OPINION 6

PUSILLANIMITY OF

ARAB LEADERSHIP

WORLD 9

NAWAZ GETS PROTECTIVE BAIL

IN TWO GRAFT CASES

Late City Vol.33 Issue 290 *Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

INDIA TOUGH TO BEAT, SAYS **SANTNER** 12 SPORT

NEW DELHI, FRIDAY OCTOBER 20, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3 the pioneer was

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India slays Bangladesh TMC, BJP in Virat hits another hundred, sniffs at Tendulkar's record LS turmoil

 $T^{\text{he legend of Virat Kohli}}_{\text{continued to grow exponentially as he reached within}$ handshaking distance of Sachin Tendulkar's world record of 49 hundreds during India's walkin-the-park seven-wicket victory over Bangladesh in a World Cup game on Thursday.

Kohli, who plans 50-over chases with the precision of a surgeon, remained unbeaten on 103 off 97 balls as India knocked off the 258-run target with as many as 51 balls remaining. India have now made it four wins out of four games and one more win would virtually put them in the semifinals.

While Kohli hit six fours and four sixes, it was his exemplary running between the wickets in pursuit of his 48th hundred that would be etched in the memory for the longest time. But credit should also go to Ravindra Jadeja (2/38 in 10 overs) and Jasprit Bumrah (2/41 in 10 overs), who were exemplary covering all bases in absence of Hardik Pandya, who hobbled off the field after twisting his left ankle.

"Sorry for stealing it (the player of the Match award) from Jaddu. I wanted to make a big contribution. Have made fifties in World Cups, wanted to finish it off this time," Kohli said after the match.

While skipper Rohit Sharma



Virat Kohli celebrates after scoring the winning runs as well as his century during the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 match between India and Bangladesh at Maharashtra Cricket Association Stadium in Pune on Thursday

(48 off 40 balls) and Shubman with each of India's opponents Gill (53 off 55 balls) added 88 in just 12.4 overs to set up the chase, it was a cakewalk for Kohli at a venue, with which he shares an intimate relation.

Rohit rattled the Bangladeshis with an all-out attack, Kohli bled them with thousand cuts, running those twos in the 90s with effortless ease, another testimony to his

Earlier, as has been the case

in the World Cup so far, scoring runs against arguably the best bowling attack in the competition proved a big ask for Bangladesh too, who managed a modest 256/8 on a battingfriendly surface.

In fact, Bangladesh squandered a terrific start which had them placed formidably at 90 for no loss after 14 overs, but India's bowling once again came to fore on a featherbed

India lost Pandya as early as in the ninth over, when he tried to stop a straight drive off Litton Das' bat with his right foot and fell on the ground. Pandya received initial treatment on the field but as he began moving to his bowling mark, it became clear he would not continue and left the field subsequently.

With all options at his perusal, the fact that Rohit Sharma

chose Virat Kohli to complete the injured Pandya's over — with India still in search of first breakthrough — showed how assured India are with their bowling attack in this compe-

Kuldeep Yadav provided the first breakthrough and Ravindra Jadeja the second, as it was India all the way with Bangladesh going at under five runs per over after a robust beginning.

In fact, Jadeja's was the standout performance with the allrounder producing a measly 10-0-38-2 and a superb diving catch to dismiss Mushfiqur Rahim.

But the initial exchanges belonged to the young Tanzid Hasan, who struck a dazzling maiden fifty scoring 51 off 43 balls (5x4s, 3x6s). Litton Das made 82-ball 66 (7x4s), whereas Rahim's 38 and a late charge from Mahmudullah (46, 36 balls, 3x4s, 3x6s) brought the Tigers their runs.

With no assistance from the surface, the task to make early inroads with the new ball appeared challenging even though Jasprit Bumrah (2/41) found some movement in the

After a watchful start Das took on Mohammed Siraj (2/60) in the sixth over, hitting two fours to get a move on and Tanzid pulled Bumrah over fine leg for the first six of the innings in the

Darshan Hiranandani, the CEO of real estate-to-energy group Hiranandani, who allegedly paid TMC MP Mahua Moitra to raise questions in Parliament about Adani Group, on Thursday said the TMC leader targeted Gautam Adani to "malign and embrass" Prime Minister Narendra Modi whose impeccable reputation gave the Opposition no opportunity to attack him

In a signed affidavit, a copy of which was reviewed by PTI, Hiranandani admitted at using Moitra's Parliamentary login to ask questions targeting Adani after state-owned behemoth Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) booked capacity at the Gujaratbased conglomerate's Dhamra LNG import facility in Odisha and not at his firm's planned facility.

Moitra, he claimed, "made frequent demands" including expensive luxury items, providing support on renovation of her officially allotted bunga-low in Delhi, travel expenses, holidays, etc, apart from providing secretarial and logistical help for her travels within India and to different parts of the world."

Earlier this week, BJP MP Nishikant Dubey and Moitra's estranged partner and lawyer Jai Anant Dehadrai alleged the Moitra took favours from Hiranandani to raise questions

in Parliament. She responded by filing a defamation suit before the Delhi High Court against them. Meanwhile, Dubey's complaint

has been referred by the Lok

Sabha Speaker Om Birla to Parliament's Ethics Committee. Hiranandani, who had this week reposted news about Adani group starting port operations in Kerala on X, couldn't be reached for comments. Once the affidavit became public, he deleted his account on X. Moitra could not be immediately reached for comments. Having met Moitra at Bengal Global Business Summit in 2017 when she was a MLA, Hiranandani said she became a "close personal friend" over the years whom he had expected to use for getting business in States ruled by Opposition parties

Moitra was very ambitious and wanted to make a name for herself at the national level," he said of her winning the Lok Sabha election from Krishnanagar in West Bengal in 2019. "She was advised by her friends and advisers that the shortest possible route to fame is by personally attacking Modi.

However, the Prime Minister enjoyed "an impeccable reputation and was not giving any opportunity to anyone to attack him in policy, governance or personal conduct," he said. "As was her wont, she thought that

the only way to attack Modi is by attacking Gautam Adani and his group as both were contemporaries and they belong to the same State of Gujarat." She was helped by the fact that

Adani had caused jealousy and had detractors among some sections of business, politics and media. 'So, she expected support from these sections in her endeavour

to malign and embarrass the Prime Minister by targeting Adani," he said. Hiranandani said she knew about IOC choosing Dhamra over his company's LNG termi-nal. "Based on this information, Moitra drafted a few ques-

tions that would have elements

to embarrass the government

by targeting the Adani group; questions that she could raise in Parliament." 'She shared with me her email ID as Member of Parliament, so that I could send her information, and she could raise the questions in Parliament. I went

along with her proposal," he claimed. Delighted at the response she received for the first set of questions he had sent to her relating to the Adani group, he said Moitra "requested" him to keep supporting her in her attacks on the Adani group. She "provided me with her Parliament login and password so that I could post the questions directly on her behalf when required."

Seat sharing rift Modi in touch with Palestine hits INDIA Bloc

tionship within the major stakeholders of the fourmonth-old coalition of Opposition parties under the banner of the INDIA alliance after the breakdown of Congress-Samajwadi Party seat-sharing talks in one of the poll-bound States, Madhya Pradesh.

While the Congress has been unhappy with the Samajwadi Party (SP) for assuming a dominant role in seat-sharing talks in Uttar Pradesh, the SP led by Akhilesh Yadav is accusing the Congress of doing the same in the Madhya Pradesh State elections, which has 230 Assembly seats. Interestingly, another major stakeholder in the INDIA bloc, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), has also proceeded to announce its candidates in the poll-bound States of MP, Chhattisgarh, and now Mizoram.

Sources within the Congress, the SP, and the AAP have stated that the apparent breakdown in alliance talks could have an

While the Congress has moved forward with announcing its candidates in crucial Madhya Pradesh, where it emerged as the winner in the last polls in 2018, the SP has also declared nine candidates in the State. Sources suggest that it may ultimately field about 40 candidates. The SP had only won one seat in MP in the 2018 Assembly elections.

Sources have indicated that the SP is also considering fielding candidates in Chhattisgarh, a move that may further strain its ties with the Congress. In Uttar Pradesh, the SP is reluctant to allocate more than 2-3 Lok Sabha seats to the Congress, Uttar Pradesh holds significant importance in the Lok Sabha elections, contributing the highest number of 80 MPs. The BIP has secured substantial victories in the state in both the 2014 and 2019 general elections.

Akhilesh Yadav, addressing a related query, stated, "Congress should clarify whether the

impact on the INDIA alliance's INDIA alliance operates at the plans in Uttar Pradesh for the national or State level. If it is not 2024 Lok Sabha polls, for which at the State level, it will not be The Assembly elections due the coalition has been formed to challenge the dominance of as well. I continuously come to challenge the dominance of as well. I continuously come reports about a seat-sharing agreement for UP in 2024. I want to affirm that the SP is formulating a strategy to contest all 80 seats in UP with the utmost responsibility, aiming to

defeat the BIP."

Pradesh chief minister Kama Nath said the INDIA alliance operates at the central level, but discussions are ongoing with the SP. He emphasised that both parties should work together to defeat the BIP. In contrast, UP Congress chief Aiav Rai expressed the view that Yadav should refrain from contesting in Madhya Pradesh as the Congress holds a strong position there. He reiterated that his party is prepared to

On his part, senior Congress

leader and former Madhya

contest all 80 seats in UP. Akhilesh, the former UP CM, remarked that SP leaders would not have engaged with Congress on seat sharing if they had known that there would be no INDIA alliance at the state

RAHUL DATTA NEW DELHI

day after Prime Minister Anarendra Modi expressed shock over the attack at a hospital in Gaza which killed more than 500 people and said that those involved in this act should be held responsible conveyed condolences on Thursday over the deaths to Palestinian Authority President. Modi also assured that India will continue to send humanitarian assistance for the people of Palestine. Spoke to the President of the Palestinian Authority H.E. Mahmoud Abbas, Conveyed my condolences at the loss of civilian lives at the Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza. We will continue to send humanitarian assistance for the Palestinian people. Shared our deep concern at the terrorism, violence, and deteriorating security situation in the region. Reiterated India's long-standing principled position on the Israel-Palestine issue," Modi said in a message on social media.

Earlier in the day, External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi in reply to a question on humanitarian assistance to the Palestinian people said that India has been supporting them.

India has been supporting

Palestine and Palestinian refugees through significant contributions to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). A total of USD 29.53 million has been contributed to UNRWA between 2002 and 2023," he said.

tion to UNRWA was increased from USD 1.25 million to USD 5 million in 2018. India has pledged an annual contribution of USD 5 million for the next two years (FY 2023-24 and FY 2024-25)," Bagchi said. He added that India urges strict observance of international law in the context of the attack on the hospital in Gaza.

There are four Indians in Gaza and the situation is not conducive for an evacuation at the moment, he said, adding they will be repatriated at the first opportunity. "The situation in Gaza is diffi-

cult for any evacuation but if we get a chance, we will get them out," Bagchi said. "One of them is in the West Bank," he said. Enunciating India's position on the conflict, Bagchi said, 'We have expressed concern over civilian casualties and the humanitarian situation arising out of the ongoing Israel-Hamas conflict. You have seen the Prime Minister's tweet. The PM has expressed his con-



cern over the death of civilians and extended his condolences to the families. India condemns all forms of violence. He added, "On the Palestine issue, we have reiterated our position in favour of direct negotiations for a two-state solution?

'We would urge strict observance of international human-itarian law," he said at his weekly media briefing while replying to questions on the attack on the hospital this week.

'We have strongly condemned the horrific attack on Israel," Bagchi said, adding the international community must stand together in combating terrorism in all its forms.

Around 500 people were reported to have been killed on Tuesday in the explosion on the

al-Ahli Arab Hospital in Gaza, triggering strong international condemnation.

Palestinian authorities blamed Israeli air strikes for the explosion at the hospital while Israel said it was caused by a misfired rocket launched from Gaza by militant group Palestinian Islamic Jihad. Prime Minister Modi on

Wednesday expressed shock at the loss of lives in the attack on the Gaza hospital and that those involved in civilian casualties in the ongoing conflict should be held responsible.

Deeply shocked at the tragic loss of lives at the Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza. Our heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims, and prayers for speedy recovery of those injured," Modi said on X. "Civilian casualties in the ongo-

ous and continuing concern. Those involved should be held responsible," he said.

The conflict has been triggered by unprecedented and multi-pronged attacks against Israel by Hamas militants from launched a massive counter offensive in Gaza to avenge the attacks. According to the Gaza Health Ministry, over 3,300 people have been killed and over 12,000 wounded in Gaza

since the conflict began. Around 1,400 people in Israel have been killed and 3,800 injured in the deadly attack by militant group Hamas since October 7. Nearly 200 others were abducted by Hamas.

In a social media post soon after Hamas launched 5.000 rockets at Israel in 20 minutes and began a multi-pronged attack by land, air and sea on October 7, Prime Minister Modi had said he was "deeply shocked by the news of terrorist attacks in Israel" and expressed India's solidarity with the country in the difficult hour. Modi reiterated his support for Israel on October 10 when he had posted that Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had called him and given him an update on the

deadly conflict.

CAPSULE

HC REJECTS SHIVKUMAR PLEA AGAINST CBI FIR Bengaluru: The High Court of Karnataka on Thursday rejected the petition by Deputy Chief Minister and State Congress chief DK Shivakumar challenging the CBI FIR against him in the disproportionate assets case. Justice K Natarajan who concluded the hearing and reserved the judgment earlier. announced the verdict on

BAIL PLEA OF TN MINISTER SENTHIL BALAJI REJECTED Chennai: The Madras High Court on Thursday dismissed the bail petition of Tamil Nadu

Thursday

Minister V Senthil Balaji, who was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with a money laundering case

A Century of charisma and political resilience in Kerala **KUMAR CHELLAPPAN** ■ KOCHI

The name Velikkakathu Sankaran Achuthanandan may sound strange and unfamiliar even to people from Kerala. However, if you mention VS Achuthanandan, or simply VS, it is certain that even

his rivals start smiling with

admiration. Achuthanandan, the sole surviving founding member of the CPI(M), turned 100 on Thursday. Born on October 23, 1923, Achuthanandan was sworn in as the chief minister of Kerala at the age of 83 on May 18, 2006, which makes him the oldest politician to reach the top position in the State. Interestingly, it was his charisma and sincerity that minister's chair.

There was a strong anti-Achuthanandan lobby within the CPI(M) against fielding him as a candidate in the 2006 assembly election. However, Kerala witnessed an uprising within the CPI(M) demanding his candidature, and the rest is history. Though he had a lackluster tenure as chief minister from 2006 to 2011, as the party leaders had restricted his authority by denying him the crucial Home Department. Achuthanandan was a victim of a surreptitious group within the

CPI(M). There was no shortage of internecine groups and turf wars in the party, which claims to be an organisation with strong moral values. The Nairs propelled him to the chief against the Eezhavas, the



against the Malabar faction fought against each other. Achuthanandan was the chief ministerial candidate in the 1996 assembly election. Although the CPI(M) led LDF won the polls, Achuthanandan suffered a shocking defeat in his constituency because the faction in the party opposed to him undermined his campaign. This led to the swearing-in of EK Navanar as chief minister into a fighter, advocating for the for the third time. Even as his friends and com-

rades celebrate his birthday, VS, the birthday boy, lies in a semiconscious state in his rented house in Thiruvananthapuram, where he is being cared for by his wife Sumathi and son Arun Kumar. VS is one of the 32 members who walked out of the national council of the CPI, the parent organisation, in protest against the latter's infatuation with capitalism and politics of compromise. Born into a poor family in Alappuzha district, he had a difficult childhood and youth. Achuthanandan had to drop out of primary school after losing his father and began working as a tailor at the age of 10. rights of workers.

"He started his political career at the age of 14 and participated in a party meeting held in Pallathuruthi on the bund of a canal. The life of VS was a struggle for the rights of the working class, and there is nothing surprising about him emerging as one of the greatest Communist leaders in the country. From an ordinary party worker, Comrade VS rose to become the Secretary of the party's State wing and then to the position of chief minister," reminisces G Sudhakaran, who served as a minister in VS' cabinet for five years. What made him unique was his

uncompromising stance against all forms of communalism. This experience turned him During his tenure as chief

minister, Achuthanandan openly stated to the national media that organisations like the Popular Front of India posed a threat to the country.

"They are working towards the Islamisation of India, and Love Jihad is proof of this agenda," he declared during a media briefing in New Delhi in 2010. This statement sealed his fate, as Islamists within the party sought his removal from the CPI(M), a move carried out by the "nouveau rich" faction within the party. He was subsequently removed

from the party's politburo. The alliance of Pinarayi Vijayan, Kodiyeri Balakrishnan, and Prakash Karat ensured that Achuthanandan's influence was curtailed. The 2011 election witnessed internal strife with-

next five years, Achuthanandan waged an all-out war against corruption and nepotism. Although the LDF achieved an impressive victory in the 2016 polls, orchestrated by Achuthanandan, the new leadership brought in Pinarayi Vijavan as chief minister and marginalised the former. When asked about VS' sidelining, party secretary Sitaram Yechury retorted, "He is the Fidel Castro of Kerala, what more does he need?" However, what the party secretary seemed to forget was that the original Castro was on life support. "A shocked VS has not recovered from that humiliation since then," noted a source close to him.

in the CPI(M), leading to the

party's narrow loss. Over the

TMC, BJP vie to cash in on Durga Puja

SAUGAR SENGUPTA KOLKATA

Durga Pujas epitomise the battle between good and evil in which the former overpowers the latter. But the mystics signify this through the eternal conflict of positive and negative forces inside a man. Whereas the materialists see in Durga Pujas an element of politics where the Gods and the Demons fought for the control of the heavens and finally Mother Durga won the battle for the former by defeating demon king Mahishasura. Cut to Kolkata.

Apparently taking a cue from the materialist school the ruling Trinamool Congress and the BJP seem to be vying against each other over the control of the State's Durga Puja

Like in the case of the

Trinamool Congress the BJP functionaries too have descended on the field to get their Durga Pujas inaugurated by their political superstars. Raja Santosh Mitra Square

Durga Puja committee in North Kolkata is a case in point. Union Home Minister Amit Shah who on Tuesday evening inaugurated this Puja, openly used the podium to declare that he would keep coming back to Bengal and deliver political speeches until a Parivartan (change) is brought through.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee and his nephew Abhishek Banerjee were prompt to react when they pulled up the BJP leadership for running with scissors in hands to catch Kolkata bound flights in their urge to cut the ribbons in Durga Pujas." The junior



Banerjee even asked "the BJP had said that Durga Pujas are not allowed in Bengal ... if it be so then why they are coming to

While the Left Front and more so the Marxists traditionally keeping off the Puja pandals -

sell their ideological publications from the stalls set up outside the Puja pandals --- the neighbourhood Durga Pujas traditionally have received political patronage with most senior leaders including late

Mukherjee, Somen Mitra, to present day ministers and MLAs like Firhad Hakim, Sujit Bose, Arup Biswas, Debashis Kumar organising their own big ticket Pujas.

The problem started when the BJP after putting up a good show in the 2019 general elections tried to vie for its own Puja pie, says BN Majumdar, a

political analysts.
"You will see how BJP leaders like JP Nadda, Smriti Irani, Suvendu Adhikari and many others are scheduled to inaugurate Durga Pujas in Bengal," ne says. In fact Ádhikari himself went on record saying that Amit Shah had asked the Bengal BJP to actively participate and organize the Pujas as

While Nadda will participate in three pujas in Bengal, including Howrah and Salt Lake, and will visit the state on Saturday (which is Saptami), Irani and Dharmendra Pradhan too will come to various Puja pandals. Even Adhikari himself is inaugurating more than two dozen Pujas in East Midnapore district.

The reason why Durga Pujas are important to the political parties is they are organized by various neighbourhood clubs which in turn enjoy good influence in their localities, a BJP leader said adding, "the TMC has captured most of these 35,000 clubs in Bengal and used them to win the elections ... till the BJP manages to capture even half of them it will be difficult for us to do something here."

Consequently the BJP which

had earlier criticised Mamata Banerjee for trying to influence the neighbourhood clubs organising the Durga Pujas by granting Rs 70,000 each to them has itself decided to follow suit by making a conditional offer to donate on his behalf a similar amount to the Durga Puja committees that are willing to accept the

"I this not hypocrisy then what is," asks TMC's Kunal Ghosh. "Just a month ago they were criticising Mamata didi for donating money to the clubs for Durga Pujas and here they have announced a similar programme ... the BJP should first retrace its steps and then criticise others," he

True, perhaps the BJP has just begun to retrace its steps in

Valley gets 1st all-weather glass ceiling Vistadome coach

¬o woo a large number of tourists visiting Kashmir valley and to provide more comfort to the local passengers, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, along with Manoj Sinha, Lieutenant Governor, Iammu & Kashmir, flagged off the first all-weather glass ceiling Vistadome coach in the Valley on Thursday.

The Union Minister attended the flag-off ceremony in virtual mode.

The Vistadome will run along a 90-kilometer track from Banihal in South Kashmir to Budgam in

central Kashmir and is expected to provide a unique experi-ence for the visitors to catch breathtaking views of the valley's landscape.

Speaking on the occasion, Ashwini Vaishnaw, Union Railway Minister said that in the last nine years, Jammu Kashmir has changed a lot and the change is discernible on the ground. After the abrogation of Article 370, the development of Jammu

held in the UT. In Railways, various development projects have been ongo-

and Kashmir is pacing fast.

Recently, meetings of G20 were



development work has been completed on Chenab Bridge, Anji Bridge, tunnels have been completed except on some portions, he said.

In his brief speech, Manoj Sinha acknowledged the vision of ing in Jammu Kashmir and the Prime Minister Narendra Modi

and expressed his gratitude for introducing Vistadome train services in the Kashmir Valley. "I am highly thankful to Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw for elevating the travel experience of people & tourists".

Sinha said, the specially designed Vistadome coach between Budgam and Banihal, is equipped with wide windows, revolving chairs that can rotate 360 degrees, and a glass rooftop, offering the passengers a panoramic view of the surrounding landscape.

The Vistadome services will have a profound impact on tourism and contribute to the

economic growth and cultural enrichment of the region. Vistadome is a symbol that facilities available in developed countries are now accessible to people of J&K, he added.

LG Manoj Sinha said after successfully hosting the G-20 working group meeting in the valley the number of foreign tourist arrivals has gone up by 350 per-He said around 1.70 crore

tourists/ pilgrims have visited Jammu and Kashmir till September 2023.

Last year 1.88 crore tourists/pilgrims visited the Union Territory giving a big boost to commuters.

the tourism sector in the region. This year, the UT administration is expecting the arrival of around 2.25 Crore tourists/pilgrims. The former Chief Minister of

Jammu and Kashmir, also a Member of Parliament, Dr Farooq Abdullah also attended the flag-off ceremony and took the first ride of the Vistadome from Srinagar. At present, 19 train services,

including seven trains, operate regularly on the Baramulla-Banihal sector in Jammu and Kashmir, serving approximately 30,000 passengers daily, including students and daily

NewsClick row: SC seeks Delhi Police's reply on pleas of portal founder, HR head

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $T^{\text{he Supreme Court on}}_{\text{Thursday sought the}} \ _{\text{response of the Delhi Police on}}$ pleas of NewsClick founder Prabir Purkayastha and its HR head Amit Chakravarty against their arrest under anti-terror law UAPA.

A bench of Justices BR Gavai and Prashant Kumar Mishra issued notice to the Delhi Police and sought its response by October 30 after senior advocates Kapil Sibal and Devadatt Kamat, appearing for Purkayastha and Chakravarty, respectively, said they are in jail and the pleas be heard early.

On October 16, the top court agreed to list the matter urgently after Sibal mentioned it before the bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud. The CJI had asked Sibal to circulate the case papers and said he would take a call on urgent listing of the matter.

The Delhi High Court had on October 13 dismissed their pleas against arrest and subsequent police remand in the case. Both were arrested by the Special Cell of the Delhi Police on October 3.

They subsequently moved the high court challenging the arrest as well as the seven-day police custody, and sought immediate release as interim



was no procedural infirmity or violation of the provisions of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act in arresting

them.

The trial court had on October 10 sent them to judicial custody

The city police has lodged cases against the two under anti-terror law Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) for allegedly receiving money to spread pro-China propaganda. According to the FIR, a large amount of funds to the news portal allegedly came from China to "disrupt the sovereignty of India" and cause disaffection against the country.

It also alleged that Purkayastha conspired with a group — People's Alliance for Democracy and Secularism (PADS) — to sabotage the electoral process during the 2019 Lok Sabha polls.

