

OPINION 6

INDIAN SPACE INDUSTRY
AT THE INFLECTION POINT

WORLD 9

CHINA REFUSES COOPERATION
WITH PAKISTAN UNDER CPEC

MONEY 10

INDIA'S EXPORT OF POLISHED DIAMOND
TO DIP BY 22 PER CENT THIS FISCAL

BHUBANESWAR, WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 27, 2023; PAGES 12 & 4

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INDIA TO FACE
AUSTRALIA IN
3rd ODI TODAY
12 SPORT

INDIA CALLS TRUDEAU'S BLUFF

PTI ■ UNITED NATIONS

India on Tuesday asked the UN member states not to allow "political convenience" to determine responses to terrorism, extremism and violence, in a veiled attack on Canada amid the diplomatic standoff over the killing of a Khalistani separatist.

Addressing the 78th UN General Assembly session here, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar also said respect for territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs cannot be "exercises in cherry picking" as he asserted that the days when a few nations set the agenda and expected others to fall in line are over.

"We must never again allow an injustice like vaccine apartheid to recur. Climate action too cannot continue to witness an evasion of historical responsibilities. The power of markets should not be utilised to steer food and energy from the needy to the wealthy.

"Nor must we countenance that political convenience determines responses to terrorism, extremism and violence. Similarly, respect for territorial integrity and non-interference in internal affairs cannot be exercises in cherry picking," the Minister said, in an apparent reference to the US, which reportedly provided Canada with intelligence after the killing of Sikh separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar.

Jaishankar's remarks on the "political convenience" appears to be directed at



External Affairs Minister Subrahmanya Jaishankar addresses the 78th session of the United Nations General Assembly on Tuesday PTI

Canada whose Prime Minister Justin Trudeau recently alleged "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of a Khalistani extremist on his country's soil on June 18 in British Columbia, a charge angrily rejected by New Delhi as "absurd" and "motivated".

"They (Canadians) have made the allegations, they have taken action on them. To us, it seems or it appears that these allegations by the government of Canada are primarily politically driven," External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said last week.

Canada has a Sikh population of more than 7,70,000 (about 2 per cent of its total

population) and are considered a crucial voting bloc.

"In our deliberations, we often advocate the promotion of a rules-based order. From time to time, respect for the UN Charter is also invoked. But for all the talk, it is still a few nations who shape the agenda and seek to define the norms. This cannot go on indefinitely. Nor will it go unchallenged," Jaishankar said in his address.

He asserted that a "fair, equitable and democratic order" will surely emerge, "once we all put our minds to it. And for a start, that means ensuring that rule makers do not subjugate rule takers. After all, rules

will work only when they apply equally to all."

"Even as we encourage collective endeavours, India seeks to promote cooperation with diverse partners. From the era of non-alignment, we have now evolved to that of Vishva Mitra (a friend to the world). This is reflected in our ability and willingness to engage with a broad range of nations," he said, referring to the rapid growth of the Quad, and expansion of the BRICS grouping.

"All countries pursue their national interests. We, in India, have never seen that as being in contradiction with global good. When we aspire to be a

leading power, this is not for self-aggrandisement but to take on greater responsibility and make more contributions," he added.

Underlining that the world is witnessing an exceptional period of turmoil, Jaishankar said it was with a sense of exceptional responsibility that India took up the Presidency of the G20. "Our vision of 'One Earth, One Family, One Future' sought to focus on the key concerns of the many, not just the narrow interests of a few," he said.

"In the words of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, it was to bridge divides, dismantle barriers and sow seeds of collaboration that nourish a world, where unity prevails over discord and where shared destiny eclipses isolation. The New Delhi G20 Leaders' Declaration articulates our collective ability to do so," he said.

He said the international order is diverse and we must cater for divergences, if not differences. "The days when a few nations set the agenda and expected others to fall in line are over," he added.

Jaishankar said that the African Union's inclusion in the G20 was a "significant step".

"This significant step in reform should inspire the United Nations, a much older organization, to also make the Security Council contemporary. Broad representation is a pre-requisite for both effectiveness and credibility," Jaishankar told the United Nations General Assembly.

India canters to Gold

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

India's dressage team cantered to its first ever Asian Games gold and only second medal in this discipline in the history of the sport with the quartet of Sudipti Hajela, Divyakriti Singh, Vipul Hriday Chheda and Anush Agarwalla living up to expectations, here on Tuesday.

The Indian quartet was performing well in the selection trials as their scores either matched or were better than the Asian Games medal winners from the previous editions. It was more about the colour of medal they would win and they grabbed the top place on the podium by aggregating 209.205 percentage points, leaving behind China (204.882 per cent) and Hong Kong (204.852 per cent).

The last time the sport of equestrian contributed to India's Asian Games tally was in 1986 when the country won a dressage bronze.

In the 1982 edition in New Delhi, the Indian team had grabbed three gold medals in Eventing and Tent Pegging competitions.

Raghubir Singh had won a gold in individual Eventing in 1982 and then added another yellow metal in Team Eventing alongside Ghulam Mohammed Khan, Bishal Singh and Milkha Singh.

Rupinder Singh Brar won the third gold medal in individual Tent Pegging.

In dressage, the horse and rider are judged on how they perform a series of movements. Each movement is



19th Asian Games

marked out of 10 (from 0 to 10).

Each rider gets an overall score and from there, a percentage is worked out. The rider with the highest percentage is the winner of his class.

Top three scorers in a team are counted to determine the winner.

It was a long and difficult journey for the Indian team which has an interesting mixture of riders. All of them left home at a young age and have been training in Europe separately for the last few years away from their family.

They took part in the Asian Games selection trials organised in Europe by the Equestrian Federation of India.

Their horses were quarantined in Aachen in Germany for seven days under strict rules before they were brought to China on September 21.

"It is unbelievable to win a gold here. It is not an easy journey for any of us. All of us have gone to Europe at a young age," said the 21-year-old Sudipti, the youngest of the quartet.

"We have worked hard for many years away from our families. We have made a lot of sacrifices," said Sudipti,

who hails from Indore.

"All of us stuck together, shouting and supporting each other. I was the last to go in the competition and after a few riders after me, finally we realised that Team India has won a gold. That was a very emotional moment," said the 23-year-old Anush, who left his home in Kolkata in 2017 to train in Europe.

"The national anthem was playing and the national flag was flying, there was no better feeling than that. It was all we had worked for and we realised our dream. The first gold medal for India in dressage," said Anush. For Divyakriti, who is hailing from Jaipur, the achievement was also due to their horses.

"A big shout out to our horses also. We are nothing without them," she said.

"It has been a long journey and not an easy one. None of us thought it (to win gold) but we gave our hundred per cent and we did it," she added.

Sudipti currently trains at Pamfou in France. She began horse riding at the age of six as a hobby but later took it seriously as a sport on the insistence of her father. The name of her horse is Chinski.

Divyakriti took to horse riding when she was in the seventh grade at the famous Mayo College Girls School in Ajmer.

She was the equestrian captain of her school. She did her graduation in Delhi's Jesus and Mary College. In 2020, she moved to Europe for training as equestrian infrastructure is not the best in India.

ED files supplementary charge-sheet against Biswal

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED) has filed second supplementary Prosecution Complaint against the former Cuttack MLA Pravat Ranjan Biswal, his wife Laxmi Bilasani Biswal, Seashore Securities Ltd., Seashore Multipurpose Cooperative Ltd, their two directors Prashanta Kumar Dash, Pravat Kumar Dash and three others before the Bhubaneswar Special Court (PMLA), an ED release said on Tuesday.

The court has taken cognisance of the Prosecution Complaint.

The agency had earlier filed a Prosecution Complaint in this case in 2016 and Supplementary Complaint was also filed in 2017. ED initiated in-



vestigation on the basis of FIR registered by the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of the Odisha Police wherein, charge-sheet was also filed subsequently, under various sections of the IPC, Prize Chits and Money Circulation Schemes (Banning) Act, 1978 and Odisha Protection of Interest of Depositors (in Financial Establishments) Act, 2011.

The investigation was subsequently taken up by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), pursuant to the order of the Orissa High Court of Orissa.

ED investigation revealed that Seashore Group of companies had collected huge funds from public through their registered cooperatives and these funds were further diverted to their other shell companies and various related individuals for concealing the source of such funds and thereby layering the same. The proceeds of crime were also channelised through the accused persons as named in the supplementary complaint filed by ED.

Further investigation was underway.

Odisha Apartment Bill cleared in Assembly

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

An Odisha Apartment (Ownership and Management) Bill, 2023 was passed in the State Assembly on Tuesday.

It has several progressive and transformative provisions relating to regulation of ownership of an individual apartment and its management.

It would regulate the use of common area in an apartment, create a common fund to meet the common expenses of an apartment, create necessary provisions relating to registration of common area in favour of association of allottees in line with the provisions of RERA Act and provide for registration of association of allottees with the competent authority to

make uniform provisions for registration and its terms and conditions to be provided in the bylaws.

Besides, the Bill aims to clearly spell out the accountability and responsibility of promoters, provide for rights and responsibilities of each apartment owner in relation to the association of apartment owners, provide for formation of association of apartment owners, create provisions for insurance of the apartment and ensure its structural stability.

It would also ensure compliance of the relevant Act, rules and regulations to effectively safeguard the interest of the apartment owners.

It will conclusively address the issues of ownership of the apartment and its management and will instill a sense of confidence and an environment of transparency among all the stakeholders.

In Rourkela

Friends kill Class-X boy for not paying money

PNS ■ ROURKELA

A Class-X student was killed allegedly by three of his friends over a matter pertaining to money at Udit Nagar in Rourkela on Monday night.

The deceased was identified as Rudra Narayan Padhi (15) of Nua Basti in Balughat. He was a student of the Developed Area High School in Civil Township here.

While two of the accused were being questioned at the Udit Nagar police station, another one reportedly absconded.

According to reports, Rudra's friends had asked him to give them money for the purpose of spending two days



ago. As he expressed his inability to help them due to lack of money, they telephoned him to come to Udit Nagar.

As he reached the place, the trio trashed him with lathi and crushed him to death with stones. The accused then dumped the body near Sarana Chhak, reports said.

Worried over Rudra's delay in returning home, his parents lodged a missing complaint with the Raghunathpali police.

On Tuesday morning, locals spotted the body and informed his parents. Police recovered the body for postmortem and registered a murder case.

WAHEEDA HONoured WITH DADASAHEB



Aaj phir jeene ki tamanna hai

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Waheeda Rehman, who made her debut 68 years ago and went on to act in cult classics such as "Pyasa" and "Guide", was on Tuesday named recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award, the government's highest recognition in the field of cinema.

"I am doubly happy because it is Dev Anand's birthday. I think 'taufa unko milna tha, mujhe mil gaya'," Rehman told PTI on the birth centenary of her frequent collaborator.

Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Anurag Thakur made the announcement on X.

"I feel an immense sense of happiness and honour in announcing that Waheeda Rehman ji is being bestowed with the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Lifetime Achievement Award this year for her stellar contribution to Indian Cinema," Thakur wrote on the microblogging site.

The award for the year 2021 will be presented during the 69th National Film awards ceremony.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi congratulated the veteran actor on being named for the honour.

"Delighted that Waheeda Rehman ji has been honored with the Dadasaheb Phalke Lifetime Achievement Award. Her journey in Indian cinema has left an indelible mark. A beacon of talent, dedication and grace, she embodies the best of our cinematic heritage. Congratulations to her," the prime minister said on X.

The five-member jury comprised Rehman's close friend and last year's Dadasaheb award winner Asha Parekh, actors Chiranjeevi, Paresh Rawal and Prosenjit Chatterjee as well as filmmaker Shekhar Kapur.

Regarded as one of the finest actors of the country, Rehman, also an accomplished Bharatanatyam dancer, made her debut in Hindi cinema with Guru Dutt's "CID" opposite Dev Anand.

After that dazzling beginning came a string of arthouse and mainstream films, the actor comfortably straddling the twin worlds of "Kaagaz ke Phool" and "Ram aur Shyam".

The remarkable career spanning more than six decades and 90 films in different languages saw her segue from black and white to colour, and from lead roles to character cameos.

Some of her most memorable performances were with Guru Dutt — "Pyasa", "Kaagaz Ke Phool", "Sahib Bibi aur Ghulam" and "Chaudhvin Ka Chand". With Dev Anand came the much loved "Guide" and "Prem Pujari". The filmography includes "Khamoshi", "Kabhi Kabhie", "Reshma Aur Shera", which got her the National Award, and "Trishul".

Remembering Dev Anand, Rehman, who has earlier won the Padma Shri and the Padma Bhushan, said it is a double celebration.

"It is very wonderful that his celebration is going on and I get this honour. I am really happy and grateful to the government that they chose me for this honour. So, it is a combination and celebration of this and Dev sahab's 100th birth anniversary," she added.

Born in Chennai, Rehman made her acting debut with the 1955 Telugu films "Roju

Maraayi" and "Jayasimha".

"At a time when the historic Nari Shakti Vandan Adhiniyam has been passed by Parliament, her being awarded with this lifetime achievement award is a fitting tribute to one of the leading ladies of Indian Cinema and one who has dedicated her life after films to philanthropy and the greater good of society. I congratulate her and humbly pay my regards to her rich body of work that is an intrinsic part of our film history," Thakur said in his post on X.

Rehman, who now lives in Bengaluru, has become selective in her film choices. In the 1990s and 2000s, she starred in character roles in "Lamhe", "Chandni", "Rang De Basanti" and "Delhi-6".

Rehman is also associated with bringing to life some of Hindi films most popular songs — "Kahin pe nigahen, kahin pe nishana" ("CID"), "Aaj phir jeena ki tamanna hai" and "Piya tose naina lage re" ("Guide"), "Luka chhippi" ("Rang De Basanti" and "Genda phool" ("Delhi-6").

Her most recent film appearance was in 2021's "Skater Girl", a coming-of-age sports drama.

Born in Chennai to a Deccani Muslim family, Waheeda never aspired to be an actor but knew she wanted to make people "laugh and cry".

She wanted to be a doctor but ended up on the silver screen instead, an actor who began with Telugu cinema and went on to rule the Hindi film industry, slipping in and out of arthouse and mainstream cinema and staying relevant as movies evolved from black-and-white to colour.

"I wanted to become a doctor, because in those days for Muslim families medicine was the only respectable profession," the actor recalled in a Tweak India interview two years ago.

Art, culture and dance interested her since she was a child. And with the support of her father, an IAS officer, she was able to pursue her dream of learning Bharatanatyam and then making a career in the movies.

"I used to make faces looking in the mirror. When my father asked why do I do this, I said 'I want to make people laugh and cry,'" she said in the interview.

Pandemonium in Assembly for second day

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Ruling BJD and opposition BJP stalled the proceedings of the Odisha Assembly for the second day on Tuesday.

As pandemonium prevailed, Speaker Pramila Mallick adjourned the House till 4 pm without transacting any business.

Soon after the House met for the day, the Opposition indulged in sloganeering alleging rejection of questions on vital issues raised by its MLAs.

While the BJP members wearing black badges trooped into the Well of the House and shouted slogans, the ruling party members countered the former by alleging Central



negligence towards the State. They particularly raised the food grains minimum support price issue.

Unable to run the House smoothly, the Speaker first adjourned the House at 10:31 am till 12 pm and convened an all-party meeting to

resolve the deadlock. The House was later adjourned till 12:05 pm and again from 12:07 pm till 4 pm in view of the noisy scenes due to both BJP and BJD members shouting slogans in support of their respective demands. The Question Hour and the

Zero Hour businesses could not be taken up. Besides, a notice given by the opposition Congress for a debate in the form of an adjournment motion on primary education also could not be taken up due to the chaos.

Rivers Day Talk, quiz on maritime security held

By Regional Science Centre, FROST

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

On the World Rivers Day on Sunday, the Regional Science Centre, Bhubaneswar in association with the Forum for River and Ocean Scientists and Technologists (FROST) organised a seminar on "Maritime Security" followed by an interactive science quiz.

The seminar was delivered by Indian Coast Guard, Paradip DIG Sanatan Jena to a wide spectrum of audience from students to professionals. Advisor to JRG Education Trust Capt. Naveen Sarma was invited as the chairperson for the event who discussed the



maritime challenges and security concerns for the various stakeholders.

