OPINION 6

RIGHT TO WORK: A FAR

CRY FOR WOMEN

WORLD 9

NAWAZ SHARIF GETS BAIL IN

TOSHAKHANA CASE

COANT

Late City Vol.33 Issue 295 *Air Surcharge Extra if Applicable

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NEW DELHI, WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 25, 2023; PAGES 12 ₹3 the pioneer

Arab World unite INC and block Mizoram but the TMC conveyed its problem to be part of it due to festive season in Keiriwal led AAP has also

The Emir of Qatar has urged the international community to take action to restrain Israel in its conflict with Hamas, emphasising that Israeli forces should not be permitted to engage in unrestricted violence in the blockaded Gaza Strip.

During his opening speech at the annual session of the Shura Council on Tuesday, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani also expressed concern that the ongoing conflict represents a dangerous escalation that poses a threat to the region Meanwhile, health officials on

Tuesday said, rapidly expanding Israeli airstrikes across the Gaza Strip killed more than 700 people in the past day as medical facilities across the territory were forced to close because of bombing damage and a lack of

power,
The soaring death toll from Israel's escalating bombardment was unprecedented in the decades-long Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

It could signal an even greater loss of life in Gaza once Israeli ground forces backed by tanks and artillery launch an expected offensive into the territory aimed at crushing Hamas.

Gaza's 2.3 million people have been under increasing bombardment and running out of food, water and medicine since Israel sealed off the territory following the devastating October 7 attack by Hamas militants on towns in southern Israel. On Tuesday, Israel said it had



Israeli soldiers gather in a staging area near the border with Gaza Strip, in southern Israel, on Tuesday

as they were preparing to launch rockets into Israel and striking command centers and a Hamas tunnel shaft.

The previous day, Israel reported 320 strikes. Witnesses and health officials said many of the airstrikes hit residential buildings, some of them in southern Gaza where Israel had told civilians to take shelter.

launched 400 airstrikes over An overnight strike hit a fourthe past day, killing Hamas commanders, hitting militants southern city of Khan Younis, killing at least 32 people and wounding scores of others,

according to survivors.
The fatalities included 13 from the Saqallah family, said Ammar al-Butta, a relative who survived the airstrike. He said there were about 100 people there, including many who had come from Gaza City, which Israel has ordered civilians to evacuate.

"They were sheltering at our home because we thought that our area would be safe. But apparently there is no safe place in Gaza," he said.

Another airstrike hit a bustling marketplace in the Nuseirat refugee camp in central Gaza, killing several shoppers and wounding dozens, witnesses

Men used sledgehammers to break up concrete and dug with their bare hands through the

jagged wreckage to save anyone they could — or at least recover the dead who had been buying meat and vegetables when the explosion hit.

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A man buried up to his chest in rubble looked up at his rescuers with wide eyes, his face coated in dust from the blast. An oxygen mask was placed on his face as they spent 15 minutes working to free him.

Gaza's Hamas-run Health Ministry said the attacks killed at least 704 people over the past day, including 305 children and 173 women. More than 5,700 Palestinians have been killed in the war, including some 2,300 minors, the ministry said, without giving a detailed breakdown. The figure includes the disputed toll from an explosion at a hospital last week.

Most of the Palestinians killed since Oct. 7 were in the north and central areas of the enclave that Israel had told them evacuate, the ministry said. The fighting has killed more

than 1,400 people in Israel mostly civilians slain during the initial Hamas attack.

As the death toll in Gaza spiralled, facilities to deal with the casualties were dwindling. A total of 46 out of 72 primary health-care facilities, and 12 out of 35 hospitals, stopped functioning, the World Health Organization said. Palestinian health officials said the lack of electricity and fuel to power generators from the İsraeli blockade, as well as damage from airstrikes, has forced many of the facilities to close

The 'tentative' schedule for the November first-week meeting of the Opposition parties bloc INDIA seems to have encountered a roadblock due to the ongoing tension between major stakeholders, the Congress and the Samajwadi Party (SP), over their alliance in poll-bound States.

Additionally, a member of the Trinamool Congress (TMC) is facing controversy and has received summons from the Parliamentary Ethics Committee.

Sources said the meeting was being planned for November 5 at Nagpur after consultation with all parties, including West Bengal Chief Minister and TMC supremo Mamata Banerjee, who confirmed her availability after Durga Puja followed by Lakhi Puja in October end.

Sources said the invitation to all top leaders was extended by Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge, Rahul Gandhi during the mid October after a meeting of the two with NCP supremo Sharad Pawar.

A consensus was reached for the meeting to be held at Delhi or Nagpur but some of the leaders suggested Nagpur, being a RSS bastion and that Pawar and the Congress are in an alliance in Maharashtra with Uddhav Thackeray led Shiv Sena fac-

The schedule was for October end keeping in mind the hectic November Assembly elections in crucial Madhya Chhattisgarh, Pradesh, Rajasthan, Telangana and

it due to festive season in Bengal culminating with Lakshmi Puja which is held six days after Bijoya Dashmi.

"The meeting was initially being discussed for November 5 in Nagpur. However, during this time, a controversy involving a TMC member in a 'cash for query' scandal has arisen. Leaders from both sides (the Congress and the TMC) will now engage in talks in the com-ing days to discuss the details of the next alliance meeting in India," said a Congress leader involved in back channel talks to unite the Opposition parties. While the Congress will be occupied throughout November with the Assembly polls, as they hope to retain Chhattisgarh and Rajasthan while remaining strong contenders in Madhya Pradesh, Telangana, and Mizoram, Bihar alliance partners JD(U) and RJD have expressed that it will be challenging for them to attend before November 10 due to the festive season, which includes Diwali and Chhath Puia celebrations that extend until November 20. Given the circumstances, some of the leaders when contacted said the meeting will take place only by November end, but believed that parties like the Congress, the SP, the AAP will get buffer time to iron out their differences arising over the question of alliance at State and

Differences cropped up between the Congress and Akhilesh Yadav led SP when the latter stated that the grand old party did not honour its rights to be part of the alliance in

national level.

Chhattisgarh where Arvind Kejriwal led AAP has also entered the poll fray.

In an attempt to placate the agitated SP, senior Congress leader and one of the decision-maker of the party in MP, Digvijay Singh, said his party colleague former CM of State Kamal Nath wanted to have an alliance with the Samajwadi Party "with full honesty", but maintained he does not know how the talks for a tie-up between the two INDIA bloc members got derailed.

Digvijaya praised Akhilesh for his leadership qualities, but disagreed with Kamal Nath, over his choice of words while dismissing his (Akhilesh) criticism for not leaving any seat in MP for the Uttar Pradeshbased party for the November 17 polls.

The former CM said he had suggested Nath to leave four Assembly seats for the SP, which wanted to field nominees in half

a dozen segments. Akhilesh had accused the Congress of having "cheated" his party after Uttar Pradesh Congress chief Ajay Rai asked his party to withdraw from MP in favour of the grand old party, saying the SP did not have any base there.

Rai also said as an INDIA bloc partner, the SP should rally behind the Commercial behind the Congress if it wants to fight the ruling BJP in MP. The SP chief went after the Congress's MP heavyweights and ex-chief ministers, Kamal Nath and Digvijaya Singh, charging that they kept the SP leaders waiting till midnight, when they had gone to meet them for seat-sharing talks.

Lord Ram's arrival imminent: Modi

PNS NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday PModi on Tuesday announced that the Ram Temple in Ayodhya will be completed in a few months and very soon Lord Ram will arrive. "Bhagawan Shri Ram bas aane hain (Lord Ram's arriva is imminent)," Modi said addressing a large gathering to mark the occasion of Dusshera celebrations in the national Capital.

Asserting that prayers at the Ram Temple during the next Ramnavmi will spread happiness in the entire world, Modi said as Lord Ram is coming under such auspicious signs, after 75 years of Independence, India's fortunes are now going to rise. The temple will be completed in a few months and it marks the victory of people's patience, said Modi.

The construction of the temple is happening amid many auspicious developments like India's successful lunar mission, inauguration of the new Parliament building and the enactment of women's reservation law have taken place. India



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during Dussehra celebrations, at Dwarka in New Delhi, on Tuesday

is today emerging as the world's largest democracy as well as the most trusted democracy," Modi said amidst the chants of Jai Shri Ram in Dwarka area of south West Delhi where huge effigy of Ravan were consigned to flames

Modi performed the ceremonial burning of the effigies, Prime Minister also worshipped artists enacting the roles of Lord Ram, Goddess Sita, Lakshman, and Hanuman during Dussehra celebrations at the DDA ground in Dwarka

the audience to recognise that the burning of Ravana's effigy should symbolise more than iust a ritual, it should signify the eradication of societal ills that threaten mutual harmony He emphasised the importance of defeating to finish off forces trying to divide the country with casteism and regionalism The Prime Minister's comments were an apparent swipe at Opposition parties whom he has repeatedly accused of seeking to divide the country in the name of caste and region to draw political mileage.



Devotees carry an idol of Goddess Durga for immersion in Ganga river on Vijayadashami, marking an end to the festivities of Durga Puja, in Kolkata, on Tuesday

Rajnath performs Shastra Puja

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE NEW DELHI/TAWANG (ARUNACHAL PRADESH)

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said given the current global scenario there is no option but to bolster the country's security apparatus, underlining that all efforts are being made by the Government to strengthen the nation's military prowess through indigenous production of defence equipment.

He made this assertion after visiting forward posts in Arunachal Pradesh and carried out first-hand on ground assessment of the operational preparedness of armed forces there. Rajnath also performed Shastra Puja with the troops at Tawang, where he reiterated that Dussehra signifies the victory of good over evil.

Tawang, last year saw an exchange of blows between the Indian and Chinese troops

when the latter tried to change the status quo at the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on December 9. The issue was resolved later after

the intervention of senior leadership

In his address, the Defence Minister described the right-eousness and dharma of the brave Armed Forces personnel

deployed along the LAC facing China there and celebrated Dussehra with the soldiers.

enough for the way you are guarding the border in difficult circumstances. I want to tell you that people of the country are proud of you," he told the

The Defence Minister expressed their "unyielding spirit, unwa-

as the living testament to the ethos of the festival of Vijayadashmi. He interacted with the troops

"No amount of appreciation is

gratitude to the soldiers for vering commitment and unpar- and its people are safe.



Defence Minister Rajnath Singh performs 'Shastra Puja' (worship of the weapons) on the occasion of 'Vijayadashami' during his visit to forward posts in Arunachal Pradesh, in Tawang district, on Tuesday

alleled courage" while guarding the borders in tough conditions, and ensuring that the nation

Stressing the need for selfreliance, Rajnath said, "Under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi,

giant strides have been made towards 'Aatmanirbharta' in defence. Earlier, we used to rely on imports to upgrade our military. But today, a number of major weapons and platforms are being manufactured within the country.

"Foreign companies are being encouraged to share their technology and produce the equipment in India with domestic industry. In 2014, the value of defence exports was about ₹1,000 crore, but today we are exporting defence equipment worth thousands of crores.

The Defence Minister said the valour and commitment of the Armed forces is one of the main reasons behind India's rising stature globally and that it is now among the most powerful nations.

He cited India's success in the economic sphere as one of the reasons for the country's growing global profile. But at the same time he noted that if the

Armed forces had not guarded the country's border effectively, then its stature would not have

Citing his recent tour of Italy, the Defence Minister recalled his visit to Montone memorial which has been built to honour the contribution of Naik Yaswant Ghadge and other Indian soldiers who fought in the Italian campaign to liberate Montone in World War II.

He added that not just Indians, but even Italian people pay their respects at the memorial. which is proof that the bravery of Indian soldiers is recognised globally.

Rajnath also visited the Tawang War Memorial, where he laid a wreath and offered tributes to the bravehearts who made the supreme sacrifice during the 1962 war with China.

He was accompanied by Army Chief General Manoj Pande, General Officer Commandingin-Chief (GOC-in-C) Eastern Command Lt General RP Kalita, GOC, 4 Corps Lt General Manish Erry and other senior officers of the Indian

Rajnath also visited the 4 Corps Headquarters at Tezpur in Assam. During the visit, he reviewed the operational readiness of the formation, which is deployed in one of the easternmost parts of the country.

The Defence Minister was briefed on the infrastructure development along the LAC and the employment of cuttingedge military equipment and technology to enhance the operational efficiency of the troops deployed in the frontline. He commended the stellar work and yeoman services being rendered by all ranks of the Corps under challenging conditions. The Defence Minister's celebration of Dussehra with the sol-

diers at the strategically impor-

tant location close to the LAC

comes at a time when India and

China have been engaged in a bitter standoff in certain friction points in eastern Ladakh for over three years.

Rajnath has been performing "Sȟastra Puja" during Dussehra for the last several years, including during his tenure as the Union Home Minister in the previous NDA Government.

Indian and Chinese troops are locked in an over three-year confrontation in certain friction points in eastern Ladakh, even as the two sides completed disengagement from several areas following extensive diplomatic and military talks.

India has been maintaining that its ties with China cannot be normal unless there is peace in the border areas

The Army has significantly bolstered deployment of troops and weaponry along the nearly LAC, including in the Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh sectors following the eastern Ladakh

'60 ultras killed in J&K this year'

fter neutralising a large number of foreign terrorists in different counterterrorism operations in Jammu and Kashmir, the security forces are inching closer to flushing out a handful of active local terror-

ists in the region. According to official sources, "around 60 terrorists have been eliminated across Jammu and Kashmir this year while 22 security personnel and 10 civilians also sacrificed their lives in these operations".

Out of 60 terrorists, 45 were foreign and 15 were homegrown

Speaking to reporters in the North Kashmir district of Kupwara on Tuesday Director General of Police Dilbagh Singh said terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir has been "almost fin-



ished" and its "remnants" will be

eliminated soon. He said only 10 local youths joined the terrorist ranks in 2023 in Jammu and Kashmir against 110 during the previous year. Singh said that out of these 10 six have been neutralized and now only four among them are active in the region. Singh appealed to these local terrorists

"They should leave the path of violence and come back". Terrorists also have families and such killings don't bring any happiness to the security force In 2022, a total number of 187 terrorists were killed across J&K Out of these 130 were local terrorists while 57 were foreign ter-

Bhagwat cautions country about attempts to harvest votes by inflaming emotions during 2024 LS polls

"Owing to practical difficulties

and security reasons, only a

limited number of people would

be able to be present in Ayodhya

on that auspicious occasion....On

the occasion of the consecration

of Ramlala, we should organize

this event at a small scale in var-

ious places. This will awaken the

Ram of one's mind in every

heart, and embellish the

Ayodhya of the mind, creating an

atmosphere of affection, respon-

have any worth or meaning.

status for the Viswa Bharati

University also known as

Shantiniketan — bearing the

names of Prime Minister

Narendra Modi as the

Chancellor and Vice Chancellor

certain to follow.

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh Chief Dr Mohan Bhagwat on Tuesday cautioned the country about the "attempts to harvest votes by inflaming emotions" during the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, and asked the people to be on the guard, as such attempts would hurt the unity of the society". Addressing the annual Vijaya Dashami rally of the RSS headquarters in Nagpur, Bhagwat said: "The country is going to hold elections to the Lok Sabha in the early days of 2024. Attempts to harvest votes by inflaming emotions are not desirable, but they still keep happening. Let us avoid these things, as they hurt the unity of the society".

"To cast a vote is the duty of every citizen, and we must follow it. Cast your vote keeping in mind the vital issues of unity, integrity, identity and develop-ment of the country," the RSS



Significantly enough, Bhagwat spoke about the opening of Ram Mandir temple at Ayodhya in January 2024.

The endeavours and efforts of a nation are driven by the national ideals. A temple for Shri Ram Lalla, whose picture is depicted on a page of the original copy of our Constitution, is being built in Ayodhya. It has been announced that Shri Ramlala will be consecrated in the sanctum sanctorum of the temple on

Union Minister for Road Transport & Highways Nitin Gadkari and Maharashtra's Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis - were among those present at the rally. This year's chief guest of the RSS' Vijaya Dashami festivities was singercomposer Shankar Mahadevan. Bhagwat, whose speech was peppered with references to the forthcoming Lok Sabha elec-tions, debunked the efforts to forge alliances with the "undesirable forces" in the country to defeat political rivals

sibility, and goodwill in the society," he said.

"To achieve narrow political gains, attempts are being made to forge alliances with these undesirable forces in the country to defeat political rivals. This is unwise and harmful for the country," he said.

"The society has already become amnesiac, ravaged by all sorts of divisions, and is caught up in a deadly pursuit of selfish interests steeped in jealousy and hatred.

Tagore name missing from

Shantiniketan Unesco plaque

That is why these demonic powers are able to get the support of internal or external forces who want to break the society and the nation," the RSS chief said.

Coming down heavily on the self-styled "cultural Marxists", Bhagwat said: "These destructive, all-devouring forces call themselves cultural Marxists or Woke, or the awakened ones. But they have forgotten Marx since the 1920s. They are opposed to all orderliness and morality, beneficence, culture, dignity and

restraint in the world' "In order for a handful of people to have complete control over the entire human race, they reward, promote and spread anarchy and indiscretion.

Their modus operandi involve taking control of the media and academia, and plunging education, culture, politics and social environment into confusion. chaos, and corruption. Such an environment enables the creation of a vicious cycle of fear, confusion and hatred," he said

More women as astronauts is part of my wish list: ISRO chairman

PTI THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

Indian Space Research Organisation Chairman S Somanath on Tuesday expressed his wish for increased female representation in the nation's space missions

He said this desire echoes the sentiments of the nation, including that of the Prime Minister. During an event at the Pournami Kavu temple here, where Somanath initiated children into the world of letters as part of the Vidyarambam ceremony on Vijayadasami, he shared his expectation of seeing more female astronauts in ISRO's ambitious Gaganyaan mission. Somanath clarified that as astronauts had already been selected and trained, participation of women won't be feasible in Gaganyaan's inaugural mission, which aims to send humans to space and bring them back safe-

However, he expressed optimism of greater female involvement in future Gaganyaan mis-

"More women astronauts in space missions is part of my wish list, and I only echoed the voice of the nation, including that of the Prime Minister," he told PTI. On Sunday, the ISRO chairman had said the space agency prefers woman fighter test pilots or female scientists for its muchawaited human space flight programme-Gaganyaan- and it is possible to send them in future. He had also said ISRO would send a female humanoid — a robot that resembles a human on its unmanned Gaganyaan spacecraft next year. The ambitious mission aims to

send humans into space on a Low Earth Orbit of 400 km for three days and bring them safely back to Earth.



'No doubt about it...But we have to find out such possible (women) candidates in the future," Somanath told PTI over phone in response to a query. Acknowledging his spiritual inclination, the ISRO Chairman engaged in prayers on Vijaya-

After completing his prayers at the temple on Tuesday, Somanath sat down for more than 30 minutes to help toddlers write

their first letters to mark the beginning of their education. Somanath justified his participation, saying the ceremony has got nothing to do with religion

but is only considered as the ini-

tiation to education. "Alphabets are worshipped in this temple. We can see the alphabets of the Malayalam language displayed as Gods and Goddesses here and worshipped. So they belong to us as knowl-

edge," Somanath said. He said on the day of Vijayadasami, children are introduced to the domain of knowledge by gurus, who have already acqui-

red something. "So when they transfer that knowledge to the children, it is a blessing. So we transfer the blessing to them so that they can become great in the years to come," the ISRO chief said.

He said it is a blessing of spirituality from the gurus to the children to help them learn and understand about the whole

universe. Former ISRO chairman G Madhavan Nair and Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre Director Unnikrishnan were also present in Pournami Kavu to help the children with Vidyarambam. Shashi Tharoor, MP, took part in

the Vidyarambam ceremony at Sree Saraswathy Devi Temple in Poojappura.

Bidyut Chakrabarty with no reference to Poet Laureate Rabindranath Tagore the founder of the world-famous institution.

Bengal intelligentsia including the descendents of Poet Laureate Rabindranath Tagore and the State's political fraternity has expressed their anguish at the act of ignoring the founder of

The central government and the Visva Bharati authorities owe an explanation as to why they have insulted Gurudev Tagore like this ... this is bad in taste," said professor Amit Chatterjee of Calcutta University. The Poet's great grand nephew Supriyo Tagore too has condemned the act of rubbing out his name. "Rabindranath belongs to the whole world and cannot be pigeonholed in one group ... he also does not need any recognition ... the authorities will do themselves some honour if they will mention his name and not otherwise," Supriyo said.