PMO imposter case: CBI conducts searches at premises of Maayank

PTI NEW DELHI

The CBI has conducted searches at the premises of Ahmedabad-based Maayank Tiwari who was allegedly posing as a high-ranking official of the Prime Minister's Office, and was trying to force an eye hospital chain to "forget" more than ₹16 crore owed to it by an Indorebased hospital, officials said.

A number of documents were seized during searches conducted recently, and are being examined, they said. The agency said

Tiwari had allegedly called and sent messages from his mobile phone, asking the promoters of Dr Agarwal's — which runs a chain of eye hospitals — to settle a dispute with the hospital in Indore, which allegedly had to return Rs 16 crore to the hospital chain, they

It is alleged that Dr Agarwal's had entered into an agreement with two doctors who ran the Indorebased hospital to join the franchise for which over Rs 16 crore was paid, they said. The Indore hospital allegedly

started violating the terms of the agreement which resulted in a dispute, and Dr Agarwal's wanted their money back and the termination of the agreement, they said. The matter went to the High Court which appointed an arbitrator to negotiate. The arbitrator, in an interim injunction, asked the Indore hospital to deposit Rs 16.43 crore within four weeks. During the dispute, the promoters

of Dr Agarwal's allegedly started getting messages and calls from Tiwari to forget the alleged dues and settle the matter with the doctors running the Indore hospital. When the Prime Minister's Office came to know, it immediately asked the CBI to probe the alleged impersonation of a PMO official. "Prima facie, this is a case of impersonation of PMO official and misuse of the name of the PMO, since neither this individual nor the professed designation exists in this office," the PMO said in a complaint to the CBI.



CHANGE OF NAME

Sharma R/o BG-3/57 A, LIG Flats, Paschim Vihar, West Delhi-110063, Declare that in My Some Records my Name has been Mentioned as Shashi Bala While Shashi Sharma and Shashi Bala are one and the Same Person.

Security upped ahead of festivals Shahnawaz Alam, and two of

STAFF REPORTER ■ **NEW DELHI**

In view of heavy footfall in markets during the festive season, the Delhi Police has taken several measures, including intensified night patrolling and setting up additional pickets, to strengthen security.

The steps are being taken at major markets and shopping centres in the national capital such as Lajpat Nagar market, Sarojini Nagar market, Connaught Place and Sadar

Bazar, they said. The upcoming festivals include Durga Puja, Dussehra, Diwali and Chhat Puja.

We have already intensified night patrolling in market areas, PCR (police control room) vehicles are on alert and additional police pickets have been installed. Police are keeping a strict vigil," a senior police official said.

The officials said additional police personnel and police mitras are being deployed to increase vigilance.

"Police personnel in plain



clothes have already been deployed in markets for monitoring activities," Deputy a terror suspect, Mohammed

Commissioner of Police (Southeast) Rajesh Deo said. Special focus will be on weekends when footfall at markets and shopping centres is the highest, the officials said. "We already have metal detectors at entry and exit

points of major markets. Besides this, motorcycle patrol teams, PCR vans, women marshalls, and women staffers are always deployed," an official said. Earlier this month, the Delhi Police's Special Cell arrested

his associates belonging to an alleged ISIS-inspired module. Alam was on the most-wanted list of the National Investigation Agency which had announced an award of ₹3 lakh on information leading to his arrest after he escaped during a raid in Pune in July.
The Special Cell has said it

had seized incriminating material, including chemicals used for IED fabrication, timers, remotes and batteries following the arrests.

also enhance their travel expe-

Inside the stations, there are

various paintings that depict

this foreseen change in their

lives, and how people will

have more time with family as

their travel time will be less.

One painting shows a young

rience, the officials said.

RAPIDX: India's first semi-high-speed regional rail service

facility and seating areas for These paintings convey NCRTC's emphasis on aes-

thetics and art, enhancing the appeal of the station, the officials said. Moreover, they transform the RAPIDX station complex into a cultural centre and a fascinating public area. These murals will not only motivate commuters during their long regional travels but also provide a few moments of respite during their hectic lives, officials said.

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, a day after its inauguration by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This section between Sahibabad and Duhai Depot has five stations – Saĥibabad, Ghaziabad, Guldhar, Duhai and Duhai

The NCRTC has been tasked to oversee the construction of the RRTS between Delhi and Meerut.

The entire 82.15-km Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS is targeted to be operational by Iune 2025. With a speed that can go up to 160 kmph during operation, the RAPIDX trains will significantly cut travel time by almost one-third, making commuting within the National Capital Region more efficient, the NCRTC said.

Congress calls for ceasefire in Gaza

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

president ongress Mallikarjun Kharge on Thursday called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza and providing humanitarian assistance to the beleaguered people, and said the perpetrators of the indiscriminate bombing on a hospital there must be held accountable.

He also appealed to all sides to abandon violence and begin the process of negotiations so that the aspirations of the Palestinian people are fulfilled and the "security concerns of Israel are also ensured". In a statement, he reiterated

the Congress' support for the rights of Palestinian people who have been "living in an atmosphere of fear and intimidation". Their aspiration for a life of dignity, self-respect and equality in a sovereign state of their own is perfectly legitimate, Kharge said in a statement.

"The indiscriminate bombing on the hospital in Gaza and residential areas resulting in the loss of hundreds of lives of innocent men, women and children is both unjustifiable and a grave humani-tarian tragedy for which the perpetrators must be held accountable," Kharge said.

"The Indian National Congress repeats its call for an immediate ceasefire and for humanitarian assistance to the beleaguered people of Gaza. It calls upon all sides to abandon the path of senseless violence and war and begin the process of negotiations and diplomacy so that the aspirations of the Palestinian people are fulfilled and the security concerns of Israel are also ensured," the Congress



president said.

On October 8, he said the Indian National Congress had condemned the brutal attacks by Hamas on the people of Israel. Also unacceptable are the indiscriminate actions by Israel's military forces in civilian areas that includes a siege of the Gaza strip and bombings in it, he said. "The Indian National

Metro Rail Corporation Congress reiterates its longstanding support for the rights of the Palestinian peo-**STAFF REPORTER** NEW DELHI ple. The aspirations of the Palestinian people for a life of dignity, self-respect and Tieutenant Governor Vinai LKumar Saxena on Thursday equality in a sovereign state of their own is long-standing and perfectly legitimate. approved the transfer of 1928 square metres of land to the These aspirations have been Delhi Metro Rail Corporation routinely suppressed and denied. Millions of (DMRC), clearing the way for the construction of Aerocity Tughlakabad, Janakpuri West to Palestinians have been dispossessed and displaced. RK Ashram and RahatGanj-Roshanara Road-Pul Bangash They have lived in an atmosphere of fear and intimida-Corridors. According to Raj Niwas, the tion," the Congress chief said. Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra too Lieutenant Governor has approved acquisition of land said on social media posts, "The bombing of hospitals, the murder of children, the under Section 8 of the Right to Fair, Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and

blockading of food, water

and medicines to civil-

ians....There are no words

strong enough to condemn

the horror that is taking place



Ltime with family' — reads a caption painted along with a colourful hand-made mural at a newly built station of India's first semi-high-speed regional rail service -RAPIDX — that seeks to redefine long-distance travel in the Delhi-Meerut region. Ahead of its operationalisation, the National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) has colored each

station on the RRTS 17km pri-

ority section in Ghaziabad in

shades of blue and beige, draw-

ing inspiration from the hues

Resettlement Act, 2013, for

Delhi Metro had urged the

Delhi Government for these

acquisitions way back in July

the said Metro lines.

Delhi LG approves

transfer of land to Delhi

of peacock feathers.

ed at Sahibabad, Ghaziabad, and Duhai RAPIDX stations. Work on murals at other completed stations are also being done," a senior official said. Interior walls of the stations have been decked up with beautiful hand-paintings that depict the transformation the RRTS will bring in people's lives, the officials said. Converting several inside walls into vibrant canvases, these paintings serve as a powerful means of self-expression, cul-

total of five stations, with

murals currently being paint-

tural representation and community engagement, they said. Not only will they attract people to the station, but they will

2020 and June 2020 respective-

This had been pending for more

Delhi, that include Khanpur,

Tughlakabad, Deoli, PushpVihar

and Dr Ambedkar Nagar, etc.

than three years.

Tughlakabad Corridor.

couple playing with their children, with a slogan — "Less time on travel, More time with family". Another painting depicts a family going for shopping and enjoying time together. Additionally, another artwork depicts the universal accessibility at RAPIDX stations and the various amenities provid-

High Court rejects Shivakumar's petition challenging CBI FIR

ed for passenger convenience,

such as escalators, wheelchair

Bengaluru: The High Court of Karnataka on Thursday rejected the petition by Deputy Chief Minister and state Congress chief D K Shivakumar challenging the Central Bureau of Investigation's FIR against him in the disproportionate assets case. Justice K Natarajan, who concluded the hearing and reserved the judgment earlier, announced the verdict on Thursday.

Madras HC rejects bail plea of Senthil

Court on Thursday dismissed the bail petition of Tamil Nadu Minister V Senthil Balaji, who was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate in connection with a money laun-

We will create robust laws to provide social security to gig workers: Kejriwal

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

A rvind Kejriwal met a delegation of the Gig Workers Association of Delhi at their request on Thursday, regarding framing a law to ensure social security of the platform-based gig workers within the national Capital. Kejriwal assured the delega-tion that the Delhi Government is always with the common people in every possible manner. He further emphasised that he will create requisite laws in accordance with regulations to provide social security for gig workers, but it may take some time. Meanwhile, the CM instructed Cabinet Minister Atishi to

determine whether gig work-

ers fall under the definition of

workers as per the

Welfare Board. If these workers fall within the purview of the Construction Workers Welfare Board, then the government won't need to create separate laws, and gig workers can benefit from the existing schemes by the Delhi Government.

The Gig Workers Association met with CM to discuss their concerns about social security. They made the CM aware of the daily issues faced by gig workers. After listening to the association's concerns sincerely, Kejriwal instructed Minister Atishi to acquire information about whether these gig workers can fall under the definition of workprovided Construction Workers

"Land measuring 1688 sq.mtr in Village Khanpur in South District has been cleared for acquisition for extension of DMRC line on the Aerocity to Chennai: The Madras High This would ensure long-pending Metro connectivity between the IGI Airport and the heavily populated areas of South-East

How tattoo, stolen wireless set led police to Soumya killers

hand tattoo, a wireless set Astolen from a policeman and CCTV footage helped Delhi Police crack the case of killing of IT professional Jigisha Ghosh and eventually led the investigators to the killers of TV journalist Soumya Vishwanathan, officials said on Wednesday

Ravi Kapoor, Amit Shukla and Baljeet Malik, who were arrested for murdering Ghosh in 2009, later confessed to their involvement in Vishwanathan's murder in 2008.

A Delhi court on Wednesday convicted four persons -Kapoor, Shukla, Malik and Ajay

syndicate for murder and other offences for the killing of Vishwanathan.

The court also convicted fifth accused Ajay Sethi under section 411 (dishonestly receiving stolen property) and Maharashtra Control of Organised Crime Act (MČOCA) provisions for conspiring to abet, aid or knowingly facilitate organised crime and for receiving the proceeds of organised crime.

Following the confessional statements of the trio, the Delhi Police arrested Ajay Kumar and Ajay Sethi and booked all five for killing Vishwanathan in the



wee hours of September 30 in 2009 when she was returning home from work. Ghosh was looted and mur-

dered on March 18, 2009. "The murder case of Jigisha was solved two-three days after her body was recovered from Suraj

got the first lead from a CCTV footage where we found one of the accused was having a tattoo on his hand, while shopping using Jigisha's debit card. Another was carrying a wireless set and wearing a cap," Atul Kumar Verma who was the

investigating officer of the case

Then the officers worked meticulously on Delhi Police's human intelligence network and soon, the police team reached the residence of Malik in Masoodpur. Kapoor and Shukla were arrested subsequently.

Malik had his name inked on his hand while Kapoor used to

snatched from a police officer. "They revealed that they kidnapped Jigisha from near her house in Vasant Vihar and later killed and dumped her body after looting her. They also did shopping using her debit cards," Verma said. Verma was leading a team of officials from Vasant Vihar police station.

"We were a bit shocked when Ravi Kapoor himself revealed that they had committed the murder of another girl at Nelson Mandela Marg, which was not very far from Vasant Vihar," said Verma. He also said two other associates — Ajay Kumar and Ajay Sethi — were involved in

Commissioner of Police (South), HGS Dhaliwal, immediately set up another team of officers and appointed then ACP Bhisham Singh to look into both the murder cases. Singh told PTI, "Since we had

iust confession of the accused for Soumya murder case, the major challenge before us was to collect forensic evidence as Detailing the night when

Vishwanathan was killed, police said Kapoor drove a Maruti Wagon R car and Shukla sat next to him. Malik and Kumar occupied the rear seat. All of

"On September 30, a car zoomed past their vehicle. It was a Maruti Zen which Soumva was driving back to her home in Vasant Kunj. She was returning from TV Today's office then located at Videocon Tower in Karol Bagh," another officer, O P Thakur, who was among the investigators, said.

On seeing a woman driver overtaking them and that she was alone, they raised the speed of their vehicle and came closer to her vehicle. First they tried to waylaid her,

and when she did not stop her car, Kapoor opened fire at bullet hit her in the temple leaving her dead on the spot. Vishwanathan's car stopped after ramming into a divider.

"All the accused fled from the spot but 20 minutes later returned to see her condition. When they saw police personnel, they ran away," the officer said. "We are very satisfied today. The conviction has happened basically due to three reasons — weapon of offence which was recovered from the accused, the forensic sketch of the spot and the sequence of incident matched with the confession statement of the accused," Singh said.

New RRTS trains to be known as Namo Bharat

¬he new Regional Rapid 1 Transit System (RRTS) trains to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday, will be known as 'Namo Bharat'.

Modi will on October 20 launch the 17 km section of Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut RRTS, a rail-based high-speed high-frequency, regional commute transit system regional commute transit system connecting metropolitan and big cities, towns and urban nodes across the National Capital

Official sources have said that India's first RRTS train will be known as "Namo Bharat". The RRTS train will be flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on October 20.

The corridor will be opened for passengers on October 21. The fare chart specifies that a

one-way journey from Sahibabad to Duhai Depot station, India's first semi-highspeed regional rail service -RAPIDX — whose trains are equipped with hi-tech features and a number of passenger amenities, will cost ₹50 while the fare for the same route will

be ₹100 in a premium-class coach. 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.

According to officials, if a passenger enters from one station, say Sahibabad station and exits from the same station, then it

Children having a height below 90 cm will be allowed to travel free, the National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) said. Commuters can buy a paper QR code-based ticket, which can be generated via ticket vending machines (TVM) or bought from ticket

tions, officials said.

Unified Payments Interface or UPI-enabled ticket vending machines have been installed to purchase paper QR code-based tickets and recharge the National Common Mobility Card (NCMC). Passengers can use bank notes, bank cards, National Common Mobility Cards and UPI to buy tickets from a TVM, they said.

With the train service opera tional, the travel time between Sahibabad and Duhai Depot will be 12 minutes, which would usually take around 30-35 minutes by road. Built at a height of 26 metres, Ghaziabad station will be the highest among the stations on the Delhi-Meerut corridor.

The new service will also ease the journey for those who travel every day to and from Delhi. The Ghaziabad station is seamlessly integrated with the Shaheed Sthal Metro station, on the Red Line of Delhi Metro, to enable commuters to comfortably move from one mode to another.

A similar arrangement is being done across the entire stretch wherever there is a nearby

Man strangles wife after quarrel over her going out for work

A 52-year-old man strangled his wife to death in south Delhi's Ambedkar Nagar area following a quarrel over her going out for work.

Their son told police that his parents had a fight on Tuesday night and when he came down from his first floor room after receiving a call from his father Ved Prakash, he found him dragging his mother's body from the bathroom, police said. On being questioned by his son Akash, Prakash confessed that



he had strangled Sushila (50) to death with a dupatta, police

The son, along with his father, took the body to a hospital on Wednesday morning, they said.

Police said according to hospital authorities, she was dead before being brought to the

The matter was reported to police by hospital authorities, an official said and added that there were several injury marks on the woman's body, including that of strangulation. The official said "the son told

us that he lived on the first floor of their house in Madangir, while his parents live on the ground floor", and that his father often got into arguments and fights with his mother

Police said according to Akash, his mother had registered a domestic violence case with police against Prakash and it was being heard in the Saket District Court.

But due to societal pressure, she withdrew the case at the time of his marriage, they said. Akash told police that "on Tuesday night, my father had fight with her as she had gone out for work" and around 6 am on Wednesday, "I got a phone call from my father".

"When Akash reached at the

mother being dragged from the bathroom by his father. He said it looked like his mother was unconscious.

When he questioned Prakash, he admitted that he had a fight with Sushila and strangled her to death with a dupatta and then kept the body in the bathroom," the official said.

Later on Wednesday morning, the father and son took the body to the hospital. Subsequently, Prakash was arrested and sent to jail, police

The letter has also been sent to

Kejriwal, BJP MP Gautam

Developmental works to be done in jailed Sisodia ward from MLA fund

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI

 $R^{\mbox{\scriptsize epair}}$ of roads and pipes are among the works to be carried out in east Delhi's Patparganj using the MLA fund of jailed AAP leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia following court approval of his request to use the money for his constituency's development. The former Deputy Chief

Minister is in jail in connection with the Delhi excise policy scam case, which is being



probed by the Central Bureau Investigation and the Enforcement Directorate.

On August 22, a court had allowed an application moved by him to release money from his MLA fund for development works in his Patparganj con-

Following the court's approval, letters have been sent to all relevant departments to ensure that development works in Patparganj start in time using the MLA fund (of Sisodia), said an official statement, which also stated the works requested by the senior Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader.

notifying the said scheme, the Aday after Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal approved government would stop our only source of income that not a scheme for the regulation and only supports me but my entire

Gambhir and Transport Minister Kailash Gahlot. "This would be a very unfortunate decision as there may be a situation of mass unemployment in a scenario where inflation is already so high and surviving in a metro city has become difficult. For most of us, driving The scheme also paves the bike taxis is our only source of income to maintain a decent livelihood in these trying times. Even drivers who are dependent on both food delivery and bike taxis are bound to lose half

> added. While appreciating the Delhi government's intent to transition to electric vehicles and reduce pollution levels across the city, the drivers underlined that harsh measures like

of their income since food

delivery is able to employ us

Clean Yamuna projects running behind time: Pollution body

Control Committee (DPCC) pointed out that several major projects aimed at cleaning the Yamuna river in Delhi are reported to be running behind schedule.

The report highlights significant delays in projects undertaken by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) and the Delhi

STAFF REPORTER ■ NEW DELHI Development Authority (DDA) the Yamuna floodplains, divid- set for the end of 2023. tion of existing ones, trapping of drains, laying sewer lines in unauthorised colonies, desilting of trunk sewers and utilisation of treated wastewater. These initiatives are part of an NGT panel's "Action Plan to Rejuvenate Yamuna".

According to the DPCC report, the work by the DDA to restore

construction of a new 124 million gallons per day (MGD) STP in Okhla has been delayed by nine months and it is now expected to be completed by March next year.

Similarly, the construction of a MGD STP in Sonia Vihar has been delayed by four months, with a new completion target

cent of the river's total length, accounts for approximately 75 per cent of its pollution load. High levels of pollution in the river are attributed to untreated wastewater from unauthorised colonies and jhuggi-jhopri clusters, as well as the poor quality of treated wastewater discharged from STPs and

Visit our website www.dda.gov.in or dial Toll Free No. 1800110332

dards by February 2025.

To meet these standards, the biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) should be less than three milligrams per litre and dissolved oxygen (DO) should be greater than five milligrams

Currently, Delhi generates 792 MGD of sewage and 35 STPs

common effluent treatment across the city can treat up to To reduce pollution in the river.

In a recent report to the National Green Tribunal

National Green Tribunal

To reduce pollution in the river.

The projects include the construction of new sewage treat
months.

The 22-kilometre stretch of the Yamuna between Wazirabad and Okhla, which made a commitment to clean capacity (550 MGD). Around enters the river.

The data indicates that only 10 out of the 35 operational STPs in the capital meet the prescribed standards for wastewater (BOD and Total Suspended Solids less than 10 milligrams per litre), with the capacity to treat 150 million gallons of wastewater per day.

writes to LG, seek more time for e-conversion **STAFF REPORTER** ■ NEW DELHI become illegal to operate. By

1,500 bike taxi drivers

licensing of aggregators providing passenger transport services and delivery service providers in the national capital, more than 1,500 bike taxi drivers have written to Delhi Lieutenant Governor Vinai Kumar Saxena demanding that they be given the same timeline for conversion to electric vehicles as their counterparts in delivery services.

way for bike taxis and mandates that the aggregators should on board electric twowheelers for passenger ser-The file pertaining to the Delhi

Motor Vehicle Aggregator and Scheme 2023 has been submitted to the lieutenant governor's office, according to an official statement.

According to the letter written by the drivers, "The scheme essentially states that only electric bike taxis would be allowed to run in Delhi and bike taxis of other fuel types would allowing only electric bike taxis to operate will take away their

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livelihood.

Minimum monthly wages for workers increased in Capital

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

akhs of workers and Lemployees working in Delhi are set to receive a big gift from the AAP Government as Labour Minister Raaj Kumar Anand on Thursday issued an order to increase the monthly wages of unskilled, semiskilled and skilled workers of

Its benefit will also be given to the employees of the clerical and supervisor class. Delhi is the only state to maintain the highest minimum wage bracket for work-

"The Arvind Kejriwal Government has increased minimum monthly wages which includes non-matriculation, matriculation and graduate employees. These new rates are applica-

ble from October one. The Labour Minister also directed to ensure payment to all workers and employees with the enhanced rate," the AAP government said in a statement.

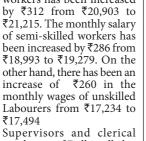
According to the new rate of minimum wage increased by the Delhi Government, the monthly wage of skilled



by ₹312 from ₹20,903 to ₹21,215. The monthly salary of semi-skilled workers has been increased by ₹286 from ₹18,993 to ₹19,279. On the other hand, there has been an increase of ₹260 in the monthly wages of unskilled Labourers from ₹17,234 to

employees of Delhi will also benefit from the new rates of minimum wages issued by the Delhi Government. According to the new rates, the monthly salary of non-matric employees has been increased from ₹18,993 to ₹19,279 due to which their monthly salary has increased by ₹286. Similarly, the monthly salary of matriculation pass and non-graduate employees has been increased from ₹20,903 to ₹21,215 an increase of ₹312.







DELHI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Waste to wealth mission with steel slag road tech

The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has constructed a road using steel slag, a waste product of steel manufacturing thereby promoting waste to wealth and "Save Earth," initiatives, Defence Ministry officials said here on Thursday.

Giving details, they said the Department of Defence is into the third week of the implementation phase (02-31 Oct, 2023) of the Special Campaign 3.0 along with the concomitant Swachhata Abhiyan.

As part of the best practices deployed during the ongoing campaign , the BRO has constructed a road using steel slag, a waste byproduct of steel manufacturing. A one km long Joram-Koloriang Road in Arunachal Pradesh has been constructed using



1200 MT steel slag as part of Waste to Wealth Initiative. Alive to the call to "Save Earth", the BRO has also taken initiative for development of road infrastructure using plastic waste in the high altitude area of Sanku at Ladakh,

which makes roads more durable, cost effective and environment-friendly.

As regards the special campaign undertaken by the Department of Defence, officials said it may be recalled that during the preparatory

phase of the Special Campaign 3.0, the department had identified a total of 3066 locations/sites across India where the Swachhata Abhiyan with people-centric engagement is to be undertaken

These locations pertain to

Accounts, Border Roads Organisation, Military Hospitals, Directorate General of National Cadet Corps, Indian Coast Guard, Sainik Schools, Canteen Stores Department and the Cantonments. At the close of business on Wednesday, 1,832 such sites had already been covered. A total number of 28,859

Controller General of Defence

such files were already reviewed till Wednesday and 16,485 such files are proposed to be weeded out. At the close of business on 18.10.23, a total of 92,850 square feet of space has been freed and revenue of Rs 55.43 Crore has been generated by way of auction of condemned vehicles and disposal of other scrap and obsolete items.

As part of the best practices deployed during the ongoing Campaign, Cantonment Board Dehradun has started

Dehradun Cantonment area for disposal of polythene waste. The polythene waste i.e. chips wrapper, polythene packing bags, polythene sacks etc is purchased at Rs 03/- per kg from the people. The collection centres for Polythene Kachra Banks have been installed at three sites in the Cantonment area.