The seminar highlighted various aspects of maritime security, including piracy, smuggling, legal framework, Maritime Cooperation and Coastal Surveillance Network etc. President and VP respectively of FROST Prof SC Misra and Dr Purnendu Misra along with other eminent people, Indian Navy personnel and students from various schools joined and interacted.

Govt examining report on missing Ratna Bhandar keys

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

An Inquiry Commission's report on the missing keys of Ratna Bhandar of the Jagannath Temple in Puri is being examined by the State Government, said Minister of State for Home Tusharkanti Behera in the State Assembly on Monday.

He was replying to a question by MLA Ganesh Ram Singh Khuntia.

Behera said the government has formed Commissions of Inquiry in as many as 24 matters since 2000. Currently, none of them are functional.

The government has so far received 20 complete reports and one interim report from the panels while three commissions were closed, he

said. Out of the received reports, 13 of them were presented in the Assembly. Presentation of remaining eight reports in the Assembly was under the consideration of the government, he said.

Notably, the Justice Raghubir Dash Commission on the missing keys of Ratna Bhandar had submitted its report to the government on November 29, 2018. The commission had been constituted on June 6, 2018, two months after the keys were found to be missing during a bid to inspect the Ratna Bhandar.

Opposition BJP and Congress have been demanding to table the panel's findings in the Assembly.

4-day IT Expo at Janata Maidan from Oct 5

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Information Technology Association of Odisha (ITAO) has announced IT EXPO-2023 to offer deep insights on recent market trends, products and services to masses.

The four-day expo will be held from October 5 to 8 at the Janata Maidan, Bhubaneswar. Over 50 IT-based companies are going to participate with more than 60 brands showcasing their products and services.

The theme of the expo is 'Discover Online, Experience Offline'.

ITAO president Abinash



Patnaik said, "We are delighted to announce IT EXPO-2023 that will offer industry participants to network, partnership, knowledge and learning. They can generate leads and uplift their sales. Market research and insights,

At IIT Bhubaneswar Seminar on 'Advancing Science and Serving Humanities'

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bhubaneswar organised a seminar on 'Advancing Science and Serving Humanities' in the realm of Cognitive Science on September 23. The seminar aimed at delving deep into the dynamic interplay, where science enhances understanding of human cognition, creativity, and the essence of human behaviour.

Dr Tapan Gandhi, Cadence Chair Professor of AI & Automation, Department of Electrical Engineering, IIT Delhi, was the speaker. He



shared his knowledge, experiences and visions for the future in this field.

Dr Gandhi elaborated upon the use of Cognitive Science with the help of Artificial Intelligence and Automation towards the benefit of humanity. He spoke about the various projects and research works he has carried out to help the physically and

psychologically differently-abled people.

Dr Gandhi mentioned his work in developing various technological interfaces like Assistive Devices, Electrooculography (EOG)-based Integrated Assistive Devices and studies on Neuro Developmental Problems, especially among blind children.

It is worth mentioning that his research on Cognitive Science, coupled with AI and Automation, has been successful in bringing vision back for around 300 children through his venture 'Project Prakash'.

He highlighted the importance of effective science communication in bridging the gap between scientific discoveries and the general public through engineering.

Through this seminar, it was illuminating to understand the value of collaboration between science and engineering of diverse backgrounds to tackle the complex humanistic issues.

Child swapping alleged at Capital Hosp

Probe ordered

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

A resident of Rajkanika in Kendrapada district on Tuesday levelled serious allegations of child swapping at the Capital Hospital in Bhubaneswar.

Pranakrushna Parija alleged that his wife delivered a child at around 10:30 pm on Monday. His family was informed about the delivery of a male child. However, they found that it was a girl child when they tried to take a picture of the infant.

Parija's family demanded a DNA test to ascertain the truth. Moreover, he refused to take the female child till the report was available.

According to Parija, the doctor subsequently told him that it was a mistake on part

of the attendant. "I suspect that my child has been swapped. If I am wrong, the authorities should conduct a DNA test of both the babies," Parija demanded.

Capital Hospital Director Laxmidhar Sahu said that if the allegations are true, it is serious. As per a preliminary investigation, he was told that the complainant's wife delivered a girl child. But it was a slip of tongue on part of the attendant who said it was a boy while handing over the baby.

The director further said that a committee has been set up and efforts would be made to convince the couple. If nothing materialises, the matter would be referred to police and subsequently steps would be taken for a DNA test to ascertain the biological parents of the child.

SNSMT lectures to be launched on Oct 2



PNS ■ CUTTACK

The Smt. Nandini Satpathy Memorial Trust (SNSMT) will launch a series of lectures from October 2. On the 2nd of each English calendar month, a thought-provoking topic shall be lectured upon by an expert

of the subject. This is being launched to stimulate social consciousness on matters concerning language, culture and history.

The first of these lectures is on 'Who got independence for India/ Bharat Gandhiji or Netaji'? This lecture shall be delivered by sociopolitical leader, Chairman of SNSMT and lead member of Netaji movement Suparno Satpathy.

The venue chosen for these lectures is 9, Pithapur of Cuttack. In year 1932, this address was the headquarter of India's freedom struggle martyr Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi. In year 1972, the address was the HQ of the then Chief Minister Nandini Satpathy.

AIIMS BBS starts 3 new depts



PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

The AIIMS Bhubaneswar celebrated its 11th Annual Day with a series of noteworthy announcements.

AIIMS Bhubaneswar Executive Director Dr Ashutosh Biswas announced the establishment of three new departments dedicated to enhancing patient welfare. They are Department of Infectious Diseases, Department of Bioinformatics and Department of Biostatistics.

Besides, Dr Biswas informed about commencement of several new academic programmes. These

include a six-year M.Ch Paediatric Surgery course, a DM course in Paediatric Pulmonology and Intensive Care and specialised programmes in Paediatric Infectious Diseases and DM Nephrology. Chief Guest Prof Shreepad Karmalkar, Director of IIT Bhubaneswar, applauded the institution's dedication to research and patient care.

The 11th Annual Day marked the inauguration of the annual souvenir "The Insight" and a book titled "Clinical Features of Melioidosis" authored by esteemed faculty members from various departments.

Changing party after being elected is cheating voters

Today the term democracy is widely understood as synonymous with "representative democracy". Under the system people have a right to choose representatives through periodic elections based on the principles of universal adult franchise (Article 326 of Indian Constitution). In order to participate in election process, the minimum age should be 18 years in our country.

A sound party system based on the ideological principles as we find in developed countries has not been developed in our country. There are so many hurdles in the party system which have weakened our democratic system. Organisational problem, widening gap between a party and its workers, strong leadership crisis, political immorality and giving tickets to criminals in a party etc have polluted the political atmosphere



RAMDAS RAY

in our country and undermined the political morality. We do not find members and political parties following political morality.

Here are a few examples to bring home the point.

In spite of passage of the Anti Defection Act 1985, the evil of defection is still in practice. Formation of new parties and breakaway groups is still continuing. In December 2003 ,

our Parliament has passed a law making amendment in the Anti Defection Act 1985 but defection has not been put under check; rather it has grown destabilising the basic essence of democratic values.

To make our parliamentary democracy a success , the evil of defection should be controlled permanently. Moreover, growing political corruption has patronised corruption in the administration and bureaucracy all over the country.

What is defection and what are its causes? Defection in politics means transfer of loyalty from one party to another for some personal gains or vested interests. When a representative after having been elected on the ticket of a party symbol leaves the party and joins another party in hope of getting some benefits, it is called defection. Defection is the opportunistic transfer of faith or loyalty to

another party which is like a contagious disease (Aya Ram, Gaya Ram) in our country. There are several factors responsible for the defection such as lack of proper leadership, lust for power, lack of ideological commitment and disobedience to the whip of the party high command etc.

Defection has very dangerous effects in the democratic paradigm of our country. It has fully corrupted and demoralised politics and spoiled our social values. The highest defect of defection is breach of faith with the electorate. A representative is elected on the symbol of a political party whose ideals and principles have been recognized by the voters at the time they elect the representative with the hope that he/she would represent their ideas till the next election. But if the representative shifts his affiliation just after getting elected, it's like cheating of the

voters and against the democratic principles. Also, in this way, the national interest stands ignored. It brings political instability from Panchayat level to Parliament and defames the sacred parliamentary system of democracy. In December 2003, the Indian Parliament passed a law making amendment in Anti Defection Act 1985 to check the unfair practice but this has not been effective in a larger perspective.

To conclude, the Central and State Election Commissions must be vigilant to stop defection by framing stringent rules by giving top priority to the sentiments of the voters. Under the present circumstances it is a crucial challenge to the Republic of Bharat.

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'Implement PESA Act in true spirit in Odisha'

Thousands of tribals take out rally; delegation meets Guv

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Demanding immediate enactment of the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act 1996, thousands of tribals drawn from 13 Scheduled districts of the State staged a massive demonstration at the Lower PMG here on Tuesday.

Adivasis under the banner of Odisha State PESA, Gram Sabha Coordination Committee took out a rally from the Master Canteen Square in the forenoon and held a massive protest meeting to press for the demands of implementation of PESA Act in true form and spirit, recognition of Gram Sabha as the decision making au-



thority, ensuring protections under Odisha State Immovable Property Transfer Act 1956, Regulation-2, not allowing proposed amendment of Regulation-2 as raised in the Tribal Advisory Council.

Addressing the gathering, advisor Sudarshan Chhotaray, president Budhua Jojo and secretary Panduram Hembrum appealed both Union and State Governments to protect the constitutional rights of tribals, tribal

heritage, tribal culture and empower Gram Sabha as the ultimate decision making unit at the grassroots level thus ensuring tribal self rule.

During the protest, a five-member delegation led by Chhotaray and consisting of president Jojo, secretary Hembrum, Suhagi Rani Marndi Hembrum and Nanaram Murmu met and submitted a memorandum to Governor Prof Ganeshi Lal and apprised him about the longstanding demands of mil-

lions of tribals.

As a custodian of the Schedule Area of the State, the Governor assured the delegation that he would take up the issue of implementation of PESA (Panchyat Extension to the Scheduled Area) Act 1996 in true spirit in Odisha. He would also apprise the President of India and Union Tribal Affairs Minister Arjun Munda, he added.

Besides, the Governor also expressed grave concern over the proposed amendment of Odisha Immoveable Transfer of Land Act 1956, Regulation-2, on transfer of land of tribals to non tribals.

Later speaking at the rally, the leaders expressed their satisfaction over the Governor's assurances.

At present eight of 10 tribal populous States have enacted the PESA Act except Jharkhand and Odisha.

Save me: Patient appeals to CM from hospital bed

PNS ■ KENDRAPADA

A helpless patient with Hepatitis B has appealed to Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik for death to relieve his suffering.

Tukuna Nauri, a resident of Balisahi village under Mahakalpada block in Kendrapada district, is a Hepatitis B patient with chronic health conditions. He has been undergoing treatment at the District Headquarters Hospital (DHH) for the past month.

The patient has developed complications of bed sores and paraplegia (paralysis from the waist down) due to prolonged hospitalisation.

Alleging medical negligence in his treatment, Nauri said the hospital is not taking care of his personal hygiene.

According to reports, Nauri was working as a labourer in Gujarat, where he suffered urinary tract infection. He underwent treatment at a hospi-



tal there for around one month. During this period, he developed complications of chronic back pain and became bedridden. As per doctors' advice, two of his friends shifted him to his village from Gujarat. With the help of villagers, he consulted the doctors at the Kendrapada DHH and later at the SCB Medical College Hospital in Cuttack. The doctors advised him for treatment at home with intake of medicines regularly. How-

ever, apathy by his stepmother at home led to deterioration of his health. Following grievances received from the villagers, the district Collector ordered to admit him at the DHH.

Nauri alleged negligence on the part of the hospital staffs. He said he has approached the district authorities from Collector to CDMO in this regard but in vain.

However, the hospital authorities dismissed his allega-

tion of medical negligence.

"His organs below his waist are not functioning. As he is bedridden, this caused bed sores. This hospital lacks improved healthcare facility to provide treatment for these ailments. He needs better treatment that can be done at the SCB Hospital. However, we cannot relocate him to Cuttack due to shortage of attendant staffs," said Additional Chief Medical Officer Dr Pramod Kumar Praharaj.

B'pur ITI girl students top in nat'l trade test



PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

Two girl students from the ITI Brahmapur topped in a national level trade test, said Principal of the IIT Dr Rajat Kumar Panigrahi.

This is the impact of Sudakhya Scheme of the Government where girls in Government ITIs are exempted from tuition fee. Besides, development fee and other charges are reimbursable to girls. Financial support in terms of maintenance allow-



ances of Rs1,500 per month for hostel boarders and Rs500 per month for day scholars and post training placement and apprenticeship training both inside and outside the State are applicable to girls under the scheme having credible impact on the career of the girl students.

"We are all are proud of the youngsters who brought name and fame to the ITI Brahmapur as well as Skilled in Odisha brand," Dr Panigrahi pointed out.

Jajpur: Missing youth found dead in forest

PNS ■ JAJPUR

A youth, who was missing from Monday, was found dead in a bamboo forest under mysterious circumstances near Kani riverbank and Palasahi village of Mallikapur panchayat under the Dasarathpur police station in Jajpur district on Tuesday.

The deceased was identified as Sabyasachi Nayak (25), son of Chittaranjan Nayak of Mohantypatana village in the district. According to reports, family members of Sabyasachi launched a frantic search to

trace him but in vain. He was spotted in the morning by some locals who informed the police. The Dasarathpur police seized the body of Sabyasachi and sent it to hospital for post-mortem. The family of Sabyasachi alleged that the youth has been murdered.

"Drug peddling is rampant in the district. Sabyasachi has been killed and we suspect the involvement of some drug addicts in the crime," a relative of the victim alleged.

Based on an FIR lodged by the family, police began investigation with the help of a forensic team.

In Jajpur Girl dies falling into septic tank

PNS ■ JAJPUR

A 21-year-old girl died after falling into the septic tank of her house on Monday evening at village Radhanagar under the Dharmasala Community Health Centre (CHC). The doctors of the hospital declared her dead.

Police rushed to the spot to investigate the incident. The body was handed over to the family members of the deceased, said Dharmasala police station IIC Tapan Kumar Nayak.

The incident went unnoticed for about two hours. Later, her family members searched for her and found her in the tank. She was immediately rushed to the Dharmasala Community Health Centre (CHC). The doctors of the hospital declared her dead.

Police rushed to the spot to investigate the incident. The body was handed over to the family members of the deceased, said Dharmasala police station IIC Tapan Kumar Nayak.

'K'jhar BDO has no respect for PRI members'

PNS ■ KEONJHAR

BDO, Keonjhar Sadar Bikash Kumar Sahu has no respect for senior citizens and public representatives, alleged Panchayat Samiti member, Gopinathpur GPBasanta Kumar Sahu here.

Sources said on Monday, Sahu (63) himself had approached the BDO, Sadar in his office chamber with regard to some development jobs in his GP. His allegation was that inspite of persistent request for many times, the BDO did not pay any heed to it.

At last, Sahu had gone to know the concrete reasons from the BDO. When he met the officer, some PS members were seated in the chairs in front of

the BDO but no chair was vacant for Sahu to seat.

Sahu alleged that as per established rules it was the duty of a Government officer to show minimum courtesy of offering a chair to seat when any public representative meets him for any work related to his area. But the BDO Keonjhar did not offer him a seat, neither as a public representative nor as a senior citizen. This shows how arrogant he is, Sahu slammed.

Sahu further alleged that there was a systematic plan to underestimate and insult him before others as he was relentlessly pursuing his cases and exposing the illegal works of the BDO. Meanwhile BDO Sahu said that he was doing his job as per established norms.

In Rourkela Asst Collector death: Tribal body demands CBI probe

PNS ■ ROURKELA

Members of the Sundargarh Adivasi Manch on Tuesday gheraoed the office of the Additional District Magistrate here demanding a CBI probe into the death of Rourkela Assistant Collector Sushmita Minz (35).

Holding the Sundargarh Collector and the Rourkela ADM responsible for the death, the Manch demanded arrest of the two officials.