Another descendent of the family requesting anonymity said how, "both India and Bengal are passing through a phase of qualitative degeneration of class where your greatness is established by your name on the hoardings ... my great grand uncle does not need such stuff ... please do not disturb his

He reminds how "insulting



Tagore, Gandhi and misinterpreting Vivekananda is an art that a conceited ruling party has completely mastered ... remember how one of their senior most cabinet ministers pleasantly sat Tagore's chair presently kept on display at the Bolpur museum when he visited there." Situated in Birbhum district of

rural Bengal, Santiniketan was founded by Rabindranath Tagore in 1901. On September 17 this year, UNESCO recognized Santiniketan as India's 41st World Heritage Site. British colonial architectural orientations of the early 20th century and of European modernism, Santiniketan represents approaches toward a pan-Asian modernity, drawing on ancient, medieval and folk traditions from across the region, says UNESCO Another descendent requesting anonymity too reminds how "more than 93 years ago Tagore had in one of his letters to Indira Devi Chaudhurani wrote his final wishes ... in his wishes he requested Indira Devi to see to it that his spirits were never sep-

arated from Shantiniketan ... he wanted to be there forever and for eternity ... here is how they are keeping his last wishes." One of the first to raise his voice against the conspicuous omission of Tagore's name from the plaque was former bureaucrat and Trinamool Congress MP Jahar Sircar who in a hard-hitting statement wrote:

"UNESCO specifically said they are honouring Rabindranath

Tagore and his unique legacy by declaring Santiniketan as a World Heritage Site. - A megalomaniac VC and his boss seem to think UNESCO is honouring

Statements also flew in from the Congress Party with senior MP Jairam Ramesh writing "erasure of Nehru wasn't enough. Now, the erasure of Rabindranath

Tagore also begins."
CPI(M)'s Sujan Chakrabarty said, "we may not be the world's biggest party ... but surely we are sensible enough to under-Modi and Tagore ... you will classify and categorise them as

stand the diffe per your mental and intellectu-When asked whether the issue will have bearing in 2024 gen-

eral elections, psephologist BN Chakrabarty said "this is such an emotive issue at least in Bengal – which is far more secular than any other region of the country – that this can counterbalance the Ram Mandir issue during the campaign ... so the BJP should do something fast to

undo what they have done." However Bengal BJP spokesperson Samik Bhattcharya tried to douse the flames saying: Tagore is such a towering personality that his name does not need inscription ... besides the name of Visva Bharati Chancellor (presently Modi ji) and the VC has been inscribed there ... so I don't think there is any need to politicize the issue." A second group in the State BJP however blamed VC Bidyut

immersion, Dussehra in Bihar

The Bihar government has ■ made elaborate security arrangements, including the deployment of additional forces, the use of drones and the installation of CCTV cameras in sensitive points, to ensure peaceful celebrations of Dussehra in the state on Tuesday.

The security has been beefed up across the state after a five-yearold boy and two women were killed on Monday and several others received injuries in a stampede at a Durga Puja pandal in Gopalganj district.

The nine-day Navratri celebrations would end this evening with the immersion of idols of Goddess Durga and the burning of effigies of the demon king

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, M/s Ambience Projects and Infrastructure Pvt. Ltd. (the Developer) had to make certain changes/deviations including increasing of number of floors/apartments/areas increasing of number of floors/apartments/areas etc. than the approved plans while carrying out the construction and development in the Group Housing Residential Apartment Complex on Piot measuring 14.82 acres in Sector 22, Gurugram falling in the Revenue Estate of Village Mullahera, Tehsil & Distt. Gurugram, Haryana in terms of License No. 48 of 2012 dated 12.05.2012 granted by the Director, Town & Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh.

Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh.
And whereas, the office of the Director, Town & Country Planning, Haryana, Chandigarh vide Memo No. ZP-864/PA(DK)/2023/35001 dated 18.10.2023 has granted in principle approval forgrant of Occupancy Certificate for the said Group Housing Residential Apartment Complex wherein the changes/deviations from the sanctioned plan have been detailed. The Director, Town & Country Planning has required the Developer to seek objections, if any, against the changes/deviations made from the approved plans in the said Group Housing Residential Apartment Complex as per Phasing Policy dated 24.04.2023. Accordingly, vide this public notice objections are hereby invited from the allottees of apartments by way of booking/purchase in the ARORA having address at R-825 R BLOCK, NEW RAJINDER NAGAR, DELHIof apartments by way of booking/purchase in the said Group Housing Residential Apartmen Complex on the changes/deviations made from the approved plan. The copies of the earlie approved building plans and the as-built

drawings showing changes in the earlie approved plan is available for perusal on ou for the past 3 years. All the 3 letters sent to Ms ouncing plans can also be perused at the office of undersigned at the site office at Ground Housing Residential Apartment Complex, Sector 22, Gurugram, Haryana. REENA ARORA calling upon her to operate the locker has returned unserved and she is

22, Gurugram, Haryana.
Any allottee of abovesaid Group Housing Residential Apartment Complex having any objection on the changes/deviations made from the approved plans of the said Complex, may file his/her objection in the office of the Senior Tow Planner, Gurugram at Sector 14, Gurugram within 30 days of publication of this notice, failing which it shall be assumed that there are no chierdinas to the proposed changes in the said objections to the proposed changes in the said Group Housing Residential Apartment Complex

For M/s Ambience Projects and Infrastructure PvL. Ltd L-4, Green Park Extension, New Delh CIN No.U70101DL2010PTG20912



Ravana. "Elaborate security arrange

ments have been made for the idol immersion at the identified water bodies and on the routes of processions. Drones would be used to ensure efficient crowd and traffic management and to maintain law and order during the burning of effigies of the Rayana at the historic Gandhi Maidan and immersion procession in the state capital. Patna District Magistrate Chandrashekhar Singh told

Besides, quick response teams (QRTs) have also been deployed at critical locations in the state capital, he said

The state police have deployed

kotak

NOTICE

Locker hired by Ms REENA

110060, with Vasant Vihar

Poorvi Marg branch of Kotak

Mahindra Bank Ltd. situated

at Situated at No-2 Vasant

Vihar Poorvi Marg New Delhi-

110057 remains un-operated

It is hereby informed that

despite this notice if the said

locker is not operated by Ms

REENA ARORA within 90

days from the date of this

notice, break open of the said

locker will be done on

January 25, 2024 at around

not contactable.

12 p.m.

more than 20,000 additional festivities, another officer said. "Around 500 additional forces have been deployed around Gandhi Maidan, the main venue in Patna where the effigies of Ravana and others will be burnt in the evening, while 2,500 additional personnel will ensure smooth immersion of idols of the Goddess Durga in the city today. Elaborate security arrangements have been made in view of the massive turnout at Gandhi Maidan, Patna Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Rajeev Mishra

During the Dussehra celebrations, Ravana Badh, the burning of effigies of Ravana, Meghnad and Kumbkarna would also be organised by different puja committees across the state.

Notably, 32 people, including 20 women and 10 children, were killed and 26 others injured in a stampede at Gandhi Maidan, shortly after the end of the Dussehra celebrations in 2014.

Two cadres of a Myanmar-

A based militant group were arrested in Manipur's

Churachandpur district after

arms and ammunition were

seized from their possession,

Chief Minister N Biren Singh

said the arrest of Chin Kuki

Liberation Army (CKLA)

members and the recovery of

weapons have "yet again under-

scores a transnational plot

aimed at destabilising both

The two cadres of CKLA were

apprehended from the Chaijang

area along the India-Myanmar

border on Monday, police said

"In a major breakthrough by

Manipur Police and Central

armed forces, multiple weapons,

Manipur and our nation".

in a statement.

police said on Tuesday.

Security beefed up for Durga idol | Three empty coaches of EMU derail near Chennai, traffic hit

PTI CHENNAL

Three empty coaches of an Electric Multiple Unit (EMU) derailed at suburban Avadi here early on Tuesday, resulting in delayed running of a number of passenger services on the busy route.

No passengers were involved in the incident, which happened around 5.40 am on Tuesday, the Southern Railway said.

While four coaches were initially said to have derailed, Southern Railway later clarified it was three. The last three coaches of the "empty rake of the suburban EMU train derailed at Avadi railway station while shunting from Avadi EMU Car shed to the main line at 05:40 hrs," an official statement said.

The suburban line towards Chennai Central was affected while there was minor disruption on the express main line owing to overhead equipment (OHE) cable glitch, it added.

ammunition, drugs and cash

have been apprehended from

Myanmar-based militant group

CKLA," the chief minister said

The seized weapons include

AK47, Insas, Sniper and M16

rifles along with a huge cache of

ammunition, he said, adding

that opium weighing about 2.5 kg, over Rs 4.86 lakh in cash and

various other items were also

"Earlier, the National Investi-

gation Agency (NIA) has taken

up cases wherein it was partic-

ularly stated that there exists a

transnational conspiracy by

Myanmar and Bangladesh-

based leadership of terror out-

fits to wage war against the Gov-

ernment of India by exploiting

recovered.

on X, formerly Twitter.

Consequently, five EMU trains towards Chennai Central were delayed and three express trains from here — Vande Bharat and Shatabdi services to Mysuru and Chennai-Coimbatore Kovai Express were regulated near Ambattur railway station, it

Saptagiri Express (Chennai-Tirupati) and Bengaluru-bound Brindavan Express and Double Decker Express, all originating from Chennai Central, were rescheduled.

The Divisional Railway Manager and his team of senior officials are on the spot. Restoration work is in full swing and now, the main line has been restored to traffic and Express trains.. Trains delayed/regulated enroute have commenced journeys. EMU services are also diverted to run on the fast line."

'The suburban line restoration works are in progress and traffic will be restored in a few hours," the statement added.

weapons has yet again under-

Two cadres of Myanmar-based militant outfit held in Manipur, arms seized

scores a transnational plot aimed at destabilizing both Manipur and our nation," the chief minister said on the micro-blogging site. CKLA is a non-signatory to the Suspension of Operations (SoO).

The SoO was signed by the Centre, the Manipur government and two conglomerates of militant outfits. The pact was first signed in 2008 and extended periodically.

More than 180 people have been killed and several hundreds injured since ethnic violence broke out in Manipur on May 3 when a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts to protest against the majority Meitei community's

NIT-Hamirpur: Student dies due to drug overdose, one more arrested with narcotics



PTI ■ HAMIRPUR (HP)

day after a first-year M.Tech student of the Anational Institute of Technology here was found dead in his hostel room due to a suspected drug overdose, another NIT student was arrested on Tuesday after Charas was seized from his possession, police said.

On Monday, the police had arrested four persons, including three NIT students and another doing BEd, for allegedly distributing 'Chitta,' a form of adulterated heroin, on campus.

Tendua Makhi area of Uttar Pradesh, after 69.38 grams of Charas was recovered from his posses

Chakrabarty.

The accused has been booked under Section 20 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances

Act (NDPS) which lays out the punishment for the production, manufacture, sale, purchase, import and inter-state export of cannabis, Superintendent of Police (SP), Hamirpur, Akriti Sharma

During checking, the police also found 42.96 grams of Charas hidden in a bush near the

on the NIT campus and appealed to the people to report to the police if they suspected anyone of indulging in such illegal activities. The four accused were booked under the NDPS

The father of the student had questioned how drugs made their way inside the campus.

the current unrest in Manipur. The police probing the death case on Tuesday demand for Scheduled Tribe "Today's apprehension of CKLA arrested a B.Tech third-year student, a resident of cadres and the recovery of

Vindhyachal hostel of the NIT on Tuesday. The SP said that the police were apprehending more suspects allegedly engaged in drug peddling

> Act, 1985. Preliminary investigations by the police and forensic team from Mandi had attributed the death of the student to the consumption of some intoxicant.

Air quality in Capital improves slightly

Delhi's air quality improved marginally on Tuesday morning but was still in the poor category, according to monitoring agencies.

The city's average air quality index (AQI) stood at 220 at 12 noon, improving from 263 at 4

pm on Monday.
Delhi's air quality had turned
"very poor" on Sunday for the first time since May, mainly due to a drop in temperature and wind speed, which allowed pollutants to accumulate.

Monday, Environment Minister Gopal Rai said the government has identified eight more pollution hotspots in addition to the existing 13 in the national capital, and special teams will be deployed there to check pollu-

Rai said the government has also decided to use suppressant powder to prevent dust pollu-

tion in the city.

Dust suppressants could include chemical agents like calcium chloride, magnesium chloride, lignosulfonates, and various polymers. These chemicals work by attracting and binding fine dust particles together making the together, making them too heavy to become airborne.

The minister also said the government will re-launch a campaign to curb vehicular pollution on October 26, a year after Lieutenant Governor V K Saxena put it on hold, questioning its effectiveness.

Sources in the city government's environment department said the LG's permission will not be required for the



campaign this year as the participants will not receive any honorarium, unlike in previous

Rai on Monday had announced that the 'Red Light On, Gaadi Off' campaign will start from Thursday.

The Minister also said odd-even vehicle rationing is not being considered at the moment. Under the odd-even scheme, private vehicles with registration plates ending in odd numbers ply on odd dates, and even numbers on even

The "Red Light on Gaadi Off" campaign, first launched on October 16, 2020, aims to reduce vehicular pollution in the national Capital by encouraging drivers to switch off their vehicles while waiting

for traffic lights to turn green. With the dip in temperature, Delhi's air quality declined to the "very poor" category on Monday. Delhi's air quality turned "very poor" on Sunday for the first time since May. Delhi has recorded the world's most toxic air, with stubble burning, pollution from vehicles, construction and coalfired power plants said to be the

According to Bloomberg report, Delhi's air quality index rose to as high as 346 early on Monday, the highest among 110 global cities tracked by IQ

hazard.

contributing factors to this

As per IQ Air data, Delhi recorded particulate matter (PM 2.5) of 296 micrograms per cubic meter of air, which is almost 20 times the WHO's After a meeting with 28 departments to ensure the effective implementation of pollution mitigation measures in the capital, Rai said the next two weeks which include Dussehra, Deepawali and farm fires, are crucial for the Capital

Rai said district collectors have been instructed to conduct field visits on October 25 and ensure the strict implementation of pollution mitigation measures.

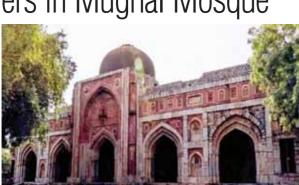
Action will be taken against diesel generator sets, said Rai, adding DG sets being used for emergency services are exempt. The minister said directions have been issued to the Delhi Traffic Police to decongest 95 identified traffic junctions which will help reduce vehicular pollution.

HC to hear on Dec 1 plea against not allowing prayers in Mughal Mosque

 $T^{
m he\ Delhi\ High\ Court\ has}_{
m advanced\ the\ date\ of\ hear-}$ ing to December 1 on a petition against the bar on offering prayers in the Mughal Mosque in the Mehrauli area. The managing committee of Mughal Mosque, which was appointed by the Delhi Waqf Board, had approached the high court last year alleging that the officials of the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) completely stopped the offering of namaz in the mosque on May 13, 2022 in an "absolutely unlawful, arbitrary and precipitous manner".

Allowing an early hearing application by the petitioner, Justice Prateek Jalan said in a recent order, "List on 01.12.2023. The next date of hearing i.E. 30.01.2024 stands

Advocate for the petitioner M Sufian Siddiqui said the prayers were being offered inside the mosque on a regular basis until last year when



they were stopped by the ASI without any notice.

Recently, the court had asked the ASI to clarify its policy on allowing prayers by devotees in religious places located inside protected monuments. In its reply to the petition, the ASI has said that the mosque in question comes within the boundary of Qutub Minar and is thus within the protected area and offering of prayers cannot be permitted

The ASI has cautioned that allowing worship in Mughal Mosque would "not only set an example but it may also impact other monuments too".

'Qutub Minar is a Monument of National Importance and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It is submitted that it is not a place of worship, since the time of its protection the monument or any part of it, has not been used for any type of worship by any community. "It is submitted that the Mosque in question comes within the boundary of Qutub Minar Complex," the reply has added

Home guard dies after pickup van hits police car



STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

41-year-old home guard A41-year-old from games was killed when a pickup van rammed into a Delhi Police vehicle in Dwarka's Baba Haridas Nagar, police said on Tuesday.

On the intervening night of October 22 and 23, assistant sub-inspector Mahesh Kumar and Home Guard Dharampal were on patrolling duty in the area in a PCR van, they said. On the Najafgarh-Bahadurgarh

Road, a pickup van hit their vehicle leaving both of them injured, they said.

The duo was taken to a hospital where Dharampal was declared brought dead while Mahesh was discharged after treatment," an official said. A case under sections 279 (rash driving) and 304A (causing death by negligence) of the Indian Penal Code was registered and the driver of the offending vehicle, Jai Lal (23), was arrested, police said.

Court quashes man's appeal against grant of interim maintenance to wife

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The intent of the provision of interim maintenance under the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act empowers the court to pass such directions as it deems just and proper, said a court here while quashing an appeal against the grant of interim maintenance to a woman.

A magisterial court granted the interim maintenance to the woman and her minor child in March this year.

Additional Sessions Judge Vishal Pahuja was hearing the husband's appeal assailing the magistrate's order, claiming he was earning Rs 12,500 per month, of which the magisterial court granted Rs 3,000 each to his wife and minor child. The appellant said that the grant of 50 per cent of his income was against the principles of natural justice.

"The intent of the provision of interim maintenance (is) that (it) empowers the court to



pass such interim orders as it deems just and proper. The monetary relief is provided to save the aggrieved person from financial crises due to domestic violence and to sustain herself," ASJ Pahuja said in an order passed last week.

"The appellant is the husband who has a duty to maintain his wife and child, so his income has to be divided between him and his wife and minor child which is aptly done in this case," he added.

The sessions court also agreed with the magistrate's finding that the husband was earning more than Rs 12,500 per month.

It said even otherwise it was not a final order and the magisterial court had merely granted interim maintenance, which was applicable till the case was disposed of. "This court does not find any

merits in this argument put forth by the counsel for the appellant, (which) thus, stands rejected," the court said, adding that "present appeal stands dismissed being devoid of



Leaders join Dussehra celebrations in Capital

STAFF REPORTER NEW DELHI

President Droupadi Murmu, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, former Congress president leaders attended events across Delhi to mark Dussehra festivities on Tuesday.

Dussehra marks the end of the nine-day festivities of 'Navratra'. Effigies of Ravana, Meghnad and Kumbhakaran are set ablaze during the celebrations to signify the triumph of good over evil. President Murmu attended Dussehra celebrations hosted by the Shri Dharmik Leela Committee at the ground opposite the Red Fort here, while Prime Minister Modi took part in an event held in Dwarka.

The Dharmik Leela Committee has been organising one of the most high-profile Ramlila events of the city since 1924. President Murmu arrived at the venue around 6 pm and offered prayers along with the members of the committee.

Murmu was accompanied by former Union Minister Harsh Vardhan. She was later handed



President Droupadi Murmu during Dussehra at Red Fort Ground, in New Delhi on Tuesday Ranjan Dimri

a ceremonial bow and arrow to shoot towards the effigies, following which they were set ablaze.

Senior Congress leader Sonia Gandhi attended Dussehra celebrations at an event hosted by the Nav Shri Dharmik Leela Committee. She was accompanied by Congress leader I P Agarwal and other party leaders. Amid chants of 'Jai Shri Ram', Sonia was gifted a copy of the Ramayana at the event.

Taking inspiration from Lord Ram, city Govt trying to serve people: Kejriwal



Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal aims at the effigy of Ravana as a symbolic gesture with a bow and arrow during Dussehra festival celebration organised by Love Kush Ramleela at Red Fort Ground, in New Delhi on Tuesday

Grassroots innovators' intitiatives help fight climate change threats **ARCHANA JYOTI** ■ NEW DELHI

In high-altitude Ladakh, in the far northern Indian Himalayas, volunteers of Leh Nutrition Project, unfazed by extreme weathers are engaged in advancing the development of artificial glaciers to help tackle water security issues for semi-nomadic communities in Changthang region. Artificial glaciers are a simple technique to maximise water harvesting.

Far off in the Sundarbans in West Bengal, The Dighir Ganguly Foundation is working with the Munda community to construct specially designed customised structures including hospitals and schools that are disaster-resistant as per the local needs. Similarly, IGSSS is increasing resilience in the face of increasing heat waves within urban communities through the installation of agri-bio



panels and insulators for 30 its initiative 'Flip the Notion'. ĥouseholds in informal settlements in the national Capital. These three innovators among nine other grassroots innovators recently here demonstrated their effective climate change solutions being implemented at the local level across the country under the ambit of the Sustainable Environment innovators. and Ecological Development

Society (SEEDS), a not-for-

profit organisation through

Clearly, in the face of climate induced threat to humankind. humanitarian innovation and intervention technologies have become an immediate need to contain the pressing challenges being posed at both global and community level as has been showcased by these

Dr Manu Gupta, Co-Founder, SEEDS, explained that their organization is engaged in build-

communities across boundaries towards disaster and environmental stewardship. 'As you know, there are

increasing number of climate induced disasters around the world. Our mission, at SEEDS, is to equip the vulnerable to be more resilient. We aim to serve in 225 hotspots in India by 2030, towards building hyper-local resilience eco-system reaching - 315 million lives," he said

In other words, the initiative's focus is climate resilience through innovation. The event which was attended by Kamal Kishore from National Disaster Management Authority (NCMA), Takeshi Komino, General Secretary at CWS Japan, Aruna Pandey, research consultant, Lighthouse Communities held research deliberations and importance

of transformative solutions

for resilient communities,

challenges and innovations for stressed communities, collaborations, and technologybased interventions amongst

Gupta added that so far they have responded to more than 45 disasters, built nearly 100 schools, more than 60,000 homes, nearly 25 healthcare facilities, more than 110 sanitation units - all this enabled through a people-led programme.

Alongside we have skilled more than one million learners in SEEDS Gurukul Programmes. Local and national organizations possess a unique vantage point, allowing them to grasp the precise vulnerabilities and challenges their communities face amidst the complexities of

climate change," he added. The other innovators that showcased their strategy aimed towards climate mitigation and adoption were

Mahila Housing SEWA Trust ELFA International, Words. Rhythms. Images (WRI), Spandan Foundation, Urmul Seemant Samiti, Jaljeevika and OMCAR Foundation.

If local women leaders under the umbrella of Mahila Housing SEWA Trust is focused on mitigating the disproportionate impact of heat stress in urban settlements in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh, the Centre for Aquatic Livelihood Jaljeevika, an NGO, has initiated a project in Purnia, Bihar with an aim to build resilience to climate change within fisheries and aquaculture communities.

OMCAR Similarly, Foundation is working to conserve the Palk Bay ecosystem through participatory marine resource management by building capacity of the locals in conservation efforts and conducting research on coastal resource management.