The polythene waste collected is then used for manufacturing High Density Composite Polymer (HDCP) tiles, boards etc. The Cantonment Board purchases minimum 70 tons to maximum 100 tons of polythene waste every month.

People can store polythene waste in the corner of their house and go to the nearest "Polythene Kachra Bank" any day of the month for sale of polythene waste. Apart from this the polythene waste can also be given to the person collecting garbage from home.



Shah to address 2 rallies in Bastar

Union Home Minister Amit Shah will on Thursday address two rallies in Chhattisgarh's Bastar division, where polling will be held in the first phase on November 7, a BJP leader

This will be Shah's second visit to the Congress-ruled State after the announcement of election schedule for the 90member assembly.

The former BJP president, a key poll strategist of the party, earlier addressed an election rally in Rajnandgaon on October 16.

Voting in the state will be held in two phases on November 7 and 17.

Shah will arrive at the Maa Danteshwari Airport in Jagdalpur from New Delhi shortly after noon, said the

BJP leader. The Union minister will attend a public meeting and nomination rally at Lalbagh Maidan in Jagdalpur, he said. Shah will later leave for Kondagaon where he will attend another election meeting and nomination rally at

Police Ground, he said.

Kondagaon fall under the Naxal-affected Bastar division of the state.

In the first phase, polling will be held in 20 assembly segments - Konta, Bijapur, Dantewada, Chitrakot, Jagdalpur, Bastar, Narayanpur, Kondagaon, Keshkal, Kanker, Bhanupratappur, Antagarh, Mohla-Manpur, Khujji, Dongargaon, Rajnandgaon, Dongargarh, Khairagarh, Kawardha and Pandariya.

The remaining 70 seats will be covered in the second phase. The ruling Congress has so far declared candidates for 83 out of the 90 seats. The opposition BJP has

announced its candidates for 86 seats, including all 20 going to polls in the first phase. The Congress registered a landslide victory in the 2018

polls, winning 68 of the 90 seats. The BJP, which had ruled the state for 15 years (2003-2018),

was reduced to 5 seats, while the JCC (J) and the BSP bagged 5 and 2 seats, respec-The current strength of the

Government has raised MSP for wheat as its stocks depleting: Congress

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The Congress on Thursday questioned Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "silence" on granting legal guarantee for Minimum Support Price and claimed the government has raised the MSP for wheat by ₹150 as its stocks are depleting.
Congress chief spokesman Jairam Ramesh also took a dig at Modi for "taking credit" for this 'big' increase, and said while the MSP for wheat went up by 119 per cent during the Manmohan Singh government, it has increased by "only 57 percent" under the NDA regime. "The MSP for wheat has been raised by Rs 150 per quintal. As

usual, the prime minister is taking credit for this 'big' increase. But the reality is something else. This has happened due to the government's wheat reserves being on the verge of being completely empty," Jairam said in statement.

"Actually, the truth is that this is not the first time that the MSP of wheat has been increased by Rs 150 per quintal. MSP increases have happened before and have been much higher than this. During the government of former prime minister Manmohan Singh, the MSP of wheat increased by 119 per cent whereas during the tenure of Narendra Modi it increased by only 57 percent," the Congress



"But right now the increase in MSP, which is a necessity, is also

being presented as a 'favour' by

the Prime Minister. And what

happened to the Kisan Morcha's demand for giving legal guarantee for MSP? This is even

ment of ASMD, say patients of

such disease and caretakers.

The doctors said the enzyme

is able to reduce the accumu-

lation of fat in organ cells and

relieve the symptoms of the

disease. As per reports, the spread of the disease has not

been established, but one in

The ASMD is characterised by

a lack of an enzyme required

to break down fatty sub-

stances. The complex lipid

called sphingomyelin accu-

mulates in the liver, spleen,

lung, and brain. As a result,

patients exhibit short stature

and changes in their appear-

ance, enlargements of internal

organs, and an accumulation

of body fat, particularly in the

the world suffers from it.

Minister's friends are rising," Jairam questioned. He also asked why soybean is being sold below the MSP in

Madhya Pradesh and why is the government importing cheap edible oil, which is going to cross 17 million tonnes this year - the highest ever. "When will the prime minister break his silence on these questions?" Ahead of the assembly polls in key wheat-growing states, the government on Wednesday announced an increase in the minimum support price of wheat by Rs 150 to Rs 2,275 per quintal for the 2024-25 marketing season.

This is the highest quantum of increase in MSP for any marketing season since the Modi

mustard seed and safflower -have been hiked. A decision in this regard was taken at the meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) chaired by PM Modi. The MSP for wheat stands at Rs 2,125 per

government came to power in

other rabi crops -- gram, bar-

ley, lentil (masur), rapeseed-

2014. Besides, the MSPs for five

quintal for the 2023-24 marketing season (April-March). Wheat is the main rabi (winter) crop and its sowing begins in October while harvesting starts from April. MSP is the minimum rate at which the grain is purchased by the government procurement agen-

Rapid test to aid in diagnosis of Hepatitis E infection

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $T^{\text{hree tests for hepatitis E virus (HEV)},}_{\text{including a rapid test to aid in the diagnosis and surveillance of Hepatitis E infection and advice to include person$ al use glucose monitoring devices have found entry into the World Health Organization's 2023 Essential Diagnostics List (EDL) released on Thursday.

The EDL is an evidence-based register of in vitro diagnostics (IVD) that supports countries to make national diagnostic delivery system. Since diagnosis is the first step to correct disease management and containment of outbreaks, access to tests

matters. Rapid testing for Hepatitis E comes with a concern that the infection is occurring around the world both as outbreaks and as sporadic cases. While most people recover completely, a small proportion (up to 4%) develop acute liver failure, which is higher in pregnant women (mortality rates 19.3-63.6%). Hepatitis E infection is under-reported and the addition of these diagnostics will support Governments to manage outbreaks, said

the WHO in a statement. Similarly, diabetes is a chronic disease causing 1.5 million deaths in 2019 with higher disease incidence and impact in lower-middle-income countries. The disease consequence can be avoided or



delayed with diet, physical activity, medication and regular glucose monitoring. on the Essential Diagnostics List could lead to better disease management and reduced negative outcomes, added the statement.

While not prescriptive, the Essential Diagnostics List has the potential to help countries with their plans to improve access to in vitro diagnostics by providing a policy framework to enable informed decision-making for national

The rapid development and global deployment of diagnostics early in the CÔVÍD-19 pandemic was vital in tracking the spread of the virus, detecting, isolating and treating those infected and protecting those at risk," said Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, WHO Director-General.

For the 2023 Essential Diagnostics List, the WHO Strategic Advisory Group of

IVD) reviewed 12 applications and recommended the addition of eight in IVDs and several edits to previously listed EDL tests, including IVDs for tuberculosis, HIV and diabetes mellitus. Other new tests added to the list include those for endocrine disorders; repro-

Experts on in vitro diagnostics (SAGE

ductive, maternal and new-born health; and cardiovascular health.

For endocrine disorders, two new tests were included. These were parathyroid hormone as a laboratory-based test to aid um homeostasis disorders and monitor the effects of treatment and 17-Hydroxyprogesterone as a laboratorybased test to diagnose and monitor congenital adrenal hyperplasia outside of the neonatal period

For reproductive, maternal and newborn health, the inclusion of two tests: Kleihauer-Betke acid-elution test as a general IVD for use in clinical laboratories to aid in the diagnosis and treatment of fetomaternal haemorrhage, and a pointof-care test to determine blood groups and Rhesus factor in the context of maternal health care and haemolytic disease of the fetus and newborn.

For cardiovascular health, high-sensitivity troponin I and T have been included to aid in the diagnosis of acute myocardial infarction in health care facilities with clinical laboratories.

> Over 10,000 seaweed species are reported worldwide, of

> which about 1,000(10%) are

recorded from Indian shores.

The seaweeds from Indian

waters, primarily collected

from their natural habitat, are

used to produce agar and

alginates by domestic indus-

Patients petition Government to recognise ASMD in National Policy for Rare Diseases PIONEER NEWS SERVICE and access Xenpozyme (An is now a treatment (enzyme expansive enzyme replace-ment therapy) for the treat-

NEW DELHI

My son, Taran is born with a rare genetic disorder Acid Sphingomyelinase Deficiency (ASMD) or Niemann Pick disease that affects the body's ability to metabolise cholesterol and other fats. Initially, we were clueless about his disease and the treatment needed.

rumming pillar to post for more than a decade, our quest for medical help yielded results when we met Dr Meenakshi Bhat at the Centre for Human Genetics with the Indira Gandhi Hospital, Bengaluru who told us that there

FORM NO. 4 [See Regulation-15 (1) (b)] DERTS RECOVERY TRIBLINAL DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAI CHANDIGARH (DRT 2) 1st Floor, SCO 33-34-35, Sector-17 A, Chandigarh (Additional space allotted on 3rd & 4th Floor also) Case No.: SA/882/2017 NOTICE UNDER SECTION 17

OF SECURITIZATION ACT R/W PROVISIONS OF THE DEBTS
RECOVERY TRIBUNAL ACT AND THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL (PROCEDURE) RULES, 1993. AS AMENED FROM TIME TO TIME.
Exh. No. 1304
GARRISION TOOLS AND ORS

ICICI BANK LIMITED (Def-2) MS SAVITA BHADANA (DEI-2) MS SAVIA BIADANY RESIDENT OF FARM NO. 18, GADAIPUR BANDH ROAD, CHATTARPUR FARM, GADAIPUR, SOUTH DELHI DELHI- 110030. (AUCTION PURCHASER)

Also At:-MS SAVITA BHADANA RESIDENT AT HOUSE NO. 617, SECTOR 21-A, FARIDABAD -121012, HARYANA.

FARIDABAD, HARYANA -121012

An application under Section 17 (1) of the Securitization 8 Reconstruction of Financial Assets & Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 has been filed before this Tribunal on 03/10/2023 in the court of Presiding Officer/ Registrar. (A copy of application is enclosed).

Show cause as to why the reliet prayed for should not be granted. You are required to file reply, if any in your defence in the paper book form in two complete sets and produce all the documents and affidavit in your support in the Tribunal personally or through your duly authorized agent or legal practitioner and appear before this Tribunal on 01/12/2023 at 10:30 A.M. failing which the application shall be heard and decided in your to supply advance copy of the reply to the SA to the Counsel for

Given under my hand and the sea of this Tribunal on this date: 06.10.2023

By order of Tribunal Signature of the Officer **Authorised Perso**

replacement therapy) available for ASMD patients like

"There is this first and only enzyme substitute Xenpozyme (Olipudase alfa 20mg) avail-able in the world after the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the product," said Navinthara Kamath, founder, Charitable Organisation. She along with caretakers of other young patients are now petitioning the Government to recognize ASMD in the National Policy for Rare Diseases 2023.

Another caregiver Shikha Golash, a mother of an 11year-old son who was diagnosed with ASMD in 2015 agreed with Kamath as she shared her travail. "Pratyaksh had a large belly and spleen since birth but it came as a shock to us when we came to know about his exceedingly

Notice is hereby given that my client Tarsem Chand Aggarwal is the owner of Property bearing No.RZ-57 K/7, Gali No.7, area measuring 100 sq. yds. falling in Khasra No.496-497 situated at Tughlakabad Extension, New Delhi, having acquired the same vide Relinquishment Deed dated 17.12.2021 (Doc no. 6980) executed by Darshna, Saroj Devi, Sanipa Kansal, Amit Kansal, Anuradha Gupta, Dharam Pal Singh All personis having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable) registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest,

family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease,

partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby requested to notify the same in writing to us with supporting documentary evidence at the address mentioned below within 7 days from the date hereof, failing which the claim or claims, if any, of such person or persons will be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned.

PUBLIC NOTICE



rare disease. Luckily for us, we met Dr Neerja Gupta from AIIMS, New Delhi and with her help, my son too received this special enzyme therapy last October and is much better now," said Golash.

Inclusion of ASMD under the National Policy for Rare Diseases 2023 will help eligible patients to receive financial support from the government

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that my client Mr. Suresh Chand Gupta, Mrs. Pooja Mangla, Mrs. Kamini Mangla, Mrs. Priyanka Mangla are in process to purchase the Property No. F-26, area measuring 100 Sq. yds. pertaining to the Mustatil No. 85, Killa No. 20, situated in the colony known as Milap Nagar, Uttam Nagar, in the area of Village Hastasal, Delhi (availing loan from Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited) from Mrs. Rita Gulati, Mr. Ninlai Gulati, Mr. Gulshine Gulati all are the legal heirs of late Sudesh Kumar Gulati & Mr. Jagiti Rai, whereas Sudesh Kumar Gulati & Mr. Jagit Rai, acquired the said property vide relinquishment deed dated 28[5/2011 (doc. No. 11963) executed by Mrs. Janki Rani and Mrs. Kawal Rani
All personis having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublesse, tenancy, (icnses, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are hereby remeated to a natify the came in weiting the

liver, spleen, lungs, and brain, among other symptoms. There may be serious health consequences as a result.

> Notice is hereby given that my client Rakesh Kumar and Ritu are in process to purchase the Eastern portion of Plot No.30-31 (MCF No.329), area measuring 40 sq. vds., falling in Mustatil No.64, Kila No.22/11/11, 00-21, 22/11/11 70-17), wake Mauja Saaran, Tehsil & District Faridabad, Haryana (availing loan from Piramal Capital & Housing Finance Limited from Shobha Arora acquired the half portion of the said property vide Regd. WILL dated 08.07.2013 (Doc No.587) executed by Sudesh ahuja, whereas Sudesh Ahuja and Shobha Arora purchased the said entire property vide Sale Deed dated 08.07.2013 (Doc No.587) executed by Maalti Dev All person/s having any claim against or in respect of the said Property, or any part thereof, by way of sale, exchange, mortgage (equitable/registered or otherwise), gift, trust, inheritance, family arrangement, maintenance, bequest, partnership, possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howsoever, are bereby 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, Mahaluxni Matro Tower Sec-4, Vashali, Gb., U.P., Mob. 88 10063351 PUBLIC NOTICE

Authorized Officer

ICICI Bank Limited

possession, lease, sublease, tenancy, license, lien, charge, pledge, easement or otherwise howscover, 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 floro, Mahaluxim Metro Tower Sec-4, Vaishali, Gzb., U.P., Mob. 9810063351 Kamal Kant Gupta (Advocate) Unit No. FF-2, First floor, Mahaluxmi Metro Tower Sec-4, Vaishali, Gzb., U.P., Mob. 9810063351 PHYSICAL POSSESSION NOTICE

Date : October 20, 2023

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

The undersigned being the Authorized Officer of ICICI Bank Limited under the Securitisation. Reconstruction

of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of the powers conferred under section 13 (12) read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) rules 2002, issued demand notices upon the borrowers mentioned below, to repay the amount mentioned in the notice within 60 days from the date of receipt of the said notice. As the borrower failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the borrower and the public in general

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

	Sr. No.	Name of the Borrower/ Loan Account Number	Description of Property/ Date of Physical Possession	Date of Demand Notice/ Amount in Demand Notice (Rs.)	Name of Branch
			Flat No-106, Tower-E, 1st Floor, Araville Sector-79, Gurgaon/ Oct 16, 2023	June 23, 2021/ Rs. 62,39,126/-	Delhi/ NCR
			Flat No 1602, 16th Floor, Tower-D, "Araville", Sector-79, Gurgaon/ Oct 16, 2023	June 23, 2021/ Rs. 73,98,500/-	Delhi/ NCR
The above-mentioned borrowers(s)/ guarantors(s) are hereby given a 30 day notice to repay the amount, else the mortgaged properties will be sold on the expiry of 30 days from the date of publication of this Notice, as no					

the provisions under the Rules 8 and 9 of Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002

GI tagging to help boost farmers income Gelidiella acerosa respectively.

ARCHANA JYOTI ■ **NEW DELHI**

Geographical Indication (GĬ) tag for agar-yielding red seaweed Gracilaria dura may encourage farmers to embrace commercial farming and help boost their income, contributing to the country's Gross Domestic Product, a senior scientist from CSIR-Central Salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute has suggested.

Agar, also known as agar agar, is a jelly-like edible substance obtained from the red seaweed and possesses excellent thickening or gelling properties. It finds huge usage as tissue culture media during research involving growth of microorganisms, in the fields of genetic engineering and biotechnology and dentistry. Food-grade agar is used in the preparation of jellies, dairy products such as yogurt and confectioneries.

Dr Vaibhav A Mantri, Senior Principal Scientist from the



growers get the maximum price for their premium pro-Making the case for GI cer-

tification to this specific strain of G. dura, he said the seaweed has restricted distribution in and around Veraval, Gujarat and on the basis of its unique intrinsic attributes useful for aquaculture and product.

The scientist further said that the agarophyte trade based on seaweed landings is worth Rs 20 million per year. Further, to cater to the entire

domestic agar demand, 4000 tonnes of dry feedstock is needed, and it can only be met through commercial farming. Seaweeds, a marine renewable resource, have recently generated enormous interest nationally and internationally due to their utility in commodity products of

everyday use.

Currently, the agar requirement for our country is 400 tonnes per year. Against this, only 300 tonnes of foodgrade and 90 tonnes of bacteriological-grade agar is being produced, largely derived from wild augmentation of other strains such as Gracilaria edulis and

tries. But due to the low cost of agarophyte feedstock, commercial farming has been discontinued by these seaweed growers. According to the data available from GIs Registry, there are about 420 GIs registered under different categories, including agriculture, hand-

icraft, foodstuff and manufactured goods. The prospect of commercial farming of this species in

Indian waters is very high. Besides, in India, this species is also reported from Mediterranean waters, e.g. Gulf of Naples, but the quality of agar obtained from the feedstock of Mediterranean waters was considerably low with diminutive industrial

MPMMCC, POWERGRID sign MoU

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Mahamana Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya Cancer Centre (MPMMCC) and Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at a function organised at the MPMMCC premises here on Wednesday. Under the agree-ment, POWERGRID will provide Rs 42.41 lakh from its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) fund for various types of medical equipment used in cancer treatment to the Varanasi units of Tata Memorial Centre- MPMMCC (Sunder Bagiya near BHU) and Homi Bhabha Cancer Hospital (HBCH), Lahartara, funded by the Department of Atomic Energy, Government of

The MoU was signed by Arun Kumar Rai, Senior General Manager, Varanasi on behalf of POWERGRID and Madho Singh, Director (Administration) on behalf of MPMMCC. Giving this information, POWERGRID SGM Arun Kumar Rai said that along with its main work



state-of-the-art facilities in Varanasi, the POWERGRID has agreed to the proposal to provide medical equipment for cancer treatment to

HBCH, Akhilesh Pandey along with senior officials of POWERGRID and both the hospitals were present in the programme.

The programme was conducted by Binod Kumar,

Marudhar, Sabarmati Express trains to run from Vns Cantt

Two important trains, Marudhar Express and

Now both these trains will get their previous originating/

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Himachal Pradesh Governor Shiv Pratap

Shukla has said that Sanatan

Bharat has always been a guiding light for the world and will

continue to be so. He was speaking as chief guest in the

formal inaugural function of

"Sanskriti Sansad, 2023" and

unveiling function of its mas-

cot held at Gandhi Adhyayan

Peeth auditorium in Mahatma

Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith

(MGKVP) here on Wednesday.

The "Sansad Sanskriti, 2023" is

to be organised by Ganga

Mahasabha under the guidance

of Akhil Bharatiya Sant Samiti,

Akhil Bharatiya Akhada

Parishad and Shri Kashi Vidvat

Parishad from November 2 to

Pradesh Shiv Pratap Shukla

said that the world always

bows before the capable and

strong leadership of the nation.

Today, if any head of state of the

world touches the feet of Prime

Minister Narendra Modi, he

indeed salutes India. The

strength of a nation is linked to

the strength of its leadership.

Sanatan Bharat has always been

a guiding light for the world

and will continue to be so.

Leaving aside the past, especial-

ly the medieval period, India

has always given direction to

the world with its Sanatan

Shakti (eternal power), he

with its knowledge and skills

and only India has the solutions

of the challenges being faced by

India is moving forward

added.

The Governor of Himachal

5 in Varanasi.

14853/14854, 14863/14864 and 14865/14866 Marudhar Express, which links Varanasi and Jodhpur, goes to Lucknow via all the three routes of Ayodhya, Sultanpur and Pratapgrah on different days. This is one of the popular trains as a movie 'Marudhar Express', a romantic comedy with Tara Alisha Berry-Kunaal Kapur starrer was made in 2019. According to NER, the Marudhar Express which departed from Varanasi Cantt on Thursday would continue to short originate/ short terminate at the same station till November 20, instead of Varanasi City station.

Express which also departed from Ahmedabad Junction on Thursday would continue to have the same short origination till November 18 and 19168 Sabarmati Express will also have short origination from Varanasi Junction from instead of Varanasi City. This is the train which met one of

renovation, expansion and Railway authorities would beautification works are going at Varanasi In for several years as it is the biggest station in this parliamentary constituency of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, several trains were cancelled, diverted and short originated / short terminated as hectic yard remodeling work was done for 45 days. In a recent press release, NR General Manager Shobhan Chaudhuri said, "A target of 70 days was set to complete this work, but due to the planned strategy and hard work of the Railways, it was promised to complete this work within only 45 days from midnight of September 1 to October 15 and the work was completed before the scheduled time with the tireless efforts of the concerned personnel?

The work involved installation of a huge 663 route electronic interlocking consisting of blocks working in six directions with 282 signals 214 tions with 283 signals, 214 points, modification of 158 new turnout yards and track October 22 to November 21, linking with route interlocking of about 38 km by NR. It also involved laying of more than 38 country near Godhra railway of 17 km old track, track wiring

The authors of book 'Kashi, Gyan Dayini, Praan Dayini, Anna Dayini' giving its copy to Governor of Himachal Pradesh Shiv

The MLA from Chakia in

Chandauli Kailash Kharwar

said that a conspiracy is going

on to convert the people of

forest community by misguid-

ing them and such events will

create awareness among peo-

MGKV, Prof Anand Kumar

Tyagi said that the main objec-

tive of the proposed event is to

establish India as a centre of knowledge and added that

India today is on the path to

'Kashi, Gyan Dayini, Praan

Dahini, Anna Dayini' Dr

The authors of the book

becoming a world leader.

The Vice-Chancellor of

the nation.

Pratap Shukla in the unveiling function of mascot of Sansad Sanskriti, 2023

the world, he said, adding that

Kashi is the capital of Sanatan

and Sanatan can never be

destroyed. At a time when the

world is witnessing the horrors

of two wars, the message to be

emancipated from Kashi will

definitely give a new direction

to the world. The welfare of the

world lies in the eternal culture

of India. now the world has also

started understanding this very

Akhil Bharatiya Sant Samiti,

Swami Jitendranand Saraswati

said that the saints of all 127

sects of Sanatan will participate

in the Sanskriti Sansad to pro-

claim the unity and integrity of

The general secretary of

fact, he said further.

compact electrical sub-stations," NR GM said, and added that with the completion of yard remodeling of Varanasi Junction, the movement of passenger and goods trains will become easier. According to the same

release, now the lines from plat-

form numbers 1 to 4 have

'Sanatan Bharat has always been

Manoj Kumar Srivastava and

Sanjay Tiwari gave a copy of the

Vidvat Parishad Padma Vibhushan Prof Vashisth

Tripathi presided over the func-

Nagendra Singh, Sidharth

Singh and others were present

on the occasion.

The president of Shri Kashi

book to the Governor.

PRAYAGRAJ (PMS): The fare 168 Rajdhani buses running in Lucknow. Now this fare will be of Rajdhani bus service run- the state will also be reduced ning between Sangam and Lucknow will be reduced by 10 per cent. Now the fare of Rajdhani buses will be equal to the fare of ordinary buses.

Currently, the fare of Rajdhani bus running from Prayagraj is Rs 93 for Kunda, Rs 139 for Unchahar, Rs 199 for

reduced by 10 per cent. This will increase the number of passengers on these buses. The process of sending the next batch of new electric buses to Prayagraj will start from this

many as 567 inmates, including 43 women, are observing nine-day fasting during Navratri at Naini Central Jail, with special arrangements made by the authorities for the auspicious occasion.

The Dramondganj police have

arrested three accused of theft

and recovered the stolen goods

on Wednesday. Under the drive

against the crime the police

during routine patrolling was

tipped off by an informer about

the presence of suspects.