"Sushmita Minz has been murdered. The Collector, the ADM, the local administration and police are behind the killing. The accused are trying to portray the incident as an ordinary one. They want the case to be probed by the Odisha police. We strongly oppose it and demand a CBI investigation. We will continue the agitation till fulfillment of our demand," said the Sarpanch of Kesramal panchayat, who joined the protest.



"We condemn the fact that neither the government nor the officials have made any statement over the issue," he said.

Notably, Sushmita was found dead in the pond of Sensory Park under the Plant Site police limits in Rourkela on September 19.

Postmortem report has con-

firmed antemortem drowning and there is no evidence of homicide, said Plant Site police station IIC JR Pati.

However, Sushmita's brother in a complaint lodged with police alleged that she was murdered. He said Sushmita was under depression due to work pressure.

The complainant blamed

the Collector, Rourkela ADM, Gurundia Block Development Officer, Gurundia Child Development Project Officer and a woman Sub-Inspector of Police for his sister's death.

Sushmita's family alleged that police in cahoots with the doctors have prepared a fake postmortem report to hide the real cause of her death.

3-day fest in B'pur to mark Paryatan Divas

PNS ■ BRAHMAPUR

Convenor of National Tourism Fest Committee (Jateeya Paryatan Utschav Committee) Er Umasankar Panigrahi reviewed the preparedness for the upcoming three-day celebration of the Biswa Paryatan Divas from Wednesday (September 27). The event will be organised by Paryatan Bharat.

Panigrahi said that the mega national level fest will be organised at Biju Pattnaik Sanskruti Bhavan near Hilpatna.

On the first day of this national level fest, the "Chha Mana Atha Guntha" written by legendry novelist Fakir Mohan Senapati will be staged, followed by a literary seminar on "Sama Samyeeka Sahityara Swara O' Sabda".



Besides, there will be a brief meeting and felicitation, followed by Odia play based on Jagannath Culture "Mani Mantey" written by Deepika Das and directed by Satyabrat Das will be staged. Similarly, on the second day of the fest, a national level seminar on 'Paryatana and Sabuja Beenijoga' will be organised by the Berhampur University in

which research scholars pursuing research on 'tourism' from different parts of the country are likely to join. This will be followed by a brief meeting and felicitation in the evening. Besides, Nataka "Asta Surya'ra Swapna" written and directed by Rabinarayan Behera will be staged in the evening.

On the closing day, a brief

valedictory function will be held followed by various completions and a photo exhibition. Similarly, on evening of the each day, Loka Nritya will be performed by the artists of Zilla Sanskruti Parishad, followed by the national film festival by Isha Vision in which 35 documentary films will be exhibited/ screened.

Stronger anti-tobacco law demanded

As Mock Youth Parl held

PNS ■ BHUBANESWAR

Considering the grave scenario of tobacco impact on youth, People's Cultural Centre (PECUC) in cooperation with Coalition for Tobacco Free Odisha (CTFO) organised a mock Youth Parliament on 'Improving Public Health by Reducing Tobacco Use' featuring 80 young participants from all corners of the State.

Rajya Sabha MPs Amar Patnaik and Sulata Deo, Bhubaneswar MLA Anant Narayana Jena along with other dignitaries including



advocate, Supreme Court Ranjit Singh and State Consultant to Directorate of Public Health, Tobacco Control, Dr GS Mishra and CTFK Anup Mishra graced the occasion.

PECUC secretary Ranjan Kumar Mohanty, chairperson Minakshi Panda and executive director Anuradha Mohanty coordinated the programme.

"Tobacco use poses a grave threat to the health and well-being of our youth, and it's crucial that we take concrete steps to protect them from this harmful addiction. This initiative is really necessary and commendable to educate the youth through this mock par-

liament," said MP Patnaik.

Deo said, "We must work together to combat tobacco use among our youth and ensure a brighter and healthier future for them."

The Youth Parliament while praising the Government for introducing the new rule for display of an anti-smoking warning on OTT platforms raised issues about how the current COTPA, 2003 law misses out on many aspects when it comes to making public places tobacco free. Hence, the Youth Parliament raised a motion for a COTPA Amendment Bill which will be discussed in the next session.

Procurement complexities Gajapati bamboo artisans in livelihood crisis



TARINI PRASAD PANDA ■ PARALAKHEMUNDI

Once upon a time bamboo was a huge economic product in Gajapati district. Before Margashira of Odia month when Laxmi Puja at various homes starts (which called Mana Basa Gurubar), plenty of bamboo processed products are sold at various streets by the bamboo artisans. But these days bamboo products are a rare sight here.

In all the weekly markets in seven blocks of Gajapati district, the bamboo processed item was sold in huge quantities and the sellers earned handsomely. But due to lack of support from the Forest Department, which has made it difficult to procure bamboo, the bamboo weavers have lost their bread and are an extinct clan. Tenklasahi and Badapada

are the areas where the bamboo artisans live. But these people are no longer in their age-old profession; rather they have switched over to other fields.

During the 1990s, these people used to do various items from bamboo and sell them. But gradually, due to raw material shortage, the bamboo item centres have almost been shut.

These families used to walk 10-15 km in search of bamboo. They too were getting orders aplenty. For marriages they earlier got orders for various bamboo products and supplied them to the families.

In the Tankla colony 150 families are living. Their situation is very bad due to loss of livelihood. It is demanded that the Forest Department simply the process to procure bamboo in order to revive the traditional profession.

In Cuttack dist Canara Bank BM goes missing

PNS ■ CUTTACK

Branch Manager of Canara Bank at Baramba in Cuttack district Tapan Kumar Sahu went missing in mysterious circumstances on Monday.

According to reports, Sahu had gone to the bank's Kalapathar branch for some work and was returning to Baramba when his mobile phone got switched off somewhere near Patani Chhak.

Unable to trace the whereabouts of Sahu, his relatives lodged a complaint, following

which police have started an investigation into the matter.

"He went out of house at around 6 pm and later talked to the branch staffs at 9:45 pm. When I called him later, his phone was switched off. After that, we lodged a police complaint. We went through the CCTV footages but didn't find anything or any sign of an accident," said wife of Sahu.

Two staffs of the banks also went to find out in case there had been any accident on the Baramba-Kalapathar route. But they could not trace Sahu.

India-Canada row will not impact military ties: Peter

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The current diplomatic standoff between India and Canada is not going to impact the ongoing bilateral military engagement and the matter has to be resolved at the political level, Canada's Deputy Army Chief Major General Peter Scott said here on Tuesday.

Scott is leading a Canadian delegation at the Indo-Pacific Army Chiefs' Conference (IPACC) here that is being attended by military delegations from over 30 countries.

"To the best of my knowledge at this time, that is not going to have an impact on us. We leave the matter at hand to the political level to try and resolve," he told news agency PTI. "

We are happy to be here and we do not see the issue clouding matters at this point



at all," Major General Scott said.

The ties between India and Canada came under severe strain following Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's allegations of a "potential" involvement of Indian agents in the killing of Khalistani separatist Hardeep Singh Nijjar in June.

India has rejected the allegations as "absurd" and "motivated" and expelled a senior Canadian diplomat in a tit-for-tat move to Ottawa's expulsion of an Indian official over the case.

"This is an issue between both our countries at a political level. And certainly our Prime Minister...

"He rose at the House of Commons and made a statement requesting India's cooperation on the independent investigation that is currently ongoing at this time," the Canadian Army official said.

"Between both of our armies, this is not affecting us. I spoke to your commander of the Army (Army Chief Gen Manoj Pande) last night. We both agreed that this is a polit-

ical issue and has no interference on our relationship," he said.

"As two armies we look for opportunities among other 30 nations that are currently participating in this conference to find areas where we can cooperate, train together, conduct exercises and operations so that we all can contribute to ensuring peace, stability with-

in the region," Major General Scott said.

"The way we see right now is that we will continue to cooperate, discuss, and enjoy great forums like this where we can exchange ideas and find solutions to the difficulties facing a lot of the Indo-Pacific nations," he said.

The Indian Army is hosting the two-day conclave of Indo-Pacific army chiefs to evolve a common strategy to ensure peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

Passing of Women's Reservation Bill heralded new future for country: Modi

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Tuesday said that the passing of the Women's Reservation Bill in Parliament's new building during the Special Session has heralded a new future for the country and will give a big boost to 50 per cent population in the country..

Addressing a Rozgar Mela after distribution of appointment letters to over 51,000 new employees in different government departments through a virtual event, Modi also emphasised on growing use of technology in governance.

The use of technology in government schemes has stopped corruption and reduced complexities, and boosted credibility and comfort, he told the new employees.

He asked them to work with the motto of "citizens-first" and deploying technology to improve governance, citing its use in direct benefit transfers to beneficiaries of various schemes, booking of



train tickets and digital locker among other fields.

The prime minister said his government works with a new mindset based on constant monitoring, mission mode implementation and mass participation in government schemes with an aim of 100 per cent saturation and paving the way to accomplish monumental goals.

This is a time of historic decisions and achievements for the country, he said, while stressing that the women's reservation bill, passed by Parliament recently, will give a big boost to the country's 50 per cent population.

The issue, which was pending for 30 years, has been passed by record votes in both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, he

said, noting that many of these new employees were not even born when the idea was first mooted.

The dreams of new India are big, he said, noting that girls are present in sectors ranging from space to sports and are being commissioned into the armed forces as well. He added the presence of women in any sector has always led to positive changes in every sector.

Asserting that the country will become the third-largest economy in the world in the next few years, Modi said government employees will have a lot to contribute in the process.

Projects across the country are being constantly monitored, Modi said, giving the example of Pragati meetings chaired by him.

Speaking about the GDP growth and the jump in production and exports, he said unprecedented investment in modern infrastructure is being made and fields like renewable energy, organic farming, defence and tourism are showing a new vibrancy, he said.

India's diplomacy scaled new heights in past 30 days: PM

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday said India's diplomacy scaled "new heights" in the past 30 days asserting that some decisions taken during the G20 Summit have potential to change the direction the 21st century world takes.

Addressing students, faculty members and heads of educational institutions at the finale of the G20 University Connect here, the prime minister also touched upon the BRICS Summit that took place in South Africa before the G20 where six new nations were included as its members with India's efforts.

After South Africa, the Prime Minister mentioned traveling to Greece which was



the first visit by an Indian Prime Minister in four decades.

He also mentioned meeting several world leaders in Indonesia before the G20 Summit. Highlighting that numerous key decisions were taken for the betterment of the world at the same 'Bharat Mandapam', Modi underlined that finding a common ground

for all member nations on the same stage in a globally polarized atmosphere was a special achievement for the government.

"In today's polarised international atmosphere, it is not a small thing to get so many countries together on one platform," the Prime Minister said, referring to the G20 Summit in Delhi earlier this month.

Maintaining that India's diplomacy reached new heights in the past 30 days, the prime minister said the G20 Summit could have been limited to a diplomatic and Delhi-centric programme but India made it

a people-driven national movement. Six more countries have joined BRICS community due to India's efforts, the prime minister said.

"A 100 per cent consensus on the Delhi declaration made global headlines...Some decisions taken during the G20 Summit have potential to change the 21st century's direction...In today's polarised international atmosphere, it is not a small thing to get so many countries together on one platform," he said.

"I want to give you a report card of the last 30 days. That will give you an idea of the speed and scale of New India. You must remember August 23! Everyone was praying and then suddenly there was a smile on everyone's face. The entire world heard India's voice:

'India is on the Moon.'

"August 23 has become immortal in the country as the National Space Day. Soon after the success of its lunar mission, India launched its solar mission," he added.

Listing out the achievements of his government in the past 30 days, the prime minister said several initiatives were taken to empower the poor, SCs, STs, OBCs and the middle class.

"The government launched the PM Vishwakarma Yojana for artisans. In last 30 days, over one lakh youths have been given central government jobs through 'Rozgar Mela'. The women's reservation bill became the first bill passed in the new Parliament building and it filled the country with a sense of pride," he said.

FCRA rules amended, NGOs have to declare movable, immovable assets

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry has amended the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Rules, 2011, asking NGOs receiving funds from abroad to submit details of their movable and immovable assets created out of those contributions.

According to the Ministry's notification issued Monday, a copy of which is with ThePrint, the NGOs will have to include the description and value of all movable assets, as on the beginning of the financial year, acquired during the financial year and disposed of during the financial year.

Details of their value according to the balance sheet



at the end of the financial year will also have to be given.

The new Rules also sought details of immovable assets, details including the land or building size, location and value will have to be included in Form FC-4 (annual return).

"The new Rules are meant for transparency in the working of

NGOs and make them more accountable," said an official.

The FCRA licence of around 6,000 organisations, including Oxfam India Trust, ceased to exist from January 1, 2022, over "violations observed" in their functioning. Renewal request of Oxfam is rejected.

Apex court expresses dismay over delay in judges appointment

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

With 70 Collegium recommendations still stuck with the Government, the Supreme Court on Tuesday expressed its dismay over the "delay" in the appointment of judges and asked the Attorney General to use his office to resolve the issue.

After a bench of justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul and Sudhanshu Dhulia raised the matter, AG R Venkataramani sought a week's time to come back with instructions on the pending recommendations for judges' appointment to the High Court.

"Today, I am quiet because the Attorney General has sought a very short time, next time I will not be quiet. Use your good office to see these issues are resolved," Justice Kaul told Venkataramani during the hearing.

The bench said, "There were 80 recommendations pending until last week when 10 names were cleared. Now, the figure is 70, of which 26 recommendations are of transfer of judges, seven are reiterations, nine are pending without being returned to the collegium and one case is of appointment of the Chief Justice to a sensitive High Court."

All these recommendations are pending since November last year, it said. Government has not cleared the appoint of Chief Justice of Manipur, where ethnic violence is not yet settled.

Justice Kaul said there is a seven-month hiatus since something substantial was done on the recommendations which are pending and these needed basic processing only.

"We have endeavoured to push things and monitor closely. I have told the attorney general that every 10-12 days this matter will be taken up, so that before I demit office (December 25), substantial work is done," said Justice Kaul, who is part of the apex court collegium which



looks after the appointment of judges in the top court and the High Courts.

The appointment of judges through the Collegium system has in the past become a major flashpoint between the Supreme Court and the Centre with the mechanism drawing criticism from different quarters.

The top court was hearing a petition filed by Advocates Association of Bengaluru seeking contempt action against the Union Ministry of Law and Justice for not allegedly adhering to the timeline set by the court in a 2021 judgment.

During the hearing, advocate Prashant Bhushan, appearing for another petitioner NGO Common Cause, submitted a chart related to pending recommendations with the Government.

He said what is more worrisome is that even after a batch of names is recommended by the collegium at one time, the government segregates it and makes selective appointments.

"This affects the morale of lawyers and as per my information, several of them have withdrawn their consents," he said. Justice Kaul, while agreeing with the views of Bhushan, said there are nine such names, where the government has kept the names pending without reverting them back.

"I agree that the way good candidates withdraw their consent to be a judge is really worrisome. We try to get the best talents but due to pendency, lawyers whose names have been recommended for judgeship have withdrawn their names," Justice Kaul said as he posted the matter for further hearing on October 9.

Rajnath calls for wisdom, concerted efforts to deal with complexities of Indo-Pacific

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

As China is flexing its muscle in the strategically important Indo-Pacific, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday called for collective wisdom and concerted efforts to deal with the complexities of the region while tapping its full potential, to ensure a future marked by prosperity, security and inclusivity.

Making this assertion here while inaugurating the 13th Indo-Pacific Armies Chiefs' Conference (IPACC), he also said it is in consonance with the ancient Indian ethos of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the world is one family) and the G-20 motto 'One Earth, One Family, One Future.'

Chief of Armies and delegates of 35 countries are participating in the three-day meet jointly organised by India and the US.

In his address, Army Chief Manoj Pande said India's outlook for Indo-Pacific emphasises respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations. He also said India's commitment towards positively engaging all stakeholders in the region has been unwavering and enduring.

Highlighting the geo-political significance and geo-economic weight of the Indo-Pacific nations, Pande said it is evident from the fact that the region accounts for 65 per cent of the world's population, 63 per cent of the global GDP and 50 per cent of the world's maritime trade. The Army chief said the region's share in the global GDP, its share in merchandise market and maritime trade lend this region a pivotal status in charting the world's course in the 21st century.