STAFF REPORTER **NEW DELHI**

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal joined Dussehra celebrations at the Red Fort here on Tuesday and said his government is trying to serve the people of the national capital, taking inspiration from the

ideals of Lord Ram. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) Government is ensuring everybody in Delhi gets good edu-cation and health services as well as facilities like free electricity, he said at the Dussehra celebrations hosted by the Luv Kush Ramleela Committee on

the Red Fort ground. "Lord Ram is our ideal. There is a lot to learn from his life and his concept of Ram Rajya. Our effort is nobody sleeps hungry and everybody gets a good education, health services and electricity in Delhi," the Chief

Kejriwal greeted people on the occasion and also prayed for their well-being and happi-'Taking inspiration from Lord

Minister said in his address.

Rama and as your son, I have been trying to solve your prob-"Still, if something remains to

be done, I seek your apology,"

he said. The Chief Minister was felicitated with a mace by the organisers at the event. He took part in the tradition of setting the effigies of Ravana, Meghnad and Kumbhakaran

ablaze with a ceremonial bow

and arrow. People cheered the torching of the effigies which was accompanied by a recorded soundtrack of crackers bursting. Since crackers are banned in Delhi due to pollution, it is no longer

used in the effigies torched on

BJP slams Congress for 'peddling misinformation'

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

The BJP has slammed the Congress for "peddling misinformation" over alleged rising economic inequality and said average income of people has increased as the country is on an "upward trajectory" under the Modi Government. The BIP's remarks came after Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh alleged the gap between the ultra-rich and the middle class in the country was widening under the government. Reacting to the Congress leader's claim, BJP's IT department head Amit Malviya mentioned on social media, "Your selective outrage and misrep-

resentation laced with lies are

The nation, under the current government, is on an upward trajectory, irrespective of how you choose to twist the bare facts. Rather than attempting to smear with half-truths, maybe it's time for some introspection at vour end. Because while figures don't lie, it appears you are clearly attempting to," he Malviya said.

A day earlier through a statement Ramesh claimed that an analysis of the publicly available data on income tax returns for the period 2013-14 to 2021-22 confirms one of the essential themes of the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' — that of increasing income inequality. The widening gap between the ultra-rich and the middle class under the Modi government is more and

Hitting back, Malviya said, "Jairam, allow me to set the record straight with cold, unadulterated facts - not the

cherry-picked statistics you are using to peddle misinformation with your half-baked gyaan (knowledge), just like your boss.

Trashing Congress' claim, the BJP leader said firstly, the SBI research has shown that the Weighted Mean Income' of Rs 4.4 lakh in AY 2013-2014 has soared by almost 3 times to Rs 13 lakh in AY 2022-23. "Do you even grasp the magnitude of this growth? The average income of all our citizens has increased," he added.

Ramesh in his post on X said the top one per cent of income



all income in 2013-14. By 2021-22, the top 1 percent made 23 per cent of all income, he said. The top one per cent of income tax payers saw their income grow at 13 per cent year-onyear from 2013-14 to 2021-22

Rejecting Ramesh's claim, Malviya contended, "While "a massive 60 per cent faster than the income of the lowest

you are busy pointing fingers at the top 1 per cent, you seem to have conveniently omitted that over a span of 8 years there is an addition of a monumental 4.81 crore more ITRs (income tax returns), filed across the board due to increased incomes' "13.6% of our population has left the lower income bracket

and migrated upwards in AY 2023 compared to AY 2012. That is not the 'ultra-rich', who flourished in the crony capitalist and license raj regime of Congress, since Independence, but common people," he added.

Contrary to the perception being created, the BJP leader said, there is "democratisation of wealth creation", which is happening in the country.

creation is not restricted to a certain income class or a select group of cities. Many startup/unicorn founders are from the middle-class and from different tier-2/3/4 cities. In 2012, Hurun list of rich entrepreneurs came from only 10 cities;

just about the rich getting richer," he added. Malviya said the top 30 cities of India are "usually" expected to be ahead in formal savings. However, in the last four years the share of cities beyond the top-30 cities in total mutual fund assets has grown from 15 per cent to 26 per cent, high-

lighting that the lower middle-

class and middle class from

tier-3 and tier-4 cities are

this number has surged to 76 cities in 2022, he said. "It is not

in mutual funds due to better incomes, he claimed.

'According to a paper by the International Monetary Fund, through various Modi government schemes and initiatives, India has practically eradicated extreme poverty and (it) is down to less than 1%, bringing down consumption inequality to its most negligible in 40 years," Malviya said.

Referring to a report of the Niti Aayog, the BJP leader said as many as 13.6 crore people have escaped the clutches of poverty between 2015-16 and 2019-

"We have actually worked for the poor and middle class and delivered, rather than the Congress's empty slogans like 'Garibi Hatao," he added.

Stand by my judgement in same-sex marriage, says CJI

Chief Justice of India D Y Chandrachud has defended his minority verdict on some aspects pertaining to same-sex marriages and said he stood by it as the judicial opinions are sometimes a "vote of conscience and a vote of the Constitution". On October 17, a five-judge

Constitution bench headed by the CJI unanimously refused to accord legal recognition to same-sex marriage, saying there was "no unqualified right" to marriage. However, the CJI and Justice S

K Kaul were in minority on the issues of right to form civil union and right of adoption of queer couples

Speaking candidly at the 3rd Comparative Constitutional Law discussion co-hosted by the Georgetown University Law Center, Washington and the Society for Democratic Rights (SDŔ), New Delhi about him being in minority in the same-sex marriage judgements, the CJI said, "I do believe it (judgement) is sometimes a vote of conscience and a vote of the Constitution and I stand by what I said."



He said the CIIs have been in minority on rare occasions. "But there are 13 significant cases in our history where the Chief Justice has been in a minority. And, I do believe, sometimes it is a vote of conscience and a vote of the Constitution and I stand by what I said," he said.

"Therefore, we said that, well, it's time for Parliament to act. Apart from that, that's where I got into a minority. I said, though we cannot therefore entrench into the domain of Parliament. Nonetheless, there were sufficient foundation principles in our Constitution, to allow for recognition of same sex unions in terms of civil unions," he elaborated.

"Three of my colleagues, another colleague joined me in

felt that to recognise a right of forming unions was again beyond the judicial domain, and that it must be left to

Parliament," the CJI said. On the fundamental issue as to whether same sex couples should have the right to form binding unions and cohabit traditional relationships, three of my colleagues, though they recognised that they do have the right, he said, "we cannot elevate this to a constitutional

The other area in which I was in a minority was whether same sex couples have the right to adopt... I said that well, same sex couples, queer couples have the right to adopt a child because under Indian law, a single individual can adopt a child, a woman can adopt a child. So, I said if they are together, there is no reason to deny them the right to adopt the child merely because they are in a queer relationship," he

"So on the broader aspect, there was a unanimity, but on the right to form unions and adoptions. I was in a minority of two as against three of my colleagues," the CJI said.

Modi, Shah greet Indo-Tibetan Border Police on Raising Day

25 per cent of taxpayers," the

After adjusting for inflation, the

lowest 25 per cent tax-payers

actually took home less real

income in 2022 than in 2019,

Congress leader claimed.



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday greeted the personnel of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) on its raising day. The force guards India's borders

Prime Minister Modi in his message said "On the occasion of ITBP Raising Day, I salute the indomitable spirit and valour of our ITBP personnel. They play a vital role in pro-

tecting our nation. At the same time, their commendable humanitarian efforts during natural disasters are a testament to their unwavering commitment to the nation. May they continue to serve with the same dedication and fervor." In his message, the home minister wrote: "Heartfelt greetings to the ITBP personnel on their Raising Day. Over the years, the @ITBP_official has evolved into the epitome of human strength and resilience, guarding the nation's borders and vital interests in harsh climatic conditions and unforgiving

ideals of patriotism for the generations to come. Salutations to the Himveers of

our nation," Shah said. The ITBP was raised in the aftermath of the 1962 Chinese aggression. The 90,000 personnel strong force is primarily deployed to guard the 3,488 km line of actual control (LAC) with China apart from render ing a variety of duties in the internal security domain and disaster management.

NIC will extend full cooperation to ethics panel probing charges against Moitra, says Vaishnaw whether there were any

Union IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw on Tuesday said the National Informatics Centre (NIC) will extend "full cooperation" to the Parliament's Ethics Committee in the investigation of charges levelled by BJP MP Nishikant Dubey against TMC's Mahua Moitra. Sharing a copy of Vaishnaw's letter on X, Dubey said it is the beginning of a 'dharma yuddh'. Moitra said she is "amused" by Vaishnaw's response to Dubey's letter and welcomed the BJP "to do a hit job on me". Dubey has accused Moitra of

accepting bribes and favours for asking questions in Lok Sabha at the behest of businessman Darshan Hiranandani to target the Adani Group and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Earlier, the BJP MP wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla in this regard. In his letter to Vaishnaw on October 15, Dubey urged the minister to take the allegations against her with "utmost seriousness", investigate the IP addresses of Moitra's log-in credentials for her Lok Sabha account and Sabha)," he said.

where she was not present. Replying to Dubey, the IT minister said the issues raised by him are of grave importance. "National Informatics Centre acts as a service provider on the instructions of organisations availing services from NIC. As a service provider,

instances in which her account

was accessed from a location

organisations of the government of India," he said. Matters related to user-access and website policy, etc. Are within the purview of the organisations that avail services from the NIC, the minister

NIC is instrumental in pro-

viding IT services to various

"In the case of the Lok Sabha website, the organisation availing services from the NIC is Lok Sabha Secretariat under the control of Speaker, Lok

Sabha," he said. The issues raised in your letter are undoubtedly of grave importance. The subject matter of your letter is currently under investigation by the Committee on Ethics (Lok

Ram Darbar idol, Golden Temple model in last round e-auction of PM mementos



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE 💻

statue of Ram Darbar, a Amodel of Golden Temple of Amritsar, Kamdhenu and the souvenir of Jerusalem are among the popular items in the latest round of e-auction of gifts and mementos given to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Minister Meenakashi Lekhi said. The e-auction that began on October 2 will end on October 31.

Minister of State for Culture Lekhi interacted with media at the National Gallery of Modern Art (NGMA) here and shared about the cultural significance of the items under the e-auction, and urged people to come forward and take part in it. The minister emphasised that

the statue of Ram Darbar, a model of Golden Temple of Amritsar, Kamdhenu and the souvenir of Jerusalem, are among the popular items in this auction and attracting a lot of bidders. A statue of Lord Laxmi

Narayan Vitthal and goddess Rukmini, the Aranmula Kannadi, a brass statue of Lord Rama, Sita, Laxman, and Lord Hanuman, are also among popular items, according to the

Culture Ministry. Replicas of the Sun Temple at Modhera and Vijay Stambh of Chittorgarh, Chamba rumal, Pattachitra, a rich painting depicting a ghat of Varanasi are among the 912 items which are part of the latest round of eauction of gifts and mementos given to the Prime Minister.

Some of the items have been displayed at the NGMA as part of an exhibition starting October 2, which has attracted more than 15,500 visitors, the ministry said in a statement. To ensure inclusivity, the exhibition offers curated walkthroughs and tours, it said. Lekhi also highlighted the indigenous art forms of high artistic value that are suitable for display in museums or at homes of art enthusiasts. 'These art pieces deserve respect and care. Some of these items include the Gond painting, headgear of Yakshagana Dance from Karnataka, and the

work," she said. In keeping with tradition, the proceeds from this e-auction will contribute to a noble cause, specifically in support of the Namami Gange Programme. This flagship initiative of the Union government is dedicated to preserving and restoring our national river, the Ganga, and enhancing its delicate ecosys-

bust of Basavanna in Bidri

tem, the statement said. The funds generated through this auction will reinforce our unwavering commitment to safeguarding this invaluable national asset, it said.

This is the fifth edition in a series of successful auctions, the first of which was held in January 2019.

"In the last four editions, more than 7,000 items have been put on e-auction, and this time there are 912 items for the eauction," Lekhi had said on

Indian scientists discover bacteria that can produce Hydrogen

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

degrading bacteria with hydrogen production capability in a hot spring from Maharashtra. The study is published in the journal Archives of Microbiology. It could be a source of clean and renewable energy, they noted. The scientists under the Bioenergy Group at the Agharkar Research Institute (ARI), an autonomous institute of the Department of Science and Technology, has been studying the microbial diversity of anaerobic

microorganisms that break down lignocellulose in a variety of environmental niches, Indian scientists have stum-bled upon a new genus of compost, mangrove sedi-

past one decade. Several novel bacterial, fungal, and methanogenic species were discovered, as per a recently published paper of the journal Archives of Microbiology. They noted that a bacteria called Sporanaerobium hydrogeniformans produces hydrogen as a byproduct of its metab-

Sporanaerobium hydrogeniformans is part of the Lachnospiraceae family, whose members are known as



the most effective polysaccharide degraders due to their capacity to synthesise free or complicated hydrolytic

enzymes. The structural ele ments of lignocellulosic agricultural wastes, cellulose and

xylan, can be broken down by

A collection of thermostable hydrolytic enzymes reported in Sporanaerobium hydrogeniformans makes the bacindustry.

The researchers also discovered that the bacteria can grow optimally at high temperatures of 45-50°C and an alkaline pH of 8.0. The bacteria may be a candidate for biohydrogen generation from agricultural leftovers in accordance with waste-to-energy legislation in India.

Additionally, genomic research uncovered that new bacterium possesses a special metabolic route for converting a variety of simple and hydrogen and ethanol. Discovery of Sporanaerobium hydrogeniformans opens up new directions for investigabiohydrogen gas as a longterm energy source. Additionally, it emphasises the value of researching microbes in hostile habitats like hot springs, where rare and important species might be found, said the scientists. They are hoping that more research on this bacterium will lead to the creation of innovative and effective processes for producing bioĥydrogen gas, which could decrease reliance on fossil

Tau proteins protect brains of kingfishers while diving: Study

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE **NEW DELHI**

 $E^{\mathrm{ver} \ \mathrm{wondered} \ \mathrm{what} \ \mathrm{helps}}_{\mathrm{kingfishers} \ \mathrm{dive} \ \mathrm{without}}$ hurting their brains while if a human ever belly-flopped into a pool, water can be surprisingly hard and sometimes can lead to injuries as well.

A team of researchers has found that it's the magic of Tau proteins that help stabilise tiny structures inside the brain of the kingfishers. In contrast, the accumulation of too many tau proteins can be a bad thing. For instance, in humans, traumatic brain injuries and Alzheimer's disease are associated with a buildup of tau, says a study in the journal Communications Biology.

The researchers had compared the DNA of 30 different kingfisher species to zero in on the genes that might help explain the birds' diet and ability to dive without sustaining brain damage.

The type of diving that kingfishers do-- what researchers call "plunge-diving" -- is an aeronautic feat. "It's a highspeed dive from air to water, and it's done by very few bird species," said Chad Eliason, a



research scientist at the Field Museum in Chicago and the study's first author. But it's a behavior that's potentially

"For kingfishers to dive headfirst the way they do, they must have evolved other traits to keep them from hurting their brains," added Shannon Hackett, associate curator of birds at the Field Museum and the study's senior author.

'The fact that there are so many transitions to diving is what makes this group both fascinating and powerful, from a scientific research perspective," said Hackett. "If a trait evolves a multitude of different times independently, that means you have power to find an overarching explanation

for why that is. "To get all the kingfisher DNA,

we used specimens in the

Field Museum's collections," says Eliason, who works in the Grainger Bioinformatics Center and Negaunee Integrative Research Center. "When our scientists do fieldwork, they take tissue samples from the bird specimens they collect, like pieces of muscle or liver. Those tissue samples are stored at the Field Museum, frozen in liquid nitrogen, to preserve the

Tau proteins help stabilize tiny structures inside the brain, but the accumulation of too many tau proteins can be a bad thing. In humans, traumatic brain injuries and Alzheimer's disease are associated with a buildup of tau. "I learned a lot about tau protein when I was the concussion manager of my son's hockey team," said Hackett.

Now that these correlated genomic variations have been identified, said Hackett, "the next question is, what do the mutations in these birds' genes do to the proteins that are being produced? What shape changes are there? What is going on to compensate in a brain for the concussive

Congress attacks Centre

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

ongress on Tuesday again Cattacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi for not visiting Manipur since the outbreak of violence in May and alleged that he "abandoned" the state at a time when his intervention and outreach were needed the most.

Congress chief spokesman Jairam Ramesh said it is the 175th day since Manipur erupted and social harmony in the state was devastated. But five questions continue to be asked by the people of Manipur and by all those who want the process of reconciliation and trust-building in the state to gather momentum, Jairam said in a state-

'The people of Manipur and the entire Northeast are closely watching how the prime minister has abandoned the state of Manipur at a time when his intervention and outreach were needed the

"He cannot escape accountability and responsibility by completely ignoring the crisis," the Congress leader said. Ramesh asked why the Prime Minister has not met the chief minister of Manipur



a large majority of whom belong to his party or are its allies.

He also asked why the Union Minister of State of External Affairs who represents Manipur (Inner) in Lok Sabha not been able to meet the PM. "Why has the PM who pontificates on all subjects not seen it fit to speak on Manipur publicly for more than 4-5 minutes at most, that too in a routine manner and after immense pressure from the Opposition?

"Why has the PM who loves to travel at the drop of a hat

a few hours in Manipur to show his concern," Ramesh asked. "Why is the CM who is so thoroughly discredited across sections of Manipur's society still being allowed to continue," the Congress MP also asked. The Congress has been critical of the Modi government's

handling of the Manipur cri-The opposition party has also

been demanding the sacking of Chief Minister N Biren Singh, accusing him of not being able to control the sit-

Hong Kong court upholds ruling in favour of inheritance rights for same-sex couples

A Hong Kong court on Tuesday upheld a ruling that favoured the granting of equal inheritance rights to same-sex couples, in the latest victory for the city's LGBTQ+ community.

The decision by the Court of Appeal rejected the government's motion against the ruling that said the differential treat ment facing same-sex married couples under two inheritance laws in the city constitutes unlawful discrimination.

"The differential treatment based on sexual orientation is apparent," Justice of Appeal Peter Cheung wrote in his judg-

Currently, Hong Kong only recognizes same-sex marriage for certain purposes such as taxation, civil service benefits and dependent visas. Many of the government's concessions were won through legal challenges in recent years as the city has seen a growing social acceptance of



same-sex marriage The ruling is a victory for the

city's LGBTQ+ movement and is expected to have a strong couples from Hong Kong, who

impact on the lives of same-sex upheld two earlier rulings that supported the granting of submarried overseas.

sidized housing benefits to that the government should Last week, the same court same-sex married partners. In provide a framework for recog-

September, the city's top court ruled in a landmark decision

passed to Li. He passed away in 2020 after suffering years of depression. Nongovernmental organization Hong Kong Marriage Equality called on the government not to appeal the judgment. With the recent court rulings, it is clear that the right thing to do is to recognize same-sex partnerships in a comprehensive manner, it said. In a statement issued by his solic itors, Li also said he hopes the government will respect the judgment. "It added insult to injury - that the government repeatedly argued in open court I am not Edgar's husband and should be treated as a stranger to

him, while I was still mourning,"



Tesla: Justice Department expanding probe and issuing subpoenas for information

AP DETROIT

 $F^{\rm ederal\ prosecutors\ have}_{\rm expanded\ investigations\ into}$ Tesla beyond the electric vehicle maker's partially automated driving systems, and they have issued subpoenas for information instead of simply requesting it, the company disclosed

In a quarterly report filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Tesla said the Department of Justice is looking into "personal benefits, related parties, vehicle range and personnel decisions" without giving details.

The additional investigation topics and the subpoenas suggest that prosecutors have broadened their inquiry, and they have found the need to force Tesla to disclose information, legal experts say.

The filing indicates prosecutors may be investigating Tesla CEO Elon Musk, and whether the company has been candid in describing the features of its vehicles, they say.

In January, Tesla disclosed that the Justice Department had requested documents related to its Autopilot and "Full Self-Driving" features. Both features are classified as driver-assist systems, and the company says on its website that the vehicles cannot drive themselves.

Now, the company is disclosing a probe that is "a lot wider than just looking at Autopilot and FSD features," said Erik Gordon, a University of Michigan business and law professor. "The DOJ often starts with a formal written request and escalates to administrative subpoenas if it

agent stole an empty plane at

Sea-Tac International Airport

in Seattle and crashed into a

small island in Puget Sound

after being chased by military

jets that scrambled to intercept

the plane. The man told an air

traffic controller that he "was-

n't really planning on landing"

the aircraft, and described him-

Sunday's incident occurred

on a 76-seat Horizon Air

Embraer 175 that left Everett,

Washington, at 5:23 pm. Local time and landed in Portland

an hour later. Alaska Airlines

did not immediately say how

many passengers were on

board

self as "a broken guy".

thinks it isn't getting full cooperation," he said.

Specifying additional items that prosecutors are looking at indicates that Tesla lawyers found them serious enough to change the company's public disclosures, Gordon said.

Tesla didn't respond to a request for comment, but the company based in Austin, Texas, said in its SEC filing that to its knowledge, no government agency has concluded that any wrongdoing happened in any ongoing investigation. The Justice Department declined to comment.

For the first time, Tesla said in its filing that the investigations could damage the company's brand. "Should the government decide to pursue an enforcement action, there exists the possibility of a material adverse impact on our business, results of operation, prospects, cash flows financial position or brand," the filing said

Jacob Frenkel, a former SEC enforcement attorney and exfederal prosecutor, said specifically pointing out "personal benefits and related parties" suggests a possible connection to Musk. Disclosing that vehicle range is under scrutiny "also reflects a concern about the company's representations about vehicle features," said Frenkel, now a partner with Dickinson Wright in Washington.

It's unclear if Tesla merely considered subpoenas as requests for information in prior quarterly disclosures, Frenkel said. "Now the broader inquiry including relating to the Autopilot and FSD features appears subject to subpoena," he

Extremists with ties to ISIS kill 26 in Congo

xtremists with ties to the Estamic State group killed at least 26 people in eastern Congo, authorities said on Tuesday.