Thereafter the police rushed to

the spot and nabbed three per-

sons in suspicious condition.

After interrogation the sus-

pects divulged that they were

involved in several incidents of

police recovered two water

pumps, one submersible pump

and one mobile phone. After

registering the case and com-

pleting the legal formalities

the police took the stolen goods

into possession and sent the

accused identified as Godal Lal

On their identification the

Sangam city records 257 dengue cases since June 1

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Sangam city has recorded 257 confirmed cases of dengue since June 1 till Wednesday. The data of the Health department, however, comes as a surprise as the district has not registered even a single hotspot.

The reason for this lies in the fact that cases being reported across the city are scattered, including from the posh colonies like Civil Lines, Georgetown, Tagoretown, Ashok Nagar, Cantt etc. Despite of having over a dozen low lying areas, which is termed a natural breeding ground for mosquitoes and insects as per the epidemiologists, has no hotspot. District Malaria Officer AK Singh said this year the city has registered less cases (257 cases from June 1 to till date) compared to previous year (512 cases from

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE PRAYAGRAJ

The New Delhi-based Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) has been

given the responsibility to clean

the Ganga before Mahakumbh

2025. For the task, the institute

aims to make people aware

about the importance of Ganga.

given to IIPA in the backdrop

of the fact that under the

Namami Gange scheme, huge

amount of fund has been spent

in the name of cleaning the

Ganga, but the pollution in the

research officer Kanishka

Sharma said this is the second

phase going on under the

Namami Gange scheme. In

the first phase, IIPA took online

feedback of 18,000 school chil-

dren and talked about creating

awareness about cleaning the

phase, which started from

August 8, students of 10 schools of Prayagraj will be informed about the importance of Ganga and the collective feeling

towards Ganga conservation

Prof Vinod Sharma said that

In the press conference,

Now, under the second

Talking to media, the

river remains the same.

The responsibility has been

June 1 to October 30). He added, "Three city main localities, including Mundera, Naini and Shantipuram, have reported more than 10 cases in past one and half months. The graph of dengue cases was more in city areas compared to rural pockets. Less cases were reported in trans-Ganga and trans-Yamuna pockets this year compared to previous year. We are monitoring vectorborne disease prone areas".

In 2022 Sangam city had recorded 1,465 confirmed dengue cases while the figure in 2021 was 1,299. However, doctors and physicians are this year witnessing more viral infections compared to dengue or chikangunia. "We can expect dengue cases to continue till this month end", he added.

The sale of antibiotics, anti-allergy drugs, cough syrups, paracetamol and other fever medicines has risen by 40

importance of Ganga

soon four biodiversity parks are going to be built in UP. In this,

along with various animals and birds, migratory birds will

also be protected. In the com-

ing time, these wetlands will

become picnic spots where

people will be made aware

Control Board and all the IITs

of the country have been

entrusted with the responsibil-

ity of monitoring pollution in

Ganga. Experts said Ganga

was the largest basin in the

country and there are a total of

14 basins in the 2,550 km long

river. This river covers 40 per

cent (pc) of the country's pop-

ulation and 65 pc of the under-

ground water is recharged from

this river. In such a situation, it

is important to make people

aware about the importance of

Ganga. The experts also informed that 10 years ago

there were around 300 dolphins

in the river and now their

number has increased to 3,000.

They further claim that dol-

phins can be seen at many

places, including Bhagalpur,

Kumar Sharma, who was made

the minister in-charge of

Mahakumbh 2025, said work

MAHAKUMBH: Arvind

Uttarakhand.

about the environment. He said that the Pollution per cent in city.

Traders at Leader road wholesale and retail medicine market observed that sale of medicines has witnessed unprecedented rise after mid-September. The Leader Road wholesale medicine market supplies medicines to neighbouring districts as well.

Traders dealing in medicines from Kaushambi, Fatehpur, Pratapgarh, Jaunpur, Bhadohi are also arriving to pick up the stock of medicines."The sale of medicines has gone up to 40 per cent in the past 10 days," said a trader at Kaurihar block.

Traders, however, claimed that there was adequate stock of medicines required for fever in the drug markets.

Earlier, the sale of medicines witnessed exponentially when Covid cases were rising and hit peak, but started declining gradually after infection

on whatever projects have been

approved should be started

soon. He said the proposals for

projects which are needed fur-

ther should be sent to the gov-

ernment soon. He said the

government will not allow any

shortage of budget for organ-

ising Mahakumbh. He asked

the official concerned to estab-

lish coordination with the peo-

ple of the city in the projects.

and Energy Minister Arvind

Kumar Sharma reviewed the

progress of 260 big projects

worth about Rs 3833 crore in

view of the Mahakumbh . He

saw the progress report of the

six-lane bridge being built on

the Ganga and the Prayagraj-

Rae Bareli highway four-lane

project. He said the work of 63

km of Prayagraj-Rae Bareli four lane highway from Nawabganj to Rae Bareli (except bypass and Sai bridge)

should be started under any circumstances from November.

The work of the bypass and Sai

river bridge is going on at a fast

pace. Instructions were given to

complete the under construc-

tion bridge on Ganga by October 2024. Kumbh Mela Officer Vijay

Kiran Anand said the fair will

be organised in 4000 hectares

UP Urban Development

Emphasis on awareness about

spread was controlled and sale of Covid related medicines declined up to 70 per cent. Doctors at government hospitals and private nursing homes, meanwhile, asserted that such fever cases have increased with the change of the weather.

They claimed, "Apart from viral fever and other infections, these are also usual respiratory issues that affects people during the changing weather conditions".

In view of the increasing viral fever cases in the districts across state, the state health authorities have also come up with a Unified Disease surveillance portal (UDSP) and awareness programme in majority of the districts of state in which health workers are going door-to-door and identifying those with dengue or other vector-borne

and 25 sectors. Seven riverfront

roads of 13 km will be built.

There will be development of

green belt on both sides of the

road, facilities of drinking

water, toilets, electricity system

developed funded by the

National Clean Ganga Mission,

under which changing rooms,

drinking water, electric park-

ing, gates, signage, benches,

dustbins, green belts and toilets

will be constructed. Permanent

bus stands are being further

improved while 12 temporary

stands will be built. Besides,

1000 shuttle buses will run in

Pant stressed on timely comple-

tion of NHAI projects, Alopibagh flyover and Subedarganj flyover and airport

expansion related works. A

200 metric tonne capacity bio-

CNG plant will be set up to dis-

pose of the waste generated during Mahakumbh. The work

of setting up 15 metric tonne

capacity biogas plant and 150

metric tonne capacity MRF

plant at three sites is also in

progress. ADG Bhanu Bhaskar,

connected through video conferencing, said Kumbh Mela

SSP should be deployed.

city. Commissioner Vijay Vishwas

Divisional

Seven ghats are also being

and vending zone.

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE VARANASI

Sabarmati Express, that link this holy city with Jodhpur (Rajasthan), known as 'Blue City' and famous for its palaces and forts and Gujarat capital Ahmedabad, an important economic and industrial hub in the country, will now run from biggest railway of the city Varanasi Junction (Cantt) of Northern Railway (NR), once again. In the recent time when vast remodeling works were going on at Varanasi Jn yard and station, over a dozen trains were shifted from this station to others to minimise its traffic load. During this period, Marudhar Express and Sabarmati Express were shifted to Varanasi City railway station of North Eastern Railway (NER) but these trains reached there only via Varanasi Jn, giving a little relief to the latter.

originate/ terminate at Varanasi Cantt (BSB). According to a release of NER headquarters, Gorakhpur, these short termination/ short origination of month but the railway sources indicate that these trains would

terminating station when the make changes in this direction.

Similarly, 19167 Sabarmati

a guiding light for the world'

station in Gujarat in 2002. of 40 km and installation and commissioning of three 11 KV

direct connection with Banaras station of North Eastern Railway (NER), from platform nos 1 to 5 with Lohta station and from platform nos 6 to 9 with Shivpur station, which will ease the traffic movement. Besides, the yard remodelling helped in making connectivity of all platforms (1 to 9) towards Varanasi City and Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Junction railway stations. Besides, doubling work has been completed between Varanasi Jn (BSB) and Varanasi City (BCY) and the length and width of eight platforms have been reconstructed apart from construction of two new platforms, 10 metres wide new and third foot over bridge (FOB), three metres wide 65 metres long FOB with ramp at level crossing number 4 and six gate part from two new washing lines and four new sick pit

Fare of Rajdhani bus to be reduced

will be promoted.

accordingly.

Along with Prayagraj, fares of Rae Bareli and Rs 331 for

INMATES FASTING: As

Maintain law and order: DM

CORRESPONDENT ■ MIRZAPUR

District Magistrate Priyanka Niranjan while holding a meeting of the district level peace committee along with SP Abhinandan at the Collectorate on Wednesday directed all the officers concerned to personally visit all the spots related to festivals and maintain law and order at any cost. She directed the Electricity department to ensure repair of loose electric wires at places related to Durga

She asked to the officials to go to the festival related areas, contact the people and solve the problem, if any. SP Abhinandan directed the police authorities to ensure regular presence of cops in the areas related to the festival and ensure compliance of government orders. Regarding the Durga idols he said from the installation to the immersion guidelines should be followed strictly. The meeting was attended by the ADM(F&R)



DM Priyanka Niranjan holding the meeting of district level peace committee at the Collectorate on Wednesday

Puia pandals and ensure unincomplaint of any kind came from the public. She asked the officials to solve all problems which were brought during the meeting and report to her.

Shiv Pratap Shukla, ASP Nitesh Singh, CO (Sadar) Shailendra Tripathi and others.

woman, of enticing a minor girl away. A woman had lodged a case alleging that her minor under the relevant sections the police recovered the girl and

Gandhinagar village under Koraon police station, Prayagraj. to jail after completing the legal formalities.

Meanwhile under joint operation of the SOG, surveillance, Chunar and Rajgarh police stations a cattle smuggler was arrested on Wednesday and eight head of cattle were recovered. During the routine checking the Chunar police was tipped off by an informer about the location of a pickup carrying eight head of cattle. As a result the police team surrounded the vehicle in a jungle and when shots were fired the police retaliated in self-defence. In the encounter one smuggler

was shot in the leg, while the other managed to flee the spot. During the search of the vehicle the police recovered eight head of cattle along with a countrymade gun and an empty cartridge from the smuggler. The cattle were released and the injured smuggler who was the driver of the vehicle was nabbed. The vehicle was seized under the MV Act. SO Rajgarh Rana Pratap Yadav, SHO Chunar Sanjeev Singh, SOG incharge Madhav Singh and surveillance inchage

Sandeep Bind of Newada under Lalganj police station to jail. Meanwhile the Jigna police have arrested an accused of rape on Wednesday. A woman had lodged a named com-

After registering the case SO Ravi Kant Mishra formed a

tion and the national general secretary of Ganga Mahasabha terrupted power supply. The Govind Sharma conducted it. EOs nagar palika were direct-Prof Ramnarayan Dwivedi proed to ensure sanitation at the festival spots as well as procession routes. The PWD was posed the vote of thanks. The chairman of Shri Kashi directed to repair all the roads Vishwanath Mandir Trust Prof Nagendra Pandey, Patalpuri concerned and ensure that no Pithadhishvar Balak Das, Jaiprakash Mishra, Prof

ARRESTED: The Halia police on Wednesday arrested two accused, including a daughter had been enticed away. After registering a case

Bind and Sandeep Bind of Maheshpur Dramondganj police station and sub-inspector Sanjai Singh conducted the operation along with their teams. The accused was identified as Altaf Ahmad of Shivrampur under Chaand police station, Bhabhua district

plaint on October 16 alleging that the accused had raped her daughter.

team to nab the accused which succeeded in arresting the accused of Chakia Bajata village under Jigna police station. After completing the legal for-



more convenience to the patients in the coming days. The amount will be used to strengthen the facilities in the hospital and some new equip-MPMMCC and HBCH and ment will also be purchased

from it. Public Relations Officer of MPMMCC and

Human Resource In-charge of POWERGRID, Varanasi and VK Singh, Deputy Administrative Officer of the

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-PAPER WITH PASSION-

Collateral damage

Palestinian humanitarian crisis worsens by the hour, though window of hope cracks open

■ srael's retaliatory attack on Gaza has led to a humanitarian crisis, exacerbated by a particularly disturbing incident — the attack on a hospital. US President Joe Biden has expressed concern and called for restraint by Israel. The rocket attack on Gaza's overcrowded al-Ahli Hospital has been one of the most horrific developments in the ongoing war, and this single attack has claimed around 500 innocent lives who were already in need of medical treatment. The Hamas attributed the cringe-making incident to Israel, which has obviously refuted involvement. It has released a flurry of video, audio and other information that it said showed the blast was due to a missile misfire by Islamic Jihad, another militant group operating in Gaza. The Islamic Jihad has dismissed the claim. The fact that hundreds of civilians under treatment have died is simply not acceptable, no matter whose missile it was. It is a human crisis of the highest order. The US President has shown guts to caution Israel against giving in to



its "rage" and asked it to exercise restraint. This marks a significant departure from the unconditional support for Israel that the US has historically maintained and signals a shift towards a more balanced approach to the ongoing conflict. Biden, while on a trip to Israel, has announced a \$100 million humanitarian aid for Palestinians affected by the conflict in Gaza and West Bank as a goodwill gesture. For its part, the office of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has said that "limited humanitarian aid" would be allowed into Gaza from Egypt following a request from Biden; though the fact remains that Egypt and other Arab countries typically don't want to take in Palestinian

refugees. Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai has donated \$300k to Gaza. British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak is also in Israel to meet Prime Minister Netanyahu as well as the top leaders of a few neighbouring countries.

Meanwhile, the humanitarian crisis is worsening each passing day. Thousands of Palestinians have been killed or maimed, and countless homes, schools and hospitals have been destroyed. The UN has been actively involved in seeking a peaceful solution but it has no way of imposing a ceasefire. The Israel-Hamas conflict broke out suddenly on October 7 when the militant group controlling Palestine fired 5000odd rockets on Israel, giving it a reason to respond with an attack on Gaza. Eventually, it became Israel vs Palestinian civilians, and the latter are being pounded for no fault of theirs. Their electricity, fuel, food and water supply, controlled by Israel, is cut off and Gaza wears the look of an open jail and a graveyard at the same time. The pressure is slowly but surely building on Israel for an early ceasefire and suspension of the ongoing hostilities. Israel is losing the perception war even outside the Arab world and it would now make sense for it to go for damage control rather than going ahead with its hawkish plans.



A community 'puja pandal' ahead of Durga Puja festival, in Prayagraj

Pusillanimity of Arab leadership



While the Arab states make a hue and cry about Israel's wrongdoings in Gaza, they themselves are not doing anything to help Palestinians in distress

S Presidential aspirant, Nikki Haley has put the cat amongst the pigeons by asking some straight questions. She stated, 'You're going to hear all those Arab countries vilify Israel for what's about to happen. You're going to hear all of them say, how dare you not do more for the Palestinian people?" and then posed bluntly, "But where are the Arab countries? Where are they? Where is Qatar? Where is Lebanon? Where is Jordan? Where is Egypt? Do you know we give Egypt over \$1,000,000,000 a year? Why aren't they opening the gates? Why aren't they taking the Palestinians? You know why? Because they know they can't vet them, and they don't want Hamas in their neighborhood. So why would Israel want them in their neighborhood?" It is true, but for shedding insin-

cere tears and making political gold out of the issue of Palestine, the Arab Sheikhdoms have never done anything worthwhile for the Palestinians, now or before. It's the same curse which afflicted the Middle East when the Syrian-Iraqi refugee exodus took place in the aftermath of ISIL running over swathes – boatloads of refugees had risked the unsafe water-crossing into Europe but no boat or bus seemed to have moved towards the borders of the cash-flush Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates etc. Instead, Europe and its leadership was hauled up the coals when they started closing their borders, given their own socio-economic concerns and inability to take any further refugees. But the Arab leadership was quick, garrulous, and snarky to call out the insensitivity of the 'West' but did precious little to alleviate the sufferings of their own Arab brethren. Now, it seems to be a replay of the exact same double game today, when the Arab regimes are halfheartedly and conveniently pointing fingers at Tel Aviv following the brutal Hamas attack, after having walked a considerable listance with Israel, themselves. It was pursuant to the 'Abraham statement urging, "the need for Accords' that had sought to officially normalise (so called 'secret



secret) relations between Israel and Arab countries, ostensibly to 'solve' the protracted Israel-Palestine issue. Except that the Accord was virtually predicated on ignoring the Palestinians and their miserable conditions and participation in the same, as irrelevant. Assumption of Palestinian invisibility from those deliberations has come to haunt the region, now. Many Palestinians had not resigned to their proposed fate of slow death and forgetfulness, and sadly it metastasised into the Hamas attack.

The 'Abrahamic Accord' was eventually as ignoble and inefficacious as the peace talks between the Americans and Taliban, in Doha. Beyond countries like Egypt, Turkey and Jordan who have had diplomatic relations with Israel for long, United Arab Emirates, Morocco, Sudan, and Bahrain had rushed into signing deals with Israel - the emotions reserved for Palestinian suffering were conveniently and tellingly forgot-

Now Bahrain was left issuing an embarrassingly platitudinous and mealy-mouthed de-escalation among all parties to preserve the lives of people", talks' in parallel are the worst kept Morocco's King Mohammed

"serious and grave escalation". They are clearly caught between condemning either the Hamas action or the disproportionate Israeli revenge, as they have been party to the brewing secondment of the Palestinian cause. Nikki Haley only questioned the obvious. Importantly, the so-called siege of Gaza may not be practically true as there is a 12-kilometer-long border between Egypt and Gaza.

VI expressed "deep concern"

and the Emiratis called it a

Public memory is short, but

long before Donald Trump embarked on his infamous 'Wall' along the border with Mexico – Egypt along with US help had started a steel wall along the Egypt-Gazza barrier. Unsurprisingly today, the same border (Rafah crossing) remains sealed to refugees, food, medical aid and other humanitarian supplies, all of which the Egyptians could deploy to aid the beleaguered Palestinians, if they wanted to. History of the massacres of Palestinian refugees by countries like Jordan ('Black September' in 1970) or Lebanon (Sabra and Shatila massacres in 1982) etc., all point to the duplicitousness of Arabs towards Palestinians. Besides, the meekly contextual defense of the Hamas by

countries like Saudi Arabia also betrays an underlying concern feared by the Arab Sheikdoms - Hamas is essentially an offshoot of the 'Muslim Brotherhood' which gave sleepless nights to Arab countries during the 'Arab Spring'. Because it threatens the Arab regimes, Muslim Brotherhood is banned in authoritarianmonarchical regimes in Saudi Arabia, UAE, Egypt

Beyond postures necessitated by having to pander to Ummah (Islamic Society) concerns and solidarity, the Arab Sheikhdoms would not touch the Hamas with a bargepole. In the entire melee, it is the hapless Palestinians who stand to suffer the most, and to that extent, the Arab Sheikhdoms are complicit for having run with the hare and hunted with the hound.

The entire plan to remodel the Middle East in line with the powers-that-be has been undone by those in whose name the peace was sought to be negotiated - except the Palestinians were ignored, even by their supposed own. (1 ne writer, a military veter

of Åndaman & Nicobar Islands and Puducherry. The views expressed are personal)

an, is a former Lt Governor

THE EDITOR

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Adapting to the future of work with NEP 2020



Artificial Intelligence powered technological tools have the potential to revolutionise education delivery and improve learning outcomes

◄he National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 is comprehensive reform aimed at reshaping pedagogy and establishing a world-class education system rooted in Indian values. This ambitious policy sets out to create a sustainable, inclusive, and knowledge-driven society by the year 2040. A fundamental aspect of NEP 2020 is the transformation of existing curricula and teaching methods across schools, as well as more than 1,000 universities and over 50,000 colleges and standalone educational institutions throughout

Current State of Education: The focal point in the current state of education in India is the students, who are the heart and soul of the higher education ecosystem. This encompasses the vast network of 42,000-plus colleges and over 11,500 standalone institutions, many of which operate in the private sector. The entire educational infrastructure, curriculum, and policies must revolve around enhancing the student's learning experiences and outcomes. It is crucial to establish a stu-

rekindle India's status as a

global knowledge powerhouse and learning hub, as it once was. The emphasis should be on effectively catering to students' needs, individual preferences, and holistic development.

This need for a student-centric approach is also recognised at the institutional level. Private universities in India are increasingly focusing on entrepreneurship, acknowledging the heightened competition arising from new educational facilities.

In response, these institutions are taking various measures to expose students to entrepreneurship at all levels of study. They are introducing unique courses that support entrepreneurship, technology empowerment, and enhanced employability, dent-centric environment to going beyond traditional aca-

demic formats. Evolution of **Skills:** The rapid emergence of technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), robotics, and automation has led to the evolution of skill sets at an unprecedented pace. This necessitates a flexible framework for skill acquisition.

learning, Continuous upskilling, and reskilling have become integral components of digital-era skill development strategies. NEP 2020 recognises this evolving learning landscape by advocating the identification and integration of specific skills and values at each stage of education to foster comprehensive student development.

Principles of NEP 2020 Ensuring an equitable and inclusive learning environment for all students.

Providing an educational system that caters to every student, regardless of age, gender, passions, interests, strengths, and weaknesses, in a personalized and accessible manner. Emphasizing student upskilling and vocational education to cultivate a highquality future workforce. Striking a balance between curricular and extracurricular activities.

Role of Technology in Delivering Holistic Education Technological tools, powered by Artificial Intelligence, have the potential to revolutionise education delivery and improve learning outcomes. This became evident during the COVID-19 pandemic when more than 320 million Indian students faced disruptions in their studies due to lockdowns. Digital education emerged as the alternative to ensure the continuity of learning.

Online classrooms were established using various online meetings, webinars, and video conferencing tools, followed by standardized virtual education through platforms like Google's "Teach from Anywhere" hub, which was available in English and 8 major Indian languages. This platform assisted over 9 lakh educators in facilitating online teaching. Multiple similar initiatives have been and can be planned and executed using cutting-edge technolo-

(The writer is Vice Chancellor, Mahindra University, views are personal)

A SHIFT IN INDIA'S FOREIGN POLICY

Sir—A political controversy has erupted following Sharad Pawar's criticism of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for showing solidarity with Israel amid the war with Hamas militants. Assam CM Dr. Himanta Sarma countered Pawar's attack by making a jibe at the Nationalist Congress Party chief. Sarma suggested that Pawar might send his daughter, Supriya Sule, to Gaza to fight for the militant group. However, it is unclear why Sarma opposed Pawar's statement. India has been supporting innocent Palestinians, and Sharad Pawar highlighted the real issue by stating that former Indian prime ministers also stood firmly with Palestine. Pawar added, "The entire land belongs to Palestine, and Israel encroached on their land. Israel is an outsider, and the land originally belonged to Palestine." India's view on other countries has always been the same, but it seems to have changed after comments from the current PM and other political leaders, which have shattered our former perspective. We should always observe inclusivity in our country and strive for equal rights for every citizen.

Md. Mofidul Islam | Howrah

TRIBAL LIVES MATTER

Sir—It has been 122 years since Australia gained independence. However, even today, that country finds itself entangled with the Buckingham Palace of England, body and mind. The clearest evidence of this is that British King Charles III serves as the monarch and head of state of Australia. This situation has perpetuated a mentality reminiscent of the colonial era among the government and the white population. The consequence? The original tribal residents continue to be treated as second-class citizens. If Australian governments genuinely aimed to provide constitutional rights to the indigenous people, and if they truly desired proper representation in Parliament, the tribals would not be living in conditions resembling those from two centuries ago.