Rajnath emphasised that the Indo-Pacific is no more a maritime construct, but a full-fledged geo-strategic construct, and the region is facing a complex web of security challenges, including boundary disputes and piracy.

He explained his vision for the region through a theoretical model by American author Stephen R Covey, which is based on two circles -- 'Circle of



Concern' and 'Circle of Influence'.

"There may be instances when the 'Circle of Concern' of different nations overlap with each other. International maritime trade routes passing through high seas, beyond the exclusive economic zones of any country, are relevant examples," he said.

"This can either result in conflict between nations or they can decide to coexist by mutually deciding the rules of engagement. The concept of these circles underscores the importance of strategic thinking and prioritisation," he added.

Rajnath pointed out that states must recognise that global issues involve multiple stakeholders and no one country can address these challenges in isolation. He stressed the need to engage with the broader international community and work collaboratively through diplomacy, international organisations and treaties to tackle common concerns within the overlapping 'Circles of Concern'.

Rajnath termed the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), 1982 as a good example of such an international agreement that establishes the legal framework for maritime activities and addresses the issues arising from overlapping 'circles of concern' of different nations.

The Defence Minister termed the IPACC, Indo-Pacific Armies Management Seminar (IPAMS) and Senior Enlisted Leaders Forum (SELF) as one of the largest brainstorming events of land forces in the region. These events provide a unique opportunity to build common perspectives towards a shared vision and build and strengthen

partnerships in the spirit of collaborative security for all, he said.

He reiterated India's stand for a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific Region in the pursuit of shared security and prosperity.

Rajnath added that India's efforts towards building robust military partnerships with friendly countries underscore its commitment to not only safeguard national interests, but also address global challenges faced by all.

The Indian Army and the United States Army are co-hosting 13th IPACC, 47th IPAMS and 9th SELF, a three-day conference of Chiefs of Armies and delegates of 35 countries in New Delhi from September 25 to 27.

The conference will provide an opportunity for Army Chiefs and senior-level leaders from land forces, primarily of the Indo-Pacific region, to exchange ideas and views on security and contemporary issues. The core effort of the forum will be to promote peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region through mutual understanding, dialogue and friendship amongst the littoral partners. Army Chief Pande said India's vision for Indo-Pacific emphasises peaceful resolution of disputes, avoidance of use of force, and adherence to international laws, he said.

"While efforts by countries are converging towards a free Indo-Pacific, yet we are witnessing manifestations of interstate contestations and competitions," the Army chief added. He further noted that "challenges we face transcend across borders and our response to them must factor in this".

American delegation visited J&K as well for G20 meet: Garcetti



PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ NEW DELHI

In the backdrop of the US Envoy to Islamabad visiting Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK), US Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti on Tuesday said the American delegation has visited Jammu and Kashmir as well for G20 meetings.

Garcetti was reacting to questions on US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome's six-day visit to POK last week. "It's not my place to react to the US Ambassador in Pakistan but he's been before and we obviously had part of our delegation in Jammu and Kashmir during G20 as well," the American envoy told reporters on the sidelines of the 20th Indo-US Economic Summit.

At the same time, Garcetti made it clear that the Jammu and Kashmir issue has to be resolved bilaterally by India and Pakistan and not by any third party, including the US.

"We'll stay engaged but this is an issue we very religiously know that has to be resolved between India and Pakistan not by any third party including the US," he said.

US Ambassador to Pakistan Blome visited the Gilgit-Baltistan region of PoK and interacted with the locals there, according to a Pakistani media report. Asked about the standing ovation given to a Nazi war veteran in the Canadian Parliament, Garcetti said: "I think everybody recognises the mistake."

He refused to comment on the US sharing intelligence on the killing of Khalistani extremist Hardeep Singh Nijjar. "It's not my place to speak on another country, Canada. As a matter of business not just this, we don't talk about intelligence or criminal justice matters," Garcetti said.

Desi components behind ISRO feat, says Somanath



PTI ■ NEW DELHI

About 95 per cent of components used in rockets in the country have been sourced from India, ISRO Chairperson S Somanath said on Tuesday.

Speaking at the 82nd Foundation Day of CSIR, Somanath highlighted that ISRO's expertise spans the entire space domain, with all technical work, including rocket and satellite development and space applications, being carried out in-house.

He said approximately 95 per cent of the materials, devices and systems used in Indian Space Research Organisation's rockets are domestically sourced, with only 5 per cent coming from abroad, primarily high-end electronic components.

"This achievement is a result of collaborations with various Indian laboratories, including national labs, defence labs, and CSIR labs, focusing on material indigenisation, technology capabilities, and research," he said.

Somanath also highlighted significant achievements in electronics indigenisation, including the design and manufacture of critical components such as processors for rockets and main computer chips, both made in India.

"Additionally, ISRO has developed essential components, such as electro-mechanical actuators, DC power supply systems, battery systems, and solar cells within the country," he said.

At the Foundation Day of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar awards were also distributed to 12 young scientists.

Immunologist Dipyaman Ganguli of CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Biology, Kolkata; microbiologist Ashwani Kumar of CSIR-Institute of Microbial Technology, Chandigarh; biologist Maddika Subba Reddy of the Hyderabad-based Centre for DNA Fingerprinting Diagnostics; Akkattu T Biju of Indian Institute of Science Bengaluru; and Debabrata Maiti of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay are among the awardees.

While Ganguli has been awarded in the field of medical sciences, Kumar and Reddy have received the award for their contribution to biological sciences.

At the event, Principal Scientific Advisor Ajay Sood said there is a rationalisation of the awards to truly make it national and to make the selection process transparent.

"From the next year, there will be Vignya Yuva Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar awards and these awards will not be seven as it is now but will number 25 and these again are meant for yuva scientists, technologists and of course the innovators in almost 12 fields and there is another one which we call others to see any other field that has not been listed," he said.

Fair a reflection of PM’s commitment to give priority to job generation: Anupriya

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Union Minister of State for Commerce and Industry Anupriya Patel said the job fair is a reflection of the commitment of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to give top priority to employment generation and act as a catalyst for further employment generation for the unemployed youth. She was speaking at a function held at Shatabdi Krishi Prekshagriha in Banaras Hindu University (BHU) organised under the auspices of the Postal Department here on Tuesday in which the PM gave more than 51,000 appointment letters to the newly-appointed youths in government departments in the employment fair organised at 46 places in the country, including Varanasi through video conferencing.

Anupriya handed over appointment letters to the newly-appointed candidates and wished them a happy future. During the ceremony in Varanasi, appointment letters were given to 213 candidates, out of which a total of 49 are women candidates who were selected for various posts like



Union Minister Anupriya Patel giving away an appointment letter to a candidate in Varanasi on Tuesday.

principals in Kendriya Vidyalayas, postal assistants in Postal department, branch postmasters, assistant branch postmasters, bank clerks, assistants in Food Corporation of India and others. She expressed her gratitude to the PM. She said that it was a step in the direction of the PM’s resolve to provide government jobs to 10 lakh youth by December 2023 which will be fulfilled. Under the leadership of the illustrious

PM, she said that the country is reaching new heights every day and the youth are getting various employment opportunities with quick speed and transparency, who are being given the opportunity to serve the nation through various government departments and participate in the national development. Referring to women empowerment, she said that today women are hoisting their flag in every field. Many

women have also got new opportunities through the employment fair, she added.

Postmaster General (PMG) of Varanasi Region Krishna Kumar Yadav said in his address that due to the visionary thinking and inspiration of the PM in the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the appointment letter received on the occasion of this employment fair is not just a paper or document, but this is a golden opportunity to take a pledge to serve the country throughout one’s life. People have great expectations from the youth as the future of the country, he added. On the occasion the PM, through video conferencing, called upon the newly-appointed people to play a direct role in the ongoing Mahayagya of development and major changes in the country and to fulfil their responsibilities in the next 25 years along with the resolutions of a developed India. “The biggest responsibility of implementing the schemes of the Central government lies on all the newly-appointed government employees. When millions of youth like you join government services, the speed

and scale of implementing policies also increases. This creates employment opportunities outside the government also,” the PM added. The local function was inaugurated by Anupriya Patel, along with Rohania MLA Dr Sunil Patel, PMG KK Yadav and Registrar of IIT (BHU) Rajan Srivastava, by lighting the lamp. Along with the Postal department, newly-appointed young candidates from Food Corporation of India, Central Public Works Department, Education department, IIT, Kendriya Vidyalaya, Union Bank, Bank of India etc participated to whom the PM addressed through video conferencing. The programme was also attended by Senior Postal Superintendent Rajan, Postal Superintendent Vinay Kumar, Hemant Kumar, Parmanand, PK Pathak, Assistant Director Brijesh Sharma, RK Chauhan, Marutnandan, Plaban Naskar, Dilip Singh, Shrikant Pal, Dilip Pandey, Santoshi Rai and others from various central departments were present. Officers, employees and public representatives also participated in the event.

NTPC Vindhyachal honoured with awards

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Under the 13th Public Relations Council of India (PRCI) Award, 2023, NTPC Vindhyachal, the nation’s largest power plant, has been awarded excellence in the field of public relations on the occasion of the two-day 17th Global Communication Conclave organised by the PRCI in Delhi recently. NTPC Vindhyachal was awarded with three gold awards, one silver and four bronze. These awards were received by it for excellence in various fields like Health Care Communication, Story Telling, Art Culture and Support Campaign, Music Video, Motivational Film, Radio, Corporate Video and Table Calendar for the Year Award etc. These awards were received by Shiksha Gupta, Executive (Corporate Communication), NTPC-Vindhyachal. The representatives of more than 200 establishments related to communication, advertising, corporate social responsibility and various forms of mass communication from India and abroad participated in this event. Apart from NTPC-Vindhyachal, many projects of NTPC Limited also received



NTPC Vindhyachal representative receiving award at Global Conclave in New Delhi recently.

awards in various categories. For this NTPC Limited was also awarded the Corporate Champion Trophy for winning the maximum number of awards in every field during this awards ceremony.

In the presence of general managers, heads of departments and other senior officers of the project, Executive (Corporate Communication) Shiksha Gupta handed over this award to Project Head (Vindhyachal) E Satya Phani Kumar under the leadership of General Manager (Human Resources) Prabir Kumar Biswas. Project Head

(Vindhyachal) E Satya Phani Kumar, while congratulating the team of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on these awards received by the project at the national level, said that with the dedication and unity of Team Vindhyachal, the project is achieving new heights every day and this award is our golden electricity will serve as another jewel in the journey.

He also said that he not only hopes but has full confidence that Team Vindhyachal would continue this practice in future also and would take the brand image of NTPC to greater heights.

Govt gears up for third campaign against communicable diseases

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The Yogi government has geared up for the third campaign to control communicable diseases. The Health department is taking effective steps to prevent communicable diseases in Varanasi by coordinating with 10 departments. Anti-larva spraying and fogging campaigns are being conducted in rural and urban areas. Beds have been reserved in hospitals along with a massive testing campaign. Public awareness drives are also being run for prevention and treatment of communicable diseases. The first and second campaigns for mass communicable diseases were conducted in April and July last and now the third phase is going to start from October. The Health department has been made the nodal department for coordination with other 10 departments for prevention and control of meningitis and other vector-borne and water-borne diseases. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said there are 6,600 cleaning workers in the Municipal Corporation area apart from 175 workers for anti-larva spray, 41 spraying and 77 fogging machines. There are 371 personnel for drainage cleaning and 175 larvicide pumps. In gram panchayats too, 1,247 sanitation workers, 712 larvicide pumps and fogging machines are being used in 694 gram panchayats for prevention of communicable diseases. The CMO said for patients of communicable diseases, five beds at each Community Health Centre (CHC), two beds at Primary

224 dengue patients detected in Varanasi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Chief Medical Officer Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said that 224 dengue patients have been confirmed in the last few days in which preventive actions like anti-larva spray, fogging, larva source destruction have been taken against all the patients. He said anti-larva spraying and fogging work is being done continuously by the Municipal Corporation and Health department in 70 hot spots (urban) and 62 rural hot spots of the district. So far 97,417 houses have been surveyed. A total of 2,52,937 breeding sites were examined in which 20,282 sources were destroyed.

A total of 331 houses were found to be larva positive and notices were given to 546 persons when mosquito-borne conditions were found. Anti-larva spraying has been done at a total of 11,425 sites, he

said. According to the CMO, an action plan is ready for fogging and spraying in all schools of the district. “Spraying work is being done in schools every Sunday.

For publicity, information and audio visuals about ‘what to do, what not to do’ are being broadcast through 55 public address (PA) systems of the city. Besides, 20 message display boards are operated by the Municipal Corporation at various places in the city. Adequate beds and testing facilities are available in government hospitals. Five beds at each community health centre and two at each primary health centre have been reserved. A total of 39 breeding checkers visited door to door in hot spot localities. Lava checking work is also being done. The facility of blood and platelets is available in a total of seven government and 12 private blood banks,” he said.

hot spots in rural areas.

A special campaign is being run by the Municipal Corporation for cleanliness, garbage disposal and preventing water logging. Panchayati Raj Rural Development department has to do all the work for prevention of communicable diseases, including cleanliness and fogging along with public relations and public awareness. Animal Husbandry department is responsible for many works like cleanliness of animal enclosures, garbage disposal, arranging vector control and serosurveillance at pig rearing sites, spraying pesticides etc.

For the prevention of communicable diseases, apart from the Health department, all the departments like Urban Development, Panchayati Raj, Rural Development, Animal Husbandry department, Education department, Disabled Empowerment, Agriculture and Irrigation will have to do their department related work. Along with ASHA and Anganwadi workers, the role of ANMs will also be important. The Education department has also been given important responsibility in which the aim is to create awareness among the parents, create posters, debate competitions and spread publicity related to prevention of meningitis and other vector borne and water borne diseases. The Agriculture and Irrigation department has been given the responsibility of giving its advice on alternative measures to stop the breeding of mosquitoes in frozen water and the Irrigation department, growing anti-mosquito plants, suggest-

ing effective and safe measures for rodent control in the fields, etc.

BID TO STRENGTHEN HEALTH FACILITIES: To strengthen the health facilities of the district, the first delivery through operation took place at the Urban Community Health Centre in Sarnath. After cesarean delivery of a high-risk pregnant woman, both mother and child are healthy. CMO Dr Sandeep Chaudhary said special efforts are being made to strengthen health facilities in the district and in this sequence the work of OPD services and admission and treatment of patients was started at the health centre in Sarnath.

The Sarnath health centre will be very useful for the citizens of the area. Now they will not have to go far for maternal and child health check-up and delivery, he said and informed that with normal delivery the facility of cesarean delivery has also been made available here.

The operation was conducted under the supervision of anaesthesia specialist Dr Nikunj Kumar Verma, gynaecologist Dr Archana Verma and Dr Abhimanyu Singh and staff nurses Amrita Dwivedi and Aman Rai. Medical Superintendent of CHC Sarnath Dr Abhimanyu Singh informed that a pregnant woman from the area was admitted here due to labour pain. She was in a high-risk pregnancy.

Therefore, the operation was conducted late on Sunday night and the delivery was done safely. The mother and child are healthy after the operation, he added.

BJP to focus on booth management

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

Ahead of Lok Sabha polls, the BJP will focus on booth management particularly on those booths that have not been the party’s strongholds. Hoping to retain both the parliamentary seats – Allahabad and Phulpur — senior leaders have asked workers to strengthen all booths at grassroots level. “We will focus on micro-management at all booths. Besides, emphasis will also be on mobilisation of voters of all communities that have not been party’s traditional supporters,” a senior party leader said. They claimed that in the next LS polls Congress will be wiped out and Prime Minister Narendra Modi will bag a third term. Moreover, the half population of the country – matra shakti – are also set to give blessings to the Prime Minister after the Nari Shakti Vandan Adhinyam was passed in Parliament.

INSPECTED: In a bid to increase tourism in Sangam city, Mela Officer (Kumbh Mela) Vijay Kiran Anand inspected proposed sites for digital museum and tent city. There are plans to develop tourist circuit in city. Mela authorities are making efforts to set up digital museum and tent city to exhibit the glamour of Kumbh. The tent city will have permanent 50 tents. Devotees and pilgrims apart from Sangam, Akshay Vat, Hanuman temple, Patalpuri, will also visit digital museum while staying in tent city. Mela authorities are making efforts to develop recreation activities (water sports), food walk, and one circuit to connect all prominent temples of the city and Triveni Pushp.