Attackers with the Allied Democratic Forces killed people in the city of Oicha in North Kivu province on Monday, said Beni Charles Ehuta Omeonga, the military administrator for

"Among the victims were seven ily killed by the assailants in their home," he said.

Most of the victims were shot in their homes, said Nicolas Kikuku, a deputy governor in the region, adding that the death toll is likely higher than what's been reported. Conflict has been simmering in

eastern Congo for decades where more than 120 armed groups are fighting in the region, most for land and control of mines with valuable minerals, while some are trying to protect their communities. ADF has been expanding and intensifying operations in recent years, spreading from North Kivu to Ituri province despite military interventions

meant to stop them. In April, the group/outfit? killed more than 30 people between the Irumu and Mambasa territories in Ituri. ADF attacks have killed at least 370 civilians Since April last year and abducted several hundred more - including a significant number of children since April last year, according to the United Nations

Miners from rival union hold hundreds underground at gold mine in South Africa

AP JOHANNESBURG

Agroup of miners from an unregistered, rival union are holding around 500 of their colleagues underground for the second day at a gold mine in South Africa over a union dispute. Some 15 miners have been injured in scuffles, the head of the mine said

Details were sketchy and there were conflicting statements about what happened. According to Jon Hericourt,

CEO of New Kleynfontein Gold Mine company, which manages the mine, the incident erupted early on Monday when the miners from the unregistered union prevented hundreds of others from leaving after their night shift ended at the Modder East mine in Springs, east of Johannesburg. He said he did not know



ers were being "held hostage' by others from the rival union. There were all sorts of hammers, picks, shovels and other mining equipment that could potentially be used as weapons, he said.

Police were deployed to the mine but they have not been in contact with anyone under-He said he did not know exactly how many of the min-them via mine telephones

and two-way radios. Hericourt said there were at least 543 employees underground in various sections of the mine. He added that there was some initial contact early

hostage-takers. "Engineers who were working in the mine on Sunday morning were also caught up (in this)," Hericourt said.

on Monday with the alleged

At least one man had sustained a serious head injury in scuffles, Hericourt said. The mine sent a paramedic and a security officer to bring him out on Monday after an agreement that they could, but the two were also taken hostage, he said.

The National Union of Mineworkers, which is the sole recognized union at the mine, said more than 500 of its members were being held against their will underground by what it referred to as "hooligans."

"They are still preventing them from coming to the surface," NUM representative Mlulameli Mweli said, adding there were also female mine employees trapped under-ground. "NUM calls for the law enforcement agencies in South Africa to intervene and go underground and arrest the hooligans who are holding our members against their

Hericourt blamed members of the rival AMCU union, saying it has demanded to be the sole syndicate representing the miners at Modder East. Meanwhile, AMCU has dis-

puted Hericourt's version of events, saying that there was a sit-in protest by miners in support of the union. New Kleynfontein Gold Mine manages Modder East, which is owned by the Gold One

Rivalry between the NUM and AMCU unions was partly responsible for one of South África's most horrific mining episodes, when 34 striking mineworkers were shot and killed by police at a platinum mine in Marikana in the North West province in 2012. Six other mineworkers and two security officials were killed in days of violence that preceded the mass shooting

12 Indians hurt in road mishap near Kathmandu

AP KATHMANDU

welve Indian pilgrims and a ■ Nepali driver were injured when the SUV they were travelling overturned some 25 km west of Kathmandu on Tuesday

morning, police said.
The vehicle carrying the 12 pilgrims, including three children, overturned after the driver lost control at Indrsarowar Rural Municipality, near Matatirtha area in Makawanpur district. The vehicle was heading towards Kathmandu from Birgunj, a southern Nepal town. The injured passengers were taken to Kathmandu for treatment, the police said.

The 25-year-old driver, identified as Anil Kumar Sah, has been detained for the purpose

They were on a pilgrimage tour of Kathmandu on Hindu festival Vijaya Dashami.

of investigation.

Off-duty pilot accused of trying to shut down engines of Horizon Air jet in midflight

AP ■ PORTLAND (US)

n off-duty pilot riding in Athe extra seat in the cockpit of a Horizon Air passenger jet tried to shut down the engines in midflight and had to be subdued by the crew, according to a pilot flying the

Authorities in Oregon identified the man as Joseph David Emerson, 44. He was being held Monday on 83 counts each of attempted murder and reckless endangerment and one count of endangering an aircraft, according to the Multnomah County Sheriff's

The San Francisco-bound flight on Sunday diverted to Portland, Oregon, where it was met by officers from the Port of Portland, who took Emerson into custody.

Seattle-based Alaska Airlines, that, we want law enforcement which owns Horizon, a

regional carrier, did not name Emerson, but said on Monday that the threat was posed by one of its pilot who was off duty but authorised to occupy the cockpit jump seat. The airline said the captain

and co-pilot reacted quickly, "engine power was not lost and the crew secured the aircraft without incident." Alaska said in a statement that no weapons were involved.

One of the pilots told air traffic controllers that the man who posed the threat had been removed from the cockpit. We've got the guy that tried

to shut the engines down out of the cockpit. And he - doesn't sound like he's causing any issue in the back right now, and I think he's subdued," one of the pilots said on audio captured by LiveATC.Net. "Other than as soon as we get on the



threat related to this inci-

Federal Aviation Administration said it was

helping law enforcement There have been crashes that investigations, but declined further comment about the

FAA records indicate that Emerson has a valid license to fly airline planes. It was not clear on Monday whether he was represented by a lawyer.

investigators believe were deliberately caused by pilots. Authorities said the co-pilot of a Germanwings jet that crashed in the French Alps in 2015 had practised putting the plane into a dive.

În 2018, a Horizon Air ground

Alaska said passengers continued on to San Francisco on a later flight.

When the jump seat, a third seat in the cockpit, is occupied it's often filled by an off-duty pilot, but the seat can be used

by other airline employees

AP KUALA LUMPUR

Malaysia's government said on Tuesday it will allow Lynas Rare Earth to continue to import and process rare earths until March 2026, after the Australian miner proposed a new technology to extract radioactive elements from the waste it produces.

The Lynas refinery in Malaysia, its first outside China producing minerals that are crucial to high-tech manufacturing, has been operating in central Pahang state since 2012. But the company has been embroiled in a dispute over radiation from waste accumulating at the plant. The government had ordered Lynas to move its leaching and cracking processes - which produce the radioactive waste from Australian ore - out of the country by the year's end. It also was

Malaysia gives nod for Australian miner Lynas to import, process rare earths until March 2026 not allowed to import raw mate-Chang said the government's

rials with radioactive elements into the country. Science Minister Chang Lih

Kang said the two conditions for renewing Lynas' license had been met after the company proposed a way to extract thorium, the radioactive element, from the raw rare earths it imports and from the more than 1 million tons of waste sitting at its

The Atomic Energy Licensing Board has studied the Lynas proposal and found it feasible, he about-turn was not a softening of its stance. He said he considered it a win-win situation as it "fulfills our decision not to allow the continuous accumulation of radioactive waste" at the Lynas plant. If successful, Chang said the

waste can be disposed off quickly and the thorium can be commercialized and sold to nuclear plants overseas or to other industries. Lynas must commit 1 per cent of its gross revenue to research and development, especially on the thorium extraction,



he added. Lynas welcomed Malaysia's decision, with CEO Amanda Lacaze saying it will provide a strong foundation for the further development of Malaysia's rare earths industry. She said Lynas has invested more than 3 billion ringgit (USD 627 million) in Malaysia. Lynas said in a statement it will raise its research and development investment from 0.5 per cent to 1 per cent of its Malaysian gross sales, to develop methods to remove naturally occurring radioactive mater-

Lynas insists its operations are safe. It had earlier taken its dispute with the government to a Malaysian court.

Last week, Lynas said it will shut down most of its Malaysian operations for the next two months to upgrade its downstream operations. It said the upgrade was essential if its license was updated to allow the company to continue to import and process raw materials from January 1.

Lynas said it plans to also undertake further maintenance work on the cracking and leaching to resume as normal. Rare earths are 17 minerals used to make products such as electric or hybrid vehicles,

weapons, flat-screen TVs,

mobile phones, mercury-vapor

lights and camera lenses.

facility if operations are allowed

China has about a third of the world's rare earth reserves but a near monopoly on supplies. Lynas has said it's refinery could meet nearly a third of world

demand for rare earths, excluding China. Environmental groups have long campaigned against the Lynas refinery, demanding that the company export its radioactive waste. They contend that the radioactive elements, which include thorium and uranium among others, are not in their natural forms but have been made more dangerous through mechanical and chemical processes.

www.dailypioneer.com

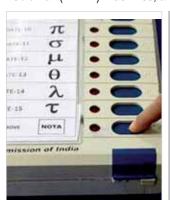
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PAPER WITH PASSION-

Status quo

EC needs a year to prepare for simultaneous polls, effectively ruling out such an exercise in 2024

The concept of "One Nation, One Election," which envisions simultaneous parliamentary and Assembly elections across India, has been a subject of significant debate. While this idea aims to streamline the electoral process, reduce costs and enhance governance efficiency, it faces a considerable challenge at two levels: Conceptual (various nuances of having all elections at one go) and operational. For now, the Election Commission has made it clear that due to a shortage of semiconductors and chips required for the production of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs), it cannot be done in 2024. Semiconductors and chips are the lifeblood of electronic devices, including EVMs. Recent global shortages in these crucial components have created substantial challenges for the EC. The commission has expressed the need for a time of up to a year to ramp up EVM production. Additionally, semiconductors are also required for Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines, an integral part of the voting process. The EC had report-



ed its inability to utilise more than 80 per cent of its budget allocated for procuring EVMs due to semiconductor shortages. This issue has been raised with a parliamentary standing committee, chaired by former President Ram Nath Kovind, tasked with assessing the feasibility of simultaneous elections. Both the parliamentary standing committee and Prime Minister Narendra Modi have endorsed the idea of simultaneous elections. The 22nd Law Commission is also examining the feasibility of this concept; it is expected to propose tentative timelines for elections.

While the concept of simultaneous elections has garnered support for its potential to save public funds and

reduce administrative burden, it faces constitutional complexities. The 21st Law Commission, which evaluated this issue in 2018, supported the idea but noted that constitutional amendments would be necessary for its implementation. It emphasised the need for further discussions involving all stakeholders before making final recommendations. Furthermore, additional costs of Rs 5,200 crore and Rs 8,000 crore are estimated to be required for the procurement of additional voting machines necessary to hold simultaneous elections in 2024 and 2029, respectively. This would mean extra burden on the exchequer. These estimates also factor in the projected population increase in India by 2029. The concept of "One Nation, One Election" holds great promise in streamlining the electoral process and improving governance efficiency though there would be a lot of issues to be settled before it can be effectively implemented without bruising the Indian democratic system itself. However, for now, the semiconductor shortage and the need for a substantial budget settles the debate in favour of multiple elections. Addressing these challenges will require coordination among the Government, Election Commission and semiconductor manufacturers. As India's democracy further evolves, the feasibility of simultaneous elections remains an important talking point.



evotees carry an idol of Goddess Durga for immersion at the bank of Brahmaputra river, in Guwahati

Right to work: A far cry for women



Gender inequality is a harsh reality of the global labour market, with almost one in four women unable to find a job, compared with 16.6 per cent of men

hile, in 2016, an ILO and Gallup opinion poll in 142 countries and territories. found that a total of 70 per cent of women and 66 per cent of men would prefer that women work at paid jobs, which included a majority of women who are not currently in the workforce, and that it holds good in almost all regions worldwide, including the Arab regions, which traditionally have a low rate of women's labour force participation. Now, despite such willingness for women to go for paid work, the women's global labour force participation rate is now over 50%, compared to 80% for men. In India, it is just 37% (PLFS-2022-

Moreover, around 2.4 billion women of working age are being deprived of equal economic opportunity, as 178 countries still maintain legal barriers that prevent their full economic participation. In 86 countries, women face some form of job restriction and 95 countries do not guarantee equal pay for equal work. The gap between men's and women's expected lifetime earnings globally is US\$172 trillion, nearly two times the world's annual GDP (Women, Business and Law, World Bank, 2022). While, globally, for each dollar of labour income men earn, women earn only 51 cents, which in low and lower-middle-income countries further go down to 33 cents and 29 cents on the dollar, respectively (ILO,2023).

Further, women face several limitations in their job search, confront different challenging situations than men, and are unable to take up employment on short notice, leading to the 'jobs gap', which stands significantly higher for women at 15%, as against men's 10.5%. Even when women secure employment, it is often a last resort option, mainly, in the informal sector, without legal protections, social security or decent working conditions. Out of every five jobs created for women, iour are witnin the informal economy, whereas for men, the ratio is two out of every three iobs (ILO)

The 2023 LinkedIn global data



THE SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT AND CHIEF ECONOMIST OF THE WORLD BANK GROUP, **RUED THAT 'WOMEN CANNOT ACHIEVE EQUALITY** IN THE WORKPLACE, IF

ing, caregiving policies, and increased flexibility of working arrangements as a pathway to closing workplace gender gaps. The World Bank's 2022 report, however, highlighted that the Pay, Parenthood and Workplace indicators have registered the lowest average scores, rising 0.9 and 0.7 points, respectively, in the last year, and the gains in the Parenthood indicator have largely been around paternity leave and shared parental leave. The Senior Vice President and Chief Economist of the World Bank Group, rued that 'women cannot achieve equality in the workplace, if they are on an unequal footing at home ...and that having children doesn't mean they are excluded from full participation in the economy'. Across the world, 118 economies guarantee 14 weeks of paid leave for mothers, and 114 of the economies mandate paid leave for fathers, but the median duration is just one week. Now, this year's Economics Nobel laureate, Claudia Goldin's research, asserted that women's employment has a 'Ushaped' relationship' with structural changes in the economy, as well as evolving social norms, especially about marriage and parenting. While, another researcher contended that 'some of the gender gap in around work. employment and earnings is due to extra barriers that

norms'. Though gender roles and the pressures to conform to them vary across regions, religions and households, it is of special concern in the Middle East, North Africa, and India. While, social analysts suggest that they can be countered through behavioural change strategies by means of socialisation, communication and monitoring, targeting not only women but also their partners, parents, family and community members, who, most of the times, cast influence on attitudes and norms around women's work, while policy-making should also be attuned to cultural norms. Now, the Global Gender Gap Report, 2022, drew attention to the large-scale disruption of economic opportunities for women in skilling, wealth accumulation and overall wellbeing in order to bridge the broader gender gaps in households, societies and economies. As the labour markets get reconfigured in the post-pandemic era, apart from embarking on frontier technologies, education and capacity-building for better employability,

(The writer is an educationist, freelance writer, and an ex-civil servant, views are personal)

productivity and wages, there

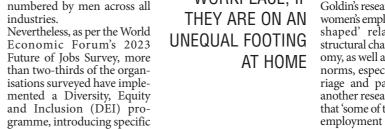
should also be increasing

efforts in establishing new

working arrangements to

enable men and women to bal-

ance caregiving



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Household chores over the right to play



While the country is making remarkable strides in development, antiquated attitudes toward girls still remain prevalent in the society

ecently, India celebrated a significant milestone at the Asian Games, with the country achieving a century of medals for the first time. This historic success isn't solely attributed to male athletes but underlines the invaluable contributions of India's female athletes. By excelling in traditionally male-dominated sports such as horse riding, the country's women athletes have defied traditional norms and emerged as fresh role models for the younger generation. However, a bitter reality persists, revealing a deep-seated gender bias in our society, particularly towards women and girls. Despite progress in various fields, there's a reluctance to change traditional

opment. India is making remarkable strides in development, yet antiquated attitudes toward girls remain prevalent. Initiatives like "Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao" and "Kanya Uthan Yojana" have been sibilities. They shoulder tasks deep-rooted prejudices that

gender norms and expecta-

women to household duties

and limit their overall devel-



introduced to empower girls, but regressive mindsets persist. As we explore space and technological advancements, we must simultaneously confront the deeply ingrained prejudices that persist against girls and women. Girls are frequently denied the freedom to play and enjoy their childhood, burdened instead with household chores from a very young age, a practice especially pronounced in rural regions.

This mindset prevails both in urban and rural areas, with tions, which often confine even more pronounced gender disparities in the latter. In Paroo and Sahebganj block, kilometres from Muzaffarpur district in Bihar, girls from economically disadvantaged farming and labour families bear the brunt of household respon-

like sweeping, grinding flour, tending to livestock, cleaning the courtyard, and working in others' fields from a young age. This inequality persists as their brothers remain untouched by such obligations. The implicit message is clear: if you're a girl, you have no right to play, and even when girls seek to play, they are often denied this oppor-

Chanda (name changed), a 10-year-old girl from Husepur village in Sahebganj block, is among those affected by these gendered biases. She is the only girl among her two older brothers. While her brothers are exempt from household chores, she is burdened with tasks like sweeping, grinding flour, and cutting vegeta-bles. "When I ask my mother to share household chores equally among us, she says, They are boys, let them play.' I really want to play too, but I can't play much." Sanjay Kumar, a science teacher at Dharphari High School, says that sports contribute to the mental and physical development of children. He says that society must challenge deprive girls of these opportunities. It is crucial for parents to encourage their daughters to play freely and embrace the physical and mental development it offers, fostering teamwork, leadership skills, and decisionmaking abilities. Childhood games contribute to balanced muscular and bone development, and girls should have the same opportunities as boys to engage in

While progress has been made, there's still a long road ahead to address the gender disparities prevalent in many rural areas. Despite government initiatives and efforts to promote sports, these deeply entrenched gender biases must be actively challenged. The transformation of societal perspectives and the empowerment of girls are essential steps to ensure their equitable participation in all aspects of life. Rural girls deserve a childhood filled with play and equal opportunities, free from the fear of societal backlash.

(The author is a young writer from Bihar. Views are personal. Charkha Features)

DELHI-NCR RAPID RAIL

(48.4%), Administrative and Support Services (46.5%), Real

Accommodation and Food

(43.3%) and Financial Services

(42.4%), Oil, Gas and Mining

(22.7%) and Infrastructure

(22.3%). In the STEM occupa-

tions that are well-remunerat-

ed and expected to grow in the

future, women are only 29.2% of all STEM workers. In the

emerging field of AI, as of

2022, it has 30% of female tal-

ent, which is likely to have seri-

ous implications, with the cre-

ation of biased algorithms

without women's perspectives.

LinkedIn data also indicated

that women hold 32.2% of

senior leadership positions in

2023, and continue to be out-

programs such as mentoring,

sponsorship, leadership train-

industries.

Sir—The introduction of India's inaugural rapid rail service in the Delhi National Capital Region (NCR) promises to trigger a transformative change on multiple fronts. Most notably, it pledges to revolutionise travel by significantly reducing commute times, providing individuals with more quality time for family and friends, personal interests, or much-needed rest. Additionally, the rapid rail system will enhance connectivity across the NCR, enabling people to live and work in various cities within the region. This newfound mobility opens doors to a plethora of job and housing opportunities, simplifies visits to loved ones in different cities, and boosts economic growth by streamlining business operations and job accessibility. The environmental benefits of the rapid rail are substantial, as it offers a more sustainable mode of transportation with reduced energy consumption and emissions, contributing to improved air quality and a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions.

Sabita Kumari | Hazaribagh

ROADBLOCKS TO OPPOSITION UNITY Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance, or INDIA, a coalition of 28 parties aiming to remove the BJP from power in 2024, seems to face challenges in maintaining a united front during the upcoming Assembly elections scheduled for November in five states. They are deeply entangled in seat allocation, and internal dynamics within the Congress also create obstacles to seat sharing. To succeed, they must be willing to allocate more seats to regional parties. Building a formidable front against the BJP demands a stronger Congress at its core, along with a deeper understanding and trust among its leaders. This should encourage them to reach out beyond their personal ambitions and engage with parties such as the

My land, your land, no man's land

women face, such as cultural



A conflict drawn from myriad hearths, Arabs, Jews trying to claim the earth Whose claim to land is it? Towns like Sinai, Gaza mire the minds West Bank, delineated for refugees back

Many centuries ago, the feud began Yet again, over a piece of land Infamous now, Palestine.

How it has left the common man, Arab, Palestinian, Jews; displaced, claiming a strip of land. Occupation, I call it, of the mind Broken dreams,

Hopes crushed. The sound of the sirens, Made those dream rushed. A gloomy atmosphere, Filled with violence.

Enter the Hamas, and ballistics follow, The Palestinians are stranded, feeling hol-

coalition. While opposition to the BJP

low, There is an eerie silence, Left behind from Ottoman times. It was once peaceful, Yasser Arafat he led, Our land, which the Israeli's claim. As refugees and displaced were bombarded with missiles, Pitifully facing, calisthenics of the Israeli kind.

21st century here we are Abandoned homes, no let-up in mortar Empty streets, stricken faces, women, children, Looking for hope vacant eyes plead, Anyone, giving any heed? Once they woke up,

Hopeful to see. The rising sun, One Last time.

Upon seeing their houses destroyed, It makes them speechless, no endgame in sight? Nowhere to go, Hope is all humans know

Can we co-create a peaceful life? The humanitarian mandate is ours to

Not just policies that should flow Let us stand as one with this one goal Even as the displaced strive to stay alive. Shaurya Bhatnagar | Noida

can act as a binding force, a viable alternative necessitates a more cohesive solution, one that envisions the nation's development.

TKR Noori | Mumbai

INDIA BEAT NEW ZEALAND India triumphed over New Zealand by four wickets in a World Cup match in Dharamsala on October 22, marking their first victory against the Black Caps in an ICC event in 20 years. India can take pride in breaking the New Zealand jinx as they passed a significant test. Shami's impressive five-wicket haul in his first match of the prestigious ICC World Cup raises questions BSP, which is not currently part of the about his exclusion when Hardik returns. It was

a remarkable team effort with everyone contributing, showcasing exemplary dedication and fielding skills. Heartfelt congratulations to the Indian team for their historic win against New Zealand! Keep the momentum going and reignite the memories of 2011. India's resounding triumph over New Zealand in the recent cricket match stands as a testament to the unwavering spirit and skill of the Indian cricket team. With exceptional teamwork, dazzling performances, and a never-say-die attitude, they showcased their mettle on the pitch.