Use Green Crackers



estival season is around, and firecrackers are back in the limelight. Diwali has, however, been reduced to a festival of sound due to the mindless bursting of conventional firecrackers. In October 2018, the apex court gave the green signal for the production of eco-friendly, green crackers as substitutes for traditional crackers. The green crackers reduce shell size.

don't use ash, and contain dust suppressants to cut down particulate matter (PM) emissions. Down the line, scientists of the famed Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), in collaboration with the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI), did extensive research to come up with ways and means of manufacturing green crackers. Worker representatives from Sivakasi, the cracker hub of India, were sent to CSIR-NEERI for training. But not all cracker manufacturing industries have the wherewithal to understand the making of green crackers on a large scale. The green crackers are expected to reduce the PM level by 30 percent. Reducing sound emission to 35 decibels is the norm. They mainly contain potassium nitrate, and minimum amounts of aluminum and barium are used. Since barium nitrate is the cause of air and noise pollution, there is a drastic reduction in pollution. But again, everything boils down to implementation. Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

Despite knowing that only 3.8 percent of Australia's 26 million population are tribals, the current Anthony Albanese government organised a referendum on whether to grant the tribals constitutional rights. The outcome was predictable: a resounding 'no.' This reflects the broader sentiment across the country, with the tribal community enduring a life of hardship in Australia despite their significant contributions to the nation's historical and basic infrastructure. Jang Bahadur Singh | Jamshedpur

HOSPITAL ATTACKED IN GAZA

Sir—The explosion at Al-Ahli hospital in Gaza City, resulting in the loss of over 500 lives, has sparked global outrage and has the potential to be a significant turning point in the Israel-Hamas conflict. Hamas attributes the incident to an Israeli airstrike, while the Israeli military claims it was caused by a misfired Palestinian rocket. Various countries in West Asia have expressed their opinions on this matter, with Syria and Saudi Arabia blaming Israel, Libya accusing it of 'war crimes and genocide,' and Iraq declaring three days of

US President Joe Biden's swift support for Israel during his visit to Tel Aviv contrasts with these stances. Attacking hospitals is considered a war crime under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, and hospitals and medical personnel are protected by international humanitarian law. The United Nations' efforts to reduce hostilities and enforce international law in the Israel-Hamas conflict seem ineffective. With a significant loss of life, there is growing demand for an immediate ceasefire. The tragedy at Al-Ahli Hospital underscores the need for the international community to work towards preventing civilian deaths in Gaza.

Sabita Kumari | Hazaribagh

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FIRST COLUMN

ISRAEL'S ATTACKS ON **GAZA DISRUPTS W ASIA**

The Israel's Gaza campaign can upset many bilateral agreements



KUMARDEEP BANERJEE

wo world leaders in the middle of almost every geo-political discussion for the past year, travelled out to their respective countries, to resolve the unfolding Israel war on terror. US President, Joe Biden travelled to Israel to express solidarity with one of its closest allies in West Asia. His next stop was Jordan where according to the white house statement, the president's trip "reiterated that Hamas does not stand for the Palestinian people's right to dignity and self-determination and discuss the humanitarian needs of civilians in Gaza. "The President also met with leaders from Egypt, and Palestinian Authority in Amman during the trip. A careful balancing of risks involved with the President's trip to Israel played out in the background, with several senior officials in the White House admitting about the possible PR fallout of the high-level visit.

The fear of a ground attack on Gaza, with US marines in the vicinity, or joining in, causing huge casualties of Palestinians, could trigger a backlash against the war against terror globally. The collective memory of people around the world is currently bombarded with visuals of human tragedy and piles of rubble, caused first by the war in Ukraine for the past year, followed by the Gaza strip, even though, many of them would have preferred, some more time to come out Covid induced economic misfortunes. Additionally, President Biden faces a tough re-election next year, with political sentiments in the US on a slippery ground regarding the state/number of wars America can afford. The world, particularly US citizens, may have a war fatigue, with the one in Ukraine, directly aided by billions of dollars, refusing to die down even in the second year.

At this juncture, for President Biden, to be drawn into a full-fledged "war against terror group Hamas" in West Asia with its ally Israel, could suitably upset domestic political equations. The US has gradually pulled out



from West Asia, in the past decade, leaving it up to local sovereign players to come to terms with each other's sensitivities. The ongoing war on terror as a response to the dastardly act, caused by US recognised terror group Hamas, could pull it back to the region upsetting its existing bilateral relations with several other countries present in the vicinity. To be sure, the US led the Arab world and Israel to slowly start patching up through the Abrahm's Accord, which involved a bunch of bilateral agreements between the countries persuaded by Washington DC to work towards a common good. The US also stitched together the I2U2 framework, which brought India, Israel and UAE to work closely on global and regional issues of concern. The current conflict in West Asia could upset some of these

Meanwhile, Russian President Vladimir Putin landed in Beijing, his second international trip since the International Criminal Court (ICC)issued an arrest warrant on him earlier this year. This trip was widely followed, as it marked the reiteration of "no limits" friendship, between Russia and China which are trying to lead a world order without the US and its allies. President Putin travelled to Beijing, immediately before he attacked Ukraine last year. Meanwhile, despite the arrest warrant, issued by ICC, President Xi landed in Moscow on a state visit and showered praises on the Russian premiere. President Putin's trip to Beijing this week was more to support the Belt and Road Initiative which he had termed as one meant for inter-

India meanwhile has to play a tight diplomatic walk with its full-fledged support to Israel for its war against terror along with the US. India has not ruptured its relations with Russia, while it continues to have abnormal relations with China due to the military conflict and is opposed to the Belt and Road Initiative, as it runs through India's acknowledged disputed territories. India is on a wait-and-watch, which it has done in the past on the Ukraine war, the Israel conflict may be no exception.

(The writer is a policy analyst; views expressed are personal)

Disturbing trend of women's radicalisation



NISHAKANT OJHA

The terrorist organisations are radicalising women by exploiting their emotions and using them for their nefarious designs



omen as foot soldiers in India is a perplexing issue that includes a gamut of information gathered of different terror groups having different motives, inspirations and belief systems. By and large, women's involvement in psychological warfare in India has been connected to the exercises of left-wing fanatic groups, for example, the Naxalites.

Women's role, however, is seen to have a critical impact in such groups, both as contenders and as pioneers. Lately, a few examples of women's contribution to jihadist oppression have come to light in India. For instance, in 2018, a group of women were captured in Maharashtra for supposedly wanting to launch fear-mongering assaults. These women were purportedly in contact with people from the Islamic State (IS) and wanted to inflict focus-based assaults in

Be that as it may, generally speaking, women's contribution in armed struggle against the state in India, is low as compared to men. This is attributed to social factors that limit women's versatility and potential in opening doors needing high commitment in tough exercises. Furthermore, the man-centric nature of numerous fear-mongering groups makes it challenging for women to ascend to administrative roles or hierarchically assume critical roles in such activities and operations.

It is essential to take note that women's contribution to armed struggle in India and West/Centre East ought not to be seen as detachment. Rather, it is essential for a more extensive study on the pattern of the utilization of viciousness to accomplish

political targets. Giving attention to the underlying drivers of armed struggle in India, like privation, imbalance, and political underestimation, is vital to forestall all kinds of efforts by people indulging in fear-

Even though women are mostly side-lined in regular roles of brutal political players, they have emerged as dynamic members in 60% of equipped assaults by radical **Enlistment and Radicalisation** The enrolment and radicalization

of women in psychological warfare in the context of India have manifested in various group formations across a long period, depending upon the particular group and settings. Here are probably some of the most widely recognized and enlisted reasons for women joining radical groups:
1. Philosophical teaching: Now

and again, women are enlisted and radicalised through philosophical inculcation. This can occur through web-based promulgation, online entertainment, or in-person cooperation with select representatives or ideologues. Women might be drawn to radical philosophies that guarantee them a feeling of direction, a place, and strength. 2. Compulsion and power: Women might be constrained or pressured into joining psychological oppressor groups, either through dangers or savagery against them or their families. For instance, families might be apprehensive about higher chances of being vulnerable to injury because they do not permit their little girls or family members to join fear-based oppressor groups. Such families succumb to threats. 3. Unique interactions: Women are also enlisted through special interactions or organizations. This can incorporate relatives, companions, or associates, who are now engaged with fear-based oppressor exercises. At times, women might be attracted to fanatic ideologies through close connections with individuals from these factions. 4. Monetary impetuses: Women might be enrolled through the commitment of monetary impetus or monetary help.

5. Abuse of strict or ethnic characters: Women might be radicalised through abuse of their rigid or ethnic backgrounds. This can incorporate the utilization of oppressive propaganda about their ethnic

communities by raising their voice, speaking to legitimise radical activities, or depicting specific ethnic groups as persecuted or exploited.

Enrolment of Women in Islamic States (IS)

It was analysed that to be enrolled against the state, as a general rule, there are four principal perspectives. It is commonly acknowledged that "psychological oppressors are made not conceived." To start with, there is a group that one has to join. For some this part of hav-ing a group, to have a place of identity, is engaging. Besides, there is this belief system, which answers why the group is "legitimised" in going after regular citizens.

The third part is social help, and this is where web-based entertainment truly comes in making future psychological militants. By utilising virtual entertainment stages to speak to individuals who might be radicalised, selection representatives from the Islamic State can stay in steady contact with Westerners, to directly come to a meaningful conclusion and persuade them that joining the group is the correct thing to do.

The fourth part in the making of a psychological oppressor is attributed to individual inspirations and

weaknesses. Understanding the circumstances and backgrounds of the lives that numerous Muslims lead in Western nations clarifies why joining or helping militant groups like the Islamic State in all probability goes in favour of such terror groups. It's an obvious fact that Islamophobia is an issue in numerous Western nations. Militants go about aggravating this issue leading to an expansion in Islamophobia. Each time a significant fear-monger assault happens, there is a critical explosion of widespread disdain and violations against Muslims.

There is a propensity to fault the Muslim people and groups for launching a couple of demonstra-

The idea of female Muslims wearing headscarves is seen as a restriction they face as compared to Muslim men. Wearing a headscarf makes these women stand out as being Muslims, and consequently easier to target them. Women from fear-based oppressor

groups are not by any means the only ones who attract likely female enlisted people. Frequently, men would play with little kids, seeing which women get emotional about their innocence and eventually succumb to the charm of such men and get trapped. A manual called "A Course in the Craft of Selecting" that was composed by Al-Qaeda was found by authorities from the US in Iraq. In the manual, it gave directions, for example, to invest however much energy as could reasonably be expected with the individual who is the objective of the enlistment, snow the fundamentals of Islam (yet be mindful so as not to raise jihad), and generally speaking to be a decent audience to the likely select/ targeted person.

In particular, young women are all the handier and so brought into the enrolment specialists' web. For any youth, the high school years can be a period of distractions, defiance, and experiencing passionate feelings. It is also a fact that the absence of shrewdness and emotional development can also instigate little kids into believing that they need to join a psychological oppressor group. Furthermore, many who decide to join the Islamic State lack information about Islam itself. As a result, they are more vulnerable and readily get entrapped in the snare laid out by the Islamic State.

The radicalisation of women is a thin-line segment, which needs deep thought and a way forward in

(The writer is an

A FEW

EXAMPLES OF

CONTRIBUTION

PSYCHOLOGICAL

TO JIHADIST

OPPRESSION

HAVE COME TO

NOTICE IN INDIA

WOMEN'S

cyber and aerospace Security; Views are personal)

eminent expert on counter-terrorism (West Asia & Middle East) and advisor to

Basking in the glory of sporting achievements

Indian sportspersons give their best-ever performance in the Asian Games; return home with 107 medals

ndia reached an unprecedented milestone of 107 Imedals at the 19th Asian Games 2023 in Hangzhou, the People's Republic of China. This is the first time in history that India has achieved this remarkable feat. This achievement came after the Indian women's kabaddi team clinched the gold medal in the women's team kabaddi event at the 19th Asian Games in Hangzhou on 7 October.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the athletes by calling it a momentous achievement for India at the Asian Games. In a post on X, the Prime Minister wrote, "A momentous achievement for India at the Asian Games! The people of India are thrilled that we have reached a remarkable milestone of 100 medals. I



(The writer is programme

executive, Gandhi Smriti

and Darshan Samiti; views

are personal)

extend my heartfelt congratulations to our phenomenal athletes whose efforts have led to this historic milestone

In a display of both grit and grandeur, with an astounding haul of 107 medals, India's 655 representatives surpassed their previous record set in Jakarta 2018. Further, beyond the significance of the medals, Hangzhou served as a crucial gateway to the Paris 2024 Olympics, providing 74 quotas spanning multiple sports. India secured six of these quotas, spearheaded by an impressive performance in boxing. Athletes such as Nikhat Zareen, Preeti Pawar, Parveen Hooda, and Lovlina Borgohain have now earned their places in Paris.



from athletics and men's hockey expanded India's quota tally, solidifying the nation's robust representation in the upcoming Olympic Games in the French capital.

This remarkable feat is not merely a statistical triumph but a testament to the transformative journey that Indian sports have undertaken in the past decade. It encapsulates a nar-Furthermore, contributions rative of perseverance, strate-

gic planning, and a resolute push towards excellence. While cricket held the nation's collective imagination, other sports languished in the shad-

The turn of the 21st century, however, witnessed a palpable shift in this narrative. Post-2014, the initiative towards the clarion call by Prime Minister Narendra Modi with his

a catalyst for change. Launched in 2018, Khelo India aimed to transform the sporting culture in India by identifying and nurturing talent at the grassroots level. The program envisioned the development of a sporting ecosystem that would encourage youth to pursue sports professionally.

One of the cornerstones of Khelo India has been the development of sports infrastructure. From building stateof-the-art stadiums to upgrading existing facilities, the initiative has provided athletes with world-class training environments. In the heart of 'Khelo India' lies its commitment to identifying and nurturing talent. School and college-level competitions were re-imagined, and special

were organized to hone the skills of promising athletes. Further acknowledging the financial constraints that often stifle budding athletes, Khelo India instituted scholarships and financial incentives. This support not only alleviates the financial burden but also sends a resounding message that sports are a viable career option.

The success stories of javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra; teenage shooting sensation Manu Bhaker; weightlifter Mirabai Chanu and others are examples of how Khelo India has promoted rural sportspersons into national and international arenas bringing glory back to the Nation. The professionalisation of sports has created a multitude "Khelo India" slogan became camps and training programs of employment opportunities.

Athletes, coaches, sports scientists, and sports administrators now have a growing ecosystem to thrive in, contributing to the overall economic develop-The focus should now shift

towards developing the health of young children, steering them away from the allure and distraction of modern gadgets, especially mobile phones. Channelling the energy and potential of the youth into sports can be a powerful tool for their holistic development. In shaping the future, let us envision an India where the focus on sports is not just about winning medals but about building a healthier, more disciplined, and focused generation that will contribute to the nation's prosperity and well-being.

UK PM Sunak pledges to stand with Israel

AP LONDON/TEL AVIV

 $B^{\text{ritish Prime Minister Rishi}}_{\text{Sunak Thursday pledged}}$ to stand with Israel in its "darkest hour" and welcomed the opening of a humanitarian corridor into Gaza as he held talks with the country's top leadership during his two-day visit to the Middle East aimed at preventing further escalation of conflict in the region.

After his meetings with Israeli President Isaac Herzog and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Sunak acknowledged the "shocking scenes"

over the past day. He pledged to stand with Israel in its "darkest hour" and welcomed the opening of a humanitarian corridor into Gaza. The British Indian leader was greeted by Netanyahu with an embrace and described each other as "my friend". "You described this as Israel's darkest hour. Well then it's for me to say I'm proud to stand here with you in Israel's darkest hour, as your friend we will stand with you in solidarity, we will stand with your people and we also want you to win," said Sunak, addressing a joint press conference with his Israeli counterpart. "I also want to thank your government for the support it has given to British nationals caught up in this horror," he said. Turning to Netanyahu, he said the UK knows Israel is taking "every precaution to protect civilians", which is in "direct contrast to the terrorists of Hamas, which seek to put

he expressed his regret at being in Israel in such "terrible circumstances". "In the last two weeks, this country has

civilians in harm's way", as

gone through something that no country, no people, should have to endure. Least of all Israel," he Earlier, he held

talks with Israel's President Herzog during which the leaders agreed on

the importance of getting urgent humanitarian support to ordinary Palestinians in Gaza. In a readout of the meeting, Downing Street said the leaders stressed the imperative need to avoid further escalation of violence in the region and agreed to continue working together to that end.

"I am in Israel, a nation in

he pioneer

grief. I grieve with you and stand with you against the evil that is terrorism. Today, and always," Sunak tweeted as he landed in Tel Aviv. Sunak's visit to Israel follows that of US President Joe Biden as world leaders step up efforts to prevent the conflict with Hamas from spilling into the wider region. Sunak is next set for a visit to Saudi Arabia and will cover other major capitals in the Middle East for further talks. "Above all, I'm here to express my solidarity with the Israeli people. You have suffered an unspeakable, horrific act of terrorism and I want you to know that the United Kingdom and I stand with you," he told reporters on his arrival in Israel. In an earlier statement, the British Prime Minister said the attack on the Al Ahli hospital in Gaza on Tuesday should be a "watershed moment" for the

"Every civilian death is a tragedy. Ánd too many lives have been lost following Hamas's horrific act of terror,"

"The attack on Al Ahli hospital should be a watershed moment for leaders in the region and across

the world to come together to avoid further dangerous escalation of con-I will ensure the

UK is at the forefront of this effort," he

European leaders also under take similar tours of the Middle East in a show of Western unity. The US, UK, Germany, France and Italy form part of the so-called Quint, a diplomatic collective who have presented a united front over the actions of Hamas in Israel and

His visit coincides with that of his Foreign Secretary James Cleverly, who began a multi-country visit across the Middle East on Thursday night as part of efforts to help prevent the conflict from spreading across the region and to work towards a peaceful resolution. Cleverly is planning to meet senior leaders in Egypt, Turkey and Qatar over the next three days, where he will discuss coordination on efforts to avoid a spillover in violence which would devastate the wider

"It is in no one's interests – neither Israeli, Palestinian nor the wider Middle East - for others to be drawn into this conflict. I am meeting counterparts from influential states in the region to push for calm and stability, facilitate humanitarian access into Gaza and work together to secure the release of nostages," said Cleverly. The UK Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) said the trip has been planned to countries which are vital to international efforts to uphold regional stability, free hostages and allow humanitarian access to Gaza, with all three vital interlocutors in the Middle

The UK Foreign Secretary will discuss the urgent need for the Rafah crossing to open so that lifesaving aid can reach those who need it and for Hamas to release the hostages.

The UK remains committed to mitigating the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza and calling for international humanitarian law to be respected, while standing alongside the people of Israel against the terrorist group Hamas," the FCDO said.



Protesters in Lebanon decry Gaza hospital blast

Hundreds of protesters clashed Wednesday with Lebanese security forces in a Beirut suburb near the US Embassy during demonstrations in support of both Gaza's civilian residents and the militant group Hamas in its war with İsrael

The protest in the Aukar neighbourhood came as US President Joe Biden made a show of solidarity with Israel during his visit there Wednesday, a day after an explosion at a Gaza Strip hospital killed hundreds of people

and prompted mass protests. Biden offered his assessment that the explosion was not the result of a strike by the Israeli military. The Palestinian group Hamas, which rules Gaza, and many Arab countries accuse Israel of striking the

itary claims it was a misfired rocket from the Palestinian Islamic Jihad group in Gaza.

Demonstrators holding Palestinian flags and the flags of various Palestinian factions took down a security wall and cut a barbed wire barrier on a winding road that leads to the US Embassy outside of Beirut. Riot police lobbed dozens

of teargas canisters and fired water canons to disperse the protesters, eventually pushing them back. Several protesters were injured.

Meanwhile, in a southern suburb of Beirut, the Hezbollah group, a key ally of Hamas, held its own rally Wednesday. Thousands of Hezbollah supporters and Palestinians waving Palestinian flags protested against the explosion at the Al-Ahli hospital in Gaza the day before. "The time has perhaps

come for the peoples of the region to declare their word in the face of American tyranny," senior Hezbollah official Hashem Safieddine said in a speech at the rally.
Chanting "death to

America," protesters burned an American flag in solidarity with the Palestinians in Gaza, where the violence has left more than 3,000 people dead since Hamas militants launched a surprise attack on Israel on October 7, leaving more than 1,000 people dead or

kidnapped. Hezbollah and Israel have clashed along the Lebanon-Israel border, though the skirmishes remain mostly contained along a handful of border towns. The militant group announced another death among its ranks Wednesday, its eleventh since the conflict

US government's assessment shows Israel not responsible for Gaza hospital blast: WH

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

US analysis indicates that AIsrael was not responsible for the deadly blast at a Gaza hospital that killed hundreds of civilians on Tuesday, the White House has said, basing its assessment on intelligence overhead imagery, intercepts and open source information.

The assessment by the US came on Wednesday the same day when President Joe Biden made a show of solidarity with Israel during his visit there.

The massive explosion at the Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital late on Tuesday night killed 471 people and injured 314 others, the Palestinian Health Ministry

"The US government assesses that Israel was not responsible for an explosion that killed hundreds of civilians yesterday at the Al Ahli Hospital in the Gaza Strip," White House National Security Council Spokesperson Adrienne Watson said in a statement.

"Our assessment is based on available reporting, including intelligence, missile activity, overhead imagery, and open source video and images of the incident," she said.

Israel had cut off the flow of food, fuel and water to the Gaza Strip after the attack by Hamas, in which nearly 1,400 people in Israel were killed.

of video, audio and other infor-

mation that it said showed the

blast was instead due to a

Mediators have been struggling to break a deadlock over providing supplies to desperate civilians, aid groups and hospitals. There were conflicting claims of who was behind the explosion, but protests flared quickly in the region as many Ārab leaders said Israel was responsible. Hamas officials in Gaza quickly blamed an Israeli airstrike, saying hundreds were killed.Israel denied that it was involved and released a flurry

rocket misfire by Islamic Jihad, another militant group operating in Gaza.

The Palestinian Islamic ihad, a smaller, more radical Palestinian militant group that often cooperates with Hamas in their shared struggle against Israel, has dismissed Israel's

allegation. Citing intelligence reports, Watson said some Palestinian militants in the Gaza Strip believed that the explosion was likely caused by an errant rocket or missile launch carried out by the Palestinian Islamic Jihad (PIJ).

"As the President said earlier today, the explosion appears to be the result of an errant rocket fired by a terrorist group in Gaza — and we are continuing to work to corroborate whether it was a failed PIJ rocket," she said.

During his brief visit to Israel, Biden tried to strike a balance between showing US support for Israel, while containing growing alarm among Arab allies. Upon his arrival, Biden embraced Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and expressed concern for the suffering of Gaza's civilians. Biden said the hospital

blast appeared not to be Israel's fault, and he cautioned Israelis not to allow outrage over the deadly Hamas attack to consume them. Biden also said that he

asked "tough questions" during a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu.

"I was deeply saddened and outraged by the explosion at the hospital in Gaza yester-

Based on what I've seen, it appears it was done by the other team, and not you," he told Netanyahu, publicly endorsing Israeli contention. He added that there were "a lot of people out there" who weren't sure what caused the explosion at Al-Ahli Baptist Hospital in the centre of Gaza.

King Charles makes plea for religious tolerance

London (PTI): Britain's King Charles III has made a plea for religious tolerance and the importance of a multi-faith outlook as he mourned the loss of lives in times of internationence to the Israel-Gaza conflict in the Middle East.

In a speech at Mansion House in the City of London on Wednesday evening, the 74year-old monarch described the UK as a "community of communities" where shared values are the force holding it together and reminding that "there is far, far more that unites us than divides us".

He stressed that British society was nurtured and enriched by citizens from the four corners of the globe, drawing upon deep wells filled with shared histories and expe-

riences. "One of my first acts as Sovereign, a little over a year ago, was to open the doors of Buckingham Palace to the leaders of the major faiths represented across these islands; to welcome them, with respect and indeed love, and to re-dedicate my life to protecting the space for faith itself within our shores," said King

"Such understanding, both at home and overseas, is never more vital than at times of international turmoil and heartbreaking loss of life...Even in the most fractious times when disagreements are polished, paraded and asserted there is in our land a kind of muscle-memory that it does not have to be like this; that the temptation to turn ourselves into a shouting or recriminatory society must be resisted," he said.

The King called for the moderating forces of "civility and tolerance, on which our political life and wider national conversation depend" and warned against the "rancour and acrimony" of social media.

In the wide-ranging speech, the monarch also reflected upon the advancement of science and the impact of artificial intelligence (AI). On a lighter note, he highlighted the importance of a healthy sense of humour that characterises British life.

Sidney pleads guilty in deal with prosecutors over efforts to overturn Trump's loss

awyer Sidney Powell plead-⊿ed guilty to reduced charges turn Donald Trump's loss in the trary. becoming the second defendant in the sprawling case to reach a deal with prosecutors. Powell, who was charged alongside Trump and 17 others with violating the state's anti-racketeering law, entered the plea just a day before jury selection was set to start in her trial. She was initially charged with racketeering and six other counts as part of a wide-ranging scheme to keep the Republican president in power after he lost the 2020 election to Democrat Joe Biden.

