 minutes, which can go up to a frequency of every five minutes according to requirement, it said. The PMO noted that a total of eight RRTS corridors have been identified for development in the National Capital Region, out of which three corridors have been prioritised to be implemented in Phase-I -- Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut, Delhi-Gurugram-SNB-Alwar and Delhi-Panipat. The Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut corridor is being developed at a cost of more than Rs 30,000 crore and will connect Delhi to Meerut with a travel time of less than an hour through urban centres of Ghaziabad, Muradnagar and Modinagar, the PMO said.

LG nod to hike in Kashmiri migrants' monthly relief to ₹27,000 per month

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

After 16 years, Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena has approved an increase in the Adhoc Monthly Relief (AMR) to Kashmiri migrants in the national capital from Rs 10,000 to Rs 27,000 per month. This enhancement in eligibility will increase the number of beneficiaries being covered by about 70%. The Adhoc Monthly Relief (AMR) was last increased in 2007 when the amount was doubled from Rs 5,000 per family fixed in 1995. According to Raj Niwas official, this enhancement comes after a long gap of 16 years, when the eligibility for AMR was doubled from Rs 5,000 per month to Rs 10,000 per month, in 2007. In 1995, the GNCTD had fixed the eligibility for AMR amount at Rs 5000 per month. At present, approximately 2,000 families in the national capital are being paid AMR at a rate of Rs 3,250 per person per month, subject to a maximum of four



people per family. This amount is shared by the Delhi government, which pays Rs 1,000, and the Centre, which pays Rs 2,250. The monthly expenditure incurred on AMR is approximately Rs 2.5 crore. AMR is provided to Kashmiri migrants under the "Security Related Expenditure (Relief & Rehabilitation)", introduced by the central government in 1989-90 to support those who had to migrate from the Kashmir Valley due to militancy. In Delhi, AMR is provided to migrant families registered by the Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi from 1990-93.

"The number of beneficiaries is, however, expected to increase by nearly 70% after factoring in increase in the number of "units" because of raising of the eligibility criteria and rise in the number of family members due to splitting and addition that will now be allowed," Raj Niwas official said. "The LG also approved bifurcation / addition of names in the Kashmiri Migrant Cards issued by GNCTD to facilitate, grown up and married children of migrants, to get their own cards made and accordingly become entitled for AMR as separate units / families. The registered Kashmiri Migrant

families will now be allowed to declare their family and allow splitting of the family due to increase in size. Birth to a couple in the migrant family would lead to addition in the family and death of a member would lead to deletion of that member. Apart from this, a non-migrant girl marrying into a migrant family will be added as a member of the Kashmiri migrant family," he said. Delhi BJP President Virendra Sachdeva has welcomed the 170% increase announced in Adhoc Monthly Relief by the Lt. Governor of Delhi Shri Vinai Kumar Saxena for Kashmiri migrants. "This raise coming after 16 years is a proof of the Lt. Governor's sensitivity towards the basic needs of Kashmiri migrants many of whom are still financially struggling to meet both ends meet," he said. The Leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri also welcomed the LG's decision to this effect.

Soumya's mother demands life term for those convicted of daughter's murder

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Madhavi Vishwanathan, a mother of journalist Soumya Vishwanathan who was shot dead 15 years ago, on Wednesday demanded life imprisonment for all four people convicted for her daughter's murder by a Delhi court, saying they should suffer what her family went through. Earlier in the day, the court convicted Ravi Kapoor, Amit Shukla, Baljeet Malik and Ajay Kumar for the murder of Soumya and also under provisions of the Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MCOCA). Fifth accused Ajay Sethi was convicted under Section 411 (dishonestly receiving stolen property) of the Indian Penal Code and under MCOCA provisions for conspiring to abet, aid or knowingly facilitate organised crime and for receiving the proceeds of organised crime. The court listed the matter for October 26 for sentencing.

"We lost our daughter. We demand life term for convicts as they should suffer what we went through," Madhavi told reporters. Special Commissioner of Police (Special Cell) HGS Dhaliwal, who was posted as DCP South earlier and whose team had cracked the Soumya Vishwanathan murder case, was also present in court with the slain journalist's family members. He said it was a very challenging case and it took more than six months to work it out. "Family members of Soumya Vishwanathan kept faith in Delhi Police and did not want the case to be transferred to any central agency. However, the case was challenging as there was no physical contact between the victim and the accused. Only a bullet was fired from a moving vehicle that hit Soumya, killing her," HGS Dhaliwal told reporters.

DDA announces mega e-auction

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

For those seeking property in the national capital, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) on Wednesday announced a mega e-auction for prime plots, CNG sites, built up shops, kiosks and mobile tower sites and registration is open till November 6. Giving details of the auction, officials said here it is the 18th phase of mega auction and the DDA has invited bids for 50 institutional plots, including 20 religious sites on leasehold basis, 12 industrial plots, 46 residential plots, 2 Group Housing Plots, 28 commercial plots and 19 small size residential plots at Rohini, all on freehold basis. Besides these, bids have also been invited for 2 CNG/Green Fuel sites and 4 gas godowns on annual license fee, 145 freehold built up shops, 13 freehold Janak Place shops, 15 Kiosks, 16 Mobile Tower sites and 105 function sites on monthly license fee. The DDA has provided QR

codes in the advertisement which are also being run on the social media platforms. By scanning these QR codes, all relevant information can be accessed. Interested bidders are required to register and then participate in the auction process online only through <https://ddauction.evizard.in> and www.dda.gov.in. Digital signature is mandatory for participation in the e auction. The DDA has set-up a help desk in its office at the Nagrik Suvidha Kendra, Vikas Sadan, INA to help addressing queries and for providing assistance in obtaining digital signatures, registration/training of prospective bidders. The help desk can be approached from Monday to Friday, 11 Am to 5 PM. Bidding for function sites, kiosks, mobile tower sites, CNG/Green fuel sites and Institutional plots will take place on November 07 while bidding for industrial, residential and small size residential plots will take place on November 8.

US Ambassador Garcetti rides Delhi Metro, interacts with passengers

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) on Wednesday informed that US Ambassador Eric Garcetti took a ride in the metro and interacted with fellow passengers. The Delhi Metro shared pictures of his metro travel on X. The US envoy to India travelled on the Magenta Line. "His Excellency Mr. Eric M. Garcetti, Ambassador of the United States of America to India, took a ride in Delhi Metro today from RK Puram to Okhla NSIC Metro Station on Magenta Line.



He also interacted with passengers during his travel & appreciated clean and efficient Metro system," the DMRC posted on X. Some of the Delhi Metro officials accompanied him when he interacted with passengers onboard the train. Ambassador Garcetti also obliged a few passengers with selfies.

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Delhi Government to run month-long campaign to curb industrial pollution: Rai

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

The Delhi government will run a month-long campaign to curb industrial pollution starting October 20. According to environment minister Gopal Rai, 66 teams have been set up to keep an eye on the fuels being used in over 1,700 industrial units in the capital. "Though these units have shifted to natural gas, we will ensure that there's no laxity on their part," said Rai directing officials to ensure regular lifting and proper scientific disposal of industrial waste from industrial areas. The environment minister further said 1753 registered industrial units of Delhi have been converted into PNG and any industrial unit that violates environmental regulations will face severe and appropriate repercussions from the relevant authorities." The DPCC team has been



"Under the Industrial Pollution Campaign, it has been decided to deploy patrolling teams to monitor the dumping of industrial waste in the whole of Delhi. Periodic reports will be submitted to the Environment Department based on their findings. The DPCC team has been instructed to take strict actions against any violation of environmental regulations by industrial units," he added. Taking a dig at Rai, leader of Opposition in Delhi Assembly Ramvir Singh Bidhuri said even though this government has done nothing to tackle pollution.

Rai had on Tuesday demanded that the Centre impose a complete ban on firecrackers and allow the movement of only CNG and electric vehicles in the entire National Capital Region in a bid to curb air pollution. Rai, in a letter to Bhupender Yadav, his counterpart at the Centre, said the Delhi gov-

ernment has taken numerous steps to curb air pollution during the winter season. "But these steps will not be effective until Haryana, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh deal with the sources of pollution in the NCR region," he said. A report by independent environment think tank Centre for Science and Environment shows that 31 per cent of Delhi's pollution comes from sources within the national capital while 69 per cent is from sources in NCR states, he said. Rai demanded that the Centre convene an emergency meeting to discuss solutions to the factors contributing to air pollution in the national capital. The states in the National Capital Region (NCR) should impose a complete ban on firecrackers and stubble burning in the entire region and allow only CNG and electric vehicles, the Delhi minister said.



A three day exhibition of 'Best out of Waste' is being held at National Bal Bhavan, based on theme cleanliness where children display their crafts made by them from recycling and reusing the waste materials. Some of the major artworks of this exhibition are dolls, houses and bicycles from old newspapers, flower from corn and pencil peels, chandeliers from threads and old bangles, coasters and baskets from old CDs, bags and toys from leftover clothes, turtles from coconut shells and many more interesting crafts. NBB Director Mukta Agarwal said the children and instructors kept in mind the government focus to create a sustainable environment and how recycled items can be shaped for best practices for generations to come. NBB is an autonomous body of Union Ministry of Education.

Atishi inspects construction of new school building

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

Delhi Education Minister Atishi on Wednesday inspected the construction work of the new school building in Paschim Vihar on Wednesday morning along with education department and public works department (PWD) officials. This upcoming four-storey world-class school in Paschim Vihar has approximately 129 rooms. The school is equipped with 13 excellent labs, 2 libraries, an auditorium, and more. During the inspection, officials informed the Education Minister that the construction work of the school is nearly 90% complete. After the inspection, the Atishi directed the PWD officials to expedite the pending work on the school and prepare a checklist for it. She emphasized



that the building should be ready by December so that it can be dedicated to Delhi's children this year. As

construction work is in its final phase, attention to every detail is essential. Speaking on the occasion, the minis-

ter said the new and magnificent building of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar School of Specialized Excellence, being built in Paschim Vihar, will provide specialized education in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and Humanities to students in the area. "Through this, we will ensure world-class education for children from all walks of life, rich and poor alike. This school, equipped with world-class facilities, will become a hub of quality education in the area, surpassing even private schools in terms of academic excellence. The Delhi government has begun this by making Delhi's schools excellent. Our government has assured Delhi's parents that a lack of money will never come in the way of their children's quality education," she added.