Tauqueer Rahmani | Mumbai

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FIRST COLUMN

NOW IS THE TIME FOR HARMONY

He who lives in harmony with himself, lives in harmony with the world: Marcus Aurelius



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR **NIKUNJ**

e all want to be happy all the time, but is it that easy? Not really! Because we cannot be happy unless there is harmony in our life. It is said that the one who lives in harmony with self lives in harmony with the whole universe. All of us are a part of a big human rosary which is tied up by a common thread of 'Relationship'. Its a fact that our relationship with others is one of the most important key areas in our life. As soon as we are born, our relationship starts with our mother till the time we die when we are cremated by our relatives. However with modern day development, the whole relationship pattern between humans has changed due to which the traditions and practices which created harmony in society and in personal relations, are dying. It's unfortunate though, but it's a harsh reality that needs to be accepted. Our desire for a big car, a big house, a big salary & a bigger self ego is eroding our value system, making us more materialistic than a real modern personality. It's so paradoxical that on one hand we are getting modernized but on other hand we are losing human touch. Today nobody cares to help a poor person, nor does one cares to look after their elders at home. This shows the level of degradation in our society which is beyond repair. Since we have forgotten the importance of the positive traits of our personality, we are losing all that we had gathered from our ancestors.

Our relationship with nature too is suffering as a result of which we are facing nature's wrath in the form of drought, famine, floods, cyclones etc.. As a result, our situation is fast changing from bad to worse, neither do we live, nor let others live in harmony. So who is to be blamed for this downfall ? For this first of all we need to



understand the causes of lack of harmony & then we must ponder on the prerequisites of creating harmony in society. To put it in simple words, harmony means friendliness & togetherness. So, if we work for the welfare of others and have love and sympathy towards them, it would be considered a good contribution to create harmony in society. If we listen to other persons viewpoint patiently, we surely create rapport with them and win their respect and love & when selfless love and regard blossom in society, these foster compassion, peace, bliss and happiness. All our interactions and relations are then based on love, understanding and unity which would ultimately create a harmonious society. Remember !! those human beings who work for creating goodwill, cooperation and cohesion in society are true servers of society and of Almighty Supreme. Last but not the least, we all should realize that the most appropriate time to create harmony is now because never before in the history of humanity had there been such a steep decline in values. Hence, if we as enlightened beings can stop this degradation and work hard to steer the society to a new direction of positivity, purity and prosperity, then our future generations will surely remember us for this valuable contribution towards a very noble cause. So c'mon let us all take a pledge to save the treasure of our culture and moral values which were bestowed upon us by our ancestors and fill them in each and every human being which would enable them to become a symbol of inspiration for everyone.

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

Beyond compliance for disability inclusion



The road to equality for disabled individuals in the workplace has been paved with both promise and pitfalls. Differently abled must be given their dignity to work



nclusivity has long been hailed as a cornerstone of any progressive society. It is an assertion that we as a nation, time and again, aspire to uphold. However, as we take stock of the employment ecosystem in India, the lens through which we view inclusivity has often overlooked a significant portion of our population - persons with disabilities. The road to equality for disabled individuals in the workplace has been paved with both promise and pitfalls. As we delve into the present status of disabled people in India's employment landscape, we uncover a complex tapestry of challenges, a world of untapped potential, and the beacon of hope represented by initiatives like the NCPEDP-LTIMindtree Helen Keller Awards. **Challenges and Opportunities**

At the all-India level, 36% of the total disoiea persons are workers. Among maie ais abled persons, 47% are working, while among female disabled individuals, only 23% are part of the workforce (DEPwD, MSJE). These figures underscore the disparity between genders in disability employment, emphasizing the urgent need for more inclusive policies. Rural India shows some promise, with 25% of female disabled individuals participating in the workforce, while in urban areas, the corresponding figure drops to 16%. This urban-rural disparity highlights the need for region-specific strategies to improve employment opportunities for disabled people. In the pursuit of employment, people with disabilities (PWDs) face significant challenges that hinder their entry into the corporate sector. This stark contrast between employable disabled individuals and those who are actually employed calls for immediate action to tap into this vast potential.

According to the latest workforce data reported by Nifty 50 constituent companies as part of their annual disclosures, the situation remains grim. Only five out of these



ACCORDING TO THE LATEST WORKFORCE DATA REPORTED BY NIFTY 50 CONSTITUENT **COMPANIES AS** PART OF THEIR ANNUAL DISCLOSURES, THE SITUATION REMAINS GRIM

(The writer is executive director, National Centre for Promotion of Employment for Disabled People, views are personal)

50 companies have more than 1% of people with disabilities on their rolls, with four of them being public sector companies. It's worth noting that public sector companies are required to reserve 4% of all jobs for disabled people in compliance with the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 - a target which all the analysed companies fall short of. In a research paper titled 'Moving Beyond Compliance: Inclusion of Persons With Disabilities in Business' (2019) published by Oxfam India in collaboration with NCPEDP findings indicated that low literacy levels, lack of access to skills and technology, ignorance, Misinformation, and prejudice, access to information on job opportunities and inadvertent exclusion are significant challenges faced by persons with disabilities in seeking employment.

Moreover, the study highlighted various hurdles faced by disabled individuals in their employment. These challenges encompass issues like ineffective integration processes, limited career growth, skill-related job losses, inadequate grievance mechanisms, poor job identifica-tion, unsuitable work assignments, lack of workplace accessibility, insufficient budget allocation for disability-related technology, and a tendency to limit inclusion efforts to CSR. Persistent barriers include negative attitudes, social integration challenges, feelings of indebtedness, and ongoing transportation issues. Addressing these challenges requires a fundamental shift in perspective and practice within the govt/corporate world. It necessitates the recognition that disabled individuals

bring valuable skills, unique perspectives, and a strong work ethic to the table. Overcoming the hurdle of attitude demands a commitment to changing workplace cultures, fostering empathy, and championing diversity and inclusion. One effective means of achieving this transformation is through the practice of reasonable accommodation. Reasonable accommodation involves making necessary adjustments to the workplace environ-ment and job duties to enable disabled employees to perform their tasks effectively. This can encompass a range of measures, from provid-

ing assistive technologies to accom-

To address the present challenges,

modating flexible work hours.

India needs a multifaceted approach. Public and private sector organizations must undertake awareness campaigns and sensitization programs to combat stereotypes and biases against disabled individuals. Changing perceptions is only the first step towards fostering a more inclusive work environment. The private sector should actively implement the provisions of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016 and provide reasonable accommodations to disabled employees. Mandatory reporting on the hiring and inclusion of disabled individuals can ensure accountability. Private sector companies must not only meet legal compliance but also set aspirational goals for disability inclusion, aiming to go beyond the minimum requirements.

As India establishes itself as a thriving centre for startups and entrepreneurship, it is essential to shine a spotlight on self-employment

opportunities for individuals with disabilities. This necessitates substantial investment. Customized training schemes and initiatives aimed at enhancing skills can provide disabled individuals with the tools necessary for success in the job market. The significant pool of employable disabled individuals should be tapped into through specific efforts, vocational training, and programs designed for skill enhancement.

Empowering individuals with disabilities to choose between remote and in-office work recognizes their diverse capabilities and needs. Rather than assuming remote work as the sole solution, it's important to provide choices and decisionmaking power. 10 achieve this, organizations should adopt accessible communication tools and provide comprehensive training to all employees. This approach promotes inclusivity and respects individual preferences, allowing disabled individuals to thrive in a workspace that aligns with their unique needs and talents.

The present status of people with disabilities in India's employment ecosystem is a mixed bag of challenges and opportunities. We have a long way to go to create a truly inclusive workforce, but the path is illuminated by promising initiatives and the potential of disabled individuals to contribute meaningfully to society and the economy. By embracing reasonable accommodation and promoting an inclusive culture, organizations can unlock the untapped potential of persons with disabilities and build a more inclu-

Menstrual hygiene policy, 2023: Need to walk the talk

There is need to develop mechanisms to ensure access to affordable and safe menstrual hygiene products, especially for those from low-income groups

Riya Akhtar has had to manage her periods with whatever material she could find. Even if this meant reproductive tract infections, buying sanitary napkins was never an option as it would put a strain on her father's meagre income. Akhtar and her three sisters are among the thousands of vulnerable adolescent girls and women in South Asia who are unable to manage their periods due to lack of monetary resources, poor access to menstrual products and cultural taboos surrounding menstruation. However, an innovative use of blockchain technology in Bangladesh is helping to break these barriers and support girls like Akhtar to better understand their bodies and menstruation and to choose



SWAPNA MAJUMDAR

(The writer is a senior

journalist; views expressed

are personal)

safer ways to improve their menstrual health.

Since February 2022, life has changed for 3,300 adolescent girls like Akhtar, her three sisters and women between the ages of 15-49 living in two urban slums Bhashantek and Duaripa, in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Thanks to a blockchain-based Building Blocks app that leverages a cash and voucher assistance programme, they are able to buy menstrual hygiene products on a regular basis from local shops close to where they live. The huge increase in uptake of menstrual pads from 32% to 96% between February 2022 and January 2023 is an indication of the period of

poverty that existed. Under this Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) project,

women and girls receive a printed QR code card for the household along with a PIN code to redeem monthly value vouchers against various brands of menstrual pads. This is being implemented through a collaborative partnership between the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in Bangladesh, the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) and a local NGO partner, the Concerned Women Development (CWFD). The CVA project was able to

piggyback the Building Blocks (BB) aid app designed by WFP as it enables individuals to receive various types of assistance from multiple organizations simultaneously. Since these families were existing beneficiaries of WFP having been assessed as highly vulnerable and food insecure, it helped UNFPA to upload its menstrual hygiene cash voucher entitlements.

Under the BB, a data and transaction management system, women and girls have individual accounts where their menstrual hygiene voucher entitlements from UNFPA are loaded. When they visit a participating shop to make a purchase, they simply enter their PIN code into the BB application on the shopkeeper's smartphone. The transaction is recorded directly in the BB system. The transaction is connected to an inventory system and provides confirmation to the shopkeeper that the transaction is valid. The selected

an accompanying information poster were handed out with no money changing hands. The application works like a cash register to select the products, and their quantity and then check out. Transactions can be verified for audits and for different parties to produce invoices and payments.

In Bangladesh, cash and voucher transfers are a popular way of assistance. The government also uses cash transfers extensively in various social protection schemes. UNFPA Bangladesh has been implementing various projects with CVA, including for emergency responses as it is a member of the cash working group at the national country level. This innovative CVA-BB menstrual products along with combo approach has helped

change in menstrual hygiene practices. Access to products in the form of menstrual pads has also vastly improved since the shopkeeper only requires a smartphone connected to the BB application to participate in the project. This means that small shops located close to the homes of women and girls recipients and ones they are accustomed to using on a daily basis can be one-stop centres. The increased demand for menstrual products boosts

ability in the slums. So, can this model be replicated in India? In India, cash transfer schemes are also widely used by the government for various social protection programmes. The country has

the incomes of the local shop-

keepers and ensures their avail-

promote social behaviour also shown remarkable and enterprising use of blockchain technology.
Additionally, the aim of the

draft menstrual hygiene policy, 2023, by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, is to promote the health and empowerment of all individuals who menstruate. It seeks to develop mechanisms to ensure access to affordable and safe menstrual hygiene products, especially for those from lowincome and marginalised communities and in remote, rural and difficult-to-reach locations. One of its main objectives is to foster innovative practices with social entrepreneurs and the private sector to address issues of access and affordability, equity and inclusivity by leveraging research and expertise.

Trump compares himself to Mandela, rails against Biden

Former President Donald Trump compared himself to anti-apartheid activist Nelson Mandela on Monday as he cast himself as the victim of federal and state prosecutors he alleges are targeting him and his businesses for political rea-

Returning to New Hampshire to register for its presidential primary, Trump held a rally where he railed against President Joe Biden's response to the Hamas attack on Israel and vowed to build an Iron Dome-style missile defense shield over the U.S.

But he focused much of his dark and at times profane speech on the criminal and civil cases against him, at one point suggesting he would go to prison like the former South African president who spent 27 years in prison for opposing South Africa's apartheid system and was awarded a Nobel

I don't mind being Nelson Mandela because I'm doing it for a reason," Trump told am amped-up crowd of supporters at a sports complex in Derry, New Hampshire. "We've got to save our country from these fascists, these lunatics that we're dealing with. They're horrible people and they're destroying our country."

Trump is facing four criminal indictments as well as civil trials that span allegations that he inflated his worth, misclassified hush money payments to women during his 2016 campaign, illegally tried to overturn his 2020 election loss and hoarded classified documents at his Mar-a-Lago club. The comments came after Trump formally filed for the first-in-the-nation primary, becoming the first person who has served as president to do so in person more than once. "Vote for Trump and solve your problems," he wrote on

the statehouse in Concord that all the candidates are asked to

Candidates this year have until Oct. 27 to officially sign up, and dozens are expected to do so. The process is easy: They only need to meet the basic requirements to be president, fill out a one-page form and pay a \$1,000 filing fee. In 2020, 33 Democrats and 17 Republicans signed up. The alltime high was 1992, when 61 people got on the ballot. Trump won both the 2016 and 2020 Republican primaries

in New Hampshire but lost the state in both general elections. After signing up for the 2016 contest on the first day of the filing period eight years ago, Trump sent then-Vice President Mike Pence to file his paperwork for the 2020 contest. That was in keeping with a tradition of other incumbents who also sent surrogates, but his return on Monday was



Also new was the security surrounding his visit. Only supporters selected by the campaign were allowed to line the hallway to the secretary of state's office at the Statehouse, and access to the building was

In 2015, he used the experience in part to boast about his personal wealth.

'They wanted a cashier's check," Trump said. "So this is from a bank that's not actualHampshire polls and noted that support for Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis has dropped significantly.

Bad things are happening, but we keep going up," he

Later, at his rally, continued to criticize Biden's response to the Hamas attack on Israel, calling the speech the president gave in response to the war last Thursday night "a grotesque betrayal of Israel" and "one of the most dangerous and deluded speeches ever delivered from the Oval Office."

He charged that Biden, in linking the threats posed by Hamas and Russia, "went before the American people and said that if you want to support Israel, then you have to give a blank check" to help Ukraine stave off Russia's ongoing invasion.

To protect the country, Trump said that, if he returns to the construction of a state-of-theart missile defense shield over the U.S. That he said would be "capable of blasting Chinese, Russian, and Iranian missiles out of our skies."

"Americans deserve an Iron Dome, and that's what we're going to have," he said, referring to Israel's vaunted defense system, which has intercepted thousands of missiles in the days since the attack.

In the weeks since, Trump has been leaning into the antiimmigration rhetoric that fueled his 2016 campaign, calling for an expanded Muslim travel ban and new ideological tests for immigrants. He has also warned that those who want to do harm to the U.S. May be infiltrating the country's southern border along with South American migrants.

He read the lyrics of "The Snake," a dark song that he's used since his first campaign as

the dangers of illegal immigration, and claimed Biden would turn the country "into a hotbed for jihadists and make our cities into dumping grounds resembling the Gaza Strip." At a news conference Monday, New Hampshire Democrats criticized Trump

and predicted state voters

would reject him if he becomes the GOP nominee. "At a time when our country confronts significant problems at home and around the world, and when our global leadership is as indispensable as ever, we need to be united. But Trump is incapable of bringing us together," said U.S. Sen. Maggie Hassan, a Democrat. 'We are the Live Free or Die State: We have no use for a man who would overturn our elections or praise dictators. I know that as Granite Staters and Americans, we will reject Trump and we will win next

Chinese FM Wang Yi to visit US ahead of likely Biden-Xi meeting

PTI ■ WASHINGTON

hina's Foreign Minister Wang Yi will visit ✓ Washington Thursday for high-level talks, the US state department has announced, as the two countries try to "responsibly manage" their fraught relations. Wang's trip to Washington is seen as paving the way for a potential meeting between President Joe Biden and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit in San Francisco next month. The likely meeting would be Xi's first trip to the United States since April 2017.

Secretary of State Antony Blinken will host Director of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Central Foreign Affairs Commission and Foreign Minister Wang in Washington on October 26-28, the state department said in a press release on Monday.

"Secretary Blinken and Director Wang will discuss a range of bilateral, regional, and global issues as part of ongoing efforts to responsibly tionship and to maintain open channels of communication," it said. Wang is also expected to meet US national security

Adviser Jake Sullivan during his stay here, according to US

Blinken spoke with Wang on October 14 and urged China to use its relationships with countries in the Middle East to stop the conflict in Israel from spreading. He also highlighted the importance of discouraging other parties from entering the conflict.

media reports.

Beijing have become increasingly fraught lately. The two nations have been locked in an escalating trade spat since

early 2018, raising import tariffs on each other's goods. The United States will con-

tinue to use diplomacy to advance its interests and values, address areas of difference, and make progress on shared transnational challenges, the statement said. Wang's visit comes amid US lawmakers asking China to iron out differences in trade

It also comes after the US reiterated its commitment to

defend the Philippines in the event of an armed attack, as stipulated in a 1951 treaty. This statement followed a maritime incident on Sunday when Chinese ships blocked and collided with two Filipino vessels near Second Thomas Shoal.

China claims nearly all of the disputed South China Sea, though Taiwan, and Vietnam all claim parts of it. Beijing has built artificial islands and military installations in the South China Sea.

7 dead in massive vehicle crashes in south Louisiana due to 'superfog'

AP NEW ORLEANS

At least seven people were killed Monday morning after a "superfog" of smoke from south Louisiana marsh fires and dense fog caused multiple massive car crashes involving a total of 158 vehicles, authorities said.

Twenty-five people were injured and the number of fatalities may increase as first responders continue to clear the crash scenes and search for victims, Louisiana State Police said in a statement Monday evening. Gov. John Bel Edwards issued

a call for blood donors and asked for prayers "for those hurt

Videos and images of the apocalyptic type scenes from the aftermath of the wrecks showed a long stretch of mangled and scorched cars on Interstate 55 near New Orleans.

Vehicles were crushed, rammed under one another and some engulfed by flames. Many people stood on the side of the road looking in disbelief at the disastrous scene, while others remained in their car waiting

Christopher Coll, 41, was among the drivers in one of the pileups. "I was already on the brakes,

drove up on top of my work trailer and took me for a ride," Coll told The Times-Picayune/The New Orleans



Coll could smell smoke as he

heard other drivers calling for help and the sounds of crashing cars and popping tires. He was able to kick open his passenger door to escape and then helped others - pulling out one person through a car window. Clarencia Patterson Reed was also in the wave of wrecked cars as she drove to Manchac with her wife and niece. Reed told the newspaper that she could see people waving their hands for her to stop, but when she did her car was hit from behind and on the side by two other vehi-

'It was Boom. Boom.' All you kept hearing was crashing for at least 30 minutes," Reed said. She was able to scramble out of her car, but her wife was pinned

Louisiana State Police shared aerial photos on their Facebook page showing dozens of crashed

cars and extensive debris on both northbound and southbound lanes of the elevated interstate, which passes over swamp and open waters between lakes Pontchartrain and Maurepas.

As of Monday afternoon, state troopers were still working "to notify families, investigate the exact causes of the crashes" and coordinate with the state's transportation department to have the bridge inspected.
Traffic backed up for miles in

both directions on I-55. The lack of visibility also prompted closures of parts of I-10 and the 24-mile (39-kilometre) Lake Pontchartrain Causeway at times.

School buses were summoned to transport stranded motorists from the accident sites. At midat the scene that one vehicle went over the highway guardrail and into the water, but the driver escaped unharmed.

China removes **Defence Minister** missing for 2 months with little explanation

AP ■ TAIPEI

China has replaced Defense Minister Gen. Li Shangfu, who has been out of public view for almost two months with little explanation, state media reported on Tuesday. Li is the second senior Chinese official to disappear this year, following former Foreign Minister Qin Gang, who was removed from office in July with no explanation

Li, who became defense minister during a Cabinet reshuf-fle in March, hasn't been seen since giving a speech on August 29.

There is no indication that the disappearances of Qin and Li signal a change in China's foreign or defense policies, although they have raised questions about the resilience of president and ruling Communist Party leader Xi Jinping's circle of power.

Xi has a reputation for valuing loyalty above all and has relentlessly attacked corruption in public and private, sometimes in what has been seen as a method of eliminatup his political position amid a deteriorating economy and rising tensions with US over trade, technology and Taiwan.

Women in Iceland including Prime Minister go on strike



AP HUSAVIK

Iceland's prime minister and women across the volcanic island nation went on strike on Tuesday to push for an end to unequal pay and gender-based violence.

Icelanders awoke to all-male newscaster teams announcing shutdowns across the island nation: schools closed, public transport delayed, hospitals understaffed, hotel rooms uncleaned. Prime Minister Katrin

Jakobsdóttir said that she would stay home as part of the women's strike - "kvennaverkfal" in Icelandic - and expected other women in her Cabinet would do the same

Iceland's trade unions, the main organisers of the strike, called on women and nonbinary people to refuse both paid and unpaid work, including household chores, for the day. About 90 per cent of Icelandic workers belong to a union.