Campaign to check food supply at stations, trains

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

For the second continuous day drive for checking clean food supply at different stations and trains continued on Monday by Varanasi Division of North Eastern Railway (NER) under the ongoing eighth ‘Swachhta Pakhwada’ (Cleanliness Fortnight) being run on the theme of ‘Swachhta Hi Seva’ from September 16 to October 2. A thorough inspection of the cleanliness of the catering facilities available at different stations and in the pantry cars of the trains was done under the guidance of designated officers. These officers, nominated by Divisional Railway Manager (DRM) Vineet Kumar Srivastava, inspected mobile vendors in many trains including Pawan Express at Banaras station, Dadar Express at Varanasi City station, Up and Down Vaishali Superfast

Express at Chhapra Junction, pantry cars of Tapti-Ganga Express at Azamgarh station, Lichchavi Express at Mau station, Lokmanya Tilak-Gorakhpur Superfast Express and Down Sadbhavna Express at Ballia station etc. The catering stalls at the stations of NER were also inspected by senior railway officials. During this period the quality of food and beverages available at Jan Aahar, canteens, food stalls, food plazas and local vendors at Banaras, Varanasi City, Ballia, Ghazipur City, Azamgarh, Mau, Bhatni, Siwan and Chhapra stations of the division was monitored by leaders on the instructions of Senior Divisional Mechanical Engineer (EnHM) Apoorva Swarnkar. By taking out cleanliness rallies at the said stations, the scouts and guides made the people and passengers aware of the cleanliness by staging street plays on cleanliness.

FLY programme concludes

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

The last day of FLY (Finding the Leader in You) programme was successfully organised at the Institute of Management Studies, Banaras Hindu University (IM-BHU) on Monday. The concluding session was taken by Usha Oja of Competitiveness Mindset Institute, New Delhi. The session continued with a talk on the perseverance and the speaker addressed the audience with a very motivational quote saying ‘the best way to motivate you is to reward yourself’. Taking the session forward, a group activity was conducted where one had to think of a top level goal and reward each other after achieving any achievement. The

speaker informed the audience about ways to overcome failures while achieving the goal, which can happen through analysis. Getting more and more learning opportunities, taking advice from others and thus solving the problems that come your way is the right way to continue moving forward. This four-day programme was organised under the ‘Student Leadership and Life Skills Initiative’. The programme has been organised under the initiative taken by the Vice Chancellor Prof Sudhir Kumar Jain. Under this initiative, leadership abilities and life skills will be developed in the students. Dr Anindita Chakraborty, Assistant Professor, IM-BHU was the coordinator of the programme.

Workshop on IP protection, promotion of innovations

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ VARANASI

Professor Unnat P Pandit, Controller General of Patents, Design and Trademarks (CGPDTM), Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, has emphasised on the need of doing invention which is relevant to the needs of the society and exhorted the faculty members and research scholars of the Banaras Hindu University (BHU) to keep in mind their purpose for which they are acquiring knowledge. He was delivering inaugural speech in a day-long workshop organised by the Intellectual Property Rights and Technology Transfer (IPRTT) Cell of BHU on Monday. It is learnt that with an aim to promote a vibrant ecosystem on campus facilitating IP filing and promotion of IP awareness, an Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and Technology Transfer (TT) cell was established in BHU under the Coordinatorship of Professor BK Sarma. The objective of



A speaker expressing his views in a session of day-long workshop organised by the Intellectual Property Rights and Technology Transfer (IPRTT) Cell of BHU.

organising the workshop was to create awareness and offer hand-holding support to inventors of the university in every aspect of intellectual property (IP) protection and promotion of innovations. The workshop was divided into five sessions including three technical sessions. The workshop was attended by 222 participants. The officers of the university and various deans and directors also attended the sessions.

Professor VK Shukla, Rector, BHU, presided over the inaugural session. The first technical session was addressed by Dr Yashawant Dev Panwar, head, Patent Facilitation Centre, TIFAC. He spoke on IPR protection and its necessity and explained all forms of IP and the criteria for the protection. He emphasised that industry and academia have conflicting values but there is a common interest to bridge

the gap which is the commercialisation of technologies. Sudarshan Singh Shekhawat, Patent Attorney, addressed the second technical session on facilitating and maintenance and emphasised the culture of confidentiality while doing research. The third session was addressed by Dr Suresh, Manager, Gujarat State Fertilisers and Chemicals who spoke on the technology transfer of IP-protected technologies. Prof RN Kharwar, Prof RK Murali and Prof Gopal Nath moderated the different technical sessions. Dr RK Singh, Dr Alok Kumar and Dr Priya Ranjan Kumar were the rapporteurs of different sessions.

According to the coordinator of IPRTT Cell of BHU Prof Birinchi Kumar Sarma, the workshop has created a mass enthusiasm among the faculty members and researchers regarding the need of protection of Intellectual Property and promoting innovations in the university. He said it is very much likely that much more filing of patents will take place from the uni-

versity in near future. According to him, patent filing is not only important for protection of intellectual property of the inventions but also helps in global ranking of the academic institutions. Dr Rajnish Kumar Singh, co-convenor of the workshop presented the report of the workshop and said that more than 222 participants both faculty members and research scholars of the university participated in the workshop and interacted with the experts. The participants were from almost all disciplines of science, agriculture, arts, commerce, law, medicine, ayurveda, performing and visual arts, education, etc. of the university.

In the final session Prof Arun Kumar Singh, Registrar, BHU was the chief guest and he gave the genesis of the IPR Cell and talked about the support university is providing to the cell. In his address he also talked about the feedback given by the participants and promised that the university will provide necessary support to the cell as per the need.

Training imparted to farmers

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■ PRAYAGRAJ

The College of Forestry, Sam Higginbottom University of Agriculture, Technology And Sciences (SHUATS), organised one-day farmers’ training programme on chironji tree cultivation on Tuesday to create mass awareness about the characteristics and benefits of the wonder tree called ‘chironji’ which will ensure high income to farmers. The training programme was organised under the auspices of project sponsored by Uttar Pradesh Council of Agricultural Research (UPCAR), Lucknow, entitled “Improvement of Chironji (Buchanania lanzan Spreng.) through selection from existing germplasm resources”. Prof Antony Joseph Raj, Pro Vice-Chancellor, SHUATS and Dean of College of Forestry said that commercially the chironji tree is known for edible kernels which fetches about Rs 600-2,000 per kilogramme in the local market. He informed the farmers that the chironji seed kernel contains about 52 per cent oil and used as a substitute

for olive and almond oils in both confectionery and indigenous medicine. Prof Antony reported that almost all parts of this plant have medicinal value for the treatment of various disorders. Beside preparation of sweet dish ‘chironji ki barfi’, bark and juice extracts of stem is used for treatment of diarrhoea and dysentery. Prof Antony informed that chironji nuts has very good demand in local as well as international markets and thus, making chironji tree an important economic crop. He encouraged farmers of Uttar Pradesh to integrate this chironji tree in farmlands in the form of agro-forestry. Dr Harsh Bodh Palwal, Assistant Professor of College of Forestry welcomed the dignitaries, farmers, students and participants of the training programme. Associate Professor and head Dr Neelam Khare proposed the need of thanks. Dr Hemant Kumar, Assistant Professor of College of Forestry imparted training to farmers on the topic ‘Multiple Utility of Chironji Tree and Plantation Management’. Anup Kujur, Young Professional

working in UPCAR’s Chironji project gave training to farmers on the topic “Introduction of chironji tree and its cultivation”. On the occasion chironji tree seedlings were presented to all the farmers by the chief guest and other dignitaries. Field visit to chironji nursery was conducted for farmers for practical training on chironji seedling production, planting techniques, plantation management etc. The organising committee members present were Dr Abhishek James (Associate Dean, College of Forestry), Dr Neelam Khare (Head of Forest Products), Dr Hemant Kumar, Dr Harsh Bodh Paliwal, Anup Kujur, Satish Kumar, Sanjeev Kumar, Clint Sones and Sanjay Kumar. **PROTEST:** Panic gripped Soroan and adjoining areas under the limits of Soroan police station when scores of locals blocked vehicular movement on busy Prayagraj-Pratapgarh highway, to mark their protest against allegedly thrashing of a youth who was detained by police in connection with a girl eloping incident.



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PAPER WITH PASSION

Chak De! India

Women cricket team's maiden gold in the Asian Games final is a fine achievement

India has won its first gold medal at the ongoing Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, thanks to India's women cricket team. In a display of unwavering determination, unrelenting spirit and unmatched skill, the women's cricket team secured a historic victory in the Asian Games cricket final. The nation watched in awe as our talented cricketers etched their names in the annals of sports history with an exemplary performance. Indian women's cricket team won their maiden gold medal in the Asian Games 2023 by defeating Sri Lanka by 19 runs after successfully defending their 116 runs on the board. It was a low-scoring match. On a difficult pitch, Titas Sadhu was undoubtedly the star as she bowled a devastating first spell, taking three wickets for six runs, and played a major role in restricting Sri Lanka to 97 for eight in 20 overs. It is not all. There was more good news for India from Hangzhou as India's 10m air rifle team shattered world record to win gold medal.



Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar won an individual bronze after teaming up with Rudranksh Patil and Divyansh Singh Panwar for the gold medal. India's 25m rapid fire pistol team also won bronze. This is nothing short of a dream run for Indian squad. But it was the women's cricket team that stole hearts. It has been overshadowed by men's cricket for decades now, getting a fraction of the allowances and perks that their male counterparts get. But that should soon change and sponsors are likely to make a beeline to sponsor their events after their emphatic and historic win. The Asian Games victory marks a significant milestone for women's

cricket in India. It not only highlights the incredible talent of our sportspersons but also serves as an inspiration for the generations to come.

The Indian women's cricket team has been steadily rising in stature, captivating the hearts of cricket fans across the country. Their victory in the Asian Games final is a testament to the hard work and dedication that these remarkable athletes put into their craft. From fierce batting to exceptional bowling, every aspect of their game has shone brightly on the international stage. The emergence of women's cricket leagues, greater media coverage and increased investment in infrastructure are all signs of a brighter future for the sport in India. The Indian women's team's triumph in the Asian Games cricket final is a cause for nationwide celebration. These incredible sportspersons have not only showcased their cricketing prowess but have also laid the foundation for a brighter future for women's cricket in India. As we celebrate this historic win, let us remember that it is not just a victory on the cricket field but a triumph of 'nari shakti.' The Indian squad has shown what can be achieved with talent and unwavering determination. Let these wins be a harbinger of more success for sportspersons—a true Amritkal for sports.

PICTALK



Saints Of Swaminarayan Gurukul pray to Lord Swaminarayan on the 'Jal Jilani Ekadashi', in Surat

PTI

Hypertension is a global health challenge

Hypertension affects individuals from all backgrounds and its consequences can be dire

In a significant revelation during the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the World Health Organization (WHO) presented its inaugural report on the worldwide impact of high blood pressure, delivering a poignant message – nearly 80% of individuals suffering from hypertension are not receiving adequate treatment. This revelation, however, comes with a ray of hope. If countries can expand their healthcare coverage, an estimated 76 million lives could be saved between 2023 and 2050. In India alone, taking proactive measures to control blood pressure among half of its hypertensive population could prevent at least 4.6 million deaths by 2040. It is bewildering that preventable deaths persist due to untreated hypertension despite advancements in healthcare and infrastructure. The number of people living with hypertension has doubled from 650 million in 1990 to 1.3 billion in 2019 globally.

In India, a staggering 188.3 million people, constituting 31% of the population, grapple with this condition.



Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, is marked by elevated blood pressure in the arteries, typically diagnosed when readings consistently reach or exceed 140/90 mm Hg. A misconception persists, particularly in socioeconomically disadvantaged societies, that hypertension is an ailment reserved for the affluent. However, WHO's report dispels this myth, revealing that over three-quarters of adults with hypertension live in low and middle-income countries.

Paradoxically, diagnosis and treatment rates are abysmally low in these regions, leading to a high mortality rate. While age is an uncontrollable risk factor, various modifiable factors, such as a high-salt diet, physical inactivity, tobacco use and

excessive alcohol consumption contribute to hypertension. Tobacco usage triggers 28% of cases in India, while physical inactivity accounts for 34%. Efforts to combat this pressing issue have been made, but more needs to be done. The India Hypertension Control Initiative (IHCI) launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare aims to tackle this growing problem. WHO acknowledges that IHCI made significant strides in ensuring healthcare facilities had adequate protocol medicines and minimal stock-outs by 2020. WHO underscores the importance of prevention, early detection and effective management of hypertension as the most cost-effective healthcare interventions.

Lifestyle adjustments like physical activity, proper sleep and reduced exposure to pollution can aid in prevention. Regular check-ups are crucial for early detection and the report emphasizes five components for effective hypertension care: protocols, medication and equipment supply, patient-centered services, team-based care and informa-

tion systems. WHO Director-General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, points out that "Hypertension can be controlled effectively with simple, low-cost medication regimens and yet only about one in five people with hypertension have controlled it."

This state of affairs must change for a safer and healthier future. The revelation that hypertension, a highly manageable condition, continues to claim millions of lives worldwide in an era of medical advancements and improved healthcare access is astonishing and disheartening.

WHO's report serves as a clarion call to governments, healthcare providers and individuals alike. One of the key takeaways from the report is the need for greater awareness. Public health campaigns and educational programs must be intensified to reach every stratum of society. People must understand that hypertension affects individuals from all backgrounds and its consequences can be dire.

(The writer is a researcher. The views expressed are personal)



BISHAL KUMAR SAHA

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(The writer is a researcher. The views expressed are personal)

Indian space industry at the inflection point

Indian space industry must be given a fillip to make the country future-ready for space. It will be good, both for India's standing and its economy



UMANG KOHLI



India's space programme has come a long way and has catapulted India to the world stage. Space technology ushers in possibilities for the future which are huge and varied, and some of these possibilities are yet to be explored. Few would understand that India's success in space technology enhances possibilities of trade and the earning of foreign exchange by providing services that are intrinsic to excellence in this domain. The private players have started playing an important role in bringing it to a level where it can be the leverage India requires for setting a benchmark for the world.

Certain joint endeavours by private and public players have given rise to exceptional dividends in the last year. The successful launch of 72 satellites by OneWeb through ISRO has boosted the broadband internet services in the country. The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) has worked to enable and facilitate the participation of private players in the space domain. The Indian Space Association, set up for the collaborative development of the private space industry in India facilitated the launch of India's first private rocket by Skyroot Aerospace and the establishment of the Mission Control Centre by Agnikul Cosmos. The launch of the world's first commercial Space Weather Monitoring System by Digantra, the launch by ISRO of Anand hyperspectral satellite of Pixal, and the collaborative effort of L&T and HAL to improve the efficiency of Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle are some of the giant leaps in space technology that will help India to bring in a lot of foreign exchange in the days to come. ISRO, through its commercial arms, has already earned

\$279 million in foreign exchange by launching satellites for global clients, but this is just the tip of the iceberg. According to the Director General of the Indian Space Association, the launch of the Shakti constellation by Pixxel has bolstered India's Earth observation capabilities and will help in agriculture, disaster management, and envi-

ronmental monitoring. The launch of commercial satellites by India of friendly foreign countries is sure to boost India's clout, not only as a regional player in Asia but also globally. This collaborative effort of the private and public sectors is bound to give dividends economically and also usher in prosperity amongst humanity in general.

Can the space program help humanity? Is it the bird's eye view we have been talking about for almost all the humanitarian challenges that exist? Let's face it, humanity faces challenges of resources, and among them, energy is one of the most critical. So can space exploration in the long run help humanity to solve the crisis of a resource crunch, including that of energy? The possibility for the same is huge, and so is the possibility of Indian Industry making it big in the decades to come. It is estimated that thousands of satellites would be required to be sent into space if the requirement of humanity is to be met. Over 100 satellites have been launched solely for monitoring the Earth's atmosphere.