DGCA implements strict rules for hand gliders

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI



In response to a recent aerial attack carried out by Hamas, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has swiftly implemented rigorous regulations governing powered hang gliders. DGCA also made it clear that no person shall carry out test flight on a powered hang glider without a commercial pilot licence with 25 hours of flying on powered hang glider.

The move comes as part of a concerted effort to bolster aviation safety and security measures in the aftermath of the unprecedented incident. The Hamas terrorists used motor-powered hang gliders to infiltrate Israel has become a symbol of the October 7 terror attack, which has shown that even the mightiest military can be caught off guard by unconventional means of infiltration. The Hamas attacks mark the second time that Palestinian

terrorists have used paragliders to invade Israel. In 1987, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command launched two paragliders from Lebanon, one of which landed in Israel. The revised regulations read that no person shall fly a Powered Hang Glider without being authorised by a DGCA approved examiner or instructor. "No person shall carry out test flight on a powered hang glider unless the person meets the following criteria- a pilot hold-

ing valid Commercial Pilot Licence (CPL) with 25 hours of flying experience on powered hang glider; or a person holding authorisation with 50 hours of flying experience on powered hang glider, the revised regulations read. DGCA also described the eligibility for becoming an examiner or instructor. It said he/she shall be a person with 50 flying hours on a powered hang glider and 10 hours on dual machines. After being approved by the DGCA, such a person can

authorise people to fly motorized hang gliders. The updated rules further read that powered hang gliders can't be sold or disposed of to any person or firm without producing a certificate issued by DGCA. "The details of flight plan and flying shall be notified by the pilot to the nearby aerodrome, defence establishment and district local authorities concerned as applicable and obtain necessary clearance. No person shall operate a Powered Hang Glider at night. The Powered Hang Glider shall not be used for public transport or aerial work or any commercial activity," DGCA said. DGCA will grant the certificate after checking the background of the buyer from the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA). Any person or firm intending to acquire/manufacture or register a Powered Hang Glider is required to obtain security clearance from MHA through DGCA and comply with the requirements specified by MHA, as per the regulations.

Rajnath urges armed forces to plan according to complex world situation

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Wednesday urged the armed forces to strategise and plan accordingly in the backdrop of present complex and ambiguous world situation which affects everyone globally. He made these assertions while addressing the Army Commanders' Conference here and said "unconventional and asymmetric warfare, including hybrid war will be part of the future conventional wars and the same is evident in the recent conflicts happening in various parts of world. This necessitates that Armed Forces should keep all these facets in consideration while planning and formulating strategies. We must keep learning from the incidents to include the global ones, happened in present as also in past. Expect the Unexpected and thereby plan, strategize and prepare accordingly." Commenting on the current situation along the Northern



borders at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh and elsewhere, Rajnath expressed full confidence in the army for any contingency though, the ongoing talks for peaceful resolution will continue at all levels. Referring to the situation along the Western borders facing Pakistan, he complimented the

Indian Army's response to cross border terrorism, however the proxy war by the adversary continues. The defence minister commended the Army for the high standard of operational preparedness and capabilities which he has always been experiencing first hand during his visits to forward areas. He also

paid tributes to all the brave hearts for making the ultimate sacrifice in the defence of the motherland. He complimented the significant contributions made by the Army in military diplomacy to further our national security interests by creating sustainable cooperative relationships with foreign Armies. He also applauded Indian Army for the stellar performance by the Army Sportspersons in the recent Asian Games 2023. The second five-day Army Commanders' Conference this year, commenced in a hybrid format on October 16. During the event, Indian Army's apex leadership comprehensively deliberated upon all aspects of existing security scenarios, situation along the borders and in the hinterland and challenges for the present security apparatus. In addition, the conference is also focusing on issues pertaining to organisational restructuring, logistics, administration and human resource management.

BJP raises corruption charges against Gandhi family after Rahul attack

PTI
NEW DELHI

The BJP on Wednesday highlighted corruption charges against the Gandhi family as it hit back at Rahul Gandhi for his attack on the government over the reports of inflated invoicing by the Adani Group in coal imports.

BJP spokesperson Gaurav Bhatia claimed the matter involving the business conglomerate is in the Supreme Court and Gandhi's comments on the issue shows he has no faith either in the Constitution or in the apex court.

Alleging that the Gandhis are the "most corrupt" family in the world, Bhatia said at a press

conference that Rahul Gandhi is himself on bail in the National Herald case. The Congress leader never speaks on the corruption charge against him and the alleged scams of his brother-in-law Robert Vadra, the BJP leader said. Earlier in the day, Rahul Gandhi cited a media report to accuse the Adani Group of over-invoicing in coal imports and fleecing people to the tune of Rs 12,000 crore in electricity rates. He attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi, asking him to come clean on the Adani issue by initiating a probe into the matter. Bhatia took a swipe at



some opposition leaders also on their stand on the Palestine issue amid hostilities between Israel and Hamas, which con-

trols the Gaza Strip, a part of Palestine. While foreign policy is a domain of the Indian govern-



ment, some opposition parties are only interested in appeasement politics and can't con-

demn a terrorist organisation, he said in a reference to the attack by Hamas militant on Israel that killed hundreds of civilians. Some MPs consider themselves above the country and made statements ignoring the country's interests, he said. Several opposition leaders had recently met the Palestinian envoy here in an expression of solidarity with the people of Palestine and were critical of Israel for its "indiscriminate bombing" on Gaza. The BJP has also been taking swipes at the Congress after its CWC resolution on the issue made no reference to the Hamas' attack on October 7.

At the press conference, Bhatia raised the issue of Karnataka minister and Congress leader Shivnand Patil being showered with currency notes in the poll-bound Telangana and accused the party of defiling democracy and elections with its alleged use of corrupt money. Patil, he said, has acknowledged that it was he in the viral video but there has been no reaction from the Congress leadership. He must be immediately sacked as the continuation of such a "corrupt" minister is a threat to democracy, Bhatia said. On the one hand there is

an honest prime minister and the BJP serving people under his leadership, on the other there is massively corrupt Congress, he claimed. Corruption is in the DNA of the Congress, he alleged. The Congress has made Karnataka an ATM for its corruption, he said, questioning the presence of ministers from the state in Telangana where the assembly polls are scheduled to be held on November 30. The BJP leader spoke of a Congress leader in Rajasthan allegedly kicking off the headgear of a person and asserted that people will demolish the party's arrogance in the upcoming polls.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that my client Bhu Parkash and Atul Kumar are the owners of House No. A720 area measuring 125 sq. Yards of Plot No. 58, Part of Kharsa No. 11846, 11887, situated in the area of Village of Sachhora Khurd in Shastri Nagar, in Block D-2, Delhi State, Delhi having acquired the same after the death of Chatar Lal vide will dated 16.09.1988 (doc. No.15439) and whereas chatar Lal purchased the same vide Sale Deed dated 05.05.1967 (doc. no. 4820.) executed by Avtar Singh, Kuldeep Singh, Datta

All persons having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (legitimate/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise whatsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

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

INS Sudarshini arrives at Ho Chi Minh City port



In consonance with the government's policy of 'Act East' and Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR), the Sail Training Ship of Indian Navy, INS Sudarshini arrived at Saigon Port, Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam) on Wednesday. The ship is currently on deployment to South East Asia as part of her long range training deployment, navy officials said.

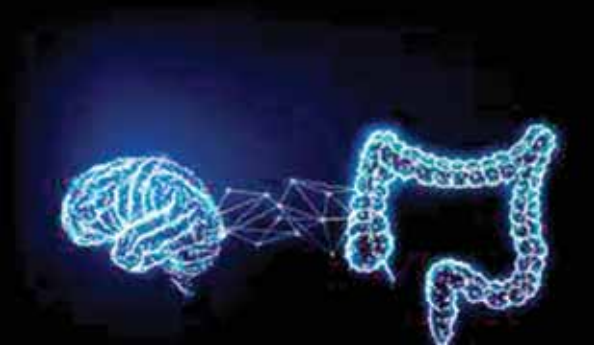
The day was marked with the visit of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar onboard ship along with representa-

tives of Ministry of National Defence (Vietnam) and members of diplomatic community. The visiting dignitaries witnessed demonstration of sail operations and were briefed on various aspects and methodologies adopted during 'Tall Ship' operations, they said. During media interaction, Jaishankar highlighted the diplomatic, cultural and historical values attached to the Indo-Vietnamese ties. He further emphasised strong mutual co-operation and bilateral engagement between Indian Navy and Vietnam People's Navy.