Prosecutors say she also participated in an unauthorised breach of elections equipment in a rural Georgia county elections office. The acceptance of a plea deal is a remarkable about-face for a lawyer

who, perhaps more than anyone else, strenuously pushed baseless conspiracy theories about a stolen election in the face of Thursday over efforts to over- extensive evidence to the con-

> testify, she could provide insight on a news conference she participated in on behalf of Trump and his campaign shortly after the election and on a White House meeting she attended in mid-December of that year during which strategies and theories to influence the outcome of the election were discussed. Powell was scheduled to go on trial on Monday with lawyer Kenneth Chesebro after each filed a demand for a speedy trial. Jury selection was set to start Friday. The development means that Chesebro will go on trial by himself, though prosecutors said earlier that they also planned to look into the possibility of offering him a plea deal

Troops hurt after drones attack US bases in Iraq

Beirut (AP): Coalition forces were slightly injured in Iraq in a spate of drone attacks over the last 24 hours at US bases in Iraq as regional tensions flare following the deadly bombing of a

Two drones targeted a base in western Iraq used by US forces and one drone targeted a base in northern Iraq. US forces intercepted all three, destroying two but only damaging the third, which led to minor injuries among coalition forces at the western base, according to a statement Wednesday by US Central Command. "In this moment of heightened alert, we are vigilantly monitoring the situation in Iraq and the region. US forces will defend US and coalition forces against any threat," Central Command said in the release. Iranian-backed militias in Iraq have threatened to attack US facilities there because of American support for Israel.

'Brazil's Bolsonaro should be charged with coup attempt'

ABrazilian congressional panel on Wednesday accused former President Jair Bolsonaro of instigating the country's Jan 8 riots and recommended that he be charged with attempting to stage a coup. representatives mostly allied with the current leftist President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva — who narrowly defeated Bolsonaro in last fall's election — voted 20-11 to adopt the damning report drafted by Sen. Eliziane Gama.

The move was largely symbolic for Bolsonaro because it amounts to a recommendation for police and prosecutors to investigate, and federal law enforcement officials separately have already been investigating his possible role in inciting

the Jan 8 uprising.

Bolsonaro has denied involvement in the rioting, which took place more than a week after the right-wing leader had quietly left the country to stay in Florida while refusing to attend Lula's inauguration.

"It's completely biased," Bolsonaro said Wednesday of the inquiry, in comments to reporters. "It's an absurdity." One week after Lula took office, thousands of Bolsonaro

supporters stormed Congress, the Supreme Court and presihis election defeat. They bypassed security barricades, climbed on roofs, smashed windows and invaded the public

Many observers at the time speculated that the riot was a coordinated effort to oust Lula from office, and could not have occurred without the complicity of some of the military and police. Gama's report jibed with those claims, and went a step further in saying they were orchestrated by Bolsonaro. The report recommends that Bolsonaro be charged on a total of four counts, including attempting to overthrow a legitimately constituted government and attempting to overthrow democratic rule. It also includes

a slew of other charges against dozens of Bolsonaro allies, including former ministers, top

military brass and police officers.
Those include Gen. Braga Netto, who served as Bolsonaro's defense minister and then was his running mate; Anderson Torres, ex-justice minister and Brasilia; former institutional security minister Gen. Augusto Heleno; former Chief of Staff Gen. Luiz Eduardo Ramos; and the head of Brazil's defense,

navy and armed forces. Military and police forces are blamed for not getting rid of illegal encampments in several Brazilian cities, where protesters spent several weeks demanding a military intervention, and for their leniency toward protesters on Jan. 8.

"I don't remember in Brazilian history a (congressional inquiry) that included such a large number of highranking officers," said Eduardo Heleno, who teaches civil-military relations at the Federal Fluminense University

agree to further step up defence cooperation

Japan, Australia

Tokyo (AP): Japan and Australia agreed Thursday to further expand defence ties, including with joint military exercises, under their upgradtwo months ago amid mutual concern about China's growing influence in the region.

The two countries have rapidly developed close defence ties in recent years, and Japan considers Australia as a semially, its closest security partner after the United States, its only treaty ally.

Japan's Defence Minister Minoru Kihara and his Australian counterpart, Richard Marles, also agreed during talks in Tokyo to step up their three-way military cooperation with the United States, the Japanese Defence Ministry said in a statement. Kihara and Marles said that deepening their operational cooperation and joint exercises, and enhancing interoperability, were important steps in increasing their bilateral

defense ties. The two ministers confirmed that there was continuing progress in those areas under their Reciprocal Access Agreement, which took effect

in August. The agreement is aimed at breaking down legal barriers to allow troops to enter each other's country for training

and other purposes. Other than with the United States, Japan has such defence

pacts with only Australia and Britain. Japanese Prime Minister

The WFP said staffers responded within hours of the first earthquakes, distributing fortified biscuits, pulses and other food items to affected families in destroyed villages. "An estimated 25,000 buildings have been destroyed," the group said a statement. "The survivors are currently sleeping in tents next to the rubble of their homes, desperate and afraid of further earthquakes and after-

Mahsa Amini awarded EU human rights prize World Food Programme attack, Amini's supporters said

AP ■ STRASBOURG

Mahsa Amini, the 22-year-old Kurdish-Iranian woman who died in police custody in Iran last year, sparking worldwide protests against the country's conservative Islamic theocracy, was awarded the European Union's top human rights prize on Thursday.

The EU award, named for Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov, was created in 1988 to honour individuals or groups who defend human rights and fundamental freedoms. Sakharov, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, died in 1989. Other finalists this year included Vilma Núñez de Escorcia and Roman Catholic Bishop Rolando Alvarez — two emblematic figures in the fight for the defence of human rights in Nicaragua — and a trio of women from Poland, El

leading a fight for "free, safe and legal abortion." Amini died on September 2022, after she was arrest-

Salvador and the United States



mandatory headscarf law.

European Parliament President Roberta Metsola said that day will "live in infamy," adding that her "brutal mur-

der" marked a turning point. "It has triggered a womenled movement that is making history," she said as she announced the awarding of the prize to Amini and the

ment in Iran. "The world has heard the chants of Women, Life, Liberty. Three words that have become a rallying cry for all those standing up for equality, for dignity and for freedom in Iran," Metsola said.

Amini died three days after she was arrested by Iran's morality police. While authorities said she suffered a heart she was beaten by police and died as a result of her injuries. Her death triggered

protests that spread across the country and rapidly escalated into calls for the overthrow of Iran's four-decade-old Islamic theocracy. Authorities responded with

a violent crackdown in which more than 500 people were killed and over 22,000 others were detained, according to rights groups. The demonstrations large-

ly died down early this year, but there are still widespread signs of discontent. For several months,

women could be seen openly flaunting the headscarf rule in Tehran and other cities. prompting a renewed crackdown over the summer. The award ceremony will

take place on December 13. Last year's prize was award-

ed to the people of Ukraine and their representatives for their resistance to Russia's invasion and defiance during the ongo-

appeals for \$19 mn to give emergency food in Af Islamabad (AP): The United Afghanistan on Sunday, after

Programme on Wednesday appealed for USD 19 million to provide emergency assistance to tens of thousands of people affected by a series of devastating earthquakes and aftershocks that has rocked western Afghanistan. Ana Maria Salhuana, deputy country director of the World Food Programme in Afghanistan, said it was helping survivors but it urgently needed more funding because "we are having to take this food from an already severely underfunded programme". The group said it is working to provide emergency food assistance to 100,000 people in the region. "Disasters like these earthquakes pound communities who are already barely able to feed themselves back into utter destitution," the WFP said. A 6.3 magnitude earth-

quake struck part of western

thousands of people died and entire villages were flattened by major quakes a week earlier. Ít was the fourth quake the US Geological Survey has measured at 6.3 magnitude in the same area in just over a week. The initial earthquakes on

October 7 flattened whole villages in Herat province and were among the most destruc-tive quakes in the country's recent history.

Fumio Kishida's government adopted a new security strategy last December that focuses on reinforcing strike capabili-ty, in a break from Japan's postwar principle of having a military only for self-defence. Under the strategy, Japan also aims to nearly double its defence spending over the next five years, which would make it the world's third-biggest spender after the United States and China. Japan has been building up its defence spending and military power in part to deter China in territorial dis-

putes it has with Beijing over

islands that Tokyo controls in

the East China Sea.

the pioneer

Russian FM offers security talks with N Korea, China

 $R^{\hbox{\it ussia's foreign minister proposed regular security talks}}$ with North Korea and China to deal with what he described as increasing U.S.-led regional military threats, as he met North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and his top diplomat on Thursday during a visit to Pyongyang. Russian Foreign Minister

Sergey Lavrov arrived in North Korea's capital on Wednesday on a two-day trip expected to focus on how to boost the two countries' defence ties following a September summit between Kim and Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Last week, the United States said North Korea had transferred munitions to Russia to boost its fighting capabilities in Ukraine in violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions that ban any weapons trading involving

On Thursday, Lavrov met Kim for talks that lasted about an hour, Russia's state-run Tass news agency reported, without elaborating. Lavrov met his The ministry also said Lavrov



North Korean counterpart, Choe Son Hui, earlier Thursday and lauded deepening bilateral collaboration.

Lavrov and Choe discussed "resuming full-fledged contacts" and intensifying economic cooperation, the Russian Foreign Ministry said in a statement. It added that Lavrov invited Choe to visit Moscow "at her convenience."

recommended that Russian tourists start holidaying in North Korea. Tass also quoted Lavrov as telling reporters that he supports holding regular talks on security issues on the Korean Peninsula with North Korea and China. The Lavrov-Kim meeting "means that the recent fleet of containers likely carrying munitions from North Korea to Russia Easley, a professor of international studies at Ewha University in Seoul.

accepting Pyongyang's help to resupply the illegal invasion of Ukraine, Moscow is set to commit further violations of UN Security Council resolutions by providing North Korea with weapons technology that could threaten stability in East Asia," Easley said. "The United States, Japan and South Korea intensifying military activity here and Washington working toward moving strategic infrastrucmoving strategic infrastructure, including nuclear aspects, here, are of great concern to us and our North Korean friends," Lavrov said, according to Tass. "We oppose this unconstructive and dangerous policy with a course toward de-escalation and inadmissibility of escalating tensions here.

The recent flurry of diplomacy between Russia and North Korea underscores how their interests are aligning in the face of their separate, intensifying confrontations with the

gramme and Russia over its

The US has been expanding regular military drills with South Korea and temporarily deploying more powerful military assets around the Korean Peninsula in response to North Korea's barrage of missile tests since last year. The U.S. and South Korea have also resumed some trilateral military exercises with Japan.

The focus of outside attention during Lavrov's visit is whether the two countries will provide any hints of how they will solidify their security cooperation or announce the timing of Putin's promised trip to Pyongyang to reciprocate Kim's visit to Russia's Far East.

During his travel to Russia, Kim met Putin at the Vostochny Cosmodrome, Russia's most important domestic space launch centre, and inspected other key Russian weapon-making sites. That triggered intense speculation that Kim seeks sophisticated Russian technologies to modernize his nuclear arsenal in return for supplying convendeclining weapons inventory. Neither Russia nor North Korea has disclosed what Putin and Kim agreed to during the summit.

"After the historic summit between President Putin and Chairman of State Affairs Kim Jong Un at the Vostochny Cosmodrome on September 13, we can confidently say that the relations have reached a qualitatively new strategic level," Lavrov said at the start of his meeting with Choe, according to Russia's state-run Interfax news agency. Choe said her meeting

with Lavrov "will become an important stage in terms of the implementation of the agreements" reached by Kim and Putin, Tass said. During a dinner banquet held for him on Wednesday, Lavrov said Russia deeply values North Korea's unwavering and principled support" for its war on Ukraine as well as Pyongyang's decision to recognize the independence of Russian-backed separatist regions in eastern Ukraine, according to Russia's Foreign

Nawaz gets protective bail in two graft cases

Islamabad (PTI): In a temporary relief to Nawaz Sharif ahead of his return to Pakistan on Saturday, the Islamabad High Court on Thursday granted the former prime minister a protective bail in the Avenfield and Al-Azizia corruption cases until October 24.

Also, an anti-corruption court in Pakistan suspended his arrest warrant in the Toshakhana vehicles The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) supremo through a counsel Qazi Mushahid approached the Islamabad-base accountability court No. 1 on Wednesday for suspension of the permanent arrest warrant issued

before an accountability court in Islamabad. Nawaz was on

ical treatment. The respite comes just days ahead of Nawaz Sharif's arrival in Pakistan on October 21, ending about four years of selfexile in London.

According to the petition, Nawaz was seeking protective bail in order to surrender before the court and "submit to due process of justice and avail remedies permissible under the law".

The plea sought the Islamabad High Court's direction to stop authorities from arresting Nawaz from the airport on his return to the country on October 21 to allow him to surrender before the court. Judge Muhammad Bashir heard the plea and ordered to suspend the warrants when informed that Nawaz wanted to appear before the court. The judge fixed the hearing for October 24 and suspended warrants until then. However, the judge warned to restore the arrest orders if Nawaz failed to

China building up N-arsenal faster than previous projections: Report

Pentagon report on China's Amilitary power says Beijing is exceeding previous projections of how quickly it is building up its nuclear weapons arsenal and is "almost certainly" learning lessons from Russia's war in Ukraine about what a conflict over Taiwan might look like.

The report released on Thursday also warns that China may be pursuing a new intercontinental missile system using conventional arms that, if fielded, would allow Beijing "to threaten conventional strikes against targets in the continental United States, Hawaii and Alaska."

The China report comes a month before an expected meeting between Chinese leader Xi Jinping and President Joe Biden on the sidelines of next month's Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco.

The annual report, required by Congress, is one growing military capabilities of China, which the US government sees as its key threat in the region and America's primary long-term security challenge.

But after Hamas's October 7 attacks on Israel, the US has been forced again to focus on the Middle East, instead of its widely promoted pivot to the Pacific to counter China's growth. The US is rushing weapons to Israel while continuing to support and deliver munitions to Ukraine in its 20month struggle to repel Russia's

Still, the Pentagon's nationdefense strategy is shaped around China remaining the greatest security challenge for the US, and that the threat from Beijing will determine how the US military is equipped and shaped for the future. The Pentagon report builds

on the military's warning last year that China was expanding its nuclear force much faster than US officials had predicted, highlighting a broad and

way the Pentagon measures the accelerating buildup of military muscle designed to enable Beijing to match or surpass US global power by midcentury.

Last year's report warned that Beijing was rapidly modernising its nuclear force and was on track to nearly quadruple the number of warheads it has to 1,500 by 2035. The United States has 3,750 active nuclear warheads.

The 2023 report finds that Beijing is on pace to field more than 1,000 nuclear warheads by 2030, continuing a rapid modernisation aimed at meeting Xi's goal of having a "world class" military by 2049.

After the previous report, China accused the US of ratcheting up tensions and Beijing said it was still committed to a "no first use" policy on nuclear weapons. The Pentagon has seen no indication that China is moving away from that policy but assesses there may be some circumstances where China might judge that it does not apply, a senior US defense said without providing details.

reporters on Wednesday on condition of anonymity before the report's release. The US does not adhere to a "no first use" policy and says nuclear weapons would be used only in "extreme circumstances."

The report said China is intensifying military, diplomatic and economic pressure not only on Taiwan but also toward all its regional neighbours to push back against what its sees as US efforts to contain its rise.

The pressure against Taipei includes ballistic missile overflights, increased warplane incursions into its international defense zone and a largescale military exercise last August that encircled Taiwan.

Beijing has vowed to bring Taiwan under its control, by force if necessary. Xi has given his military until 2027 to develop the military capability to retake the self-ruled island democracy that the Communist Party claims as its

Chinese Communist Party warns cadres against interference in pvt businesses to bolster eco

As the Chinese economy struggled to recover from the post-ČOVID blues and antimonopoly campaigns, the ruling Communist Party in an attempt to bolster sagging business confidence has warned its cadre against 'inappropriate interference" in microeconomic activities.

The officials of the Communist Party of China (CPC), which is headed by President Xi Jinping, were at the forefront of the antimonopoly campaign in the last few years to rein the country's multi-billion businesses like Alibaba and corporate leaders like Jack Ma, who suddenly announced his retirement in 2019 and spent following years mostly abroad.

Ma returned home in March this year following assurances of friendly policies for the private sector to revive the struggling economy, especially by Premier Li Qiang, regarded as a friend of Ma.

Ma's return followed assur-

ances from Xi, under whose watch the CPC in the few two years carried out a massive anti-monopoly campaign against top business houses including Alibaba which created a panic among private businesses. Besides the crackdown, several top businessmen were whisked away by security agencies creating panic among private businesses. The problem was accentuated by prolonged stringent Covid lockdowns leading to huge losses for businesses.On Wednesday, an article in the Study Times - an education journal of the CPC Central Party School, widely read by officials at all levels to gauge which way the winds are blowing in Beijing warned the cadre not to overstep.

"Curbing the inappropriate interference of authorities in microeconomic activities has always been a key task in the reform of China's economic system," Cai Zhibing, an associate professor of the Economics Teaching and Research Department at the Central Party School, said in

the article, citing dictates in the Central Anti-Corruption Coordination Group Work Plan (2023-27) released in September. Such "interference" means

those officials are not taking into consideration the requirements of "high-quality development", as championed by the party's Central Committee, Cai said, adding that some authorities are not "strict and civilised" when it comes to law enforcement. And "one-size-fits-all" reg-

ulations and measures that have popped up across the country have "greatly" increased economic uncertainties, burdens and risks for businesses, Cai said, without pointing any fingers, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported on Thursday. Cai blamed the pandemic, changes in global trade trends, and shifts in domestic development focus for what he

called an "imbalance" in local government finances, warning that this has subsequently incentivised regional authorities to turn more aggressive in seizing assets and assessing fines, seeking any means to raise revenue. "As a result, such interfer-

ence has disturbed the order of operation, harmed the business environment and affected confidence in business operations," Cai said. "Reducing inappropriate interference in economic activities involves mitigating authorities' circumvention of market-economy rules ... and ensuring fair and full market competition while effectively revitalising market vitality," he explained. China's National Bureau of Statistics (NBC) on Wednesday cautioned that China's external environment was becoming more complex and grave and warned that domestic demand remained

China reaffirms commitment to support SL credit optimisation Colombo (PTI): Sri Lanka on Thursday said China has ment, the Chinese Finance ment, the Chinese Finance in the Chinese Finance ment, the Chinese Finance ment, the Chinese Finance in the China debt treatment with the Export-Import Bank of China advisors intend to take the nech control of the state and their advisors intend to take the nech control of the state advisors intended to take the nech control of the state advisors intended to take the nech control of the state advisors intended to take the nech control of the state advisors intended to take the nech control of the

support the country's efforts to restructure its external credit to comply with the reforms suggested by IMF for releasing the second tranche of the USD 2.9 billion bailout package. President Ranil

Wickremesinghe who is on a four-day visit to Beijing from October 16-20 had talks with the Chinese Finance Minister Liu Kun who assured "an extensive commitment from China to enhance Sri Lanka's credit optimisation," a statement from the President's office here said.

iting lack of evidence, Sri

└Lanka's anti-graft com-

mission has dropped a case

against former president

Gotabaya Rajapaksa in which

more than Rs 17 million was

discovered by protesters from

the President's House here in

July 2022. The Commission to

Investigate Allegations of

Bribery or Corruption (CIA-

BOC) on Wednesday report-

ed to the Colombo Fort

Magistrate's Court that due to

lack of evidence, no further

action can be taken against the

informed the court that further

legal proceedings regarding

this incident would not be

taken owing to insufficient

evidence to proceed with the

matter, the Daily Mirror online

cash was found at the

President's House in Fort

Colombo after Rajapaksa fled

the President's House on July

9 last year following the upris-

testers stormed the President's

Tens of thousands of pro-

More than Rs 17 million in

The Bribery Commission

74-year-old politician.

reported on Thursday.

ing against him.

PTI ■ COLOMBO

commitment to extend comprehensive support for the implementation of a mediumterm and long-term programme that is mutually beneficial to both parties and aimed at optimising Sri Lanka's debt. China holds about 52 per cent of Sri Lanka's USD 46 billion external credit.

Last week, Sri Lanka concluded a preliminary deal with China on the restructuring of its debts to Beijing.

Both nations reached an agreement on the key principles and indicative terms of

Corruption charges against

House in the capital in July last

year demanding his resigna-

tion. The anti-government

protesters discovered over Rs

17.85 million in cash and

handed over the money to the

the court to return the cash to

him. The Colombo Fort mag-

istrate's court rejected the plea.

also questioned by Sri Lanka

A three-hour-long statement was recorded at his pri-

vate house as directed by the

court, a police spokesman had

said. Rajapaksa has said that

the money found at the

Rajapaksa later applied to

Earlier this year, he was

Colombo Fort police.

police in the case.

Rajapaksa dropped

The agreement in principle covers approximately USD 4.2

billion of outstanding debt.

However, Sri Lanka's Finance Ministry in a statement issued here on Thursday said it was not in agreement with a proposal by the group of private bond holders made on October 13 relating to the country's outstanding international bonds.

'The authorities of Sri Lanka wish to acknowledge the Group's proposal, and further clarify that this proposal has not received a favourable response from Sri Lanka.

President's Office belonged to

him but he was unable to take

care of it due to the prevailing

security situation at that time.

money belonged to him and it

was to be distributed among

the people whose houses were

destroyed by the protesters, the

Daily Mirror portal reported

Sri Lanka on July 13 last year

to the Maldives. From there, he

travelled to Singapore from

where he sent in his resigna-

tion on July 14, paving the way

for the incumbent Ranil

Wickremesinghe to take over

Thailand. He returned to Sri

Lanka on September 2

Rajapaksa and his family faced

multiple accusations of wrongdoing between 2015 and 2019.

The powerful Rajapaksa fam-

ily has dominated Sri Lankan

politics for over two decades.

Mahinda Rajapaksa, the 77

year-old patriarch of the

Rajapaksa family has been the

country's president and prime

minister. He was also forced to

resign as the prime minister

amidst the anti-government

protests in the country last year.

. Later, Rajapaksa flew to

the presidential reins.

The former president fled

He told the police that the

proposal and assess its compatibility with the parameters in Sri Lanka's IMF-supported rogramme and the comparability of treatment principle,

compliance with both of which

is imperative for the authori-

ties", the statement said. It said Sri Lanka "invites the Group to further engage with the country's debt advisors, to progress the matter in a reasonable and viable way".

In March this year, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved a 48-month, USD 2.9 billion extended

PUBLIC NOTICE

shanpur daurli, Pargana Daurala, Rehai Sardhana & Deurti (LIP.), vide registered sede dated 15 06.20 kN 001, Vol No 4424, Document No 9184 Page 262 Executed By Mrs. Sumitra Devi WWo Mr. Mohani favor of Mrs. Krishna Devi WWo Mr. Chaman Sin le deed Lost Hat Mr. JanakRaji Informed to Sardone eurut) Police on dated 17.10.2023 Firs 20000693078 Al Persons are hereby informed to Appa are mortagoing the said property with Say Bush
ic policies and reforms.

The IMF however had made external debt restructuring conditional to the 4-year programme. In September the second tranche of USD 300 million was held back due to the inconclusive nature of debt restructuring. Sri Lanka was hit by its worst economic crisis in history last year when its foreign exchange reserves fell to a critical low and the public came out on the streets to protest the shortage of fuel, fertilisers and essential

PUBLIC NOTICE

The to the General Public that Mr. Sanja

RTP-125/23

commodities.

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LIMITED

(Regd Office :- PSEB Head Office. The Mall, Patiala - 147001) Corporate identity Number :- U40109PB2010SGC033813 Website :- www.pspcl.in

Dy. Chief Engineer/Headquarter (Procurement Cell-3) GGSSTF

Roopnagar invites E-Tender ID No. 2023_POWER_111228_1 for

Hiring of 1 No Ambulance of Type-B with driver for 24x7 in GGSSTP

Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online at

PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LIMITED (Regd Office :- PSEB Head Office. The Mall, Patiala - 147001) antity Number :- U40109PB2010SGC033813 Website :- www.pspc

Mobile No.:- 96461-55525

Dy. Chief Engineer/Headquarter (Procurement Cell-3) GGSSTP,

Roopnagar invites E-Tender ID No. 2023 POWER 111238 1 for

Annual overhauling of Coal Pipe for 2 no. units of 210 MW at

Short Term E-Tender Eng. No:- 500/P-3/EMPW-12469 Dated 18.10.23

For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to

https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 18.10.23/05.00 PM onwards.