Schools and the health system, which have female-dominated workforces, said they would be

heavily affected by the walkout. National broadcaster RUV said it was reducing television and radio broadcasts for the day. Tuesday's walkout, which lasts from midnight to midnight, is being billed as the biggest since Iceland's first such event on October 24, 1975, when 90 per cent of women refused to work, clean or look after children, to voice anger at discrimination in the workplace. In 1976, Iceland passed a law guaranteeing equal rights irrespective of gender. Since then there have been several partial-day strikes, most recently in 2018, with women walking off the job in the early afternoon, symbolizing the time of day when women, on average, stop earning compared to men. Iceland, a rugged island of around 380,000 people just below the Arctic Circle, has

gender-equal country 14 years in a row by the World Economic Forum, which measures pay, education, health care and other factors. No country has achieved full equality, and there remains a gender pay gap in Iceland. "We have not yet reached our goals of full gender equality and

been ranked as the world's most

we are still tackling the gender-based wage gap, which is unac-ceptable in 2023," she told news website mbl.Is. "We are still tackling gender-based violence, which has been a priority for my government to tackle."

Her Cabinet is evenly split between male and female ministers, and nearly half of lawmakers in Iceland's parliament, the Althingi, are women.

China prods Bhutan to establish diplomatic relations, settle border issues soon

China has asked Bhutan to Cestablish diplomatic ties with it and resolve the boundary issue "as soon as possible" to transform the relations between the two neighbours into "legal form".

Bhutanese Foreign Minister Dr Tandi Dorii who is currently visiting Beijing to take part in the boundary talks between the two countries met Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on Monday during which Wang said restoration of diplomatic ties will serve the long-term interests of both countries, a Foreign Ministry press release

"The conclusion of boundary negotiations and the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Bhutan fully serve the long-term and fundamental interests of the country and nation of Bhutan," Wang

"China is ready to work with Bhutan in the same direction, seize the historic opportunity, complete this important process as soon as possible, and fix and develop China-Bhutan friendly relations in legal form," Wang, also a member of the powerful Political Bureau of the ruling Communist Party, told Dorji. The Bhutanese Foreign Minister is in Beijing to hold the China-Bhutan boundary talks, the

release said. The Chinese Foreign Ministry press release quoted Dorji as saying that Bhutan and Ćhina have enjoyed a traditional friendship.

He thanked China for its strong support and assistance to

Bhutan firmly abides by the one-China principle meaning Taiwan and Tibet are part of China and stands ready to work with China for an early settlement of the boundary issue and advance the political process of establishing diplomatic relations, it said.

China and Bhutan do not have diplomatic relations but maintain contact through periodic visits by officials.

4 suspected North Korean defectors found in small boat in South Korean

 $F_{\text{found in a small wooden}}^{\text{our North Koreans were}}$ boat in South Korean waters on Tuesday in what is likely a rare case of North Koreans taking a risky sea voyage to flee to the South, Seoul officials said.

More than 30,000 North Koreans have fled to South Korea to avoid poverty and political oppression since the late 1990s. A vast majority of them have come via a land route with China, and defecting by sea is uncommon because it's more

A South Korean coast guard ship found the boat south of the two Koreas' eastern sea border on

Tuesday morning, after a report by a fishing boat. The four people on board identified themselves as North Koreans, coast guard officials said.

South Korea's military said it secured the custody of the North Koreans in coordination with the coast guard, after chasing their boat along the sea border. A military statement said the North Koreans were suspected of defecting to South Korea but gave no further details. South Korean public broadcast-

er KBS, citing an unidentified government official, reported that the four North Koreans - a man and three women - are members of one family. KBS said they were not armed and did not

wear military uniforms when they were found.

South Korea's Unification Ministry declined to provide personal details of the four, saying an investigation was under-

North Korea's state media did not immediately report on the four North Koreans.

North Korean defectors are required to undergo questioning by South Korean authorities to determine whether their desire to resettle is genuine.

In 2019, South Korea deported two North Korean fishermen who said they wished to resettle, after determining they were criminals who had killed 16 fel-

EPA proposes banning cancer-causing chemical TCE used in automotive care and other products

The US Environmental Protection Agency on Monday proposed banning the cancer-causing chemical trichloroethylene, which can be found in consumer products including automobile brake cleaners, furniture care and arts

and crafts spray coating. The move would end a nearly four decade battle to ban the chemical known as TCE, which can cause sudden death or kidney cancer if a person is exposed to high levels of it, and other neurological harm even at lower exposure over a long period. a toxic legacy in communities

studies found that as much as 250 million pounds of TCE are still produced in the United States annually. One of the first places the

chemical raised concern was in Massachusetts, where it was linked to contaminated drinking water in the city of Woburn. Two locations there were ultimately designated as massive Superfund sites. Monday's news conference was held at one of them, a location which now serves as a transportation center. "For far too long, TCE has left

across America," said Michal Freedhoff, the EPA's assistant administrator for the Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. "Today, EPA is

taking a major step to protect people from exposure to this cancer-causing chemical." Massachusetts Sen. Edward Markey, who has led the effort

"With this rule, we can see a

future where we will no longer be manufacturing, processing and distributing a chemical known to be deadly," Markey said. "We will no longer be exposing American families, communities and workers to a toxic chemical legacy that leaves questions, cancer and catastrophe in its wake?

Markey called the effort personal, citing his long-time work with Anne Anderson, a residentturned-activist whose son Jimmy died in 1981 of leukemia. "Since Anne and I met in 1980,

to ban TCE, welcomed the effort to clean up Woburn, to get justice for her son, and to save other families from seeing their children fall sick as a result of contamination," Markey said. 'Thanks to the advocacy of Anne Anderson and the action of the EPA, the era of corporations using communities like Woburn as dumping grounds for toxic TCE is over." A 1982 lawsuit over the contaminated water supply involved eight Woburn families, including the Andersons. The case garnered national attention and led to the book and movie titled "A Civil

16 killed as boat catches fire in western Congo

t least 16 people were killed on Monday when a boat caught fire on the Congo River, local officials

said.
The boat was carrying fuel and was on its way to the city of Mbandaka from the eastern part of the capital, Kinshasa, said Papy Epiana, the provincial deputy. At least 11 people were rescued and it's unclear if more are missing.

The accident comes two days after a boat capsized also on the Congo River, killing at least 40

people.
Boat accidents are common on the Congo River and on the nation's lakes because of the prevalent use of makeshift boats that are often overloaded. The majority of the population in the country's northwest use the rivers to travel because of a lack of good roads and because it is less expensive.

The accidents in the country's west come amid rising insecurity in the conflict-riddled east. At least 30 people were killed and their homes burned Sunday night in Rutshuru Territory in



North Kivu province, according to local authorities.

The attack was perpetrated by the M23 rebel group, said Justin Kaleghesere, vice president for the Rutshuru Territory Youth

The M23 rebel group, largely comprised of Congolese ethnic Tutsis, rose to prominence 10

years ago when its fighters seized Goma, eastern Congo's largest city on the border with Rwanda. Its name derives from a March 23, 2009 peace deal, which it accuses the Congo government of not implementing. The rebel group was dormant for nearly a decade before resurfacing late last year. Failed peace talks and broken cease-fires have led to continued violence that has displaced tens of thousands of people. During Sunday's attacks, officials say victims were killed with machetes or shot when M23 launched attacks against the Wazalendo, a local selfdefense group.

Sharif gets bail in Toshakhana case; his jail-term in Al-Azizia case suspended

PTI ISLAMABAD

For the first time since his freturn from London after four years of self-exile, former premier Nawaz Sharif on Tuesday appeared before the Islamabad accountability court, which confirmed his bail in the Toshakhana corruption case.

Sharif, 73, the three-time prime minister and supremo of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), returned to Pakistan

on Saturday.
Ahead of Sharif's arrival on October 21, his legal team approached the Islamabad High Court, which granted him a protective bail until October 24 in the Avenfield and Al-Azzizia corruption cases. Also, an anti-corruption court suspended his arrest warrant in the Tosha-khana case. The court cases, which stopped due to his absence, have resumed.

On Tuesday, Sharif marked his attendance in the Accountability Court of Judge Muhammad Bashir, who had suspended his arrest orders in the Toshakhana case last week to facilitate his return to Pakistan.

The attendance was significant to show that he had surrendered before the court. He was allowed to leave after the judge witnessed



his presence in the courtroom. During the hearing, the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) prosecutor contended that Sharif had surrendered, therefore, his arrest warrant should be cancelled. "If the warrants are cancelled then the trial can move forward," he said.

The judge subsequently confirmed Sharif's bail in the case against surety bonds of Rs 1 million. The hearing of the case was adjourned till November 20. The case is based on allegations that Sharif, former president Asif Ali Zardari and ex-prime minister Yusuf Raza Gilani received luxury vehicles and gifts from the Toshakhana. In another relief to Sharif, the Punjab government on Tuesday suspended his sentence in the Al-Azizia case.

Punjab's interim Information Minister Amir Mir and Sharif's lawyer Amjad Parvez confirmed the development, Dawn newspaper reported.

Mir said that the caretaker government had done this by "using its constitutional powers" under Section 401 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, which deals with suspensions, remissions and commutations of sentences. Sharif was convicted in the Al-Azizia Steel Mills corruption case and sentenced to seven years in jail in December 2018. He was allowed to go to London in November 2019 on medical

grounds and he returned about four years later on Saturday. He was also convicted in July 2018 by an accountability court in the Avenfield properties case and sentenced to 10 years in jail. He was arrested and put in jail but set free after being given bail while his appeals against acquit-His daughter Maryam Nawaz was also sentenced to seven years in jail in the case but was acquitted in September 2022 along with her husband

Muhammad Safdar.
The IHC declared him a proclaimed offender in both cases in December 2020.

Earlier today, Sharif's counsel Qazi Misbah in the Toshakhana case filed three different applications in the accountability court, which include the restora-tion of the PML-N supremo's annexed property in the case; appointment of Sharif's pleader in the case; and an application to submit the politician's bail bonds.

Sharif was disqualified in 2017 and later in 2018 convicted in the two cases of corruption. He has always denied allegations of any wrongdoing and termed his conviction orchestrated by the powerful establishment in col-lusion with the judiciary.



Ukraine's leader says Russian naval assets no longer safe in Black Sea near Crimea

Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy claimed on Tuesday that recent Ukrainian attacks have denied the Russian fleet safe bases and secure maritime corridors in the western part of the Black Sea, as Kyiv's troops look to squeeze the Kremlin's occupying forces out of the Crimean Peninsula.

Moscow's battlefield efforts further west and has been a frequent target for Ukrainian forces during the war since Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

"The Russian fleet is no longer capable of operating in the western part of the Black Sea and is gradually retreating from Crimea," Zelenskyy claimed, without providing evidence. "This is a historic achievement." Ukraine is keen to show that billions of dollars' worth of weapons supplied by its Western allies have allowed it to make progress in the fighting, as the conflict enters its 21st month amid a broad stalemate.

With the war poised to extend into another winter and likely deep into next year, Kyiv is push ing its allies to provide it with more military assets. Ukrainian officials, meanwhile, are competing for the world's attention with the Israel-Hamas war.

Ukraine's forces are not vet able to strike at any target in Crimea and its waters but that capability is coming closer, Zelenskyy told a meeting of the Crimea Platform, a diplomatic forum, in Prague via video link. He did not elaborate. The Russian Defense Ministry said its forces hit three Ukrainian sea drones in the Black Sea early

Russia annexed Crimea, in eastern Ukraine, in 2014. In February last year, it launched a full-scale invasion that also aims to annex the Ukrainian provinces of Donetsk, Kherson, Luhansk, and Zaporizhzhia. Since the collapse last August of

a deal allowing Ukraine to safe-Zelenskyy said, a new Black Sea export corridor has allowed some 50 ships to set sail, with more than 50 more departures expected. He did not provide

IN OTHER DEVELOP-

German defense conglomerate Rheinmetall and Ukrainian Defense Industry have formed a joint venture, Ukraine Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal announced during the German-Ukrainian Business Forum in Berlin. He called it "a significant event that elevates cooperation between our countries to a qualitatively new level." The joint company will provide maintenance and repair services for the equipment supplied to Ukraine by its partners

Ukraine's air force said it shot down six Russian drones over the central and southern regions of the country on Monday night. Russia launched the drones from Crimea, the Ukrainian army said. Russian shelling killed two Ukrainian civilians in the south of the country and injured at least 20 other in the southeast, the presidential office reported

Pak general elections date likely to be announced soon: PM Kakar PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

sserting that there will be a level play-A sserting that there will be a level play-ing field for all political parties in the next general election, Pakistan's caretaker prime minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar has expressed hope that the election com-mission will shortly announce the date of the polls.

Without mentioning the exact date, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) last month announced that general elections would take place in the last week of January 2024. "It seems that the date of the elections will

be announced quite soon," Kakar told reporters at a news conference, three days after returning from China, where he had attended Belt and Road Forum (BRF) conference on the 10th anniversary of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Commenting on the issue of equal polit

ical space for parties in the country, Kakar said, "No political party has been left out of the political process and that the care-taker government is doing its best to assist the electoral process."
"We want no political party, entity and its

associated political players to be out of



tion is imposed by the court, we have to obey the orders," he said as former prime minister Imran Khan's Pakistan Tehreeke-Insaf (PTI) is facing legal challenges and some of the top leaders of the party are

"Can't comment if level playing field means ensuring a particular party's win. (We) remember the level playing field of 2018 when the South Puniab front came into being," Kakar was quoted as saying Refuting the allegations that level playing field was not available to all political parties, but one, Kakar said: "What attempt the caretakers can do in two months which will help any party to get 171 seats (of the National Assembly in

elections). Kakar was talking to media amind demands by the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) for a level playing field two days (PML-N) supremo Nawaz Sharif returned to Pakistan ending his selfimposed exile.

However, Dawn also reported that Kakar replied with "I abstain" when asked "why an extraordinary protocol was given to Sharif on his return and why the Pakistani high commissioner in the UK

was at the airport to see him off."
The International News quoted Kakar, who was asked if there was a possibility of some leading Baloch Awami Party (BAP) politicians joining the Pakistan Muslim League (N) before the forthcoming elections, as saying: "If any politician wants to join a particular political party, he or she has a right to do it independent."

GeoTV reported that earlier in the day, Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa - while hearing the petitions seeking timely elections within 90 days of the dissolution of the assemblies - had observed that it was "not possible" to meet the 90day deadline for holding elections.

The apex court has adjourned the hearing till November 2, it said. The news channel also quoted Kakar as saying, "The PML-N supremo is a political reality" and that "his adversaries should face him in



At least 1 sailor dead, 4 missing as 2 cargo ships collide off Germany coast

AP ■ BERLIN

Two cargo ships collided in the North Sea off the coast of Germany on Tuesday and one of them apparently sank, German authorities said. One sailor died and four were miss-

The vessels collided around 5 a.M. About 22 kilometres southwest of the island of Helgoland, Germany's Central Command for Maritime the collision was about 31 kilometres northeast of Langeoog island, which is just off the

German mainland. One of the ships - the British-flagged Verity, which had seven people on board - is believed to have sunk. Two sailors were rescued. The body of one man was recovered, while four were still missing by midday, the emergency command said.

The emergency command said the Verity, which was 91 metres (299 feet) long and 14 metres (46 feet) wide, was headed from Bremen, Germany, to the English port of Immingham. The other, bigger ship - the Bahamas-flagged Polesie remained afloat and had 22 people on board. None of them were believed to be injured. The vessel was heading from Hamburg to A Coruna, Spain. The Polesie is 190 metres (623 feet) long and 29 metres (95

Prince William to travel to Singapore for Earthshot Prize announcement on climate projects

AP ■ LONDON

Prince William will travel to Singapore next month to name the winners of his Earthshot Prize, a global competition to find solu-tions to the challenges of climate

William created the prize three years ago to encourage inventors and entrepreneurs to develop technologies to combat global warming and mitigate its impact on the environ-

Singapore was chosen to host the latest annual awards ceremony because of its role as a "hub for innovation" in Southeast Asia, William's office at Kensington Palace said in a state-

During his four-day trip to Singapore, the prince will meet with local groups to learn how they are working to protect and restore

the planet. William will also attend the United



for Wildlife global summit, featuring representatives of law enforcement agencies, conservation groups and corporations that are working to combat the trade in illegal wildlife products, which is estimated at USD 20 billion annually.

The Earthshot Prize is named after the late President John F. Kennedy's 1962 "moonshot" speech, which challenged Americans to reach the moon by the end of that decade. The speech inspired William and his partners to set a similar goal for finding solutions to climate change and other environmental problems by 2030.

Earthshot offers 1 million pounds (USD 1.2 million) in prize money to the winners in each of five categories: nature protection, clean air, ocean revival, waste elimination and climate change. The winners and all 15 finalists receive help in expanding their initiatives to meet global demand.

feet) wide There was no immediate word on the cause of the collision. Vessels supporting the rescue effort included a cruise ship, the Iona, that has doctors on board and could treat people if needed, the emergency command said.

PTI ■ KATHMANDU President Ramchandra Paudel and Prime Minister

Pushpa Kamal Dahal "Prachanda" on Tuesday greeted the Nepalese people on the occasion of Vijaya Dashami, and said that such occasions have kept the cultural unity and identity of Nepal intact. Dashain, a 10-day long festival, is celebrated across Nepal to worship goddess Durga and Vijay Dashami is the last day of the festival.

President Paudel said that Vijaya Dashami signifies the victory of virtue over vice, and mutual goodwill, fraternity, and reunification in society, will inspire everyone to promote social harmony, unity, solidarity, justice and equality. "Such festivals that are celebrat-

Nepal Prez Paudel, PM Prachanda greet nation on Vijaya Dashami ed with great enthusiasm in

our country have contributed to further strengthen our geographical, cultural, and linguistic diversities, keeping our cultural unity and identity intact,'

Extending best wishes to the people on the occasion, Prime Minister Prachanda said that Nepal's government is actively working to drive the nation towards the path of prosperity and bring positive changes to the people's lives with the institutionalisation of good governance and social justice.



"The public support to all the efforts of the government is very significant for building a prosperous Nepal," he said. As part of the Hindu rituals during Dashain, various temples in the country also witnessed the sacrifices of ani-

Nepal's Rajdevi Temple in Nepal's Janakpur city witnessed the sacrifices of over 15,000 goats on the 8th and 9th day of Dashain which are known as Ashtami and Navami and are of equal importance as Vijaya Dashami.

A court in Kenya extends orders barring deployment of police to Haiti for 2 more weeks



AP ■ NAIROBI (KENYA)

court in Kenya has extended orders blocking Athe deployment of Kenyan police to Haiti to lead a U.N Security Council-approved mission to combat gang violence in the Caribbean nation. The High Court on Tuesday said that it would rule

on the case on November 9. Former presidential candidate, Ekuru Aukot, filed

a petition on October 9 against the deployment of Kenyan forces, arguing that the law allowing the president to do so conflicted with articles of the constitution.

Aukot's petition also faulted President William Ruto for agreeing to lead the international peacekeeping mission while Kenya struggles with security issues arising from militant attacks and most recently ethnic clashes The U.N. Security Council resolution, drafted by

the United States and Ecuador, authorizes the force to deploy for one year, with a review after nine

Kenya's national assembly has yet to schedule a debate on the motion to deploy the contingent, which is expected to be made up of about 1,000 police officers. The non-U.N. Mission would be funded by voluntary contributions, with the U.

'India to surpass Japan to be 2nd largest economy in Asia by 2030'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India, the world's fifth largest economy in the world, is likely to overtake Japan to become the world's third-largest economy with a GDP of USD 7.3 trillion by 2030, S&P Global Market Intelligence said in its latest issue of PMI.

After two years of rapid economic growth in 2021 and 2022, the Indian economy has continued to show sustained strong growth during the 2023 calendar year.

India's gross domestic product (GDP) is expected to grow 6.2-6.3 per cent in the fiscal year ending in March 2024, being the fastest-growing major economy this fiscal

year. Asia's third-largest economy grew by a stellar 7.8 per cent in the April-June quarter.

"The near-term economic outlook is for continued rapid expansion during the remainder of 2023 and for 2024, underpinned by strong growth in domestic demand," S&P Global said.

The acceleration of foreign direct investment inflows into India over the past decade reflects the favourable longterm growth outlook for the Indian economy, helped by a youthful demographic profile and rapidly rising urban household incomes.
"India's nominal GDP mea-

sured in USD terms is forecast to rise from USD 3.5 trillion in 2022 to USD 7.3 trillion by

2030. This rapid pace of economic expansion would result in the size of the Indian GDP exceeding Japanese GDP by 2030, making India the second largest economy in the Asia-Pacific region," it said. By 2022, the size of the Indian GDP had already become larger than the GDP of the UK and also France. By 2030, India's GDP is also forecast to surpass Germany.

The US at present is the world's largest economy with a GDP of USD 25.5 trillion. It makes up for a quarter of the world's GDP. China is the second largest economy with a GDP size of about USD 18 trillion, which is almost 17.9 per cent of the world GDP. Japan is a distant third with



USD 4.2 trillion GDP, followed by Germany with USD 4 trillion GDP.

S&P Global said the longterm outlook for the Indian economy is supported by a number of key growth drivers. "An important positive factor for India is its large and fast-growing middle class, which is helping to drive consumer spending. The rapidly growing Indian domestic consumer market as well as its large industrial sector have made India an increasingly

important investment destination for a wide range of multinationals in many sectors, including manufacturing, infrastructure and services," it said.

The digital transformation of India that is currently underway is expected to accelerate the growth of e-commerce, changing the retail consumer market landscape over the next decade. This, S&P Global said, is attracting leading global multinationals in technology and the said of the said nology and e-commerce to the Indian market.

"By 2030, 1.1 billion Indians will have internet access, more than doubling from the estimated 500 million internet users in 2020," it said.

"The rapid growth of e-com-

merce and the shift to 4G and 5G smartphone technology will boost home-grown unicorns like online e-commerce platform Mensa Brands, logistics startup Delhivery and the fast-growing online gro-cer BigBasket, whose e-sales

have surged during the pan-

demic.