Gut microbiomes have a link to Alzheimer's disease: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

Gut microbiome and Alzheimer's disease, the most common cause of dementia, have a link, according to a study led by University College Cork (UCC) in Ireland. It supports the emergence of the gut microbiome as a key target for investigation in Alzheimer's disease due to its particular susceptibility to lifestyle and environmental influences. Published in Brain, the study shows that the memory impairments in people with Alzheimer's could be transferred to young animals through transplant of gut microbiota. Alzheimer's patients had a higher abundance of inflammation-promoting bacteria in faecal samples, and these changes were directly associated with their cognitive status. "The memory tests we investigated rely on the growth



of new nerve cells in the hippocampus region of the brain. We saw that animals with gut bacteria from people with Alzheimer's produced fewer new nerve cells and had impaired memory," Professor Yvonne Nolan from the university. "People with Alzheimer's are typically diagnosed at or after the onset of cognitive symptoms, which may be too late, at least for current therapeutic approaches.

are likely to develop Alzheimer's. "The study represents an important step forward in our understanding of the disease, confirming that the make-up of our gut microbiota has a causal role in the development of the disease," said Sandrine Thuret, Professor of Neuroscience at King's College London. According to health experts, trillions of microbes live in our gastrointestinal tract. These different types of bacteria, viruses, fungi, and other microorganisms — collectively known as the gut microbiome — play a vital role in maintaining overall health by helping to digest food and make nutrients. They also support the body's immune system and produce chemicals that affect brain function. When it gets out of balance, the gut microbiome can contribute to disease, they said giving the instance of the present study.

Central Coalfields Limited (A Subsidiary of Coal India Limited)

NOTICE

"All the tenders issued by CIL and its Subsidiaries for procurement of Goods, Works and Services are available on website of Coal India Ltd. www.coalindia.in/ respective Subsidiary Company (CCL, www.centralcoalfields.in/), CIL e-procurement portal <https://coalindiatenders.nic.in/> and Central Public Procurement Portal <https://eprocure.gov.in/> in addition, procurement is also done through GeM portal <https://gem.gov.in/>".

LOSS OF ID CARD

Public Notice

This is to bring to the notice of the general public that one ID Card of Tejshree Malhotra issued by ICICI Bank Ltd. having ID card no. 2347597 has been found missing and/or lost on October 17, 2023 10:00 AM Anyone, who finds the said ID card, is requested to return the said ID CARD to the Reliable Debt Management Legal Services, Plot Num 6 Office Num 101 Gall Num 3 East Guru Angad Nagar Delhi 110092 Therefore, all the customers of ICICI Bank Limited are hereby notified not to make any payment to any unauthorised person holding the said ID card no 2347597. Please take further notice that anybody making payment any person holding the said ID card shall do so at his/her own costs, risk and peril and ICICI Bank shall not be bound and/or responsible for any payment... ICICI Bank Ltd New Delhi

Date: 19/10/2023
Place: Delhi

For:-
ICICI BANK LTD
S.D

NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COUNCIL (ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT-NORTH)
4th Floor, Pragati Bhawan, Jai Singh Road, New Delhi-110001

PUBLIC NOTICE

NDMC invites agency for conducting Demand Survey & MIS Entry of Vendors/Hawkers in different zones in NDMC area through e-Tender. The schedule of e-Tender with complete details and terms & conditions are available on e-procurement web portal i.e. www.procurement.delhi.gov.in/ with the following criteria dates:-

Sr. No	Mode/process of RFP	Through e-procurement system
1	e-Tender ID	2023_NDMC_248846_1
2	Tender Amount	Rs.10,00,000/-
3	Date of Release of RFP	14.10.2023 at 1600 hrs
4	Date & Time of Pre-Bid Meeting	17.10.2023 at 1600 hrs
5	Last date & time for online submission of BID	23.10.2023 at 1500 hrs.
6	Bid opening date and time	23.10.2023 at 1600 hrs.

Concomitant if any, shall only be available on above website. The details/information of the above tender be asked the same may be contacted to Director (Enforcement)-North, NDMC, 9th Floor, Palika Kendra, Sansad Marg, New Delhi-110001. **Mob./Contact No:- 011-23364699 Email: director.enforcement.north@ndmc.gov.in and Jt. Dir. (Enforcement)-North, NDMC, 10th Floor, Palika Kendra, Sansad Marg, New Delhi. **Mob./Contact No:-011-41501372****

**Jt. Director (Enf.)-North
New Delhi Municipal Council**

PM Modi to launch 511 rural skill development centres in Maharashtra

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will launch 511 rural skill development centres in the name of late BJP leader Pramod Mahajan in Maharashtra on Thursday via video conferencing. The PMO said in a statement that these centres are being established across 34 rural districts of Maharashtra. They will conduct skill development training programs across various sectors to provide employment opportunities to the rural youth, it said. "Each centre will train about 100 youngsters in at least two vocational courses. The training is being provided by empanelled industry part-



India, Lanka discuss safety measures at coast guard meet

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE
NEW DELHI

India and Sri Lanka on Wednesday here discussed all aspects including safety of mariners, cross-border fishing and regional maritime contemporary issues during the 6th Annual High-Level Meeting between the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) and the Sri Lanka Coast Guard (SLCG). Giving details, ICG officials said the meeting marked a significant milestone in the collaborative efforts to combat transnational illegal activities at sea and promote regional cooperation. The meeting follows the institutionalized mechanism as outlined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the ICG and SLCG. Sri Lanka Coast Guard Director General Rear Admiral

Pujitha Vithana, held meeting with ICG chief Pal PTM with focus on a range of regional maritime contemporary issues, including cross-border fishing, safety of mariners, the adoption of best practices, capacity-building programs and other collaborative arrangements. Both sides expressed their commitment to enhancing mutual cooperation in addressing these challenges, thereby strengthening the maritime safety and security framework in the region. The 6th Annual ICG-SLCG High-Level Meeting underscores the commitment of both the Coast Guards to jointly address maritime challenges and foster regional cooperation, ultimately contributing to the safety and security of the maritime domain in the region. The 7th annual ICG-SLCG meeting will be hosted by Sri Lanka.

2-day India-France military meeting organised

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India-France MSC is a forum established to progress defence cooperation between both nations through regular

talks at strategic and operational levels between Headquarters (HQ), Integrated Defence Staff (IDS) and the Joint Staff HQ of French Armed Forces. The latest round of meeting was conducted in a friendly, warm and cordial atmosphere. The discussions focussed on new initiatives under the ambit of existing bilateral defence cooperation mechanism and strengthening ongoing defence engagements, officials said.





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PAPER WITH PASSION

The final frontier

Going forward, India's space foray is poised to be even more daring and challenging

Having already won accolades for its space programme, India is now eyeing greater glory. Since 1962 when ISRO transported rockets on bicycles to launching 100+ satellites on homegrown rockets, its space programme has come a long way. With its lunar odyssey and Mars rendezvous, Indian space scientists have amassed the confidence and mettle to take on more challenging jobs, hitherto considered the prerogative of only developed nations. In a bold and visionary move, ISRO has raised the bar by announcing the planned launch of an Indian Space Station by 2035 and landing of an Indian on the Moon by 2040. The development will make India one of the few countries, including the US, Russia and China, to have its own space station. Such a station will serve multiple purposes, from conducting experiments in micro-gravity to testing life support systems for future deep-space missions. It will also provide an ideal platform for international collaboration in space research, strengthening

India's global standing in the space community. More, it will create opportunities for commercial ventures and further technological advancements, making it a significant investment. While India's aim of sending its first astronaut to the Moon is an incredibly ambitious goal, it is entirely feasible given ISRO's track record. Chandrayaan-2, launched in 2019, was a monumental success and has significantly advanced India's lunar exploration capabilities.

India's space missions hold great promise. These not only demonstrate the nation's technological prowess but also provide invaluable insights into lunar resources, geology and potential future colonisation.



Additionally, the missions will open doors to lunar commerce, with the Moon potentially serving as a source of minerals, water and even a staging point for future deep-space exploration. Indeed, the grand success of the Indian space program would not have been possible without the efforts of Vikram Sarabhai and the vision of first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru, who was keen on building a progressive country with a 'scientific temper' in line with the great Indian tradition of exploring and finding the truth. The Indian space programme is one of the best examples of excelling through sheer hard work and innovation and achieving great success with a fraction of the cost that other countries incur. The space programme is no longer an experimental venture but an economically viable project that opens up tremendous economic prospects, from satellite manufacturing and launch services to space tourism. India's space ventures will create jobs and stimulate economic growth. Besides, collaborating with other spacefaring countries on the Indian Space Station will create opportunities for international partnerships and research. It will help foster goodwill and diplomacy, strengthening India's position in global politics. As ISRO works tirelessly to break fresh ground, India's future in space is brighter than ever.

PICTALK



Devotees take part in a 'Garba' performance during nine-day long Navratri festival in Bhopal

For fulfilling life, accept it as it comes

Life is a strange experience not only because of its brevity but also for the disproportionate sense of importance that people ascribe to their own being



VINAYSHIL GAUTAM



Assuming that the average life of an individual is about 80-90 years (at an optimistic level) the proportional level of work experience may not be more than about 40 years or so. This calculation is difficult to derive empirically but is common mensical if you consider the following: One spends about one-third (1/3) of the 80 or 90 years simply sleeping or taking rest; another 1/5 is spent eating, dressing, commuting, and all that goes with it. The first 10 years or so before adulthood are part of growing up. A rough calculation like the one in the preceding lines would show that even the figure of 40 years of operational active life is a generous projection and assessment of the years allotted to 'experience'. Of these 40 years' a substantial part is spent preparing for life, such as studying, searching for information, and more. Hence, the conclusion is that roughly, only, about 50% is the active man-years in a human life of 80-90 years. To spend this on feeling jealous, being petty, or simply idling would be such a waste. There is a need to be constructive, positive, and joyful. Anger comes easy, and dissatisfaction even

easier. People pack in these 30 years or more with a lot of other sentiments such as envy, hate, pedanticism, showing off what little they have, or simply displaying power in the limited space that the Almighty may have given them power.

A simple reflection would ask a basic question of whether this pedanticism is worth it or not. All said and done, power itself is a passing phenomenon. Nobody does or can stay in power forever. Then why the pedanticism? Qualities of humility, helpfulness, understanding, and supportiveness are not meant for saints only. They are meant for normal, everyday people who go through the grind of life. The vicissitudes of everyday life can be quite demanding.