Helium-3 is one moon resource that could potentially be cheaper to mine from the moon. Helium-3 is a very attractive fuel for future

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HELIUM-3 IS ONE MOON RESOURCE THAT COULD POTENTIALLY BE CHEAPER TO MINE FROM THE MOON. HELIUM-3 IS A VERY ATTRACTIVE FUEL FOR FUTURE NUCLEAR FUSION REACTORS

nuclear fusion reactors. If this becomes possible in the future it could solve a lot of clean energy-related issues that humanity faces today. It could also unlock a lot of economic value for the Indian Space Industry in the future. Lunar resources could also be used to help build up an industrial infrastructure in near-Earth space in the future. Satellites provide accurate weather reports which also help to track increasing rates of climate change and its effects, such as rising seas, moisture levels, and incidents of floods, wildfires, and atmospheric changes; helping us stop deforestation. Satellites cover the entire globe enabling high-capacity connectivity over wide & hard-to-reach areas including deserts, mountain ranges, islands, rainforests, or wetlands. Around fifty per cent of illegal mining activities can be monitored from space only. Ninety-nine per cent of weather forecasts can be from space alone. Space technology provides information regarding water and food production, precision irrigation and farming techniques. The direct economic impact of the sector is important, but it is the indirect impact that highlights how critical space is going to be for our life on

Earth. The UN has been urging for use of space technology to attain sustainable development goals.

The private sector and public sector milieu in the Indian context are best suited to exploit these opportunities in the future. Private players that are into satellite communication, GPS technology, surveillance, and disaster management are likely to benefit most from advancements in space technology. The Indian Space Industry would also be required to collaborate and work towards the transfer of technology with players in countries like the United States and France to enhance the scope of their achievements in space. The calmness and maturity of the public sector, along with the dynamism and initiative of the private sector, when invested in the development of space technology can for sure help in solving some of the challenges confronting humanity today. We are at an inflection point from where the Indian Space Industry is only destined to go up, and this is going to increase India's clout in the international community many fold.

(The writer is an expert on geopolitics and international Affairs. The views expressed are personal)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

WINNING IS A HABIT

Sir — The game of cricket is a team sport where performance is the key. The Indian women's cricket team secured a victory over Sri Lanka women by a margin of 19 runs, clinching the gold medal at the 2023 Asian Games. This marks India's second gold in Hangzhou. Rajeshwari Gayakwad bowled the final over, conceding only five runs while taking a crucial wicket. The Asian Games 2023 has proven to be a successful platform for the Indian cricket team. This victory represents India's second gold medal at the 2023 Asian Games. Harmanpreet Kaur, as the toss-winning captain, chose to bat first in the final. Opener Shefali Verma was the first to depart, with Sougandika Kumari claiming her wicket. Subsequently, Smriti Mandhana and Jemimah Rodrigues built a vital 73-run partnership to steer India back into contention. Winning is indeed a habit, and the women's team executed it splendidly. Congratulations to Team India.

Jayanthi CK Maniam | Chennai

WORLD TOURISM DAY

Sir — Tourism is known to provide a massive boost to a nation's economy. Responsibility on the part of travellers is key to sustaining tourism because travellers aware of their obligations towards maintaining the purity of a destination are godsend for tourism. Sustainable tourism, movie tourism, medical and religious, and ecotourism--form the crux of tourism. In India, nearly six per cent of the GDP is accrued from tourism. It is also a large avenue for employment with as much as 25 million workers earning their livelihood from this sector.

In a country as diverse as India, it is a laborious task for the government to keep tourist places spic- and- span which is why the role of citizens in overseeing the orderliness of key places is so vital.

There are plenty of attractions in the country that can set the visitors' pulse racing. Good connectivity, adequate cleanliness and the so-called certainty factor

Vande Bharat: A game changer



With nine additional Vande Bharat trains put into service, the stations they traverse are set to undergo renovations, creating more job opportunities in catering, cleaning, and operational services, which will contribute to the cause. Vande Bharat is an innovation that has rev-

olutionized train travel. Many of us cherish the prospect of securing window seats to relish the scenic views. This project, a testament to our domestic capabilities, is an accomplishment for Indian Railways, which boasts a legacy spanning 170 years. It is indeed an engineering marvel.

The acceleration is exceptional, living up to its acclaim, with a nearly silent ride, except for the coaches with traction motors, which produce some noise. The team of officers at ICF, Chennai, has made the most of this opportunity, creating history. It stands as the largest coach manufacturing facility. Art plays a role in cleansing the soul, and this is exemplified by the presence of an art gallery within the factory. The leadership and passion of all involved have transformed our dreams into reality.

Akhilesh Krishnan | Mumbai

make a tourist place much sought after one. Needless to say, the role of local population has a far reaching impact in making this a reality. Some exquisite tourist centres are a far cry from what they were earlier.

Since it takes two to tango, the travellers have a huge task of keeping the attractions noise free and hygienic. Preventing the centres from deteriorating to mere structures, maintaining the liveliness of the places and ensuring no tourist is harassed are critical to preserve the name and fame of a place.

Ganapathi Bhat | Akola

ESCALATING COURT CASES

Sir — Delivering justice to the common people is a fundamental pillar of a democratic system. It is a right that citizens must have access to. However, we currently face a concerning situation in our country. The number of pending court cases has doubled in the last five years, with more than five crore cases awaiting resolution. This means that, on average, one case is pending for every three and a half people. Uttar Pradesh alone has over one crore pend-

ing cases. The backlog is exacerbated by the fact that one-third of the judge positions in the country remain vacant. This shortage of judges, along with inadequate staff and resources, contributes to delays, especially in criminal cases. Uttar Pradesh, for instance, has nearly 98 lakh pending criminal cases. Maharashtra follows with 51 lakh pending cases.

Interestingly, the central government allocated over 54 crore rupees in the fiscal year 2022-2023 to handle these cases. Paradoxically, there are 61 lakh 57 thousand cases in court due to a lack of lawyers. Moreover, in many cases, plaintiffs and defendants fail to appear, accounting for 8 lakh 82 thousand such instances. Reducing the backlog of cases demands serious attention and action from the government. It is essential to ensure that the people receive timely justice.

Shantaram Wagh | Pune

Send your feedback to: letterstopioneer@gmail.com

FIRST COLUMN

CALLING GEN-NEXT: BE A CHANGE CATALYST

India has a sizable youth population and if they do not affect social change, who will?



RAJYOGI BRAHMAKUMAR **NIKUNJ JI**

Most of us are very much aware of the phenomenon known as the 'Generation Gap', which in simple language can be described as a 'wide difference in cultural norms between members of a younger generation and their elders.' It can also be described as a situation which occurs when older and younger people don't understand each other's point of view because of their different life experiences, opinions, habits and behaviour.' Though it is a very common issue, sometimes it becomes a very serious one. One thing that is universally recognised regarding the youth is that the youth, in general, have energy, stamina, strong will and zest for life. But certain other valuable characteristics of youth, which can be great tools for social transformation are not fully realised or utilised by society, and as a result of this, they get confused and disturbed. One such important personality trait of the youth is that they strongly aspire to do something new. They want change, not status quo. They are not tied down to the past and, instead, have an openness to accept new things. Hence it is easier for them to adapt to any kind of change in comparison to the older generation because they have the wish to learn new things.

Compared to this, the old generation has, no doubt, experience but most of their ideas have already been applied to situations in life and they may not now have any new concepts and adequate energy to work in real life. So, the old order has to change, giving place to new, as the saying goes, and, in this work of social transformation, youth- the new blood- have to play a vigorous role to usher in a new era. It has, therefore, rightly been said that if the youth are awakened, the whole world will get awakened because not only will the awakened youth themselves be a great achievement of their country but they will work, as leading lights, for the tender-aged children who, following their example, will prepare themselves mentally and physically for the dawn of new era.



But, have the potentialities of the youth been utilised for the work of national reconstruction so far? Have they been given the opportunities and guidance to fulfil their dreams of taking the world into a new era of peace and prosperity? Well! If we take into view the Indian situation, we can say, in general terms, that the youth are restless and disappointed because their abilities have not been provided with enough channels for self-expression and fulfillment. Today most of them have a complaint against society in general and against those who are in the seats of authority in particular.

They say that their energies- both mental and physical - are not being used in wider spheres of national development because the older generation denies them adequate participation, thinking that the youth are inexperienced and immature. Against this thinking, the youth argue that what the elders call "experience" and "maturity" is, in fact, a hindrance in breaking new grounds and what is required at present is new initiatives, new ideas adventures and innovativeness which is a characteristic that's mainly present in youth.

All would agree that to bridge the ever-widening gap of emotional estrangement between the older and the younger generations and to stop further erosion in values, whosoever may have been responsible for it until now, is to have such formal and informal educational centres and institutions which can inspire the youth to some higher principles and ideals and can fire their imagination with a new paradigm of society where there will be no violence and where all would live peacefully as loving members of the family of mankind. These institutions should have persons of ennobling character, pleasing manners, and loving demeanour who can awaken the potentialities of the youth for social reconstruction and can also bring change in the older generation and enable them to play a useful role in the work of nation-building.

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

A simplified tax regime can prevent tax evasion

An archaic and complicated tax system, with too many amendments, not only confuses the taxpayers but also leads to leakages and corruption



SUBHASH CHANDRA AGRAWAL

A complicated tax system in India with a six-decades-old Income Tax Act 1961 with too many amendments in the form of a lot of confusing patchwork is in force. Likewise, ever since the reformative step of introducing the Goods & Service Tax (GST) Act was introduced on 1st July 2017, there has been a regular practice of changing tax structure in an ever-confusing GST regime with too many confusing and complicated provisions incorporated in the system.

An altogether new tax regime should be introduced without patches of useless and largely misused exemptions. Implementation of Raja Chelliah Committee recommendations to fix the highest tax slab at 30 per cent to be in tune with most countries in the world, had largely abolished the practice of converting black money into white money. Gradually increasing this highest slab also through imposing cess and surcharges has undone the good achieved.

The highest tax slab of 30 per cent should be restored so that people may find it advantageous to bring complete income to books. Rather a permanent Voluntary Disclosure Scheme should be introduced whereby provision may be there in tax-return to declare at the highest suggested tax rate of 30 per cent, any income without disclosing the source of income. This will make cash transactions, especially in property deals accounted for if registration fees on the property are also reduced to say just three per cent. Names of all those disclosing incomes under the suggested highest 30-percent slab should be on the website according to income disclosed so that status-conscious persons may race to disclose more incomes.

Basic tax exemption should be fixed at rupees five lakhs abolishing most tax-exemptions including on charity, donation, contribution to political parties and even agricultural income which are largely misused. An ordinary farmer does not earn more than rupees five lakhs per annum, and the provision is grossly misused by ultra-rich persons including known celebrities to declare their unaccounted income as agricultural income through some village-land purchased only for the purpose without practically having any agricultural produce.

Income Tax slabs can then be 10 and 20 per cent for incomes between 5-10 lakhs and 10-15 lakhs respectively and thereafter 30 per cent for the rest. LK Jha committee recommendations to make the calendar year a financial year should be implemented to be in line with most countries of the world, thus abolishing another British legacy of following April-March presently as a Fiscal Year. It is ridiculous to have different depreciation rules for Tax and Corporate audits. There should be a single and unified Tax and Corporate Audit.

Rather than concentrating more on small cash transactions, all sale-purchases above rupees 10000 must be compulsorily through bank transactions. For this, transaction charges on credit cards should be slashed down to just half per cent (GST-exempted) which too to be borne by the central government with all incentives on purchases made through credit cards abolished. Present high two-percent transaction charges on credit cards make traders charge it separately from customers especially where trade margins are low. Such a system will fetch much higher tax revenue for the government, than through half-per



THE HIGHEST TAX SLAB OF 30 PER CENT SHOULD BE RESTORED SO THAT PEOPLE MAY FIND IT ADVANTAGEOUS TO BRING COMPLETE INCOME TO BOOKS

(The writer is an RTI consultant; views expressed are personal)

cent transaction-charges to be borne by the government.

Banks issuing credit cards will get much more earnings even with a half-per-cent transaction charge because of the manifold use of credit cards. Two sets of credit card machines should be compulsory for every GST-registered dealer dealing in cash to avoid payment receipt through credit cards with the usual excuse that the swapping machine is out of order. Strict action must be there against those refusing payment through credit/debit cards.

The input-tax-credit system in the GST-regime in manufacturing is the biggest corrupt practice of tax evasion where left-out GST invoices by ordinary customers are sold by traders to consuming manufacturers or producers to avail false Input-Tax-Credit where cash is paid back by traders to those purchasing left-out GST-invoices of actual consumers bringing more currency in circulation, this being the reason of basic motive of currency-demonetisation being failed where currency in circulation rapidly increased rather than projected decrease. An annual forensic audit may be made compulsory on claims made for Input-Tax-Credit by manufacturers/producers to avoid false claims of excessive input tax credit in these sectors. Rather study should be made if, with the abolition of an excessively high 18-percent GST slab, Input-Tax-Credit can be altogether abolished from manufacturing/producing sectors, retaining it only on tradable commodities.

But such reform in the Input-Tax-Credit system can be practically possible with drastic reform in the GST tax structure wherein initially only three tax slabs of 6, 12 and

30 per cent may be there abolishing all presently existing GST rates. India is the only country that has so many GST rates. Gradually even slabs of 6 and 12 percent may also be replaced by a new 10-percent tax structure. Zero-percent GST may only be retained on totally unbranded raw materials that cannot be consumed without giving a finishing touch like agricultural products, fish, meat, cotton yarn etc.

All items of long-term use like cars, air-conditioners, TV sets, refrigerators etc. may attract 30 per cent GST while their parts may uniformly attract 12 per cent GST. Unmindful policy framers brought clutch-plate and clutch-bearing under different GST slabs of 18 and 28 per cent. Likewise, similar items sold by confectioners like sweets, biscuits, napkins etc. attract different GST slabs with luxury sweets causing diabetes attracting just 5 per cent GST.

Invoices for items like gold jewellery can be drawn in two parts, one for metal and embodied items and the other for making charges so that the suggested 12-cent GST may be payable only on making charges. Cess on extra-luxurious items should be replaced by additional GST slabs in multiples of 60 per cent, also bringing petroleum products under the GST regime to ensure uniform pricing of petrol and diesel in all states. Abolishing an 18-percent GST slab will be more than compensated by clubbing lower slabs of 3 and 5 percent into a single 6-percent GST slab. The input-tax-credit (ITC) system should not apply to non-tradable commodities and services like has been done, and rightly too, in the case of car expenses for non-commercial use.

With the GST slab of 18 per cent abolished and the service sector attracting just 12 per cent GST, those with income of rupees ten lakhs or more (instead of the present rupees 20 lakhs) can be brought under the GST regime like was the system before the GST-regime. It is illogical to keep lawyers out of the purview of the GST regime. The useless system of Tax-Deducted-At-Source for GST, which is hardly used in practice, should be altogether abolished. Otherwise, any such deducted tax should be auto-reflected in the GST accounts of affected ones, abolishing the cumbersome practice of filing a new monthly return to get credit for deducted GST.

All government payments can be considered to be exempted from GST to avoid unnecessary government accounting by putting tax from one government pocket to another. It is illogical that some premium postal services like Speed Post may attract GST while other postal services do not attract GST. Even illogical postal rates (both inland and foreign) need simplification for the equal rise of postal tariff for the equal rise in slab-weight in multiples of 50 gms. of inland postal-article with all postal tariffs being in multiples of rupees ten except for registered newspapers and post-cards which may cost rupee one with the abolition of outdated Inland-Letter-Cards. Presently a postal-article weighing 200 gms sent locally by reliable and fast Speed Post costs just rupees 30 but if sent by unreliable ordinary post, it will cost rupees 50. Likewise, foreign-mail tariffs can be fixed for 20 gms or part slab-weight independently for air and sea-surface-mail.

Medical treatment facilities must be available in the campus

The provision of medical facilities within the university premises is an urgent requirement to address the health concerns faced by students from different states

It is indeed a pressing concern that students from different states face difficulties in accessing medical treatment facilities at the university. The lack of proper healthcare services can hurt their health, leading to various diseases. Students often have to rely on private hospitals, which may not be affordable for everyone. Additionally, the language barrier further exacerbates the problem, as students can be taken advantage of due to their lack of knowledge.