The large increase in FDI inflows to India that has been evident over the past five years is also continuing with strong momentum evident even during the pandemic years of 2020-2022.

"India's strong FDI inflows have been boosted by large inflows of investments from global technology MNCs such as Google and Facebook that are attracted to India's large,

fast-growing domestic consumer market, as well as a strong upturn in foreign direct investment inflows from manufacturing firms," it

Overall, India is expected to continue to be one of the world's fastest-growing economies over the next

decade.

'This will make India one of the most important long-term growth markets for multinationals in a wide range of industries, including manufacturing industries such as autos, electronics and chemicals to services industries such as banking, insurance, asset management, health care and information tech-

Future Investment Initiative in Riyadh



PTI NEW DELHI

nommerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal on Tuesday participated in the seventh edition of Future Investment Initiative (FII) in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

"Deliberated on new pathways for investment with the goal to create a positive global impact and navigate new frontiers of growth and prosperity," Goyal

said in a post on X. The minister is in Riyadh for a two-day visit.

FII Institute is a global nonprofit foundation, which aims to gather government and business leaders from around the world to discuss new pathways for investment.

Its four areas of focus are artificial intelligence (AI) and robotics, education, healthcare

Goyal participates in Little more optimistic about India's economic growth than few months ago: RBI MPC member

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

RI MPC member Jayanth R Varma on Tuesday said that he is 'little more' optimistic about India's economic growth than a few months ago, though concerns remain as the country is now 'disproportionately' dependent on household spending with other components of demand encountering headwinds.

Varma further said that India should be willing to accept inflation between 4 per cent and 5 per cent for several quarters as the price of avoiding a growth shock.

'I am a little more optimistic about growth than I was 2-4 months ago. My cautious optimism stems from improved consumer confidence and various indicators that point to the continuation of the growth momentum," he told PTI in a

While keeping the global growth projection for FY24 unchanged at 3 per cent, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) recently revised its growth projection for India upwards by 20 basis points to 6.3 per cent in October.

"However, the outlook remains fragile because demand is now disproportionately dependent on household spending with other components of demand encountering headwinds," the eminent economist emphasised.

Explaining further, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) member said while external demand is weak due to the sluggishness in the world economy, the revival in private capital expenditure is still too tentative and muted.

"Fiscal consolidation amounts to a withdrawal of the pandemic era government spending stimulus," Varma, current-



Institute of Management, Ahmedabad noted

India's GDP growth in 2022-23 was 7.2 per cent, lower than 9.1 per cent in 2021-22. According to the Reserve Bank

of India's projections, India's GDP is likely to grow at 6.5 per cent in the current fiscal year. Asked when inflation will fall back to the RBI's target of 4 per cent, Varma said August inflation was high, but September inflation is within the band and October inflation is also

Pointing out that India has been experiencing a lot of volatility in commodity and food prices over the last couple of years, he said in this context, a sharp rise or drop in inflation in one or two months does not mean anything.

I am confident that we will achieve this goal, but I think it will take a few more quarters... We should be willing to accept inflation between 4 per cent and 5 per cent for several quarters as the price of avoiding a growth shock," Varma said.

The eminent economist noted that a more rapid pace of reduction could impose an intolerable growth sacrifice. Annual retail inflation, called CPI or consumer price index, cPI or consumer price index, rose 5.02 per cent in September from 6.83 per cent in the previous month on the back of softer vegetable prices.

Recently, Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das has

said that the fundamental goal of the monetary policy is to align inflation with the 4 per cent target and anchor inflation expectations. RBI MPC in its last meeting

earlier in the month, decided to keep the benchmark lending rate at 6.5 per cent, for the fourth time in a row, in a bid to keep retail inflation under

Responding to a question on the implication of high crude oil prices on the government's subsidy figure and inflation, Varma stressed that there is no question that the conflicts in the Middle East pose risks to the world economy.

"What I find reassuring is that oil prices have remained rangebound in the face of these conflicts," he said, adding this is in his view suggestive of depressed global demand putting a lid on

Varma, however, warned that of course, a bigger flare up in the region that takes us back to 1973 would be a very different situation, but as of now there is ground for guarded optimism.

These conflicts would slow the fall in inflation but would not reverse its decline," he opined. The Israeli military has been carrying out retaliatory air strikes on Gaza following the unprecedented attack on Israel on October 7 by

Cello World sets IPO price band at ₹617-648 per share

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Household products and stationery manufacturer Cello World Ltd has fixed a price band of Rs 617-Rs 648 per share for its Rs 1,900-crore initial public offering (IPO), market sources said on Tuesday.

The issue will open for public subscription on October 30 and the anchor book of the offer will be opened for a day on October 27, according to the red herring prospectus.

The issue is a complete offer for sale (OFS) by promoters and other selling shareholders, with no fresh issue of equity share component.

The offer includes a reservation of shares worth up to Rs 10 crore for subscription by eligible employees.

The company has raised the size of its IPO size to Rs 1,900 crore from Rs 1,750 planned earlier.

The OFS comprises the sale of equity shares by Pankaj Ghisulal Rathod, Gaurav Pradeep Rathod, Pradeep Ghisulal Rathod, Sangeeta



Pradeep Rathod, Babita Pankaj Rathod and Ruchi Gaurav

The Mumbai-based Cello World has a product portfolio across three key categories -consumer houseware, writing instruments and stationery, and moulded furniture and related products.

In 2017, it ventured into the glassware and opal ware business under the 'Cello' brand. The company has 13 manufacturing facilities in five different locations -- Daman, Haridwar (Uttarakhand); Baddi

(Himachal Pradesh); Chennai Tamil Nadu) and Kolkata West Bengal) as of March 31, 2023. It is also in the process of setting up a glassware manufacturing facility in Rajasthan. Besides, its net profit rose 30 per cent to Rs 285 crore in FY23 from Rs 219.52 crore in

the preceding fiscal. Kotak Mahindra Capital Company Ltd, ICICI Securities Ltd, IIFL Securities Ltd, JM Financial Ltd and Motilal Oswal Investment Advisors Ltd are book-running lead managers.

Gold rises ₹50, silver declines ₹500



old price rose Rs 50 to Rs G61,650 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the yellow metal had ended at Rs 61,600 per 10 grams.

Gold price fluctuated within a small range, as investors looked for fresh developments regarding the ongoing war between Israel and Hamas, Saumil Gandhi, senior analyst of commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

However, silver declined Rs 500 to Rs 74,500 per kilogram. In the global markets, both gold and silver were down at USD 1,975 per ounce and USD 22.92 per ounce, respectively.

Traders believe gold price will consolidate in the upperend range before the key US macro data, Gandhi said.

Meanwhile, in futures trade, the December contract of gold plunged Rs 332 to Rs 60,267 per 10 grams. Also, December contract of silver tumbled Rs 521 to Rs 71,554 per kg on the MCX.

Global solar projects set to win over \$380 billion investment this year

Investment is increasing in the global solar energy projects, and is expected to be more than USD 380 billion this year, the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Director General Dr Ajay Mathur has said.

Mathur made these remarks on Monday on the sidelines of the

'The good thing is that investment flow is increasing. It was about USD 310 billion for the whole of last year, and USD 235 billion investment has come in during the first half of this year," Dr Mathur told PTI.

"We expect it to be more than \$380 billion this year."

Elaborating on ISA work, he said, "Our goal is that in every member country, we make solar the energy of choice. ISA will have 120 member countries by the end of this year, up from 116 currently.

The challenge is to get investments for small solar plants to reach out to the remote regions as approximately 74 per cent of the investment so far has gone



to large-scale projects in the OECD and China, Dr Mathur

informed "All of Africa has received just

2-3% from these funds." Γwo-thirds of the investments have gone into large solar plants and not into smaller projects. "We need to have a lot of investments in energy storage facilities as well as solar, hydro,

and battery among others. Dr Mathur said ISA is also focused on capacity building, such as training and certifying people to implement and design solar projects and plants in the future. He underlined the need to

train bankers on how to assess

loan applications for solar

development. The ISA works with member countries and "hand-hold" them through the project management process as well as helps in creating policy and regulatory frameworks that are needed for the ecosystem to

happen. Dr Mathur also sees the Middle Eastern countries playing a bigger role in the development of energy and cited the example of Abu Dhabi Future Energy Company, MASDAR, which has invested in renewable energy projects in 40 countries since it was established in 2006.

India's demand for electricity for ACs to exceed total power consumption of Africa, says IEA

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India's demand for electricity for running household air conditioners is estimated to expand nine-fold by 2050 and will exceed total power consumption in the whole of Africa today, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said on Tuesday.

In its latest World Energy Outlook, IEA said India will see the largest energy demand growth of any country or region in the world over the next three decades.

It projected India's energy supply to rise from 42 exajoules (EJ) in 2022 to 53.7 EJ in 2030 and 73 EJ in 2050 under stated policies scenarios and 47.6 EJ by 2030 and 60.3 EJ by 2050 as per announced pledges.

Oil demand is seen rising from 5.2 million barrels per day (bpd) in 2022 to 6.8 million bpd in 2030 and 7.8 million bpd in 2050 under stated policies scenario. Under announced pledges, this demand is seeking 6.2 million bpd in 2030 and 4.7 million bpd in 2050.

IÊA said over the past five decades, India witnessed over 700 heatwave events, which have claimed over 17,000 lives. Fuelled by its geographic and meteorological conditions, air conditioner ownership in India has been steadily rising with growing incomes, tripling since 2010 to reach 24 units per 100 households.

"The impact of cooling needs on electricity consumption is already clear," the Paris-based agency said.
"Electricity demand is sensitive

to temperatures, and in India's case there is a sharp increase in demand as temperatures cross the 25-degree Celsius thresh-

Electricity consumption due to space cooling increased 21 per cent between 2019 and 2022, and today nearly 10 per cent of electricity demand comes from space cooling requirements. "Household air conditioner



the IEA scenarios, outpacing the growth in ownership of every other major household appliance including televisions, refrigerators and washing machines," it said.

'Residential electricity demand from cooling increases ninefold in the Stated Policies Scenario (STEPS) by 2050..

IEA said by 2050, "India's total electricity demand from residential air conditioners in the STEPS exceeds total electricity consumption in the whole of África today..In the Announced Pledges Scenario (APS), howair conditioners is nearly 15 per cent lower in 2050 as it is in the STEPS as a result of increased use of energy-efficient air conditioners and thermal insulation in buildings. "This reduction itself is larger than the total electricity generation by several countries today, such as that of the Netherlands". The growth in ownership and

use of air conditioners and other cooling equipment is one of the key drivers of the increase in peak electricity demand in India.

In the STEPS, peak electricity demand rise around 60 per

cent from the 2022 level by 2030 and cooling accounts for nearly half of this increase. In the APS, however, the implementation of building codes,

the use of more efficient appliances and the adoption of demand response measures enable the same cooling needs to be met with less energy. This reduces peak electricity demand growth by nearly onequarter compared to the STEPS. Given that the electricity system is sized to meet peak demand, lower peak demand helps to lower electricity investment needs and system costs.

Álthough solar PV matches well with daytime cooling needs, cooling demand is also significant in India during the late evening and at night.

"Lowering cooling demand through energy efficiency policies therefore reduces the need for investment in batteries or expensive standby generation capacity, and thus helps to integrate renewables more cost effectively," IEA said.

IEA said India is moving into a dynamic new phase in its energy development marked by a long-term net zero emissions ambition, increased regulatory sophistication, a focus on clean energy deployment, and the creation of domestic clean energy technology supply chains.

Recognising the potential to transform its energy sector and reduce the import burden of fossil fuels while reducing CO2 emissions, India has announced a net zero emissions target by 2070, and has put in place policies to scale up clean energy supply and clean technology manufacturing. 'While clean energy investment in India more than doubles in the STEPS by 2030 from around USD 60 billion in 2022. investment needs to nearly

triple by the end of this decade

to be on a trajectory to meet its

net zero emissions target,

which is reflected in the APS,

BYJU's CFO quits after audit, Golani gets additional charge of India CFO



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

 $\begin{array}{ccc} E_{pany} & \text{BYJU'S} & \text{Chief} \\ \text{Financial} & \text{Officer Ajay Goel} \end{array}$ has quit after completing the audit process for the financial year 2022 and will return to Vedanta, the company said in a statement.

The edtech major has roped in industry veteran Pradip Kanakia as the senior advisor, and President (Finance) Nitin Golani has been given addi-

Chief Finance Officer (CFO) to handle the finance function of the company. "I thank the founders and col-

tional responsibility as India

leagues at BYJU'S for helping me assemble the FY'22 audit in three months. I appreciate the support received during a short but impactful stint at BYJU'S," Goel said.

He will transition after completing the formalities of the financial year (FY) 2022 audit, the statement said.

TOTTENHAM BACK TO TOP OF PREMIER LEAGUE

Tith a clinical finish and a neat assist, Son Heung-min delivered his best impression of Harry Kane to propel Tottenham back to the top of the Premier League. The 2-0 win over Fulham showed once again that Tottenham can thrive without the departed Kane this season

Especially with Son, the player who has replaced Kane as the team's center forward, in such prolific form.

Both of Tottenham's goals came from the same source - Fulham defender Calvin Bassey giving away possession when passing out from the back under pres-sure - and Son had a key role in each of them.

In the 36th minute, the South Korea captain was on hand to collect a pass from Richarlison after Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg intercepted Bassey's clearance. Son showed great footwork to cut inside, around covering defender Tim Ream, and curl a shot into the far corner from the edge of the area.

The second goal, scored by playmaker James Maddison in the 54th, was similar as Hojbjerg again stopped a pass from Bassey reaching its intended target. Bassey is a left-footed player who was deployed Monday as a right-sided center back and he misplaced both passes



with his right foot. Hojbjerg stabbed a first-time pass to Son, whose deft lay-off went into the path of Maddison and the England playmaker

slotted home under former Arsenal goalkeeper Bernd Leno. "That was what won us the game tonight, the work without the Tottenham manager Ange

Postecoglou said. "Both our goals came from that.' Tottenham regained the twopoint lead with which the team

entered the weekend and

remained unbeaten after nine games, along with north London rival Arsenal. It has 23 points under Postecoglou, who took over as Tottenham manager in

any coach has gained from his first nine games in charge in the competition Kane might be pouring in the

goals in Germany - he has nine in eight games for Bayern Munich in the Bundesliga - but Son is doing the same for Tottenham since being pushed up front by Postecoglou, having started the season on the left

Son has seven goals, the same as Liverpool's Mohamed Salah and only two behind top scorer Erling Haaland of Manchester City. Maddison has also slotted in seamlessly since joining from relegated Leicester in the offseason. That was his first home goal, after scoring twice on the road, and he celebrated by performing a darts pose alongside

"Coming to a club like Totten-ham, which is obviously a big-ger club in stature than Leicester, the scrutiny, the responsibility, the pressure goes up a notch," Maddison said. "I love that. I thrive off that - 60,000 fans were here today and I love these occa-

Fulham stayed in 13th place on 11 points.

At the end of the day, the goals we gave away are identical," said Ream, Fulham's captain. "Players at this level will punish you if you give the ball away in

Valencia beats 10-man Cadiz 2-0 to snap winless

streak in Spanish league **AP** ■ VALENCIA (SPAIN)

Valencia snapped a fourgame winless streak in the Spanish league with a comfortable 2-0 win over a Cadiz side that played most of the match with 10 men.

Valencia went ahead after just four minutes thanks to a lovely chip from José Gavà. Robert Navarro was shown a red

card for Cadiz in the 22nd, and three minutes later Hugo Duro added a second for the hosts. It was Valencia's first league win since mid-September, and lifted it into eighth place. Cadiz is now six games without a win and sits in 16th place with nine points

Cadiz plays Sevilla at home on Saturday, while Valencia is away to Athletic Bilbao the next day.

from 10 matches.



Dutch giant Ajax parts company with coach Steijn after woeful start to the season

AP AMSTERDAM

Ajax parted company with coach Maurice Steijn with the biggest team in the Netherlands languishing in nextto-last place in the Dutch league after just one win from its opening seven games.

Steijn only joined from Sparta Rotterdam in the offseason, signing a three-year deal.

The mutual decision for Steijn to is taken after at Utrecht that left Ajax, a fourtime European champion, one

point off last place.
"We have worked intensely and professionally together over the

last few months," Ajax chief executive Jan van Halst said. "But the sporting successes and the development of the team were lacking. That is why we decided to sit down together again

"This time, Maurice also expressed his concerns on whether he was the right man in the right place. Together we decided that it would be best to part ways." Ajax's last win in any competi-

Hedwiges Maduro, a former Ajax player, will take temporary charge of the team starting with the trip to Brighton in the Europa League on Thursday.

'Andretti snub isn't personal even though it feels like and looks like a grudge'

AP AUSTIN (US)

ndretti Global is so commit-Andretti Giovai is so commune that it spent millions of dollars building a car to test this week at a wind tunnel in Germany.

WASTE OF MONEY?
"We had to roll the dice," shrugged Michael Andretti, who shared photographs with The Associated Press of the F1 test car built to 2023 regulations. Michael Andretti and top Andretti Global executives spent last weekend at the U.S. Grand Prix in Texas trying to drum up interest for their bid to join the F1 grid in 2025. Andretti hoped to come face-to-face with Stefano Domenicali, because an ambush seemed to be his only chance of engaging the F1 president in conversation.

Just days earlier, 1978 F1 champion Mario Andretti — Michael's dad — helped honor Domenicali at the National Italian American Foundation. Michael sent a congratulatory said went unanswered. In fact, Domenicali, Formula One Management and Liberty Media Corp. Have pretty much ghosted Andretti since the FIA last month approved Andretti's bid to expand the F1 grid for an 11th team.

The next step is for F1 to approve the application, and the only formal response to the FIA approval was F1's declaration to "now conduct our own assessment of the merits of the

(Andretti) application." Andretti and partner General Motors need to know, like, yesterday if they will be racing in F1 to be ready for the 2025 season opener. F1 knows this, and the longer the series ignores Andretti, another year goes by without one of the most famous names in motorsports on the grid. Michael Andretti's 13 races in a failed 1993 season was the last time an Andretti competed

Now he wants back in - to represent the United States as an American team with an American driver - and is beginning to take the pushback personally. The teams that have publicly objected to expanding dilution of prize money as their reasons for resistance.

But the list of reasons against adding another team has grown to include a lack of room to



many paddocks, dubiousness over a new team's ability to comnete and unfairness to the teams that have spent billions on F1. Mohammed Ben Sulayem, in his second season as president of the FIA, opened the "expressions of interest" process that allowed outside parties to apply to join F1 and he has championed the Andretti/General Motors bid. Ben Sulaym said he believes

expanded to three races in the United States - is stupid. He approved the Andretti application from a pile that started

especially at a time F1 has

ıdino General

Told that Andretti thinks the resistance from the F1 and the teams is actually personal, Ben Sulayem agreed. But felt the issue is green and white.

It's about the money. It's only about the money," Ben Sulayem insisted to AP. "That's what's personal. They don't want to share the money." Andretti thinks it's a grudge and

wants to knows what he has done wrong so he can fix it. 10 current teams have no say in Andretti's fate, but he knows the long history of backroom politics that often plays a role in F1 decisions.

The AP asked four teams if they have a grudge against Andretti. Zak Brown of McLaren does business with Andretti and host-ed the Andretti group at McLaren all weekend, so his feelings are clear. Aston Martin boss Mike Krack worked for Andretti in Formula E and is also pro-Andretti.

It got trickier with Mercedes boss Toto Wolff and Gunther Steiner, the principal at Haas, which considers itself the only American team (it is owned by California businessman Gene

"I don't know him," said Wolff. "I mean, he's one of the great names of the sport. And I think Andretti, as a racing team, has been doing well in the United States. There's no grudge. If you haven't really met someone, you can't have a personal grudge.

Ändretti said he's met Wolff. At last year's Miami Grand Prix, when Andretti went team-toteam seeking support, it was ly an hour inside Mercedes hospitality with Wolff.

Steiner copped to knowing Andretti, "but not very well." "It's nothing personal," said Steiner.



Sarabjot wins bronze and India's eighth Paris Olympics quota place

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Shooter Sarabjot Singh won a bronze medal and sealed a Paris Olympics quota place for India in men's 10m air pistol at the ongoing Asian Shooting Championship in Changwon, Korea on Tuesday.

Sarabjot shot 221.1 in the final to finish behind the Chinese duo of Zhang Yifan (gold, 243.7) and Liu Jinyao (242.1) to earn the eighth Olympic quota place for India in shooting and a first in pistol event.

The Indian had earlier qualified for the top eights with a score of 581, which helped him clinch the eighth spot in the qualifica-tion round. With China having already exhausted their two Olympic quotas in the event and only one of the two Koreans eligible, Sarabjot had his task cut

out needing a high finish. He shot to the lead after the first five shots which was crucial and as the two Chinese caught up and went past him, Sarabjot was able to maintain his composure and register yet another interna-

tional podium finish. In the women's air pistol event, none of the five Indians, including those playing for ranking points only, could make the top

eight cut. Rhythm Sangwan finished 11th (577), Esha Singh 13th (576), Surbhi Rao 15th (575), Ruchita

Vinerkar 22nd(571) and Palak 25th (570) respectively.

men's air pistol, Varun Tomar (578) and Kunal Rana (577) fiished 16th and 17th while Shiva (576) was 20th and Saurabh Chaudhary (569) was 35th.

The junior pistol events and the men's and women's skeet qualifications were also underway on day one of competitions.

United hosts Copenhagen in first home game since Charlton's death League games so far on goals conceded deep into added time. **GROUP D:** After two consecuwithout defender Victor Gómez

AP MANCHESTER

look at what's happening in AEuropean soccer on GROUP A: Old Trafford is set for an emotional evening as Manchester United hosts FC

Copenhagen in the first match at the stadium since the death of Bobby Charlton, one of United's greatest players. Charlton died Saturday and there will be tributes to the late England international ahead of

the game. United is looking to win its first points in the group after losing the opening two games, to Bayern Munich and Galatasaray.