Whether we like it or not, we all have our share of disappointments, emotions, and some experiences of not having achieved, not having received enough, or getting nowhere near where we wanted to get. This happens in interpersonal relationships, in family environments, work environments and almost everywhere else. It is amusing, to say the least,

that people gloat at their few successes and feel so bruised, hurt, and unhappy about their setbacks and disappointments. This is an unusual feeling because nothing lasts. Life is as simple as having it. There is a constant feeling of change in the experience of the individuals. Because of this, to see joy or pain larger than in a temporary frame would be unrealistic. However, life is a testimony to the fact that many have the illusion of permanence when, largely speaking, the concept of permanence is itself an illusion. There enters spirituality and religion. The spirit is accepted as a continuance in most religions, and the body is a passing phase. Some religions believe that the body will come alive on the date of judgment, and then eternal life will follow. Other religions believe in Atma-'soul' and Paramatma-'supreme existence'. This need not be a place to get into the details of the philosophy of the other world. Suffice it to say that those who do not believe in the day of judgement believe that 'Atma' must ultimately merge in the 'permanence' and, therefore, the cycle of

birth and rebirth. Be that as it may, it is true that there is an existence of the spirit, the soul, or whatever phraseology one chooses to use after the body runs its course. The body, therefore, becomes a passing experience. It works through sensory life. Embedded in this body is the experience of joy and happiness, sadness, or melancholy. It was so worthwhile to reflect that all these are passing experiences, as enumerated above. They should not be taken too seriously nor should they be taken to heart. Accepting things as they come and acting on them with a sense of fulfilment seems to be the way forward. This is being facilitative. The relatedness and relativity of life are reflected in the seconds, minutes, hours, and days, and it is that which one tries to live with such intensity! A sense of support is all that one needs to lead a healthy, fulfilling, and complete life. This can be stated simply, but it is a lifetime struggle, let alone fulfilment, to achieve.

(The writer is a well-known management consultant. The views expressed are personal)

ACCEPTING THINGS AS THEY COME AND ACTING ON THEM WITH A SENSE OF FULFILMENT SEEMS TO BE THE WAY FORWARD

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BIDEN BETRAYED ISRAEL

Sir—The Biden administration should reassess its unwavering commitment to Israel's security and well-being while actively striving for a lasting peace that safeguards the interests of all involved parties. It is disheartening to witness what appears to be a breach of trust with our long-standing ally, Israel. Throughout history, the United States has consistently extended robust support to Israel's right to self-defense. However, recent developments suggest a departure from this policy. The administration's calls for a ceasefire during the conflict, without addressing the provocations and attacks launched by terrorist organizations against Israel, raise questions about our dedication to the security of our ally. Israel has faced a relentless barrage of rocket attacks, endangering the lives of its citizens. It is imperative that the United States stands firmly beside Israel in unequivocally condemning these acts of terror. Any perception of wavering support sends a troubling message to Israel's adversaries and threatens the stability of the entire region.

Md. Ali Gori | Jharkhand

CRICKET IN THE OLYMPICS

Sir—In a significant development at the International Olympic Meeting in Mumbai, cricket has been approved as a sport for the 2028 Olympic competition in Los Angeles, USA. Following its inclusion in the Commonwealth and Asian Games, T20 cricket is now set to take center stage in the Olympics. Remarkably, only two out of the 99 assembly members opposed this move. Cricket boasts nearly two and a half billion fans worldwide, and after a hiatus of 128 years, it's making a grand return to the Olympics. This tournament will feature six women's and six men's cricket teams. Interestingly, while the United States may not currently be a prominent figure in cricket, they will have an automatic entry as the hosts. There's also a proposal to guarantee entry for world champions. Presently, cricket is

Koraput Coffee at the top



A tribal district in Odisha is garnering recognition for its coffee production. At the recent 5th World Coffee Conference in Bangalore, Kruti Coffee from Koraput received India's Best Natural Coffee Award. Their 'Kindiriguda Naturals' originate from a village in Koraput, where 40 families are dedicated to coffee farming. Koraput coffee boasts both filter and instant ground varieties, the latter being a recent addition.

tion in August. This venture has not only empowered farmers but also uplifted the entire district's economic prospects.

The majority of tribal farmers are now engaged in coffee cultivation, with approximately 3,500 hectares dedicated to coffee farming by 4,300 growers, including 800 tribal farmers, according to government data. In 2017, Ajit Rout, a former senior liaison officer of the Coffee Board in Koraput, breathed new life into Koraput coffee by establishing the Coffee Development Trust in May 2017.

Their primary challenge remains reaching urban buyers with Koraput coffee. A total investment of 50 lakhs has been made to produce this exceptional coffee from Koraput. This accomplishment stands as a remarkable achievement for Odisha, especially in a district known for its tribal population and economic challenges. The once bitter taste of coffee has now become sweet for the state.

Akankhya Rout | Dhenkanal

competing with football at the global level. The ICC men's T20 cricket rankings comprise 87 countries, and there are 66 women's teams. In contrast, the Football Federation's list includes 207 men's teams and 186 women's teams. Hence, cricket's journey to the pinnacle of global sports may take some time.

After the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles, the spotlight will shift to Brisbane in 2032. Following that, there's a possibility that the 2036 Olympics will grace India. Overall, while cricket has secured a place in Los Angeles, its permanence in the Olympic arena must be ensured. Cricket enjoys immense popularity in India, and the quest for an Olympic gold medal is now the dream of every Indian.

Shantaram Wagh | Sangli

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

Sir—We must establish a comprehensive 360-degree survival plan that encompasses the care and nurturing of individuals

from adolescence through youth to old age. This plan should facilitate a seamless transition, free from government or group interventions, making it a natural phenomenon. It should also mitigate the risks of landslides, floods, earthquakes, and fires within our homes. The true essence of this concept began to emerge when it gained popularity. In this context, the environment's success is measured by its ability to support both reproduction and survival. Are you intrigued to delve into this concept further with just a few insights? Natural selection, first theorised by Charles Darwin, focuses on the factors that aid living organisms in adapting their genes over generations, leading to the survival of the fittest. It involves the adaptation of species that, in certain aspects, are better suited to their environment.

Tanisha Gupta | Ujjain

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

Accelerating green innovation through EVs

As the wheels of innovation turn, EVs are not only driving us forward but also steering us toward a greener horizon



TUSHAR CHOUDHARY

In the wake of the global climate crisis, the need for innovative solutions to combat environmental challenges has never been more pressing. India, a country known for its vibrant startup ecosystem, finds itself uniquely positioned to drive a transformative change through electric vehicle (EV) companies. These enterprises are not just shaping the future of transportation but also revolutionizing the nation's startup landscape, with far-reaching implications for sustainability, economic growth, and technological advancement.

Thriving startup ecosystem India's startup ecosystem has undergone a remarkable evolution over the past decade, establishing itself as a fertile ground for innovation. Within this ecosystem, the EV sector has emerged as a dynamic force, leveraging technology and green initiatives to redefine mobility and address environmental concerns. A recent report by the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) predicts that India's EV industry could reach a staggering market value of \$206 billion



by 2030, with startups contributing significantly to this growth.

Environmental imperative As India strives for sustainable development in the face of rising pollution and climate change concerns, EVs offer a viable solution to mitigate carbon emissions and reduce reliance on fossil fuels. With the nation's commitment to the Paris Agreement, targeting 40% of energy generation from renewables by 2030, the role of EV companies becomes pivotal in achieving this goal. By transitioning from conventional internal combustion engines to electric propulsion, India can substantially reduce its carbon footprint and pave the way for a cleaner, greener future.

Job creation The surge in EV startups isn't merely an environmen-

tal endeavour; it also carries significant economic implications. A report by the World Economic Forum highlights that the electric vehicle value chain could potentially generate up to 10 million jobs worldwide by 2030.

Addressing challenges While the potential of EV startups to drive green innovation is undeniable, several challenges must be addressed. The lack of charging infrastructure is a primary concern, impeding the widespread adoption of EVs. However, this challenge also presents an opportunity for startups to innovate by developing efficient charging solutions and collaborating with the government to expand the charging network. Moreover, integrating renewable energy sources into charging infrastructure can further enhance the sustainability of the EV ecosystem.

Government support The Indian government's recognition of the importance of EVs is reflected in its policies and initiatives. The Faster Adoption and Manufacturing of Electric Vehicles (FAME) scheme, along with tax incentives and

subsidies, aims to encourage EV adoption and domestic manufacturing. However, a sustained collaboration between the government and startups is essential to address regulatory hurdles, standardize policies, and create an environment conducive to innovation. India's endeavours to foster a green startup ecosystem transcend national boundaries. The success of its EV startups can serve as a global inspiration, showcasing how technological innovation can be harnessed to address pressing environmental challenges. The accelerating growth of EV companies within India's startup landscape holds the promise of transformative change. With strategic government support, robust private sector innovation, and heightened public awareness, India's EV startups can steer the nation towards a sustainable, eco-friendly, and economically prosperous future. As the wheels of innovation turn, EVs are not only driving us forward but also steering us toward a greener horizon. (The writer is the Founder & CEO, of Motovolt Mobility, views are personal)



FIRST COLUMN

EMOTIONS AND GOD ARE SYNONYMOUS

Spiritual acts will always supersede material acts, but only God can exercise this power



AJIT KUMAR BISHNOI

Have't we all wondered about God not showing any emotion when major disasters take place? How else did they happen when God is in control? For example, a plane crashes and all occupants die. World Trade Centre's two buildings were left in ruins when planes hijacked by terrorists crashed into them. A tsunami comes and many are washed away. A major earthquake causes mayhem when thousands die and are helplessly buried in houses, etc, they were occupying. The worst possibly took place when Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed to extinction with nuclear weapons.

Before I answer this very important question, let us become aware of what emotion is. The definition of this word is strong feelings of any kind, e.g. love, joy, anger, hate, fear, etc. This includes excitement or disturbance of feeling on account of certain important events/thoughts. There are three types of emotions: good like appreciation, such as attachment and bad like greed.