E-Tender Enq. No:- 499/P-3/EMPW-12468 Dated 18.10.23

For detailed NIT & Tender Specification please refer to

https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

https://eproc.punjab.gov.in

https://eproc.punjab.gov.in from 18.10 23/05.00 PM onwards.

University, **Amritsar** Advertisement No. 7/2023

Guru Nanak Dev

Online applications are invited for

Post Non-Teaching Physiotherapist in the University Online registration of applicatio for this post will start w.e.f. 20-10 2023 at and end on 10-11-2023 Last date for submitting Hard Copy of the online submitted application is 20-11-2023.

For further details visit University Website: https://www.gndu.ac.in Amritsar Registrar

18-10-2023

NA/12/19742/2023/29045 Dated CHD :- 10/19/2023

COMMERCIAL SUMMARY SUIT NO.129, OF 2021 Plaintiff Presented Apex Techno Polymer Pvt. Ltd.) 17th day of Company having Registered

December, 2021 office at 14th Floor, Ratan Central, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Road, Parel, Mumbai - 400 012.

Versus Parakh Kapoor Sole Proprietor of KITAEI. Sector-7, Plot no.33, IMT Manesar, Gurugram, Harvana -122050

Parakh Kapoor Sole Proprietor of KITAEI.,

Procedure

The Defendant above named.

WHEREAS the Plaintiff above named has instituted a suit against you under order XXXVII of the Code of Civil Procedure,1908, as set out in the Plaint therein, whereof the following is a concise statement, viz. (a) That the Defendant be ordered and Decreed to pay to the Plaintiff a Sum Of Rs. 1,34,61,724/- (RUPEES One Crore Thirty Four Lacs Sixty One Thousand Seven Hundred and Twenty Four Only) as per particulars of claim Exhibit 'ID' together with interest at the rate of 21% per annum from the date of filing of this suit i.e., 31/1/2021 till payment or realization.

Sealer Sanjeev S. Hariakar, (Advocate for Plaintiff)

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUDICATURE AT BOMBAY ORDINARY ORIGINAL CIVIL JURISDICTION IN ITS COMMERCIAL DIVISION J⊓der order XXXVII of the Code of Civil Procedure, 1908)

(c) Any such further other orders in the interest of justice be kindly Passed. You are hereby summoned to cause an appearance in person or Vakalatnama to be entered for you in this court within ten days from his Service hereof, upon you; in default whereof the Plaintiff will be entitled at any time after the expiration of such ten days to obtain a decree for any sum not exceeding the sum of Rs. 1.34.61.724/-RUPEES One Crore Thirty Four Lacs Sixty One Thousand Seve Hundred & Twenty Four Only) & Sum of Rs. ___ For Cost together with such interest If any as the court may order. If you cause an appearance in person or a Vakalatnama to be entered for you the Plaintiff will thereafter serve upon you a Summons for Judgment at the hearing of which you will be entitled to ask the Court for leave to defend the suit. leave to defend may be obtained if you satisfy the Court any affidavit or otherwise that there is a defense to the suit or the merits or that it is reasonable that you should be allowed to defend the suit. Witness Shri NITIN M. JAMDAR Acting Chief Justice at

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given to the General Public on behalf of our client that M/s Vasikaran Real Estate Pvt. Ltd is the owner of Residential Plot Bearing Nos. J-11, & J-12, situated in the residential color known as "Mayfield Garden", situated at Villagesknown as "Mayfield Garden", situated at Villages-Tigra, Samaspur, Adampur, Bindapur & Wazirabad, Gurgaon, Haryana "the said property", by virtue of separate Saie deads dated 03.06.2013, registration No 6010 & 6012, has lost/misplaced original Buyers Agreement and Original Allotment Letter & Original Possession Letter, with respect of the above said both the properties. All persons are hereby informed not to deal or carry out any transaction with anyone nas already carried out or being carried out kindly inform the undersigned in writing on the below 200, Ilnd Floor, 23, Shivaji Marg, Moti Nagar, N. Delhi-15 Ph : 011-41112527-28 | legal@knalegal.com

Biswa, out of Khasra No. 8 Min, Sfluated at Abad offergrah, in the area of Village Dana, Pargana Dasna flehsil & District Ghaziabad. Uttar Pradesh and they al divided their own share vide Partition Deed to be financed & mortgaged by Hero Housing Finance Ltd. And Mr Jamesh Chand died and there are no other legal heirs o Late Hamesh Chandra except Mrs. Manju, Mr. Jaswan Solanki, Mr. Yogesh Solanki & Mrs. Aarti, If any person (S. 1900) and the proposed where the propo

aid property.
Raghav Tiwari, Advocate
Ch. 830, Patiala House Courts,
New Delhi – 110001 Mob.: +91-8076188328



Parbhani City Municipal Corporation invites e-Tender for the work of invitation for Expression of interest (EOI) Day to day Operation, Maintenance & Repairs of Parbhani Municipal Solid waste (Wet And Dry Waste) processing plant of capacity 100 MT & Biogas Plant of capacity of MT and sanitary Landfill site at (Borwand kh) of PCMC" along with necessary spares and electricity bill For Parbhani Municipal Corporation, Parbhani, in the State of Maharashtra, Please visit website www.mahatenders.gov.in from Date 19/10/2023 or detailed information.

Dy. Commissioner Parbhani City Municipal Corporation F.2023/SWM/घ. व्य. प्रकल्प/ई-निविदा/कावि/4792 दिनांक 18/10/2023 Parbhani

verka Period/Tentative Qty Design, Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Feron Based Cold Rooms, Blast Cold Room, Anti-room with Puf-Panels, Compressor Racks & its Accessories including

Ludhiana Dairy.

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

incharge (Purchase)

Last date of

submission of Bid

02-11-2023

Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar Punjab-143005

aled EOI are invited for and on behalf of Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar from experienced and Financially sound Food Chain Vendors hav ing experience in supply and sealing of prepared only veg Food and bever age items at Kiosk

(Refundable) Supply and selling of prepared Three times of only veg food and beverages bid value (3x items, by Food Chain Vendor at bid value)

EOI document alongwith term & conditions may be downloaded fron University website www.gndu.ac.in or obtained from office of Assistan

> Registrar Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar (Punjab)-143005

other allied refrigeration jobs and civil works at Verka

Expression of Interest

EMD Name of Work

Registrar (General) Administrative Block, Guru Nanak Dev University Amritsar Free of cost during office hours on or before due date and time Application form may be obtained from office of Assistant Registrar

NA/12/19743/2023/29046 Dated CHD :- 10/19/2023

FOR REGISTRAR

Bombay aforesaid, this 20th day of July 2023. Sd.J.

Corrigendum & addendum, if any will be published online a 20th July, 2023. ABC Business Centre, Chamber No. 39., 43 - Great
Western Building, Opp. Lion Gate, N. M. Street Extn., Fort, Mumbai - 400 023. RTP-126/23

Kiosk Guru Nanak Dev

two years ago for failing to appear in a case about getting a vehicle from Toshakhana on concessional price. The 73-year-old politician was convicted in the

Avenfield and Al-Azizia cases and was declared a proclaimed offender in the Toshakhana vehicle case, which is pending

Sensex, Nifty fall for second straight session

quity benchmark indices declined for the second consecutive session on Thursday amid weak trends in global markets and fresh foreign fund outflows.

'Disappointing quarterly earnings numbers and revenue forecast from IT services company Wipro also weighed on investor sentiments.

'The 30-share BSE Sensex fell 247.78 points or 0.38 per cent to settle at 65,629.24 points. During the day, it plunged 533.52 points or 0.80 per cent to 65,343.50 points.

'The Nifty declined 46.40 points or 0.24 per cent to 19,624.70

Among the Sensex firms, Wipro fell nearly 3 per cent after the company reported an almost flat



consolidated net profit at Rs 2,667.3 crore for the September quarter, trailing street expectations. It has also projected up to 3.5 per cent fall in revenue in the current quarter on weak glob-

al economic outlook and uncertain business environment. NTPC, Tech Mahindra, JSW Steel, Bharti Airtel, Tata Steel, Tata Consultancy Services, ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra

Bank and Reliance Industries were among the other major 'Nestle jumped nearly 4 per cent

19,671,10

after the FMCG major reported an increase of 37.28 per cent

in net profit at Rs 908.08 crore for the third quarter ended September 30, helped by a consistent performance almost across all major brands. 'UltraTech Cement, IndusInd

TOP GAINERS

6.72 Bajaj Auto

Nestle India

TOP LOSERS

THE UPL

3.57 Hero Motocorp

Tech Mahindra

Bank, Larsen & Toubro and Axis Bank were among the

In Asia, markets in Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong settled in the negative ter-

'European markets were trading lower. The US markets ended lower on Wednesday.

'Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 1.99 per cent to USD 89.68 a barrel.

'Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth 1,831.84 crore on Wednesday, according to exchange data.

On Wednesday, the BSE benchmark plunged 551.07 points or 0.83 per cent to settle at 65,877.02 points while the Nifty declined 140.40 points or 0.71 per cent to 19,671.10 points.

Rupee rises 5 paise to close at 83.23 against \$ **RUPEE VS DOLLAR**

 $T^{ ext{he rupee}}$ traded in a narrow range to settle 5 paise higher at 83.23 (provisional) against the US dollar on Thursday, tracking softening crude prices in the international markets amid lingering geopolitical uncertainties.

However, foreign fund outflows, a weak greenback overseas and a negative trend in domestic equities weighed on investor sentiments, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the local unit opened at 83.26 against the US currency and witnessed a high of 83.23 and a low of 83.28 during intra-day trade.

The local unit settled at 83.23 (provisional), registering a gain of 5 paise over its previous

The rupee declined on Thursday pressurised by a weak tone in the domestic markets and a rise in US Dollar. FII selling also weighed on the domestic currency, said Anuj Choudhary -Research Analyst a Sharekhan by BNP Paribas.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, rose 0.05 per cent to 106.61. Global oil benchmark Brent

crude futures fell 1.92 per cent to USD 89.74 per barrel. "We expect the rupee to trade with a slight negative bias as risk aversion in the global mar-

kets amid rising geopolitical uncertainty in the Middle East

may put pressure on Rupee," Choudhary said. However, any diplomatic efforts to contain the conflict in the Middle East may support

the rupee at lower levels.

Traders may take cues from

weekly unemployment claims

and existing home sales data from the US. "Investors may remain cautious ahead of US Federal Reserve Chair, Jerome Powell's speech for some cues over monetary policy trajectory. USD/INŔ spot price is expected to trade in a range of Rs 83 to Rs 83.60,"

he said. On the domestic equity market front, Sensex fell 247.78 points or 0.38 per cent to settle at 65,629.24 points. The Nifty declined 46.40 points or 0.24 per cent to 19,624.70 points. Foreign Institutional Investors

(FIIs) were net sellers in the capital markets on Wednesday as they sold shares worth Rs 1,831.84 crore, according to

Gold jumps ₹250; silver declines ₹500

PTI NEW DELHI

Gold price jumped Rs 250 to Rs 60,900 per 10 grams in the national capital on Thursday amid a rally in precious metal prices globally, according to HDFC Securities. The yellow metal had closed at Rs 60,650 per 10 grams in the

previous trade. However, silver declined by Rs 500 to Rs 74,200 per kg. In the international markets,

The data is for absorption of gold was trading higher at retail real estate space in shop-USD 1,952 per ounce while silping malls, prominent high ver was down at USD 22.94 per street locations and standalone ounce. retail properties.

metal is bolstered by the rising geopolitical tension in the Middle East, which boosts safe-haven flows.

"Traders are now looking forward to more US macro data and Fed Chair Jerome Powell's speech scheduled later on Thursday," Saumil Gandhi, senior analyst of commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

'Prices of essential food items to remain stable during festive season'

Prices of essential food items will remain stable during the festival season, Union Food Secretary Sanjeev Chopra on Thursday said. The decision on allowing sugar exports during the current 2023-24 marketing year (October-September) will be taken after the agriculture ministry comes out with the production estimates of sugar-

easing of retail space rose 46

Lper cent across eight cities in

the January-September period to 4.73 million square feet on better demand from retailers,

The absorption of retail space

stood at 3.23 million square feet

Delhi-NCR and Pune collec-

tively accounted for a share of

over 61 per cent in leasing

Anshuman Magazine, Chairman & CEO - India, South-East Asia, Middle East &

Africa at CBRE, said, there has

been a remarkable growth in

retail absorption and supply

activity during this period.

according to CBRE.

in the year-ago period.

Leasing of retail real estate

Sep across 8 cities: CBRE

space up 46 per cent in Jan,

The secretary was briefing the media on the domestic supply and prices of key essential food items like wheat, rice, sugar and edible oils.

"Prices are expected to remain stable during the festival season. We are not anticipating any manner of hike (in food item prices) in the festival season. Hopefully, prices should rule stable in the next couple of months," Chopra told reporters

"With the surge in newly avail

able spaces and the onset of the

festive season, we anticipate a

continued upswing in space

Magazine said the retail sector

is on the brink of a remarkable

transformation, where retailers

are keen on revamping the in-

store experiences with cutting-

edge technology, personalised

services and space optimisation.

"Although we expect consumer

spending and retail sales to sta-

bilise compared to the unprece-

dented growth of the previous

growth in categories such as

restaurants, hotels, transporta-

tion services, vehicle purchases,

as well as apparel and footwear,"

During the January-September

34 per cent, home & department

and beverage at 13 per cent.

utilisation," he said.



The government has taken some decisions recently to ensure price stabilisation, the secretary said. The government has recently used all tools at its command, whether trade policy or

stock limit norms. These tools have been used judiciously to ensure prices remain stable to check prices, Chopra noted. Sugar opening stock stood at 57 lakh tonnes on October 1, the start of the new marketing year, Chopra noted.

On Wednesday, the government again extended restrictions on sugar exports beyond October 31 this year and till further orders, a move aimed at increasing the availability of the

commodity in the domestic market during the festive season. Earlier, the restrictions were imposed until October 31 this year. "Restriction on export of Sugar (Raw Sugar, White Sugar, Refined Sugar and Organic sugar) is extended beyond October 31, 2023 till further order. Other conditions will remain unchanged," the Directorate General of foreign trade (DGFT) said in a notifi-

Illegal betting and gambling: Tax authorities losing ₹2 lakh crore annually, says report

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

As Cricket World Cup 2023 is gaining momentum, illegal betting activities are also picking up steam with crores of rupees invested through informal routes leading to a loss of about Rs 2 lakh crore to tax authorities, a report said.

The illegal sports betting market receives an estimated inflow of Rs 8,20,000 crore (USD 100 billion) per annum from India, according to Think Change Forum (TCF)

Factors such as digital infrastructure growth, smartphone usage, and the expansion of athletic events have contributed to this kind of inflow,

Despite regulatory restrictions, India's illegal betting period, the fashion & apparel sector's share in leasing stood at and gambling market has stores at 17 per cent, and food shown remarkable growth, it



baseline estimated deposits of Rs 8,20,000 crore being for betting at current GST rate of 28 per cent, India is losing Rs 2,29,600 crore per annum. To restrict such activities, the report suggested strict imple-

According to the report at a mentation of the new GST regime by establishing a task force to monitor illegal offshore betting activities and forcing offshore operators to register in India to protect the outflow from legal gaming platforms to offshore plat-

measures, the new regime could lead to the diversion of growth from legal gaming companies to illegal betting platforms and offshore operators, resulting in substantial tax losses for the government, it said.

forms. Without such stringent

In India, it said, cricket dominates, with the Indian Premier League (IPL) being a significant driver of betting activity. As per estimates, more than 140 million people in India participate in betting and gambling regularly and million during the IPL. The report highlighted that a

ban on betting and gambling transactions under India's exchange control regulations drives offshore gambling firms to employ covert methods for moving money both within and outside the country, it said. Funds are funnelled through mechanisms like hawala, cryptocurrencies, and other illicit channels, posing a threat to the nation's financial stability. These diverted funds may fund illegal activities, undermining public order and national security.

According to the report, there are more than 75 betting and gambling sites that specifically target the Indian population, many of which persist in their operations despite legal

To further attract Indian users, it said, they have secured the endorsement of popular figures as their brand ambas-

Delay in forming of Self-Regulatory Organizations (SROs) will allow illegal offshore betting sites to mushroom, as without these regulators will have no authoritative instrument to classify legal and illegal operators, it

Sitharaman calls for developing capabilities, legal systems for global arbitration centre for maritime sector

 $F_{\text{Sitharaman on Thursday}}^{\text{Inance Minister Nirmala}}$ called for developing capabilities and legal systems to have an international arbitration centre for the maritime sector in the

ance, arbitration and the creation of more diverse options are required to boost the country's shipbuilding capacity. Addressing a session on

She also said financing, insur-

'Maritime Financing, Insurance and Arbitration' at the concluding day of the third Global Maritime India Summit (GMIS) here, the minister said that though there are many Indians working in international arbitration centres in London or Singapore or Dubai, they are all just helping the senior lawyers there and not leading a case. This needs to change and can change, she said.

But there is a need to improve and strengthen our arbitration processes and laws so that they meet global standards, the minister said, adding that "when we have developed a system for this, we can also have an arbitration centre". Financing, insurance, arbitration and the creation of more diverse options are required to boost the country's shipbuilding capacity, she

"India has passed an arbitration bill, has got an arbitration centre and is improving its strength in arbitration, the minister said, adding that a need has been felt to have a full-fledged Indianowned and India-based Protection and Indemnity (P&I) entity to reduce India's vulnerability to international sanctions and pressures.

This will also provide greater strategic flexibility in shipping operations and provide protection of liabilities to the ships operating in coastal and inland waters during their operations, Sitharaman noted.

An expert committee has also been constituted to relook at the Harmonised Master List (HML) and to streamline the understanding of infrastructure among all financing/regulatory institutions, she said

Google should bring Tensor chip plant in India in 3 years: Vaishnaw

While Google has announced the manufacturing of Pixel smartphones in India, Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw has asked the company to start production of its Tensor chipset in India in three years. The communications and IT minister has also suggested Google to bring premium Pixel Fold devices in India at the ear-

The Tensor G3 chipset includes the latest generation of ARM central processing units, an upgraded Graphics processing unit (GPU), and next-gen Tensor Processing Unit (TPU) to support Google's artificial intelligence (AI) models.

GPU and application-specific chips are crucial to support the development and implementation of AI technologies, but there is a shortage in their supplies due to advanced bulk orders from the US and Chinabased entities.

"I have asked them to bring the fab of Tensor to India in three years. In the coming days, they should start manufacturing Tensor in an Indian fab, Vaishnaw told reporters on the sidelines of the Google for India

The minister said India's manufacturing ecosystem has become very good, and he has asked Google to support it and deepen it further.

"The entire supply chain team of Google will be working here to ensure that the Indian component system gets deeper," Vaishnaw said.

At the event, Google Senior Vice President for Devices and Services Rick Osterloh announced that the company will make the Pixel series of smartphones in India, starting with Pixel 8, and plans to roll out the India-made devices in 2024. He said that the company will partner with international and domestic manufacturers to make the phones in India.

September quarter results PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Nestle shares climb

nearly 4 per cent after

Shares of Nestle India Ltd on Thursday jumped nearly 4 per cent after the company reported an increase of 37.28 per cent in net profit for the third quarter September 30.

The stock ended at Rs 24,122 apiece, up 3.66 per cent on the BSE. During the day, it rallied 4.12 per cent to reach its 52week high of Rs 24,228.75. It was the biggest gainer among the 30-share BSE

Sensex firms. On the NSE, it jumped 3.51

per cent to settle at Rs 24,080 per piece.

The company's market valuation also climbed Rs 8,218 crore to Rs 2,32,573.99 crore. FMCG major Nestle India Ltd on Thursday reported an increase of 37.28 per cent in tainable energy transition, while net profit at Rs 908.08 crore for the third quarter ended September 30, helped by a consistent performance almost across all major brands.

The company, which follows the January-December financial year, had posted a net profit of Rs 661.46 crore in the same period a year ago, Nestle India said in a regulatory



crore during the period under review, as against Rs 4,577.44 crore in the corresponding period last fiscal, the companv said. This is the first time when the

9.43 per cent to Rs 5,009.52

sales of Nestle India, maker of Maggi noodles, Nescafe, Kitkat, crossed Rs 5,000 crore during a quarter. 'We crossed Rs 5,000 crore

turnover, which has been our first in any quarter in the history of the company and a landmark for us," Nestle India Chairman and Managing Director Suresh Narayanan

₹2,400 crore green ammonia plant coming soon Deendayal Port Authority to set commitment to driving susgrowth in the region, it added.

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Takson Green on Thursday said it has inked an initial pact with Deendayal Port Authority to develop Rs 2,400 crore green ammonia plant at Kandla Port in Gujarat. This landmark project marks a

significant milestone in India's sustainable energy transition, a company statement said. Jakson Green Private Ltd has

signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with up a green ammonia facility, valued at approximately Rs 2,400 crore, it said. According to the statement, the

green ammonia facility, situated at Kandla Port, Gujarat, will be developed in a phased approach, with a projected annual production capacity of 1,33,000 tonnes of green ammonia.

Additionally, this endeavour is poised to create more than 5,000 jobs, including O&M, thereby fostering substantial economic



The MoU was signed by Jakson Green Joint Managing Director Krishnan Kannan and Deendayal Port Authority Chief Mechanical Engineer Sushil Chandra Nahak. The Deendayal Port Authority would facilitate Jakson Green in obtaining necessary registrations, approvals, clearances, and provide incentives, among others.

In the statement, Jakson Green's Kannan said, "This partnership reinforces our unwavering

being of the local community."
The MoU was signed on the sidelines of the Global Maritime India Summit (GMIS) 2023. The maritime industry being a

major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, the summit focused on how renewable energy has the potential to play a significant role in decarbonising the

also acting as a catalyst for eco-

nomic growth and the well-

Mickelson claims more players want to jump to LIV Golf

AP WASHINGTON

Phil Mickelson sounded confident as ever Wednesday that more PGA Tour and European tour players would jump to Saudi-funded LIV Golf next year, even as the league was denied in its bid to get world ranking points.

Do I think that? No. I know that's going to happen," Mickelson said at Trump Doral near Miami, site of the seasonending team championship.

"When players look at LIV, they want to be a part of it," he said. "Everybody here is happy and enjoying what we are doing and enjoying the team aspect of it and enjoying each other and the camaraderie and enjoying playing golf globally and all the benefits that come with playing this tour.'

Mickelson was viewed as the chief recruiter even before LIV Golf began in June 2022.

LIV picked up several premier players for its inaugural season, such as Dustin Johnson and Brooks Koepka, Bryson DeChambeau and eventually Cameron Smith a month after he won the British Open. The rebel league this year



added Brendan Steele, Danny Lee, Sebastian Munoz, Mito Pereira and Thomas Pieters. LIV always expected to be playing in 2024 amid an agreement by its Saudi Arabian backers, the PGA Tour and the European tour for a commercial enterprise. That stunning agreement, announced on June 6, has not been finalized.

Key to the agreement was dropping all lawsuits. Below that section was a non-solicitation clause that said the Saudi Public Investment Fund and both tours would no longer recruit players to join their

The Justice Department, which is conducting an antitrust review, recommend-

ed that clause be removed. The tour agreed, saying it was unnecessary because all sides were negotiating the agreement in good faith. There has been no indication

of top players wanting to leave the PGA Tour, which next year will feature eight "signature events" with \$20 million in prize money and limited fields, most of them without a cut.

Mickelson said the number of newcomers would be tied to how many spots were available. LIV relegated four players because they finished at the bottom of the points standings. They face a "promotions" event. the OWGR board v.
"The reality is I've been field-

ing calls, as we all have, from players that are free agents to PGA Tour players to DP World Tour players that want to come over," Mickelson said, using the commercial name of the European tour. One of the obstacles in reach-

ing an agreement on the new business deal is how to integrate team golf and what penalty players would face if they want to return to the PGA Tour or European tour. The Official World Golf Ranking board last week rejected LIV's bid to be recognized because it operates differently from the other two dozen tours in the system. At issue was LIV having a closed field for the entire season with limited chances to join, along with the team component potentially affecting the integrity of individual play. LIV now has only two players in the top 50 - Koepka and Smith - and four others who are among the top 100. The majors rely on the world ranking as one of their criteria for granting exemptions to players. Executives from the four majors were the only ones on the OWGR board voting on



Billie Jean King wants better scheduling in tennis

AP WASHINGTON

 $B_{\text{groups with a say in the tennis schedule to avoid}}^{\text{illie Jean King wants the}}$ potential conflicts such as the close timing and far distance between the WTA Finals and Billie Kean King Cup Finals, which led Iga Swiatek, Coco Gauff and Jessica Pegula to choose to compete in the former and skip the latter.