Bayern Munich heads to Turkev looking for its 16th win in a row in Champions League group-stage games. Midfielder Leon Goretzka did not travel with the squad Monday after fracturing his hand in the win over Mainz on Saturday and other absentees include forward Serge Gnabry, who remains out with an arm injury, and defender Dayot Upamecano. Galatasaray is coming off a surprise 3-2 win over United but has concerns over its star forward Mauro Icardi. He scored both goals in a 2-1 win over Besiktas on Saturday but also hurt his ankle.

GROUP B: A surprising win for Lens over Arsenal in the last round of games has thrown wide open a group also containing PSV Eindhoven and Sevilla. Arsenal will be looking to

bounce back from that loss - its only defeat in 13 matches this season in all competitions when the English team travels to Sevilla. Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta has to weigh up whether to bring back goalkeeper Aaron Ramsdale, who has been dropped to accommodate summer signing David Raya.

Raya has been shaky for Arsenal so far and made a couple of big mistakes in the 2-2 draw at Chelsea in the Premier League, including letting a cross go over his head and into the net for one of Chelsea's goals.

Lens, which leads the group on four points, hosts PSV, which is in last place on one point, in the other game. GROUP C: Real Madrid will

look to strengthen its hold on first place when it visits thirdplace Braga. A third straight win in the group will leave Madrid in good position to make it to the knockout stage for the 28th consecutive time.

The Portuguese side has never advanced past the group stage. It is making its third Champions



because of injuries. Midfielder Dani Ceballos is listed as doubtful because of a muscle ailment. Braga could be

and midfielder Arda Güler

Napoli will still be without standout forward Victor Osimhen for the trip to Union Berlin as he recovers from thigh injury sustained while with Nigeria's national team. However, Khvicha Kvaratskhelia appears back to his stunning best and he scored two goals to help Napoli beat Hellas Verona 3-1 on Saturday. Napoli is level on points with

because of a thigh injury.

Braga, three behind Madrid. Union Berlin's first season in the Champions League is turning into something of an ordeal. Union lost 3-0 to Stuttgart on Saturday for its eighth straight loss in all competitions and has lost both of its Champions

tive losses, last-place Benfica looks to get back into contention when it hosts group leader Real Sociedad. The Portuguese side was a quarterfinalist last season but needs the victory to maintain a realistic chance of returning to the knockout stage. Sociedad is making its third Champions League group appearance, and first since 2013-14. The Spanish side reached the last 16 in its debut in 2003-04, losing both legs to Lyon. Last year's runnerup, Inter Milan will again look to Lautaro Martínez and Marcus Thuram to spearhead its attack against Salzburg.

Among other Indians in the

PTI MELBOURNE

Shubham Jaglan, who came close to logging a top-10 on his debut in 2021, returns to the Asia-Pacific Amateur Championship (AAC) for another shot at what he calls as the 'finest' amateur opportunity available to the players of the

The AAC, now celebrating its 14th edition, gives the winner one of the best prizes in the sport for the amateurs with a place in both the Masters at the Augusta National and the Open for the following year.

For the third time in as many years India has seven players of whom three are making their second start at the tournament from Thursday

The closest any Indian has come to winning the prestigious event is Rayhan Thomas, who was runner-up in 2018 in Sentosa Golf Club in Singapore. Thomas, originally slated to play here, pulled out

due to an injury.
The Indian squad, sent by the Indian Golf Union, includes Kartik Singh, a 13-year-

Jaglan, 13-year-old Kartik among Indians at Asia-Pacific Golf

the event, as he makes his debut at the

Interestingly Kartik at 203rd in the world is now the highest-ranked Indian in Melbourne following the withdrawal of Thomas

The other six players are Jaglan, T-11 in his previous AAC start in 2021, Krishnav Nikhil Chopra (T-44 in 2022) and Shaurya Bhattacharya (T-47 in 2022). Kartik Singh, Yuvraj Singh, Raghav Chugh and Vedant Sirohi are making their debut at the AAC.

Four of the seven are currently playing college golf in the United States and they are Jaglan (University of South Florida), Chugh (Rice University), Sirohi (Webber International) and Chopra (Long Beach

old, who becomes the youngest player in Kartik's ranking is a result of his regular



success in domestic events. He also played the US Junior Amateurs this year. Jaglan, who came into the squad following the withdrawal of Thomas, has been focussed on college golf in the US, but is thrilled to be back at the AAC. "Last year I missed the event in Thailand

because I had to play college events. This year, I could make it. The prizes on offer here are just amazing, so I am very excited about having a shot at this event."

Jaglan, now in his third year at college at South Florida, plans to play the PGA Tour University Tour, from where the Order of Merit winner gets a card directly into the PGA Tour and the Top-10 get a chance to Korn Ferry Tour.

Chopra, son of former India cricketer, Nikhil Chopra, now a commentator, has matured as a golfer, as have Yuvraj Singh, son of a former hockey player, and Shaurya Bhattacharya, with the exposure they have got by being sent to various international events by the Indian Golf

Vedant Sirohi has also been playing college golf in the US.

programme of Alpine Formula 1 team Australia and his best Qualifying result of second at

PTI ■ ENSTONE (ENGLAND)

India's Kush Maini on Tuesday joined the young driver development programme of Alpine Formula 1 team.

Before Kush, Jehan Daruvala was another Indian who was on the driver programme of a Formula 1 team — Red Bull Racing in his case — but he could not graduate to the highest level after three mixed Formula 2 seasons under their

Kush, 23, is competing in his rookie Formula 2 season. The Bengaluru-based driver secured his first Formula 2 podium with a third-place fin-

ish in the Sprint Race in

Silverstone. He currently sits just outside of

Maini joins young driver development

the top 10 in the championship standings having secured 11 point scoring finishes across the season. Kush's brother Arjun was a development driver with the Haas Formula 1 team but he too could not reach the pinnacle of four-wheel racing.

Kush will join the growing

Alpine Academy line-up which currently features drivers such as Alpine F1 Team Reserve Driver Jack Doohan and 2022 FIA Formula 3 Champion Victor Martins, and has a host of successful graduates includ-

Zhou Guanyu and Oscar Piastri, and Olli Caldwell who currently competes for Alpine Elf Endurance Team. "It's a dream come true to be associated with a team like

ing current Formula 1 drivers

BWT Alpine F1 Team, where I can learn and grow to hopefully one day be ready to take the step into Formula 1. A massive thank you to Alpine for believing in me and giving me this opportunity," said Kush. Julian Rouse, Alpine F1 Team

Interim Sporting Director, added: "He is a young talent who we believe has strong potential and will be a great sset to our driver development programme.

DE KOCK, KLAASEN POWER SOUTH **AFRICA TO 383/5 AGAINST BANGLADESH**

Quinton de Kock's magnificent 174 and a brutal 49-ball 90 from Heinrich Klaasen underlined South Africa's batting prowess as they ended with a mammoth 382/5 against Bangladesh in a World Cup

game here on Tuesday.
De Kock pumped 15 fours and seven sixes to not only record his third century in five innings, but his 140-ball knock which witnessed a fantastic late acceleration, also had the opener record the ninth highest individual score in the tournament's

Even though he was not required to do the heavy lifting after a stunning ton against Éngland, a two-day break had Klaasen back at his best - cracking eight huge sixes and two fours for his quickfire effort.

In his 150th ODI, de Kock flayed the Bangladesh bowlers in hot and humid conditions to bat almost through the end, but certainly missed an opp ortunity to become the first South African to record an ODI double ton. Nevertheless, de Kock was particularly striking with quick hands and

compelling footwork after a slowish start, as the 'keeper-batter unleashed some spectacular hits all around the

En route his 20th ODI ton, de Kock went past India's Virat Kohli for most runs and also eclipsed Australia's David Warner (163) to record the highest individual score in this World

And as has been the case a few times in the recent past, South Africa went ballistic in the last 10 overs to add another 144 runs with David Miller making an unbeaten 15-ball 34. With Shakib Al Hasan back, there

was a visible change in Bangladesh's approach with spin being introduced with the new ball from the second over whereas after the powerplay, close-in fielders at unorthodox spots ensured the flow of runs was in check. Mehidv Hasan Miraz's tidy start had him finding an outside edge off Reeza Hendricks' (12) bat in the second over but Tanzid Hasan could not grab the opportunity. But Bangladesh did not have to wait

for long. After squaring up de Kock just outside the off-stump with a jaffa, Shoriful got one to sneak through the



over for the first breakthrough.

The second wicket followed soon in the next over as Mehidy trapped Rassie van der Dussen (1) in front of the wickets. To their credit, Bangladesh bowlers did well to keep the scoring rate in check in the power-

But de Kock led South Africa's recovery with Markram in tow. With Shakib opting for a full-fledged spin attack in the middle overs, South Africa batters found accelerating a little difficult with close-in fielders in

place.
However, to their credit, South African batters did not miss any opportunity to pick up the odd boundary.
Markram batted fluently for his 67 ball 60, using his hands adroitly to produce seven boundaries but an inside-out lofted hit found Das at long on in the 31st over off Shakib, with the third wicket stand producing 131 runs for the Proteas.

The fourth-wicket stand was even bigger and better - 142 runs off just 87 balls between de Kock and Klaasen — as Bangladesh were left with a mountain to climb.

at the back end of the innings. They played well, but we can improve and do well in the

Naveen, who plays for Lucknow Super

Giants in the IPL, also gave credit to the tournament for shaping their players for this

"That's true. IPL happens here in India, and

along with that experience, coming and play-

ing here (in Chennai) or any other venue

Afghan spinner Noor Ahamd returned with

impressive figures of three for 49 on his

does give you a lot of confidence.

World Cup debut on Monday.



It inspires another generation of players to take up cricket: Afghanistan coach on Pak win

The historic victory against The historic victory against Pakistan in the World Cup will inspire the next generation of Afghans to take up cricket, feels Afghanistan coach Jonathan Trott.

Afghanistan notched up a memorable first-ever ODI win over Pakistan, prevailing by eight wickets, a little over a week after they stunned defending champions England.
"I think it just shows the

amount of talent in the side for the country again, as when we were fortunate enough to beat England," Trott said at the post match press conference on Monday.

"It inspires another generation of players to pick up a cricket bat and a cricket ball, work on their fielding and their fitness. Afghanistan had come close to beating Pakistan a few times recently but never managed to cross the line

'It doesn't take a lot to see the passion and the rivalry between them. I'm just glad today we were in the game again, and we managed to get across the line." "Hopefully, will now have that self-belief that we can go on and trust our games and be very confident for the games coming forward.'

The 42-year-old, however, refused to call the wins against the two former champions "upsets".

'Not sure I'd say upset if I'm honest. I think it's a disservice to the guys in the changing room. I think maybe you'd say, when we go into a side, you say underdogs or whatever, but it's

not an upset."
"We played well, these guys

work hard, and they deserve to win. If we play good cricket. And for me, I think we've just got to make sure we keep playing good cricket and not get too far ahead of ourselves.

The win against Pakistan has elevated Afghanistan, who were languishing at the bottom, to sixth on the points table. Trott feels that there is still room for improvement.

'We need to be more consistent in the things that we do. We know the areas we need to work on and those things that will help us have evenings like this and be more consistent and beat the big teams. But, every game that we go into this World Cup, we got a chance of winning it.

PLAYING IPL HELPED

Making his World Cup debut, 18-year-old wrist spinner Noor Ahmed picked up three wickets that included the crucial scalps of Pakistan skipper Babar Azam and Mohammad Rizwan.

Trott feels that playing in pressure situations, in front of big crowds in the IPL has helped Noor, who plays for Gujarat Titans in the lucrative league. 'I thought we got it right with Noor today coming in and the way that he bowled, certainly for a youngster as well. The way that he bowled and started really well and then got a few

wickets and a bit of momentum. "Again, there's always things we can work on but you know that's what the likes of the IPL does for countries like Afghanistan. Exposes players from a young age to playing in front of big crowds and under pressure situations.

Resurgent Australia face tenacious Netherlands in World Cup

PTI N NEW DELHI

 $B^{
m olstered}$ by the revival of their batting firepower, a rejuvenated Australia will look for another dominating show but need to be cautious when they face a tenacious Netherlands in their next World Cup match here on Wednesday.

their campaign, the five-time champions turned it around with two solid performances against Sri Lanka and Pakistan but they know very well that they can ill-afford to take the Dutch lightly in what is turning out to be a World Cup of upsets. The Netherlands have been one of the success stories of this showpiece event as they stunned an in-form South Africa at Dharamsala after returning to the World Cup following a 12year hiatus. They will look to take a cue from Afghanistan's win over Pakistan to keep their story

However, it will be easier said than done, especially after the marauding show of the Aussies against Pakistan.

The reasons behind the turnaround include their top-order batting might, the return to form of spinner Adam Zampa and the consistent performances of pacers Josh Hazlewood and Mitchell Starc.

The return to form of David Warner and Mitchell Marsh is good news for Australia as they can blow away any opponent with their sheer ruthless batting. A case in point is the 259-run opening partnership that the two shared against Pakistan.

strike rate of 108.3 in seven innings as an opener, grabbing the opportunity with both hands in place of an injured Travis Head while the ever-dependable Warner has looked in ominous touch. But Australia will need to add firepower in their middle order, especially with Steve Smith and Marnus Labuschagne struggling at the moment.

While Smith has crossed the 30mark only once in his last four innings, Labuschagne has fared slightly better though he is yet to score a half-century in the tournament and has a low strike rate of 64.70.

With Head nearing his full fitness, the Delhi game could be a final test for Smith and Labuschagne to prove themselves as another failure might see one of them lose their place to the returning Head, who also provides the team with a handy off-spin

will remember this World Cup for the rest of my life: Naveen-ul-Haq "We still have a lot of things to be improved, especially the way we conceded a few runs

fghanistan pacer Naveen-ul-Haq will Aremember the ongoing World Cup for the rest of his life for his team's inspiring success but the fast bowler won't reverse his decision to retire from the One-Day format at the end of the tournament.

Afghanistan created ripples with their win over defending champions England last week and on Monday the team from the strife-torn nation exceeded expectations by drubbing Pakistan with consummate ease. The 24-year-old Naveen had made a shock announcement last month that he would quit the ODIs at the end of the World Cup

He took the decision to prolong his T20

Now that Afghanistan's performance has created a huge impact, he was asked if he would rethink his retirement decision.

'Not at all. That's the final decision I have made. Luckily, I will remember this World Cup for the rest of my life," Naveen-ul-Haq told reporters after Afghanistan's first ever

PTI ■ BENGALURU

squad.

Former India batter Dilip Vengsarkar on Tuesday rem-

inisced that living up to the tag

of champions was as much or,

perhaps, an even tougher task

for the 1983 World Cup winning

Vengsarkar had played just two matches in that Prudential Cup

in England, but remains proud

of the triumph, which he termed

the result of ultimate team work

"It was extremely difficult, and

we went into the tournament

without having any real chances

(to win). But then we emerged

champions, and immediately

after that we hosted West Indies

at home. "They came prepared

and dominated us, winning the

Test and ODI series. The dom-

'It was tough to live up to billing | PTI CHENNAL

ination started with the first Test

at Kanpur (WI won by an

"In the ODI at Jamshedpur,

(Gordon) Greenidge and (Viv)

Richards were competing against each other to hit the ball

longer as we just watched," said

Vengsarkar during the launch of the book 'The Lords of the

Wankhede - Tales Between Two Titles', co-authored by former India batter WV Raman and

veteran cricket writer R Kaushik.

Greenidge (115 off 134 balls)

and Richards (149 off 99 balls)

made hundreds as Windies

posted 333 for 8 in 45 overs, and

won the 4th ODI by 104 runs.

Vengsarkar said it was a new

experience for the whole team to

go into the 1987 World Cup at

home as favourites.

innings and 83 runs).

of champions after '83 triumph'



victory over Pakistan. Naveen dedicated the victory to his people back home.

"It does mean a lot back home to the people of our country. We all know the situation back home. There was also an earthquake that happened a few days ago.

There is not a lot of happiness in the country without cricket. So, at least we have given them some moments of happiness tonight. Going deeper into the tournament, every game and two points count. The win tonight (Monday) is quite big for us.

Naveen admitted that there are areas that they still need to improve, majorly being leaking runs at the closing stages of the innings, as Pakistan scored 101 runs in the

While he disclosed that he is very close to all-rounder Mohammad Nabi, who has been giving him healthy tips, he admitted that it

Pakistan all-rounder Iftikhar

Ahmed has conceded that the

side's spinners haven't been effective which has led to hat-

trick of defeats in the ongoing

World Cup. Pakistan fell to an eight-wicket

loss to Afghanistan here on

Monday, their third on the trot

in the marquee-event. Spin has

been Pakistan's biggest weak-

ness. Notably, the 1992 champi-

ons do not have a proper finger

spinner in the side with all-

rounders Iftikhar and

Mohammad Nawaz sharing the

We do have finger spinners in

our team, including me and

(Mohammad) Nawaz. Yes, the

role of our spinners hasn't been

that effective here. But we will

keep trying to improve. That's all

we can do," he told reporters

after the loss.

is not easy to get a chance in the playing XI alongside fellow spinners Mujeeb Ur Rahman and Rashid Khan. Getting a chance alongside Mujeeb and Rashid is very tough. But, somehow I got the chance to play, and I just wanted to deliv-

upcoming games.

World Cup.

Pakistan spinners have

been ineffective, says Iftikhar option we have for now. If you



on the back of half centuries by Abdullah Shafique and Babar Azam and contributions by the lower order batters Shadab Khan

and Iftikhar. "Frankly speaking, this was a wicket of 300-plus. But, their

runs and boundaries.

Pakistan put up 282/7 on the board after electing to bat first bowlers did trouble us. As a bat-

ting unit, we need to improve. Babar Azam and his men have been sloppy in the field, dropping catches, and giving away

"We made a lot of mistakes during our fielding, I admit. But, we need to improve; that's the only

are playing against a worldclass side, you have to perform at a similar level across departments. Only then you will be able to survive.

The Men in Green have now entered the 'must-win' stage. They have to win their remaining games as well as need some favourable results to make it to the semi-finals but Iftikhar thinks there is still time left to bounce back.

"We can definitely bounce back. There's no doubt that we possess the abilities, and we have worldclass players in our side."

'We still have a lot of matches left. But we have to win them all to get into the top four," he

We'll address it: Marsh on late batting collapse against Pakistan

ustralia will not brush aside Athe late collapse against Pakistan and will look to address their batting frailties in the back end when they face the Netherlands in their World Cup match, said in-form all-rounder Mitchell Marsh on Tuesday.

David Warner (163) and Marsh (121) smashed superlative hundreds, forging a 259-run stand for the opening wicket but a late collapse saw them eventually finish at 367 for 9 against Pakistan. "I think individually everyone would have addressed that. To be honest I thought Pakistan bowled really well and gave us a bit of a blueprint on how to go about it certainly towards the

back end of the innings," Marsh said during the pre-match press conference

"They're a very good outfit and we were able to get on top of them in the first half of the innings, but they came back strongly, and you expect that from teams like Pakistan.

So, we'll address it, and hopefully moving forward, we can have a great last 10 overs and apply some pressure to other teams," he said ahead of Australia's match against the Dutch here on Wednesday.

BATTING AT NUMBER 3

Travis Head, who had injured his left hand during a World Cup warm-up match in South Africa, is firming up for a return after

hitting the nets here ahead of the Netherlands clash.

Asked if Head will play tomorrow, Marsh said: "Yeah, I think that decision will be made this afternoon/tonight. He looked good, a bit of range hitting last night. He says the hand feels good. So, I'm sure if he's fit, he'll be available for selection in the

"I'm not sure who he'll replace at this stage, but I presume that if he's fit and he gets through today that he'll play, but that decision will be made tonight." Marsh also said he has no issues slipping back to No. 3 in case Head regains his opening slot. "I'm very happy to go back down to three. I've obviously batted there a lot over the last



couple of years, so I feel really comfortable at three. And if and when Heady comes back in, I think that's the best position for me to play for this team," he said. It has been a World Cup of upsets with Afghanistan stun-

ning defending champions England and Pakistan, while the Netherlands shocking South Africa the other day.

"Yeah, teams have got better. I think that's great for world cricket, certainly in tourna-

ments like this that can sometimes be pretty long. And you see a lot of games that are not exactly close or competitive," he

"But we've said it multiple times now in this tournament this year, there's absolutely no easy games. And you go into every game having done all the appropriate homework and hopefully you can come out with a win.

'So, tomorrow is no different for us. We respect the Netherlands; they're playing some good crick-et and that will be a tough chal-Talking about his evolution as a

cricketer, Marsh said: "I've still worked hard for a long period of time to hopefully keep improving. And there's no doubt that I've had probably more opportunities at the top of the order and more time to bat in the white ball format.

"Not a whole lot's changed, I've just probably not given up on the fact that I was striving for something and kept working hard through periods of time that were tougher than others.

"In the last couple of years, I feel I've been as consistent as I could have been, which was something I was always striving for. I guess all the best players in the world that you look up to, and certainly in our team, they're so consistent. And that's what I was.

It has been a long season for Australia but Marsh said the experience of the players have helped them to be in great frame of mind despite the initial reversals.

"India probably play the most cricket out of anyone. And I guess from our point of view and from my point of view, it's leaning on experience of the past,"

'We've got a team full of a lot of experience at the moment, guys who've played 12 months of the year for the last probably six or seven years. So, we're not in unfamiliar territory, whilst we had a slow start and we were put under pressure at times, the vibe in the team is great.

'We've played really good cricket in the last two games and hopefully that's the case tomor-

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