God doesn't interfere in the cited occurrences due to the following reasons. The first one is the 'Karmaphala Principle', which is what you sow you reap. Our 'karmaphalas' are carried over life after life till they come to fruition. We cannot see that, because we have no memory of our past lives; God has; He knows our past, present and future also. For example, a police officer catches a habitual thief and deals with him harshly. As a bystander, you may feel a little emotional seeing a man being dealt harshly, because we don't know the background.

Why is the 'karmaphala' principle so important to God? Because this creation can only function on this basis. Imagine good people getting punished and bad ones getting away with murder. Sometimes it may seem that way, because good people have also got a bad past, and bad ones have not always been bad. However, what we do in our present lives get us reward and punishment in our future and, if not in the present life, the 'karmaphala' system is unfailing. Similarly, dharma must be paramount. Dharma is so dear to God that He even incarnates to reestablish it. It is dharma, not emotion, which is required for the creation to exist for billions of years.



If God becomes soft, no one will be punished, which will make everyone free of fear. And in the absence of fear, do you think any kind of order can be maintained? We all know that ultimately fears only make us behave. Justice cannot be administered by a soft God; He must always be just, which God is.

Now some explanation of terrible occurrences. There is a training institute for successful IAS candidates in Mussoorie, where they assemble for training. Don't they come from different parts of the country? Similarly, all those destined to die get on the ill-fated plane. The same, however, does not happen in each case of catastrophe. Many survive in case of major earthquakes, as they do in tsunamis. Did you know that many escaped from the twin World Trade Center buildings after planes hit?

Now the important question: does God ever get emotional? Yes, He does. Yes, God shows emotions wherever appropriate. Rather God is so emotional that He is pleased by simple acts like doing 'namaskar' to His deity or photo, which even a child can do. But God will never get emotional when dharma is being infringed upon or someone is being justly punished for bad 'karmas', except in the case of devotees surrendered to Him. God helps them come out of their troubles. Why? Spiritual acts will always supersede material acts, but only God can exercise this power.

(The writer is a spiritual guide; views are personal)

A long road to economic recovery for Sri Lanka

While Sri Lanka is getting international help in dealing with its economic crisis, it needs to find ways to repay its debt



NARESH BANA



TALAL RAFI



Much is being written and talked about debt restructuring, bailouts, and direct investment into Sri Lanka.

While the International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout is on course, seventeen countries promised support in May this year. China is supporting and India is constantly sending money and material as a neighbouring large economy. The World Bank (WB) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) are also coming up with equal measures (Almost \$ 3.75 Billion) as external help to resuscitate the Sri Lankan economy. While all this is welcome, we also need to see what additional can be done to make this economic revival less punitive and sustainable for Sri Lankan people. For that, we need to answer the 'what' and 'how' of sustainable options and see what may be applicable to the evolving scenario in Sri Lanka and in which time frame.

The economic crash has impacted Sri Lankan institutions and financial companies in a big way, and they have apparently become disconnected from fundamental values and long-term sustainable thinking. Instead of nurturing sustainable collaborations, banks, lenders, borrowers, and shareholders seem to be pursuing short-term relationships founded on situational values. For practitioners of sustainability, this is the opportune time to get out of this cycle of crises and think long-term and with sustainable human relations and get out of the crisis smoothly in this interconnected world.

Funds extended by International Financial Institutions (IFI) are loans and would need to be returned, though over a long duration. Further, these loans may be denominated in US dollar (USD), Euro, Japanese Yen, Chinese RMB, ADB SDRs or Indian Rupees (INR), all foreign currencies having only a market-based relationship with the Sri Lankan rupee (SLR). Such a relationship subjects the repayment of



DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAPITAL MARKET AND RAISING REGIONAL FUNDS WILL GIVE REGIONAL INVESTORS A CHANCE TO EARN RETURNS ON INVESTMENTS

(Naresh is Vice Chairman of the Indo-Sri Lanka Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Talal Rafi is an Economist, a member of the Deloitte Global Economist Network and a regular columnist for IMF; Views expressed are personal)

these loans to currency risk as SLR is traded and subjected to the vagaries of the currency market. Prevailing political risk in the country makes it even more complex and challenging. Such external funds when applied to sustain/boost economic activity where earnings are in SLR, an asset-liability currency mismatch happens due to currency trade and inflationary pressures. For example, if the SRL depreciates against USD by 10%, revenues in Sri Lanka remain the same while liabilities get enhanced by 10% on the higher side.

Even with a free float regime, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka does have some control over the exchange rate through its monetary policies, but the overall effective control of the exchange rate is most limited due to the precarious situation of forex reserves and import commitments. The funds which will be used in various development works or infrastructure projects where developers may earn revenue to repay the loans (extended to them in foreign currency) will either manage the currency risk by hedging or factor it in their project tariff thereby leading to additional burden on the user of the infrastructure eventually eroding the purchasing power of the common person, finally, denting the repayment capacity of the nation. At the same time, the currency risk can have an upside as well and it may generate revenues much in excess of the projections if the infrastructure gets extra utilized or exchange rates go in favour of Sri Lanka. Though it may not excite the lenders much beyond receiving

interest on payments on the principle there is little potential for the upside, while the developers harvest profits.

In view of the uncertainties associated with the exchange rate, currency risk could be a difficult and sensitive issue to be effectively assumed by the government of Sri Lanka. It is at this stage that time tested, and innovative strategies are put into practice to hedge and ameliorate currency risk. The conventional hedging strategies being used are (a) Natural hedge (b) Local currency swap (c) Exchange-rate Indexed contracts and (d) Loan in pegged currency. Most of the above options load hedging costs onto the end user i.e., the common person, directly (rates/tariff increase) or indirectly (enhanced taxation). The way out is having more of 'local currency i.e., Sri Lankan Rupee'. But when internal debt is already at sky-high levels how does the local currency become available to users to sustain and grow the economic activity? That is where external support can be of help. Committed leadership and good diplomacy can play a key role. These are extraordinary times and solutions too need to be extraordinary.

In addition to the IFIs, there is a definite role to play for the growing regional economies of Indian Ocean Rim (IOR) countries. Firstly, together with IFIs, these economies can help enhance local currency availability in Sri Lanka i.e., subscribing to Sri Lanka sovereign bonds denominated in any stronger currency of the region with whom Sri Lanka has a fair-trading activity. Secondly, this is the time to refurbish and resuscitate

Sri Lankan capital markets to enhance transparency and credibility, which not only would bring more remittances and deposits from non-resident Sri Lankans but also help these markets to engage with other regional markets and regional investors and draw on their strength. Both activities may enhance the availability of local money without any currency risk and thereby render maximum sustainability with the least pain for the economic resuscitation of Sri Lanka.

The optimism of drawing equity investment from IOR countries is based on the apparent cohesiveness that emanates from shared cultural and trade ties between the neighbours. Among many IOR countries, particularly Malaysians, Malaysians and Indians would like to invest in Sri Lanka and see that the economy does well as there are shared investments in either country which suffered badly during the economic crisis. Development of the capital market and raising regional funds will give regional investors a chance to earn returns on investments which is nothing but helping their own investments give better returns. Such financial instruments of Sri Lanka may be supported by more credible regional financial institutions or by regional sovereigns. Those who invest do know that Sri Lanka is always bankable and will give better returns on investment in future. On the part of Sri Lankan people, they need to elect caring, credible and committed leaders to minimize the political risk which is significant and could jeopardize the recovery trajectory.

India has the will and capacity to host Olympic games

India has the potential to stage the Olympic Games. But would we be able to compete in the Olympics we host, is the moot question

The declaration by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Saturday that India would not leave no stone unturned in hosting the 2036 Olympic Games is music to the ears. A prime minister of the country is bold enough to make a commitment like this is proof of India's odyssey during the last decade. The Olympic Games, a quadrennial event, is the world's biggest sporting competition that draws athletes from all the countries in the comity of nations. It may not be a big challenge for a country with a track record of successfully hosting the Asian Games, the Commonwealth Games, World Cup Cricket and Hockey. There is a reasonably good infrastructure in place and if a mission is launched right now, it may not



KUMAR CHELLAPPAN

(The writer is a correspondent at The Pioneer; views expressed are personal)

be that difficult to supplement the existing stadiums with additional facilities. The Centre has the capability to build more airports to strengthen connectivity and set up hotels and the Olympic Village of global standards across India.

The only question that disturbs the mind is do we have world-class athletes capable of making it to the podium. Agreed, we have Neeraj Chopra, who emerged as a national icon after winning a gold medal in javelin throw in the Tokyo Olympics 2020 (held in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020). Neeraj's was the only gold medal won by India as the country finished in the 48th position in the medal tally. The United States led the table by winning 39

gold medals and 41 silver medals while China finished close with 38 gold and 32 silver. Japan, the host nation finished third by bagging 27 gold and 14 silver medals. The Tokyo Games saw the participation of 11,420 athletes representing 206 nations vying for the honors.

Staging a sporting event like the Olympic Games is by no means a tough job for India. The country has the political and executive leadership to make it happen. But the major question is whether the host country would figure at least in the first 20 positions in the medal tally. 2036 is just 12 years away and India does not have a sporting system in place to groom gold medal winners by that time. How many among our athletes have

the capability to finish in the first six positions in the track and field events? Neeraj Chopra was a flash in the pan. The policymakers and those heading the sports associations should take a look at the performance of the Indian athletes before venturing out to host the global sporting event.

The lackadaisical and irresponsible attitude of persons heading various sporting events has contributed a lot to the fall in standards as well as the stagnant growth of sports in India. It is time we took the performance of Indian teams in events like football, volleyball, basketball, track and field events and aquatics to understand the abyss to which we have fallen. The Indian football team which finished fourth in the 1956 Melbourne Olympics

was seen struggling even in the Asian Games. The less we speak about other events, the better. More than the track records of the teams, we should also look into the performance of the association office bearers to understand the fall in standards.