In light of these challenges, the university must prioritise the provision of adequate medical facilities within the campus itself. By establishing medical services on-site, students would have easier access to healthcare, promot-



SHIVANI SHARMA



NIMRAT KAUR

(The writers worked as Assistant Professors at SSD Girls' College, Bathinda; views expressed are personal)

ing their overall well-being. Having healthcare facilities within the university premises would not only benefit the students' physical health but also contribute to their peace of mind and academic performance.

Moreover, by addressing this issue, the university demonstrates its commitment to the students' welfare and creates an inclusive and supportive environment. It is essential to ensure that students' health needs are met, enabling them to focus on their studies and personal growth without the added burden of seeking medical care outside the campus.

By investing in proper medical facilities within the university, students will have convenient and affordable



access to healthcare. This step acknowledges the diverse needs of the student population and emphasises the value of their well-being. It is a significant initiative that promotes a healthy, thriving university community.

Students on university campuses, often encounter a slew of health-related chal-

lenges. One pressing issue is the accessibility of medical facilities on campus. It's no secret that university campuses can be vast and bustling, making it essential for students to have easy access to healthcare services.

One common challenge students face is the lack of convenient healthcare options.

Many campuses have limited medical facilities, or they may be located far away from student residences or academic buildings. This can pose difficulties, especially in emergencies or when students require immediate attention for illness or injuries.

Additionally, the availability of specialised healthcare services can be a concern. University students, come from diverse backgrounds with unique healthcare needs. Campuses need to offer a range of medical services to meet these diverse needs, including mental health support, reproductive health services, and specialised care for chronic conditions.

Another aspect to consider is the cost of healthcare. University students often face

financial strains, and the burden of medical expenses can further add to their challenges. Accessible medical facilities should take this into account by providing affordable or subsidised healthcare options, such as low-cost consultations, medication, and tests.

To bridge the healthcare gap, universities can take proactive steps. They can establish on-campus medical clinics or health centres with extended hours of operation to accommodate students' busy schedules. Moreover, partnerships with local hospitals or healthcare providers can enhance accessibility by providing specialised services or urgent care facilities.

Prioritising accessible medical facilities on university campuses is crucial to

ensure the well-being of students. By addressing the challenges and offering comprehensive, affordable, and conveniently located healthcare services, universities can support students in maintaining good health and thriving academically.

In conclusion, the provision of medical facilities within the university premises is an urgent requirement to address the health concerns faced by students from different states. This step will not only enhance their physical well-being but also contribute to their overall success and happiness during their time at university. Let us strive for a healthier and more inclusive academic environment where students' health is given the attention it rightfully deserves.

S Korea parades troops, weapons

AP ■ SEOUL

South Korea paraded thousands of troops and an array of weapons capable of striking North Korea through its capital as part of its biggest Armed Forces Day ceremony in 10 years on Tuesday, as its president vowed to build a stronger military to thwart any provocation by the North.

Concerns are growing that North Korea is seeking Russian help in expanding its nuclear arsenal in return for supplying Moscow with conventional arms exhausted by its war with Ukraine.

"After looking at your imposing march today, I believe our people would trust you and have faith in our national security," President Yoon Suk Yeol told cheering soldiers at the end of the ceremony in a central Seoul plaza. "I'll always support you together with our people."

Earlier, South Korea rolled tanks, artillery systems, drones

ARMED FORCES DAY CEREMONY

and powerful ballistic missiles capable of hitting all of North Korea through the streets of Seoul, amid steady autumn rains.

About 4,000 South Korean troops carrying rifles or flags followed them, accompanied by about 300 US soldiers, in the first such military parade since 2013.

As the soldiers and their weapons went past, Yoon waved, clapped and flashed a thumbs-up.

Since taking office last year, he has been pushing hard to beef up South Korea's defense capability while expanding military drills with the United States in response to North Korea's advancing nuclear arsenal.

But a complication in Seoul and Washington's efforts to curb the North's nuclear ambitions is the latest North Korean

push to deepen military cooperation with Russia. Earlier this month, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un travelled to Russia's far eastern region to meet with President Vladimir Putin and visit key military sites. North Korea reportedly wants to receive Russian technologies to help its development of spy satellites, nuclear-propelled submarines and powerful long-range missiles. Such weapons would pose a major security threat to South Korea and the US.

In a formal Armed Forces Day ceremony at a military airport near Seoul earlier Tuesday, Yoon said he'll strive to build "a strong military that instills fear in the enemy". "Based on battle-ready combat capabilities and a solid readiness posture, our military will immediately retaliate against any North Korean provocation," he said.

"If North Korea uses nuclear weapons, its regime will be brought to an end by an overwhelming response" from the South Korean-US alliance. That ceremony drew about 6,700 soldiers and 200 weapons assets, the largest of its kind since 2013, according to South Korean officials.

Yoon didn't mention North Korean-Russian ties in either of his two speeches Tuesday. But in an address to the UN General Assembly last week, he said South Korea "will not sit idly by" if North Korea and Russia agree to such weapons deals in violation of UN Security Council resolutions that ban all weapons trading with North Korea.

US officials have also said that North Korea and Russia would face consequences if they go ahead with such deals. Also Tuesday, senior diplo-

mats from South Korea, Japan and China met in Seoul and agreed to hold the first summit of their leaders in four years "at the earliest convenient time", according to a statement from South Korea's Foreign Ministry.

No date has been fixed, however, and the South Korean statement said the three countries agreed to hold a related foreign ministers' meeting in a couple of months.

Yoon said last week that Chinese Premier Li Qiang and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida had expressed their support for a trilateral summit in South Korea.

Yoon's moves to strengthen South Korea's military alliance with the US and boost Seoul-Washington-Tokyo security cooperation have caused concerns that Seoul's relations with China, its biggest trading partner, will be undermined.

But Yoon says Seoul-Washington-Tokyo cooperation won't marginalise any particular nation.



South Korean soldiers give a demonstration of their skills in the traditional Korean martial art of Taekwondo during a celebration to mark the 75th anniversary of Armed Forces Day in Seongnam, South Korea, Tuesday. **AP/PTI**

S Korea's Constitutional Court strikes down law banning anti-Pyongyang leafleting

AP ■ SEOUL

South Korea's Constitutional Court on Tuesday struck down a 2020 law that criminalised the sending of anti-Pyongyang propaganda leaflets to North Korea, calling it an excessive restriction on free speech. The ruling came in response to a complaint filed by North Korean defector-activists in the South. They included Park Sang-hak, who has been a frequent target of North Korean government anger for his yearslong campaign of flying leaflets across the border with balloons. The law was crafted by the previous liberal government in Seoul that desperately pushed for inter-Korean engagement. It made leafleting a crime punishable by up to three years in prison or a fine of 30 million won (USD 22,000).

The law passed in December 2020, six months after the North expressed its displeasure over the leaflets by

blowing up an inter-Korean liaison office in the North Korean border town of Kaesong.

Park did not immediately comment on the court's decision, which immediately invalidated the law. He and other activists could still be blocked by police in situations where their leafleting activities are seen as risking the safety of South Koreans living in border areas, the court said. South Korea's Unification Ministry promoted the law when the liberals were in power but reversed its stance to align with the views of the current conservative government that took office last year, saying that outlawing leafleting went too far. But the ministry, which handles inter-Korean affairs, still would prefer for Park and other activists to stop flying pamphlets into North Korea.

"For the safety of residents in border areas and for stably managing inter-Korean relations, it would be ideal to

refrain from sending leaflets to North Korea," a ministry official who spoke on condition of anonymity told reporters during a background briefing on Tuesday.

The court's justices voted 7-2 in favour of nullifying the law, concluding that it excessively restricts freedom of expression in a broad range of activities and "mobilises the state power of punishment when that should be a last resort".

Citing the tensions between the rival Koreas, the court acknowledged that the law was based on legitimate concerns about the safety of South Korean residents in border areas. The majority opinion said the government still would have the ability to keep the activists in check, including police monitoring and intervention, but that it would be wrong to hold the activists responsible for damage and danger directly caused by North Korean provocations. Park and other defectors from

the North for years have used huge helium-filled balloons to launch leaflets criticizing the leadership of North Korea's authoritarian ruler, Kim Jong Un, his nuclear weapons ambitions and the country's dismal human rights record. The leaflets are often packaged with US dollar bills, and USB sticks containing information about world news.

In his latest launch, Park said he flew 20 balloons carrying 200,000 leaflets and 1,000 USB sticks from a South Korean border island last Wednesday.

North Korea is extremely sensitive about any outside attempt to undermine Kim's leadership as he maintains tight control over the country's 26 million people while severely restricting their access to foreign news.

Aside of detonating the liaison office, North Korea also in 2014 fired at propaganda balloons flying toward its territory.

20 die, 300 hurt in gas station explosion

Nagorno-Karabakh residents flee

AP ■ YEREVAN (ARMENIA)

At least 20 people were killed and nearly 300 others injured by an explosion at a crowded gas station in Nagorno-Karabakh as thousands of people rushed to flee into Armenia, separatist authorities in the region said Tuesday. More than 13,500 people — about 12% of the region's population — have fled across the border since Azerbaijan's swift military operation to fully reclaim the breakaway region after three decades of separatist rule, Armenia's government said Tuesday morning.

The explosion took place as people lined up to fill their cars at a gas station outside the regional capital of Stepanakert late Monday. The separatist government's health department said that 13 bodies have been found and seven people have died of injuries from the blast, the cause of which



remains unclear. It added that 290 people have been hospitalised and scores of them remain in grave condition.

Armenia's health ministry said a helicopter brought some blast victims to Armenia on Tuesday morning, and more flights were expected.

Azerbaijani presidential aide Hikmet Hajiyev said on X, formerly Twitter, that hospitals in Azerbaijan were ready to treat victims, but not if any had been taken to them. Azerbaijan has sent in burn-treatment medicine and other humanitar-

ian aid, he said. Gasoline has been in short supply in Nagorno-Karabakh for months, and the explosion further adds to local residents' anxiety about whether they will be able to drive out. The Armenian border is about 35 km (22 miles) from Stepanakert.

Cars bearing large loads on their roofs crowded the streets of Stepanakert, and residents stood or lay along sidewalks next to heaps of luggage.

The Azerbaijani military routed Armenian forces in a

24-hour blitz last week, forcing the separatist authorities to agree to lay down weapons and start talks on Nagorno-Karabakh's "reintegration" into Azerbaijan. While Azerbaijan has pledged to respect the rights of ethnic Armenians in the region and restore supplies after a 10-month blockade, many local residents feared reprisals and decided to leave. Azerbaijan's blockade of the only road connecting Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia caused severe shortages of food, medicine and fuel in the region.

Moscow said that Russian peacekeepers in Nagorno-Karabakh were assisting the evacuation. Some 700 people remained in the peacekeepers' camp there by Monday night.

Nagorno-Karabakh was an autonomous region within Azerbaijan under the Soviet Union, but separatist sentiment grew in the USSR's dying years and then flared into war.

Nagorno-Karabakh came under the control of ethnic Armenian forces, backed by the Armenian military, in separatist fighting that ended in 1994.

Serbia demands NATO to take over policing of Kosovo after shootout

AP ■ BELGRADE

Serbia's president demanded on Tuesday that NATO-led troops stationed in Kosovo take over the security from police in the north of the country, days after violent clashes between armed Serbs and Kosovo police left one officer and three gunmen dead.

A daylong shootout in northern Kosovo on Sunday further raised tensions in the Balkan region at a time when European Union and US mediators have been pushing for a deal that would normalise ties between the wartime foes.

The violence over the weekend was one of the worst confrontations in Kosovo since it declared independence from Serbia in 2008.

Kosovo Prime Minister Albin Kurti accused Serbia of logistically supporting "the terrorist, criminal, professional unit" that clashed with the police. Serbian President

Aleksandar Vucic denied those claims, saying the gunmen were local Kosovo Serbs "who no longer want to withstand Kurti's terror".

On Tuesday in Belgrade, Vucic met with ambassadors from five Western countries and the EU demanding that NATO-led troops stationed in Kosovo, known as KFOR, take over "all the security matters in the north of Kosovo instead of Kurti's police".

There are around 4,500 KFOR peacekeeping troops stationed in Kosovo.

There was no immediate reaction from NATO to Vucic's request, but it is highly unlikely that it would be accepted because the primary task of the troops is peacekeeping and not policing.

Vucic also said in an Instagram post that these are "one of the hardest moments for Serbia." Earlier, the government proclaimed a day of mourning on Wednesday

because of "the tragic events", referring to the shootout.

A Kosovo Serb party allied with Vucic proclaimed three days of mourning starting Tuesday in the Serb-dominated north of Kosovo for the three killed Serb assailants.

On Tuesday in Pristina, a Kosovar court decided to keep three of the six arrested gunman for a month in pretrial detention.

They are accused of violating the country's constitution and of terror acts.

On Sunday, about 30 men in combat uniforms opened fire on a police patrol near the village of Banjska in the early hours of the morning, killing one officer and wounding another.

They then fled to a nearby Serbian Orthodox monastery, breaking down the gates with an armoured personnel carrier before barricading themselves in with priests and visiting pilgrims.

Saudi envoy visits West Bank

Ramallah (West Bank) : Saudi Arabia's newly appointed envoy to the Palestinian Authority presented his credentials to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas during his first visit to the Israeli-occupied West Bank on Tuesday, a trip linked to American efforts to normalize ties between Saudi Arabia and Israel.

The visit by nonresident ambassador Nayef al-Sudairi, who also serves as the Saudi ambassador to Jordan, is widely seen as an attempt by the kingdom to address the key sticking point in the Saudi-Israeli normalisation deal — Saudi Arabia's long-standing support for the Palestinians.

The Saudi government has said it will only normalise ties with Israel if there is major progress toward the creation of a Palestinian state.

To kick off his two-day trip, the Saudi diplomat met with Abbas, head of the Palestinian Authority that exercises limited autonomy in parts of the West Bank, and other senior Palestinian officials. "God will-

ing, this visit will be just the beginning of things to come, with the coordination of senior Palestinian officials who are architects of our relations," al-Sudairi told journalists after meeting with Abbas.

Some 16 years ago, Arab leaders convened in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, to reaffirm the Arab Peace Initiative, pledging no diplomatic recognition of Israel without a just settlement to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Although Palestinians still live under an open-ended Israeli military occupation in the West Bank and under an Israeli-Egyptian blockade in Gaza, a landmark diplomatic deal between Israel and Saudi Arabia has in recent weeks appeared to gain momentum.

But several obstacles to such an agreement remain. The Saudis are seeking a defence pact with the United States and want help in building their own civilian nuclear programme, which has fuelled fears of an arms race with Iran. **AP**

2 explosions rip through dwellings in Sweden

AP ■ STOCKHOLM

Two powerful explosions have ripped through dwellings in central Sweden, injuring at least three people and damaging buildings, with bricks and window sections left spread outside.

Late Monday, an explosion occurred in Hasselby, a suburb of the capital, Stockholm. In the early hours of Tuesday, a blast in Linköping, some 175 km (110 miles) to the southwest, ripped the facade off a three-story building, leaving debris strewn across a parking area.

It was not known whether the blasts were related to each other. Swedish radio said Tuesday that the explosion in Linköping was connected to a feud between criminal gangs, a growing problem in Sweden with drive-by shootings and bombings. Two gangs — one led by a Swedish-Turkish dual national who lives in Turkey, the

other by his former lieutenant — are reportedly fighting over drugs and weapons.

So far this year, there have been 261 shootings, 36 people have died and 73 were wounded. The count doesn't include the latest explosions. Police said that residents in the affected area in Linköping were evacuated to a nearby sports facility. In Hasselby, three people were taken to a hospital. Their conditions were not known.

No one has been arrested, police said. Following the explosions, the Swedish government said it will hold a meeting to identify measures that can be quickly implemented. Sweden's ministers for justice and civil defense, Gunnar Strömmer and Carl-Oskar Bohlin, will participate along with other authorities, including representatives of the Scandinavian country's municipalities and regions. "We are now bringing together all relevant actors to jointly identify what can be done in the short and long term," Strömmer told Swedish news agency TT. "The criminals' access to explosive goods must be cut off," Bohlin told the Expressen newspaper.

Earlier this month, a 13-year-old boy was found shot in the head in woods not far from his home near Stockholm. A prosecutor said his death was a chilling example of "gross and completely reckless gang violence." On Sept 22, two people were killed and two wounded when a gunman opened fire in a crowded bar northwest of Stockholm. One of the dead, a 20-year-old man, was the shooter's likely target, police said, while the other three were believed to be bystanders. The motive remained unclear. Police said the shooting could possibly be part of a local personal conflict and there was some uncertainty whether it was connected to the ongoing feud.