On a conference call Wednesday to promote the competition named in her honor - its finals will be Nov. 7-12 in Seville, Spain - King said she isn't sure how much discussion there's been between the International Tennis Federation, which oversees the BJK Cup, and the WTA, whose championships are Oct. 29 to Nov. 5 in Cancun, Mexico.

We all need to get together and figure out a better calendar for the players and every-No. 4 Pegula. body knowing what's going to happen, because you can't start making these decisions, like on the (WTA) Finals, in October or ... September," King said. "They have to know ahead of time. It's only fair." Added Conchita Martinez, tournament director for the BJK Cup Finals and, like King, someone who has a player won the team competition that used to be known as the Fed Cup: "We need to work together for better solutions." Kazakhstan. The WTA announced in June when its season-ending tour event would be played, but it

Fort Worth, Texas, also was not announced until September of last year. That prompted Swiatek to point out that the location and the timing - competition in Fort Worth ended a day before the start of the Billie Jean King Cup Finals in Glasgow, Scotland - were problematic. "This situation is not safe for our health and could cause injury," Swiatek said last year. She opted to participate in the WTA Finals and not play for Poland at the BJK Cup Finals in 2022 - and made the same decisions this time.

Gauff, the 19-year-old American who won the U.S. Open last month for her first Grand Slam title, and Pegula also will be in Mexico and not in Spain.

It means three of the top four women in the WTA rankings will miss the BJK Cup Finals: No. 2 Swiatek, No. 3 Gauff and

'We need to focus on the positive here," Martinez said. "I mean, we might not have three names here. But we have amazing players playing." Among the Grand Slam singles champions expected to participate in Seville are Marketa Vondrousova and Barbora Krejcikova for the Czech Republic, Sloane Stephens for the United States and Elena Rybakina for

King said she would like to see the BJK Cup and its equivalent for men, the Davis Cup, be combined.

"You know how I am about hold the 2022 WTA Finals in work together," she said.

Morikawa leads the PGA Tour's Championship by 1 stroke

AP INZAI CITY (JAPAN)

ollin Morikawa's last PGA Tour victory was the British Open in 2021, but his 6-under 64 on Thursday to lead the Zozo Championship after the first round suggests the end of the American's mini slump might be in sight.

Mikumu Horikawa and Americans Ben Shelton and Eric Cole were among five players just a shot back at the Accordia Golf Narashino Country Club on the outskirts here and play golf to just learn of Tokyo, the only PGA Tour a little bit more and kind of

Morikawa has Japanese ties on his father's side, though he's unclear who his distant relatives might be in Japan. His mother's roots are in Hong Kong.

"There's obviously a little bit more meaning to this tournament for me," he said. "But look, a win's a win, I'll take a win anywhere, right. I'm doing everything I can the next three days and kind of tonight to make sure I give myself the best opportunity to do that.'

Japanese player Horikawa joked about looking up at the leader-board and seeing a "kawa" on top - but that was Morikawa not Horikawa. The suffix or prefix "kawa" means river in Japanese and appears in many Japanese family names and place names. "So oh, that's not me," Horikawa said. "Oh, I want to catch up with him.

Morikawa won the PGA Championship in 2020 and followed it with the British Open, his quick fame putting him in demand abroad.

"It's been nice," he said. "We've kind of been able to travel over



essentially my history."

Morikawa took in one of Tokyo's most famous sushi restaurants during his stay - Sukiyabashi Jiro - and he said he may never get

"Man, I almost don't want to have sushi again because it was that special," Morikawa said. 'Chef Jiro was actually making the sushi for us, which made it even that much more special." The Zozo field is stacked with Japanese connections and many local players.

Xander Schauffele, three back after a 67, has maternal grandparents living in Tokyo and his mother, Ping Yi, has roots in Taiwan and grew up in Japan. His mother-in-law is also Japanese, and his wife is half Japanese and grew up in Japan's southern island of Okinawa. Rickie Fowler's mother has Japanese roots and his grandfather, Yutaka Tanaka, is Japanese. Kurt Kitayama's mother was born in Japan, and his father, Clifford, is Japanese-American. Fowler and Kitayama each shot

Sindhu enters quarterfinals of Denmark Open posed of a serve with a straight

 $D_{\text{V Sindhu fought her way to}}^{\text{ouble Olympic medallist P}}$ the women's singles quarterfinals with a come-from-behind win over world No. 7 Gregoria Mariska Tunjung of Indonesia at the Denmark Open Super 750 badminton tournament here on Thursday.

A former world champion Sindhu, who had reached the semifinals at Arctic Open last week, produced a gritty show to bounce back from a game down to outwit Tunjung 18-21 21-15 21-13 in a 71-minute second round match.

The Indonesian had defeated Sindhu twice in the last three meetings this year, including one at the Madrid Spain Masters final, though the Indian came 2 head-to-head record.



Sindhu has been going through poor form this season, having returned from the Hangzhou Asian Games without a medal and things looked bleak for the Indian after she fell behind 6-12 and conceded the opening game against the Indonesian.

However, she returned with vengeance in the second game, a dominating run of play.

Soon, the Indonesian reeled off eight straight points to draw parity at 14-14 but two flick serves helped Sindhu to move ahead as she grabbed six game points when Tunjung went long. Sindhu squandered one before sending a precise lift at the

3 in the third game. Sindhu disto the net.

baseline to take the match to the

decider.

out of her rival. Tunjung grabbed a narrow one point advantage after two precise returns on her opponent's forehand but Sindhu again fought back to draw level at 13-13 after Tunjung went long twice. The young Indonesian implod-

smash but then went wide at net

A series of forehand cross hits

kept Sindhu under pressure as

she continued to make errors. In

no time, Sindhu was trailing 5-

9. But the Indian was back on

level terms after drawing errors

to allow the advantage slip.

ed as she made too many errors on the backline and at net as Sindhu jumped to 18-13 in a blink of an eye. A reverse drop took her to

seven match points and Sindhu sealed it with a diving save as | did not make the site known

Saudi Arabia as part of the oil-rich kingdom's bid to lure the

major force in soccer. Ronaldo had led the way with his move to Al-Nassr in December. He was followed by Champions League winners like Karim Benzema, Sadio Mane and N'Golo Kante. But aside from Ronaldo, Neymar was arguably the biggest coup for Saudi Arabia after it had missed out on moves for Messi and

sport's biggest names to its

league and establish itself as a

Mbappe. Meanwhile, over in the United States, Messi opted to make the switch to MLS with Inter Miami. The Argentine great, who fulfilled his career ambition of winning the World Cup last year, appears to be loving life in Florida and quickly led Inter

Leagues Cup. The goals are flowing as he draws superstar fans such as LeBron James and Selena Gomez to watch him in person. În Saudi Arabia, Ronaldo has

put behind him the difficulties he endured at Manchester United last year, which led to his contract being terminated in November. He went on to have a disappointing World Cup, dropped to the bench by Portugal and then out in the quarterfinals.

It was not clear what direction his career would go when he joined Al-Nassr in one of the most surprising transfers in the sport's history, but it was certainly going to make him even richer after signing a deal reportedly worth up to \$200 million a

Neymar's injury compounds troubled start to his next chapter

AP MANCHESTER

In what has become an all-too familiar sight, Neymar left the soccer field in tears after yet another injury - this time with a torn ACL and meniscus. Quite a contrast to Lionel Messi's

smiles at Inter Miami and Cristiano Ronaldo's reenergized

Cristiano Ronaldo's reenergized success with Portugal.
Neymar damaged his left knee in the first half of Brazil's 2-0 World Cup qualifying loss at Uruguay on Tuesday. On Wednesday, the extent of the injury was confirmed by his Saudi club Al Hilal, which said he would undergo curgory. he would undergo surgery. At the 2014 World Cup in

Brazil, a knee to the back from Colombia defender Juan Zuniga in the quarterfinals ruled Neymar out of the tournament with a fractured vertebra. Then

more tears when Neymar feared an ankle injury would cut his tournament short. Instead, it was a loss to Croatia in the quarterfinals that prematurely ended his bid to win soccer's biggest tro-

Ronaldo and Messi turned the Ballon d'Or award for the world's best player into a personal duel at the height of their powers. But the pair recently left elite European soccer behind, with the 31-year-old Neymar also heading to the Saudi league after years of being in the shadow of two of the sport's greatest ever players.

Along with Messi and Luis Suarez, Neymar may have been part of a Barcelona forward line that won the Champions League in 2015, but he was never



Even his record 222 million euro French club to a Champions (\$270 million) move to Paris Saint-Germain in 2017 did not League title. Instead, it was PSG teammate Kylian Mbappe who provide the platform for him to emerged as the player most Messi as he failed to lead the cer's next icon.

League title. Instead, it was PSG step out in front of Ronaldo and likely to establish himself as soc-

Saturday's match, The Charlotte

Observer reported Wednesday. Inter Miami's home finale came on the same day the MLS Players Association revealed that Messi's annualized compensation from his MLS contract

with the team is just over \$20.4 million. That's more than the entire payroll of all but three other MLS teams and twice as much as every player combined on Orlando City.

contract, a 2 1/2-year deal that runs through the 2025 season, is worth about \$150 million. The the team or its affiliates, or for any performance bonuses. Messi's commitment to

Argentina for World Cup qualifying would have kept him out of Wednesday's match - which was a rescheduled game, after both teams went deep in the Leagues Cup tournament and needed to move the matchup anyway. With Saturday being meaningless in the standings, it was assumed that Inter Miami would take no unnecessary risks with Messi, a seven-time Ballon d'Or winner as the world's top player. And it seems very likely that Messi will become an eight-time winner of that award when this year's recipient is announced in

ionel Messi out for Inter Miami's home

AP FORT LAUDERDALE

ionel Messi says he will play Lin Inter Miami's season finale on Saturday, although the club hasn't confirmed that is the actual plan. Messi - who scored both

goals for Argentina in its 2-0 World Cup qualifying win at Peru on Tuesday night - wasn't in the lineup for Inter Miami's final home game of its Major League Soccer season against Charlotte on Wednesday night.

Messi, dressed casually in a white T-shirt, was in the Inter Miami bench area with his teammates for Wednesday's match after returning from Peru earlier in the day.

Not playing on Wednesday was expected. This part was not:

he wants to play once more for Inter Miami before his inaugural MLS season ends, which means he's intending to play in Charlotte on Saturday - even though that match will be played on artificial turf.

"I'll play the game that is left now," said Messi, who played all 90 minutes of Tuesday's match - a good sign after battling a leg injury for the last several weeks. The notion of Messi play-

ing might not necessarily be what Charlotte wanted to hear, given what will be at stake on the final day of the regular season. Charlotte wasted a pair of one-goal leads and tied Miami 2-2 on Wednesday, missing out on a chance to climb from 12th to



The top nine teams in each conference make the play-

Enzo Copetti and Kerwin Vargas scored for Charlotte. Nicolas Stefanelli and Robbie Robinson scored for Inter Miami, which could still thwart Charlotte's playoff plans with a win on Saturday depending on how other results on Decision Day in MLS goes. Charlotte stayed 12th, and now needs a win and some help to make the

Inter Miami was eliminated from MLS playoff contention earlier this month. Coach Gerardo "Tata" Martino said earlier this week that there was "a chance" Messi could play Saturday, and that the team

physically upon his return to Miami following the qualifying games with Argentina. He said after Wednesday's match that he was sticking to

that approach. Martino heard what Messi said, but didn't fully commit to his captain playing Saturday. "Tomorrow we'll talk with him, but the most important

thing here is the 90 minutes that were played ... That he felt well, and he was confident and not worried about his injury," Martino said. "We'll talk again to see if he's ready to play again."

Even the hope of Messi playing seems to be a big boost to ticket sales. Charlotte has sold more than 60,000 tickets in its 74,000-seat stadium for

The 36-year-old star has a \$12 million base salary and total guaranteed compensation of \$20,446,667, the players association said in its 2023 salary update. Inter Miami says Messi's

MLS figures do not account for Paris on Oct. 30.

India tough to beat, assessing conditions: Santner

PTI CHENNAI

New Zealand spinner Mitchell Santner feels assessing the conditions in Dharamsala and countering an in-form Rohit Sharma will be vital as they eye the "tough" task of beating India at home during their World cup clash on Sunday.

New Zealand have done well to adapt to the different conditions in the World Cup. The Black Caps, who have won all four of their games in the tournament so far, have played in Ahmedabad, Hyderabad and Chennai.

They will now fly to Dharamsala for the muchanticipated game against India, who are on a threematch winning streak.

"We know they're going to obviously be a challenge at home. They look pretty tough to beat. We'll have to do our assessment in Dharamsala see what the wicket's going to

do. "There has been a little pace and bounce. But whether that is the case when we play them, we'll see," Santner said

after New Zealand's 149-run win over Afghanistan on Wednesday.

Rohit has looked in imperious form at the top, playing brilliant knocks of 86 against Pakistan and 131 against Afghanistan to fashion huge victories.

"I think power play with the ball is going to be very impor-tant. The way Rohit's kind of getting them off to a flyer. And so, I think we have to do similar stuff to what we're doing. "I guess you're never going to play a perfect game so for us, it's two points. That's what we look to get out of every game depending on who we're playing and what we've done well through this tournament is being able to adapt to different conditions.

"Every pitch we've played on has been slightly different. We have to treat it very similarly leading into the game against India, assess the conditions, see what's going to work the best with ball, with bat, build those partnerships and try to take them deep and see what happens.

Searching for their maiden



title, New Zealand have so far beaten holders England, Netherlands, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, in the tourna-

"We've just got to kind of keep doing us, keep focused on the things we want to and how we want to play. And obviously, it's nice to be in this position to lead into this game.

"We obviously know it's such a long tournament, and one loss isn't going to hurt you if you win the rest, or you kind of look at that at the start."

The Kiwis survived an early scare with the bat to post a respectable total of 288 for 6 and successfully defended it to secure a win over Afghanistan. Santner believes the 144-run partnership between skipper Tom Latham and Glenn Phillips was the turning point.

'We know that every game is a tough game. Afghanistan today was no different. We started off pretty well, but there were moments in the game where we were battling

"It was on a knife edge for a while, so it was nice to get to a score. I guess that partner- ond Black Caps spinner to

ship between Tom and GP was reach 100 ODI dismissals. massive for us, and then it pressure with the new ball always helps.

CSK's Santner and Conway enjoy home comfort at MA Chidambaram Stadium

Familiar with the conditions at the MA Chidambaram Stadium having played for the Chennai Super Kings, Santner had a spectacular game. The spin all-rounder took three scalps and plucked the ball midair to complete a stunning catch.

"I guess when we turn up here for IPL, we've played on wickets that kind of look similar to that. Today, it looked like it swung a little bit and actually spun a little bit more under lights, which kind of helped that we lost the toss and batted first," he said.

"It's nice to be playing here, watched a lot of games here and played the odd one, and speak for Dev (Conway) as well, it's pretty cool to play in front of some loval fans. Ibrahim Zadran's wicket saw Santner become just the secafter former skipper Daniel Vettori.

'It's nice to get to that milestone. I wasn't thinking about it too much leading into the game. It's just about trying to perform my role and do a job out there just like every other game. It has been a general trend in this World Cup that the teams have been attacking more during the second powerplay with pacers. As for the New Zealanders, they have

used Santner and pacer Lockie

Ferguson in tandem.

"I guess that kind of the middle phase - the key is to try to take wickets. It's challenging at times when teams use that phase to set up a platform and then have wickets in hand to attack the last 10-15 overs.' 'So, it's nice for me when he's (Ferguson) bowling 150 out of the other end because they might try to take me on a bit more and not face that.

His role in the middle is to be aggressive and take wickets. And, on a day, if he is potentially going for runs, it might be more my job to kind of

Hardik Pandya leaves field after twisting ankle

PTI ■ PUNE

India suffered an early setback in their World Cup contest against Bangladesh when allrounder Hardik Pandya left the while bowling his first over here on Friday

The incident took place during the third delivery of the ninth over when Pandya attempted to stop a straight drive from Bangladesh opener Litton Das with his right foot on his fol-

lowthrough. However, Pandya twisted his ankle as the ball passed under him, leading the all-rounder to stumble and fall to the ground. Pandva felt discomfort from the moment he stood up and after getting his right ankle strapped which resulted in a long delay, he got up but hobbled towards his bowling mark.

It was at this moment that Pandva walked off the field as Survakumar Yaday came in as the substitute fielder.

But much to the cheer of the crowd, Virat Kohli rolled his arm over to complete the over, giv-

Electing to bat, Bangladesh recovered strongly from a timid start and were on charge to reach 63 for no loss after 10 overs.

ing away just two runs.

Australia, Pakistan need to regain batting, bowling mojo

PTI ■ BENGALURU

A ustralia's cricketing DNA is constructed by meticulousness and Pakistan's by explosiveness

When they meet each other here on Friday, Australia and Pakistan will have to regain those qualities in batting and bowling to infuse a fresh life into their World Cup campaign, which is yet to go into overdrive.

Pakistan's strength lies in their ability to play fearless cricket in the face of pressure. Make a quick rewind to their glory year of 1992 for a validation of that remark.

But in this World Cup, they caved in at the first hint of real pressure, a match against fight in their seven-wicket battering by the Men in Blue. That mammoth chase of 345 at Hyderabad in their second match came on a featherbed against a vastly short of quality Sri Lanka, and taking it as a pointer will be sheer naivety. Now, the Aussies offer another genuine pressure point to the Green Brigade. A side immersed in its own turmoil, the five-time champions are no India but they are a rival not to be scoffed at.

Pakistan will know that very well because Australia hold a 69-34 advantage in ODIs and a 6-4 edge in the 50-over World Cups.

Pakistan perforce will have to shed their timidity and it should start from the top. Opener Imam-ul-Haq has made just 63 runs from three matches, and the left-hander needs to give more solid support to Abdullah Shafique, who has replaced misfiring Fakhar Zaman.

They have another problem in his pace and swing, the com-



the fluctuating form of skipper Babar Azam. Babar, Pakistan's batting mainstay, made a fifty against India, but it was preceded by two ordinary outings against Netherlands and Sri Lanka. Both these batters will have to contribute heavily against the Aussies, who have a pace attack that can potentially damage any batting line-up. They also have to find a solution for the over-reliance of the middle-order on Mohammad Rizwan. The likes of Saud Shakeel, who made a fifty against Netherlands, and the hard-hitting Iftikhar Ahmed need to find the road that leads them to consisten-

In the absence of injured pacer Naseem Shah, Pakistan has leaned heavily on the 23year-old shoulders of Shaheen Shah Afridi but the left-arm pacer is nowhere near his best in the tournament. Afridi will have to rediscover

bination that makes him so lethal in white ball formats.Shadab Khan, their vice-captain and leg-spinner, has neither been able to chip in with ball nor with the bat in this edition of the World Cup. It will not be a big surprise if leggie Usama Mir comes in place for him on the morrow.

At the other end of the spectrum, the Aussies are in an even bigger hole. The defeats against India and South Africa have put them in an unenvious position where even one more loss can further peg back their semifinal ambi-

Their victory over Sri Lanka is just a baby step as they have to build on it to reach the knockout stage.

The batters are the main culprits for pushing the Aussies into that squishy place. Apart from Josh Inglis no other Australian batsman has made a fifty in this event, and Marnus Labuschagne is the

only batter to have scored more than 100 runs in total. Imagine, Mitchell Starc (55) has more runs against his name than Glenn Maxwell (49) and almost as many as Steve Smith (65), David Warner (65) and Mitchell Marsh (59) from three matches. If anything, it shows a total downtime of their batting unit, and they need to better it against Pakistan.

But that does not absolve the Australian bowlers from their faults. While Starc, Adam Zampa and Josh Hazlewood have tried to keep things tight, skipper Pat Cummins remains a loose end in their bowling. Cummins' mojo in red ball cricket has not really percolated to his white ball outings, at least consistently, and the 30year-old will have to find his champion self here.

But the only hindrance for that is the smooth deck and shorter boundaries at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium, often a friend of the batters.

We nullified Rashid's threat: Phillips

PTI CHENNAI

ware of the dangers that A ware of the dangers that spin wizard Rashid Khan poses as a bowler, New Zealand batters tried to work through his spell and were able to nullify the threat during their 149-run win over Afghanistan, said wicketkeep-er-batter Glenn Phillips.

Rashid could only manage figures of 1 for 43 in his 10 overs, while a couple of dropped chances against his bowling hurt his spell too. "Everyone plans against

Rashid as best as they can. Sometimes, he has an unbelievable day, and he's just unplayable regardless of how much you plan," Phillips told reporters here. 'Ŵe understood that if we

could keep him quiet, it would allow us to take on other taking on Rashid really well, besides also seeing others struggle against him. 'We have realised that we

need to work through his spell. It's a cool challenge every time you face him. He bowled incredibly well today, but I believe that we nullified his threat today.

Phillips played a knock of 71 and involved in a partnership of 144 runs with skipper Tom Latham (68), allowing them to recover from 110 for 4 and post a competitive total of 288 for 6.

It was Phillips' first fifty of the

ongoing world cup. "We went out there and tried to do the particular job. It was nice to be able to contribute today with the bat," he said. "Afghanistan spinners are incredibly talented. We just tried to take them one over at a time and realised that if we can drag it longer, we can have firepower at the end. "It was all about what's the

good score here and what



can we potentially defend, and also try to get as close to it as possible.'

Excited to play at Dharamsala: Chapman

The Kiwis will be up against hosts India next in Dharamsala on Sunday, and all-rounder Mark Chapman is eagerly looking forward to playing at the picturesque venue.

"I am excited to play at Dharamsala; it's a beautiful ground with beautiful scenes. have played there once, probably a warm-up game against Hong Kong in 2016, so looking forward to it," he said. Chapman slammed 25 off 12 balls with the help of a six and two fours to swell New Zealand's innings.
Talking about his role as a fin-

isher, he said: "I have played a lot more T20 cricket for New Zealand than one-day cricket, so batting down the lower order and doing the right things helps you.
"I guess it's all about playing

as per the team's requirement. As for me, today was not the day to act as a finisher, but rather bat as long as possible and post a defendable

ummins hopes his batsmen will fire against Pakistan

PTI BENGALURU

ustralian batting has not Aclicked as a unit so far in the World Cup, and captain Pat Cummins hoped that his batters will fire on all cylinders against Pakistan here on Friday. Apart from Josh Inglis and Mitchell Marsh none of the other Australian batsmen have been able to make a fifty in the tournament so far, and Cummins was banking on the batsmen-friendly nature of the Chinnaswamy stadium to buck

"You know, especially at a venue like here in Bangalore, I dare say it's going to be high scoring, smaller field. Pitch is always really good here. So, yeah, batting is super important. I think the way the guys started last game (against Sri Lanka) really set the tone," said Cummins during his prematch press meet here on Thursday.

Cummins took heart from the fact that Marsh made a fifty against Lanka and hoped David Warner would also join the party sooner than later.



"You know, Mitchie and Davey up front from the first over taking the game on. That's what we want from our players. They're working really hard. They're doing all the right things. I'm sure plenty of runs are around the corner," said Cummins. The premier pacer was also delighted to see Inglis stepping up for out of form Alex Carey, who is the regular wicketkeeper.

"Alex has missed out on the last couple, which is unfortunate. We know he's a class player, but Josh, he stepped up last game, which is awesome," he said. The 30-year-old said dew has played a big factor in a team's decision to bat or bowl after winning the toss in this tournament

Yeah, it's a factor. I think I've said it previously in T20s - dew might play a part for 50% of the match plus in here, day and night, I only played part for the last 20 overs, say, in ODI.

So, you got to balance whether, say, bowling second, it might be tough at the back end. But also, you've got lights on, ball might zip around a bit more at night before that. So, it's a balancing act. I don't think there's a right or wrong," said Cummins. Pakistan might be coming to this match after a seven-wicket battering by India at

Ahmedabad, but Cummins was not ready to take them lightly. "They're a side that always seems to be right up there. Some really good quick bowlers who can do some damage, some spin bowlers that can bowl 20 of their overs. "And then they've got, you know, I think Rizwan's the leading run-scorer, Babar Azim's always good, a couple of other batters that have scored a lot in ODIs lately. So, they're a really strong side pretty much in all facets," he added.

Cummins was asked for his view on Pakistan players openly supporting Palestine in the conflict with Israel, but the New South Welshman did not want to draw himself on to

"I love seeing sports people, seeing their personalities brought out as well. So, yeah, no hugely strong thoughts either way," he said.

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