The question is should we waste scarce resources to host an event where the Indian stars would not be able to make any impact and finish as also-rans? The present association office bearers or coaches are incapable of moulding star performers in the next ten or twelve years. Do we have a sports culture in the country? How many sports magazines or weeklies are there in India? The 24/7 sports channels are for action-packed events from Europe and the American

continent. When we take up a mission like the Olympic Games, it should with the objective of leaving behind a sterling history for future generations to get inspired. Despite winning gold medals in the Olympics and Asian Games, Neeraj Chopra has to contend with the job of a junior commissioned officer in the Indian Army. Had he been a cricket star, the corporates would have offered him the post of a senior executive and a six-digit take-home pay. It is said that Adolf Hitler was so impressed with the artistry of hockey wizard Dhyana Chand in the 1936 Berlin Olympics and offered him German citizenship and the rank of colonel in the German army which the latter declined. We have to go miles

and miles before we can boast of world-class sportsmen. It is for that we should give importance. Hosting the Olympics could wait for some more decades. It is interesting to hear what late Olympian Abdul Rehman said after watching India getting trounced by the then USSR (6-0) in the opening match of the 1986 Jawaharlal Nehru Cup International Football tournament. "Thank God for the accord signed between India and USSR in 1971. Had that treaty not been there, the Russians would have scored at least 12 goals". There are sporting fans who ask what would happen if the Indian basketball men's team were pitted against the women of the USA! You cannot blame sports lovers.

ENGLAND QUALIFIES FOR THE EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

AP ■ LONDON

England became the ninth team to book a place at next year's European Championship after beating Italy 3-1 at Wembley Stadium, two years on from losing the final to the Italians at the same venue.

Denmark and Hungary also could have qualified on Tuesday but both must wait until the next qualifying games in November. And tiny San Marino briefly looked on track for a historic draw in its narrow loss to the Danes. Italy took the lead with a goal for Gianluca Scamacca -- his first for his country -- but England turned the game around with two goals from captain Harry Kane and one from Marcus Rashford. England joins host nation Germany and previously qualified Austria, Belgium, France, Portugal, Scotland, Spain and Turkey at next year's 24-team tournament.

Defeat to England deepened the gloom around the Italian team amid a scandal around players' alleged involvement in an illegal betting ring. Premier League midfielders Sandro Tonali and Nicolò Zaniolo left the Italy camp last week after being questioned by police. Italy's game with Ukraine on Nov. 20 will decide which team gets the second qualifying spot in Group C along with



England. Italy is seeking to avoid missing a second tournament in a row after failing to qualify for the World Cup last year. The decider is officially a home game for Ukraine but will take place in Germany because of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The Ukrainians had to recover from a goal down to beat

Malta 3-1. The win was sealed when Chelsea winger Mykhailo Mudryk scored a powerful long-range shot for his first international goal. NEARLY SAN MARINO'S MOMENT San Marino threatened the greatest shock in its soccer history as it held the score level with Denmark at 1-1 until

Denmark scored again to seal a 2-1 win that leaves it on the verge of qualification. San Marino captain Alessandro Golinucci scored his country's first goal in a competitive game for two years to level up the score in the 61st minute - with substitutes charging onto the field to join the celebrations - but Yussuf Poulsen's header

nine minutes later put Denmark ahead again. San Marino has tried to qualify for the European Championship nine times and has lost every game with the sole exception of a 0-0 draw with Estonia in 2014. San Marino has won only one game ever, beating Liechtenstein 1-0 in a 2004 friendly.

Denmark could have secured qualification Tuesday but needed other results to go its way. A 2-1 win for Kazakhstan against Finland earlier ensured Denmark would have to wait until next month's games. Group leader Slovenia won 1-0 against Northern Ireland. Kazakhstan is trying to qualify for its first-ever European Championship and upset Finland with two late goals from Bakhtiyor Zainutdinov including an 89th-minute winner. Kazakhstan must win its last two games against San Marino and Slovenia next month to have any chance. HUNGARY WAITS Hungary needed a win over Lithuania to qualify but instead drew 2-2 after recovering from being 2-0 down at halftime. Serbia is second in Group G and edged closer to qualifying by beating Montenegro 3-1. FRANCE BEATS SCOTLAND France recovered from a glaring defensive error to beat Scotland 4-1 in a friendly between two teams that have already qualified for the European Championship. An errant pass from Eduardo Camavinga allowed Billy Gilmour to score Scotland's opening goal before France responded with two goals from defender Benjamin Pavard, one by Kylian Mbappé and another for Kingsley Coman.



Neymar leaves match with knee injury

AP ■ MONTEVIDEO (URUGUAY)

Neymar was in tears as he left the field with a left knee injury at the end of the first half of Brazil's 2-0 World Cup qualifying loss at Uruguay. The 31-year-old striker tripped and fell during a run in the 44th minute at the Centenario Stadium on Tuesday and was immediately surrounded by players from both teams as he held his knee. Neymar was carried off on a stretcher with both of his hands on his face. Richarlison came on to replace him. Neymar used crutches as he left the stadium. Brazil's doctor Rodrigo Lasmar told reporters it was too early to determine the severity of Neymar's injury. "We did all the tests and we will repeat them tomorrow. Those 24 hours are key to see how his knee will respond, how swollen it will be and what images will show," Lasmar said.

"Let's wait for the exams with calmness, evaluate with calmness and tell you once we have a diagnosis." Uruguay led 1-0 when Neymar was hurt. Brazil went on to suffer its first loss in 37 matches in World Cup qualifying. Neymar did not speak to reporters in Montevideo. After leaving the stadium, he posted on Instagram that "God knows about all things." "All the honour and all the glory will always be yours, my Lord. No matter what, I have faith," he said in the post. Neymar, who plays for Al Hilal of the Saudi Pro League, was criticised by fans before the World Cup qualifier because of his sub-par performance during Thursday's 1-1 draw between host Brazil and Venezuela. He recently returned to play after a right ankle injury that sidelined him for almost six months. Neymar made his national team debut in 2010 and has 79 goals in 128 appearances for Brazil.

Messi scores 2 in World Cup, qualifying win

AP ■ MONTEVIDEO (URUGUAY)

Lionel Messi scored twice in Argentina's 2-0 win at Peru in a World Cup qualifier on Tuesday, playing the entire match for his national team. The 36-year-old appeared fit after he was sidelined for several matches with his club Inter Miami because of muscular pain. Elsewhere, Venezuela beat Chile 3-0. Yeferson Soteldo opened the scoring shortly before the break, Salomón Rondón added a goal in the 72nd minute, and Darwin Machis scored seven minutes later. Last week, Venezuela earlier had a 1-1 draw against Brazil.



Ecuador and Colombia had a scoreless draw, and Paraguay beat Bolivia 1-0 on Antonio Sanabria's goal in the 69th minute. Argentina leads South American qualifying with 12 points in four matches. Uruguay, Brazil and Venezuela have seven points and are separated by goal difference. Colombia has six points, and Ecuador, Paraguay and Chile have four each. Peru has one point and Bolivia has zero. The next World Cup in the United States, Mexico and Canada will include 48 teams, meaning direct entry for the top six teams in South America. The seventh-place team will contest an intercontinental playoff for a berth. Two more rounds of South American World Cup qualifying will be played in November. Brazil and Argentina will face off at the Maracana Stadium in Rio de Janeiro on Nov. 21. ARGENTINA 2, PERU 0 Messi increased his total to 106 goals in 178 international appearances, moving within two of Iran's Ali Daei for second on the career list behind Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo at 127. The defending World Cup champion never faced risks at Lima's National Stadium against a Peruvian team that has yet to score in four qualifying matches. Argentina's confident performance could be traced to Messi finally playing as a starter and appearing fully healthy. The 36-year-old made it 1-0 after a counterattack in the 32nd minute. Enzo Fernández passed to Nico González on the left. A low cross found Messi at the edge of the box, and he shot

it to the left angle of goalkeeper Pedro Gallese. Messi scored again 10 minutes later after Enzo Fernández found him nearly at the same spot. Messi shot it on Gallese's right corner. He later had a goal disallowed for a low margin offside caught by video review in the 57th minute. "Yes, we have a good group and a good environment in our dressing room and things are much easier. We enjoy being together and playing together," Messi said. "After we won the World Cup we got confidence, we are more united and firm. I hope we can keep growing." Peruvian and Argentinian fans tried to invade the field after the match to hug Messi, who led the World Cup champions to their eighth straight victory since they won last year's title in Qatar.

Last Thursday, Messi played for almost an entire half of Argentina's 1-0 victory over Paraguay. URUGUAY 2, BRAZIL 0 After a slow start to the match in Montevideo, Maximiliano Araújo easily beat Marquinhos on the left flank and crossed the ball to Darwin Núñez, who headed it into the net. The second half started with Brazil still doubtful and Uruguay ready to counterattack. One of those transitions was enough for a close-range finish by Nicolás de la Cruz in the 77th minute. "In the short run we need to be realistic, we need to improve," Brazil captain Casemiro said. "For Neymar to leave the match it is surely something serious. But I hope it isn't at the end. He has had those injuries whenever he starts picking up his pace again, it is hard."

Pakistan claims its first-ever win in soccer World Cup

AP ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's national soccer team won a World Cup qualifying game for the first time, beating Cambodia 1-0 here to advance to the second round in Asia. After the first leg in Phnom Penh finished 0-0, an angled left-foot half-volley from Harun Hamid on Tuesday was enough to secure victory at Jinnah Sports Stadium in a first home game for Pakistan since 2015. It was also the first win for Pakistan, ranked 197th, since 2018. It joins Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan and Jordan in Group G of Asian qualifying, which kicks off next month.

Pakistan was banned by FIFA in April 2021 for 15 months because of "undue third party interference" - its second ban in four years. Pakistan will be joined in the second stage by nine other teams after two-leg, home-and-away series for the Asian Football Confederation's 20 lowest-ranked teams. With no domestic league since 2018, Pakistan's English coach Stephen Constantine, appointed just 13 days before the first of the qualifying games last week, faced a difficult job. Ahead of the games against Cambodia, Constantine had promised: "If we get the combination right, watch out."

The Pakistan Football Federation posted a video on social media of Constantine celebrating with the team after the historic win, with the message: "The floor is all yours, Coach. We've made history." Singapore beat Guam 3-1 on aggregate after winning 1-0 on Tuesday, and Afghanistan also beat Mongolia 1-0 to advance 2-0 overall. Yemen was held 1-1 at Sri Lanka, Asia's lowest-ranked team at No. 202, but had done enough in its home leg to advance 4-1 on aggregate. The other teams to advance to the 36-nation second round are Bangladesh, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Nepal, Indonesia and

Myanmar. Myanmar will open the next stage against Japan, which beat Tunisia 2-0 in a friendly at Kobe, a sixth successive victory, thanks to a goal in each half from Celtic's Kyogo Furuhashi and Junya Ito. In another friendly, South Korea routed Vietnam 6-0 at Suwon, in coach Jurgen Klinsmann's third straight win. Apart from Vo Minh Trong's own-goal, all the scorers for South Korea were European-based players: Bayern Munich's Kim Min-jae, Hwang Hee-chan of Wolverhampton, Tottenham's Son Heung-min, Lee Kang-in of Paris Saint-Germain and Stuttgart's Jeong Woo-young.

Aliassime wins matches for first time since March

AP ■ TOKYO

Felix Auger-Aliassime defeated Sebastian Ofner 6-4, 6-1 to advance to the quarterfinals of the Japan Open on Wednesday, winning consecutive matches for the first time since March. The 23-year-old Canadian, who had not won back-to-back matches since Indian Wells, rallied from a break down in a tight first set before racing through the second by winning the final six games.

"I need results like this," said Auger-Aliassime, after backing up his win over Aleksander Vukic in the first round. "I believe in my game and I believe in myself that I have what it takes to win at this level. I have done it before but it is about doing it and having a lot of belief and a positive mind. I am happy that my level is translating to the match court after a couple of months." Auger-Aliassime next plays American qualifier Marcos



Giron, who upset eighth-ranked Casper Ruud 6-3 6-4. Fifth-seeded Tommy Paul beat fellow American Mackenzie McDonald 6-4 6-2. The 12th-ranked Paul will play Ben Shelton or Jordan Thompson. Also, Shanghai Masters winner Hubert Hurkacz lost his first-round match to No.57 Zhang Zhizhen 3-6 6-4 7-6(4). Zhang fired 10 aces and broke serve three times to avenge his defeat to the 11th-ranked Hurkacz in Shanghai last week.

Third-seeded Marie Bouzkova advanced to the quarterfinals of the Jiangxi Open in China by beating Amina Anshba 7-5 6-0. Nao Hibino of Japan followed her victory over top-seeded Beatriz Haddad-Maia in the first round with a 6-3 7-5 win over Kimberly Birrell. The 93rd-ranked Hibino will play Diana Shnaider in Friday's quarterfinals after the Russian advanced when Vera Zvonareva retired due to illness when trailing 6-3 0-1.

Kane: It's never as easy as it looks

AP ■ LONDON

England booked its place at next summer's European Championship with a 3-1 win over defending champion Italy at Wembley Stadium. England had to come from behind following Gianluca Scamacca's first goal for the Azzurri on Tuesday. But two goals from Harry Kane -- including a penalty -- and a Marcus Rashford strike gave Gareth Southgate's team the victory it needed to secure at least a top-two finish in its group. "It's never as easy as it looks," Kane told Channel 4. "We have had a really tough group this time but credit to the lads, some of the results we've had, performances and we topped it off here today. We went 1-0 down, we stayed calm and we stayed steady, we knew we had enough to get the win

and we did it. "It has been a tough journey and to qualify with two games to go is credit to everyone involved," the Bayern Munich striker added. Italy, which is embroiled in another soccer scandal, could face the prospect of playoffs and even failure to qualify for a second straight major tournament. The Azzurri lost a play-off to North Macedonia last year and didn't qualify for the World Cup, just a year after winning the pandemic-delayed Euro 2020. It also missed out on the 2018 World Cup after losing a play-off to Sweden. England leads Group C, three points ahead of Ukraine, which won 3-1 at Malta, and six points above Italy. The Azzurri play North Macedonia and Ukraine in their final qualifying matches next month. Italy travelled to England with-

out a number of players through injury and a betting scandal. Premier League midfielders Sandro Tonali and Nicolò Zaniolo left the Italy camp last week after being questioned by police over alleged involvement in an illegal betting ring. It was the first time Italy had played England at Wembley since beating Southgate's team on penalties to win the European Championship in 2021. And the Azzurri took the lead in the 15th minute when Giovanni Di Lorenzo rolled the ball across from the right and Davide Frattesi completely missed the ball but Scamacca fired into the roof of the net. That was Scamacca's first goal for Italy - coming in his 13th appearance - and he nearly had a second eight minutes later but he fired just wide of the left upright.

World Cup bid boosted by Indonesia changing sides

AP ■ LONDON

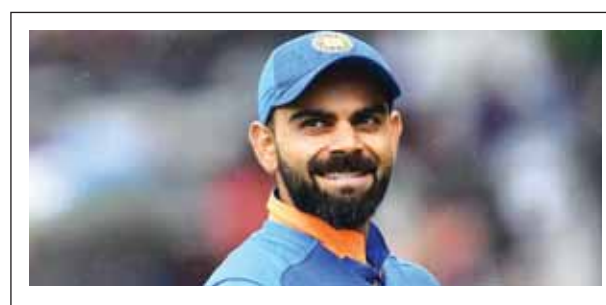
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went 1-0 down, we stayed calm and we stayed steady, we knew we had enough to get the win and we did it. "It has been a tough journey and to qualify with two games to go is credit to everyone involved," the Bayern Munich striker added. Italy, which is embroiled in Geneva, Oct 18 (AP) Saudi Arabia's FIFA-favored bid to host the men's World Cup in 2034 passed on Wednesday one of the few barriers left in what seems an inevitable win. One week after revealing talks with Australia about bidding to co-host the 2034 World Cup, Indonesian soccer leader Erick Thohir said his federation is now with Saudi Arabia. Thohir's change of plan was detailed in a statement from the Indonesian soccer federation

website hours before an online meeting of the Asian Football Confederation, whose 47 members include Australia, Indonesia and Saudi Arabia. During the meeting, FIFA President Gianni Infantino urged AFC members to "be united for the 2034 World Cup." Infantino has long been a close ally of Saudi soccer and the kingdom's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, and FIFA's surprise decision two weeks ago to fast-track bidding for the 2034 men's tournament was seen as favorable for them. AFC members responded quickly to Infantino's urging and the Japan federation proposed united support behind the Saudi bid backed by Uzbekistan, Lebanon and India.



INDIA AIMS TO EXTEND WORLD CUP DOMINANCE VS BANGLADESH



Kohli: No big teams in World Cup, beware of upsets

PTI ■ PUNE

There are no "big teams" in the World Cup and upsets at the mega event happen when the conversation revolves around the more successful teams, star India batter Virat Kohli said on Wednesday. Kohli's statement comes following two major upsets in the ongoing World Cup. While Afghanistan stunned holders England by 69 runs in New Delhi on Sunday, Netherlands recorded their biggest win in the history of the game when they shocked South Africa by 38 runs in rain-curtailed affair in Dharamsala on Tuesday. "There are no big teams in the World Cup. Whenever you start focusing only on bigger teams, an upset happens," Kohli told Star Sports ahead of India's World Cup match against Bangladesh. India have dominated Bangladesh in World Cup and have not given them much after losing to the Asian neighbours in 2007 in the Caribbean but Kohli reminded of the



threat skipper Shakib Al Hasan poses with the ball on Thursday. "Over the years, I've played a lot against him (Shakib). He's got amazing control. He's a very experienced bowler. He bowls very well with the new ball, knows how to deceive the batsman, and is also very economical," Kohli said. "You have to play your best against all these bowlers, and if you aren't able to, these bowlers are able to create pressure and increase the chances of getting you out." India all-rounder Hardik Pandya agreed with Kohli. "He is a very street-smart cricketer. He has been carrying Bangladesh on his shoulders for the longest years," Pandya said. Shakib, on the other hand, feels that Kohli is the best batter in the modern era. "He's (Kohli) a special batsman, probably the best batsman in the modern era. I think I'm lucky to get him out five times. Of course, it will give me great pleasure, taking his wicket," he said.

if they spend a large part of their preparation time drawing up plans against Rohit, whose red-hot form promises a third century in a row in World Cup encounters against the 'Tigers'. Rohit's stupendous 137 in the quarterfinal in Melbourne (2015 World Cup) and 104 in Birmingham (2019) ensured his side exceeded the 300-run mark for a third consecutive time since 2011 edition against Bangladesh, with India burying their opponents under a mountain of runs on each of these occasions. The Indian captain has hit seven centuries, the most for any batter in World Cup history, and it remains to be seen how soon he enters double-digit figures in terms of hundreds, given his magnificent form. Notwithstanding their impeccable run so far, India will look to guard against any complacency knowing that this World Cup has already produced two sensational upsets, with defending champions England hunted down by Afghanistan and South Africa stopped in their tracks by a spirited Netherlands. The knowledge of conditions and an expected packed house at the MCA Stadium promises India the best atmosphere once again to record another win in this World Cup and continue their march towards the semifinals, but Bangladesh are no

pushovers and they have been a tricky side to face for India. For Bangladesh, it is imperative that their best player and captain Shakib Al Hasan overcomes the challenge of a quad injury to his left leg and is available for selection on Thursday. Shakib, who did not bowl on Tuesday during the team's training session, will be essential for Bangladesh to take the fight to India. A comprehensive win in the World Cup opener followed by two defeats against better teams has put Bangladesh in a position of some desperation, given that a third loss on the trot will only dent their hopes. Litton Das and Mehidy Hasan Miraz have one half-century each to show at the top order from the first three games but more will be expected from young players Najmul Hossain Shanto and Towhid Hridoy, as only Mushfiqur Rahim has done the heavy-lifting in the middle order. Taskin Ahmed's sudden dip in form has piled up pressure on the team which has been scrambling for bowling options, with the right-arm seamer managing only two wickets in three outings. For someone as experienced as Mustafizur Rahman, the returns have largely been disappointing, as he also has only two wickets to show in three matches.

Scott: We can beat any side at our best

PTI ■ DHARAMSALA

The historic upset win over South Africa is not a fluke as Netherlands have the potential to beat any side in the ongoing World Cup if they play their best brand of cricket, asserted captain Scott Edwards. The Dutch stunned South Africa by 38 runs in their round-robin league clash here on Tuesday, their first win against a Test playing nation in World Cup history. The match was reduced to 43-over-a-side affair due to rain. "We go into every game with our plans and our ways that we're going to try and win the game. For us it's just about playing our best brand of cricket and we feel like if we play well enough on the day, we can beat any side," Edwards said at the post-match press conference. It was also Netherlands' third 50-over World Cup win and first in 16 years. They recorded their maiden victory against Namibia in the 2003 edition in South Africa. Their second win was against Scotland in the 2007 edition in the West Indies. Netherlands made it to the main tournament in India through the qualifying round and Edwards said his side did not come here just to make up numbers. "Yeah, absolutely. I think after qualifying we were pretty quick to set our minds to what we wanted to do at this tournament. We weren't coming here just to have fun and enjoy it. We're here to win games of cricket and give ourselves the best chance to make the next stage," Edwards said.



"South Africa is obviously a very strong side and they'll be close to that semi-final spot. So, if we want to be amongst them, we've got to beat sides like this," said the 27-year-old wicketkeeper. The Dutch were reeling at 140 for seven in the 34th over before Edwards himself engineered a remarkable recovery with an unbeaten 78 off 69 balls to take his side to a fighting 245 for eight. They then shot South Africa out for 207 in 42.5 overs. Asked what transpired between him and other batters when they were looking down the barrel, Edwards said, "As a group we pride ourselves on playing total cricket which is guys that are coming in at number 8, 9, 10 have just as much of the ability to put on those partnerships. "But out there batting with them, it was just about giving ourselves a chance to go harder later in the innings. And luckily enough, Roelof (van der Merwe) and Aryan (Dutt) in there played some unbelievable cameos to get us to what we thought was probably a par score."

New Zealand sets target 289 for impressive Afghans

PTI ■ CHENNAI

New Zealand recovered well from a mini mid-innings slump to post a commendable 288 for six against a gritty Afghanistan in a World Cup group league match here on Wednesday. Will Young (54), Tom Latham (68) and Glenn Phillips (71) scored half-centuries to ensure that the Black Caps posted an above-par total on a track where stroke-making isn't the easiest of proposition. Phillips and Latham put on 144 invaluable runs for the fifth



wicket and it could well prove to be a game-changer. Put into bat first, the Kiwis lost opener Devon Conway (20) in the seventh over, with spinner Mujeeb Ur Rahman trapping him leg-before. However, the pair of opener Young and in-form batter Rachin Ravindra (32) took charge and put on a convincing 79-run stand for the second wicket. A chance to stump Ravindra was missed, whereas spinner Mohammad Nabi was put under pressure by the Black Caps batters, as he was attacked quite regularly. Eventually, it was

pacer Azmatullah Omarzai who got the partnership broken in the 21st over, cleaning up Ravindra off a straight delivery, as the batter attempted to swing it towards mid-wicket, but missed it completely in the process. It was at this moment the New Zealanders had a brief collapse, losing Young and Daryl Mitchell (1) by the 22nd over to Omarzai and spinner Rashid Khan, respectively, as the score read 110 for four. While Young had already scored his seventh ODI half-century, he was notably dropped in the second over by Rahmat Shah off

Fazalhaq Farooqi. Nevertheless, New Zealand managed to recover soon as skipper Latham and Phillips put up another fine stand that defined the tone for the rest of their innings. The duo also brought up their respective 23rd and third ODI half-centuries each, despite the Afghani bowlers keeping the Kiwi scoring rate in check. As the pair began upping the ante and the scoring rate post the 45th over, the partnership was broken by pacer Naveen-ul-Haq in the 48th, with both the set batters departing in the same over. But, there was still some work to be done, and it was Mark Chapman (25 not out) who came up with some late blitz, including two fours and a six, to ensure that the Black Caps went past the 275-run mark on this track. For Afghanistan, Omarzai and Naveen were the stars with the ball, seizing a couple of wickets each, whereas Rashid was a no-brainer with his economical spell. However, a total of three dropped catches did make things a bit hard for the Afghans, especially Rashid, who saw a couple of his chances go abegging.

SA coach blames batting, defeat to Netherlands

PTI ■ DHARAMSALA

South Africa coach Rob Walter has blamed the shock 38-run defeat at the hands of the Netherlands in the ongoing World Cup to his side's disappointing death bowling and poor start with the bat. The Netherlands recovered from 140 for 7 to post 245 for eight in the rain-hit match on Tuesday and then bowled out South Africa for 207 in 42.5 overs to cause the second major upset of the ongoing showpiece. Afghanistan pulled off the first upset on Sunday, shocking defending champions England by 69 runs in New Delhi. The 38-run win was also Netherlands' first against a Test playing nation in their World Cup history. A disappointed Walter minced no words, saying his side were below-par against the Dutch. "At 140 for 7, you're in control of the game really. So, to not be



able to close it out at the death is disappointing, of course, and certainly the momentum shifted in the game then," Walter said at the post-match press conference. "But at the end of the day, we back ourselves still to be able to chase 240 but then we probably you know we got off to a very poor start and they put us on the back foot," he added. He said strategically also South Africa committed mistakes. "Maybe I've got ratios a little bit wrong in terms of the slow balls versus hard length and on pace deliveries. From extras point of view, there's definitely

Warner 'annoyed' at DRS decision against him in SL match

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Veteran Australia opener David Warner is "annoyed" and "frustrated" at the DRS call which went against him in his side's World Cup match against Sri Lanka and has called for more "accountability" in the system, according to a report. In the match, which Australia won by five wickets in Lucknow on Monday, Warner fell LBW to Sri Lanka pacer Dilshan Madushanka. The left-hander went for review but the DRS call went in favour of the on-field umpire, who had originally given him out. The prolific southpaw, who was batting on 11, left the ground fuming. He was seen smashing his bat against his pad and turned back to yell towards the wicket as he walked off. Warner said he wanted greater

Shane Bond parts ways with Mumbai Indians

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Former New Zealand pacer Shane Bond has ended his nine year association as Mumbai Indians bowling coach, the Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise announced on Wednesday. Bond, who has been associated with MI since 2015, won four IPL trophies as the bowling coach of the team. Bond made the decision to part ways with MI after the five-time IPL champions appointed Lasith Malinga as their bowling coach for season 2024. Malinga, who retired in 2021 and had played for MI, worked with the Rajasthan Royals until this year. The 48-year-old Kiwi also quit as MI Emirates head coach. He was at the helm of affairs of MI Emirates team in the inaugural season of ILT20 this year. "I would like to thank the Ambani family for the opportunity to be part of MI One Family for the last nine seasons. It has been an incredible experience with so many great memories on and off the field," Bond said in a statement issued by the franchise.



Rohit rises to sixth place in ODI batters' rankings

PTI ■ DUBAI

India captain Rohit Sharma on Wednesday jumped five places to sixth in the ICC ODI batters' ranking on the back of his imperious form in the ongoing World Cup at home. Rohit amassed 131 runs against Afghanistan and then backed it up with an imperious 86 from 63 balls against arch-rivals Pakistan to be one of the in-form batters in the showpiece.



South Africa wicketkeeper batter Quinton de Kock rose three spots to third after back-to-back tons (100 against Sri Lanka and 109 against Australia) in the World Cup as he leapfrogged teammate Rassie van der Dussen in fourth. De Kock missed an opportunity to climb even closer to top spot after he was dismissed for 20 against Netherlands. Afghanistan opener Rahmanullah Gurbaz (up 19 spots to 18th) and

Netherlands captain Scott Edwards (up 16 spots to 27th) have also surged in the batting rankings following superb innings that inspired each of their teams to shock victories. Pakistan captain Babar Azam has edged up to 836 rating points and stretched his lead in the ODI batting rankings to 18 points. India opener Shubman Gill remained in second spot after overcoming illness to kick off his World Cup campaign with 12 runs against Pakistan.

Veteran New Zealand pacer Trent Boult is within reach of the No.1 spot in the ODI bowling rankings following a destructive spell against Bangladesh. He finished with 2/45 against Bangladesh after also dismissing Towhid Hridoy for his 200th wicket in ODIs. Boult is only one rating point behind current leader Australia's Josh Hazlewood (660 rating points) after moving up one place in the latest update.

Afghanistan magician Rashid Khan climbed two spots higher to fourth place in the bowling rankings, while South Africa spinner Keshav Maharaj made a bigger move of seven spots to equal fifth alongside Mujeeb Ur Rahman. Among the quicks, India's Jasprit Bumrah (up seven spots) and South Africa's Kagiso Rabada (up one spot) have risen to equal 14th, as Lungi Ngidi jumps six spots to 16th.