1,329 hunger deaths in Ethiopia's Tigray region since cease-fire

AP ■ NAIROBI

Researchers say they have verified 1,329 deaths from hunger in Ethiopia's northern Tigray region since a cease-fire ended a two-year conflict there in November. A study by local health authorities and Mekele University in the regional capital found that hunger is now the main cause of death in Tigray, accounting for more than 68 per cent of deaths investigated by the researchers.

The study is based on a household census conducted by health workers from August 15-29 in nine subdistricts of Tigray and 53 camps for internally displaced people.

Tigray in total has 88 subdistricts and 643 displacement camps, so the number of

hunger deaths across the region is almost certainly far higher.

One factor is the suspension of food aid by the United States and United Nations after the discovery in March of a huge scheme to steal humanitarian grain in Tigray. The pause was extended to the rest of Ethiopia in June after the theft was found to be nationwide. Ethiopia's government wants the suspension ended. The US government and the UN want the government to give up its control of the food aid delivery system.

The number of deaths from all causes recorded by the researchers in the Tigray areas studied rose sharply after the aid suspension, almost doubling from 159 in March to 305

in July. Around 5.4 million of Tigray's 6 million population relied on humanitarian aid. Over 20 million people in Ethiopia as a whole need food aid.

The study's findings are described in a document seen by The Associated Press and prepared by the Tigray Emergency Coordination Center, a group of UN agencies, aid groups and regional government offices.

Hunger plagued Tigray throughout the conflict between Ethiopian and allied forces and Tigray fighters. For much of it, the federal government cut the region's services and restricted aid access, prompting UN experts to accuse it of using hunger as a weapon.

The government rejected claims of weaponising aid, blaming the Tigray fighters for the lack of access.

November's cease-fire kindled hopes that aid would reach the region, but they were dashed by the discovery of the massive theft, with some US-marked bags of grain being sold in local markets.

Tigray authorities found that 7,000 metric tons of grain had been stolen. Earlier this month, the region's leader announced that 480 officials had been arrested in connection with the corruption.

Other parts of Ethiopia are yet to disclose the results of their own probes. The US and the UN World Food Programme are also investigating.

Shakira charged with tax evasion for 2nd time

AP ■ BARCELONA

Spanish prosecutors have charged pop star Shakira with failing to pay 6.7 million euros (\$7.1 million) in tax on her 2018 income, authorities said Tuesday, in Spain's latest fiscal allegations against the Colombian singer.

Shakira is alleged to have used an offshore company based in a tax haven to avoid paying the tax, Barcelona prosecutors said in a statement.

She has been notified of the charges in Miami, where she lives, according to the statement.

Shakira is already due to be tried in Barcelona on Nov. 20 in a separate case that hinges on where she lived between 2012-14. In that case, prosecutors allege she failed to pay 14.5 million euros (\$15.4 million) in tax. Prosecutors in Barcelona have alleged the Grammy win-



ner spent more than half of the 2012-14 period in Spain and therefore should have paid taxes in the country, even though her official residence was in the Bahamas.

Spanish tax officials opened the latest case against

Shakira last July. After reviewing the evidence gathered over the last two months, prosecutors have decided to bring charges. No date for a trial was set. The public relations firm that previously has handled Shakira's affairs, Llorente y

Cuenca, made no immediate comment.

Last July, it said the artist had "always acted in concordance with the law and on the advice of her financial advisers".

Shakira, whose full name is Shakira Isabel Mebarak Ripoll, has been linked to Spain since she started dating the now-retired soccer player Gerard Pique. The couple, who have two children, lived together in Barcelona until last year, when they ended their 11-year relationship.

Spain tax authorities have over the past decade or so cracked down on soccer stars like Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo for not paying their full due in taxes. Those players were found guilty of tax evasion but avoided prison time thanks to a provision that allows a judge to waive sentences under two years in length for first-time offenders.

China refuses cooperation with Pakistan under CPEC

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

China has refused to further expand cooperation in the areas of energy, water management, and climate change under the multi-billion dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), it emerged on Tuesday, signalling a strain in the 'iron-clad' friendship between the two all-weather allies. Cash-strapped Pakistan also gave up its opposition to setting up a new imported coal-fired power plant in Gwadar in Balochistan province and agreed to a number of Chinese demands to address Beijing's concerns, The Express Tribune newspaper reported, citing the signed minutes of the 11th Joint Cooperation Committee (JCC) of the CPEC.

The JCC is a strategic decision-making body of the CPEC and its 11th meeting was held virtually on October 27 last year on the insistence of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)-led government that wanted to showcase some progress. However, the minutes of the meeting were signed almost a year later on July 31 during the visit of Chinese vice premier He Lifeng, highlighting the difference of opinions on both sides that led to such a huge delay in reaching a consensus, the report said. When contacted, the Ministry of Planning stated that it was a global practice for the minutes of meetings between two countries to be signed by both sides only after due consultation and evolving



consensus. Interestingly, the final draft shared with Beijing by Pakistan and the final minutes signed by both sides were different in many ways, the report said. China's disagreement to further expand cooperation in areas of energy, water management, and climate change under the CPEC underscores "the challenges that both the sides are facing in deepening the economic ties", it said.

The USD 60 billion CPEC, which connects Gwadar Port in Pakistan's Balochistan with China's Xinjiang province, is the flagship project of China's ambitious multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The BRI is seen as an attempt by China to further its influence abroad with infrastructure projects funded by Chinese investments all over the world.

The CPEC is a collection of infrastructure and other projects under construction throughout Pakistan since 2013. India has protested to China over the CPEC as it is being laid

through Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK).

The details of the final minutes of the 11th JCC showed that China did not agree to a host of measures that Pakistan had proposed in the areas of energy, water management, climate change and tourism in Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber-Paktunkhwa, PoK and the coastal areas.

China excluded cooperation in the areas of cross-border tourism in Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber-Paktunkhwa, PoK and cooperation for the promotion of coastal tourism from the final minutes, the details showed. China also did not agree to Pakistan's proposal for the inclusion of Water Resources Management and Climate Change and Urban Infrastructure Development in the CPEC framework. The proposal for setting up a new joint working group on water resources management and climate change was also rejected by China.

SL prez to meet IMF officials for talks on eco reform plan

PTI ■ COLOMBO

Sri Lankan President Ranil Wickremesinghe will meet the officials of the International Monetary Fund on Tuesday to hold crucial talks on the hard economic reforms undertaken by the government to stabilise the fiscal system of the cash-strapped island nation.

The officials of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) are visiting the country to conduct the first review of its USD 2.9 billion bailout package approved for crisis-hit Sri Lanka in mid-March. The second tranche of USD 300 million is to be released after the ongoing review. During the review, the government will have to convince the global lender that it has fulfilled the conditions set by the IMF to revive the island nation's economy.

“These two weeks would be crucial for our economic reform programme. At this IMF review, we will be assessing the extent to which we have complied in setting up reforms and how far we need to go,” State Minister of Finance Shehan Semasinghe told reporters here. Sri Lanka has executed some of the tough reforms to stabilise the nation's economy. Semasinghe said some of the reforms had hit the people hard.

“These were reforms that should have been implemented a long time ago...We only started doing so when the crisis hit,” he said.

Sri Lanka was hit by its worst economic crisis in history when the country's foreign exchange reserves fell to a critical low and the public came out on the streets to protest the

shortage of fuel, fertilisers and essential commodities.

The country began seeking the IMF bailout only after it declared its first-ever sovereign debt default in April 2022.

The resultant political crisis forced the then president Gotabaya Rajapaksa to resign in July 2022. His successor Wickremesinghe has steered the economy out of the mess by lowering inflation.

Having entered the IMF programme, the government set in a series of tax and utility services reforms which meant higher taxes and tariff hikes. Still, analysts say the island's economy has only partially recovered. An Indian credit line of nearly USD 4 billion provided a lifeline to the country until the bailout agreement with the IMF was reached.

Judicial remand of Imran, Qureshi extended

PTI ■ ISLAMABAD

Pakistan's former prime minister Imran Khan and his close aide Shah Mahmood Qureshi will continue to remain in jail till October 10 as a special court on Tuesday extended for the third time their judicial remand in a case related to the alleged disclosure of state secrets.

Khan, also the chief of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party, was arrested last month after a case was filed against him for allegedly violating the Official Secrets Act by disclosing a secret diplomatic cable (cipher) sent by the country's embassy in Washington last year in March.

Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain conducted the proceedings inside the high security Attock jail where the former prime minister has been detained since August 5 after his arrest following conviction in the Toshakhana case. Khan's sentence was suspended by the Islamabad High Court on August 29 in the Toshakhana case, but he continues to

remain in Attock prison in the cipher case.

After the hearing, the judge ordered to keep Khan in judicial custody until October 10 to complete the probe.

It is the third time that Khan, 70, has been sent to jail on remand. His judicial remand was initially extended till September 13 and then again till September 26, along with Qureshi's. The previous 14-day remand ended today.

Qureshi was presented before the special court at the Federal Judicial Complex in Islamabad. The two-time former foreign minister was brought to the court handcuffed. The court authorities informed that his judicial remand in the case was also extended till October 10.

Qureshi, 67-year-old former foreign minister, was arrested under the Official Secrets Act for violating the secrecy of the official cable sent by the Pakistani embassy in the US to the foreign office when he was the foreign minister.

As per the law ministry, Khan's special court proceed-

CIPHER CASE



ings are being held in the Attock jail "due to security reasons".

Security was beefed up outside the jail ahead of the hearing. Talking to the media outside the court, Qureshi lamented that the PTI leadership was being punished for the crimes they haven't committed.

“(Our) conscience is content, intentions are clean... (we) are innocent... God can change hearts and overturn decisions,” he said. When asked what would happen if his party is not allowed to contest polls, the vice chairman of the PTI said

the polls would then be “meaningless” and “worthless”.

“The importance of the polls would end without PTI participating in it,” Qureshi said, adding that the country will suffer an irreparable loss if transparent elections are not held. A day earlier, the Islamabad High Court ordered authorities to shift Khan to the Adiala jail in Rawalpindi. However, the directive was not implemented.

Earlier, the authorities were allowed to conduct hearings of the case in the jail due to security concerns. The cricketer-

turned-politician is charged with the violation of the Official Secrets Act in connection with the leakage of a confidential diplomatic cable from Pakistan's embassy in Washington.

The cipher case was filed last month against Khan on the allegations of violating secret laws of the country in the matter of a cable sent by the Pakistan embassy in Washington in March last year.

In March last year, ahead of the vote of no-confidence that resulted in his ouster, Khan pulled out a piece of paper - allegedly the cipher - from his pocket and waved it at a public rally in Islamabad, claiming it was the evidence of an “international conspiracy” being hatched to topple his government.

However, during the interrogation with the joint investigation team (JIT) in the jail on August 26, Khan denied that the paper he waved at a public gathering last year was the cipher. He also admitted to losing the cipher, saying he couldn't recall where he kept it.

US concerned over Chinese ship's planned visit to SL

AP ■ NEW YORK/COLOMBO

The US has expressed concern to Sri Lanka about the likely visit of a Chinese research ship next month that could also cause worries in India which in the past has raised security concerns over docking by China's spy vessels, according to a media report.

US Under Secretary Victoria Nuland, who met Sri Lankan Foreign Minister Ali Sabry in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session, raised concerns about the upcoming visit of the Chinese research vessel 'SHI YAN 6'. Daily Mirror newspaper reported on Monday. Minister Sabry briefed her that Sri Lanka, as a neutral country, had worked out the Standard Operating Procedure (SPO) to be followed by foreign ships and aircraft in carrying out any activity in Sri Lankan territory.

The minister reportedly told her that Sri Lanka had been even-handed in this approach for all the countries and could not exclude China from the process as a result. Earlier, President Ranil Wickremesinghe also said that the SPO had been worked out for foreign vessels. The Chinese research vessel is expected in Sri Lanka in October to carry out research along with the National Aquatic Resources Research and Development Agency (NARA). Described as a Research/Survey Vessel with a carrying capacity of 1115 DWT, the current draught is reported to be 5.3 metres in length overall 90.6 metres and width 17 metres.

Sri Lanka's Foreign Ministry last

month said it is currently processing a request by China to allow its research ship to dock in the country.

“The Chinese embassy here has made an application and the ministry is currently looking at it,” Priyanga Wickramasingha, the foreign ministry spokesperson, had said. No dates have been fixed yet for the visit, she said.

China despatches its research/surveillance vessels to Sri Lanka on a regular basis. In August this year, the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy warship HAI YANG 24 HAO arrived in the country on a two-day visit.

It was reported that the arrival of the 129-metre-long ship was delayed due to concerns raised by India.

In August last year, a similar visit by the Chinese ballistic missile and satellite tracking ship, 'Yuan Wang 5', which arrived in the southern Sri Lankan port of Hambantota elicited strong reactions from India.

There were apprehensions in New Delhi about the possibility of the vessel's tracking systems attempting to snoop on Indian defence installations while being on its way to the Sri Lankan port. However, after a considerable delay, Sri Lanka allowed the ship to dock at the strategic southern port of Hambantota, being built by a Chinese company.

Cash-strapped Sri Lanka considers both India and China equally important partners in its task to restructure its external debt. China is one of the top lenders to Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka owes USD 7.1 billion to bilateral creditors, including USD 3 billion to China.

China's top diplomat calls on US to host an APEC summit

AP ■ BEIJING

China's foreign minister called on the US on Tuesday to do what it can to host a cooperative meeting of Asia-Pacific leaders in November, criticising those who seek to play up a confrontation between democracy and authoritarianism. Wang Yi said the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in San Francisco in November should promote cooperation rather than provoke confrontation, and said the US should show fairness and inclusiveness to create better conditions for a smooth meeting. “We should ... oppose advocating for democracy versus authoritarianism” and imposing our own values and models on others,” he said at the launch of a government report on its proposals for what it calls “a global community of shared future.”

US President Joe Biden has sought to create alliances and partnerships with other democratic countries to build a more unified response to China's growing geopolitical influence. China is a one-party state that has been ruled by the Communist Party for more than 70 years.

China has been trying to position itself as a leader of less-developed nations, saying it offers an alternative to what it has long called “Western hegemony.” The APEC meeting is widely seen as an opportunity for Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping to meet as the US and China try to manage their rocky relationship — if the Chinese leader attends.

Xi skipped a recent Group of 20 leader-

ers' meeting in India, and Wang gave a non-committal response when asked if Xi would go to APEC. “We are in communication with all parties and will make an official announcement in due course,” he said. In Hong Kong, a Chinese territory, leader John Lee said he has not received an invitation to APEC. Hong Kong is a member of the group, but the U.S. has banned him from entering the country since 2020 for his role in enforcing a national security law that has targeted pro-democracy activists. “According to APEC guidelines and protocol, the organizer should send an invitation to the leader of the respective economies,” Lee said at his weekly media briefing. “I am still waiting for the invitation letter to be sent to me.” Wang stepped down as foreign minister at the end of last year and became the Communist Party's foreign policy chief. He returned as foreign minister in July, while retaining the more senior party position, after his successor, Qin Gang, was removed from office. The government still hasn't explained what brought about Qin's downfall.

Russian drone strikes hit port area, cut ferry service to Romania

AP ■ KYIV

Russia struck the Black Sea region of Odesa in a drone barrage that damaged a warehouse, charred dozens of trucks and injured two drivers in fiery explosions that led to the suspension of the ferry service between Romania and Ukraine, officials said Tuesday.

Meanwhile, a senior Russian naval officer that Ukraine on Monday claimed to have killed in a missile strike was seen attending an online conference.

Video shot from the Romanian side of the Danube River showed rapid bursts of Ukrainian anti-aircraft fire streaking through the night sky followed by two orange fireballs exploding near the port area. Photos showed burned-out frames of trucks.

Romanian Border Police said ferries were anchored on the Romanian shores of the Danube in Isaccea due to the attacks on Ukraine. Traffic was being redirected through Galati, a Romanian town upstream on the Danube.

Ukraine's air force said it downed 26 of 38 drones launched by Russia overnight.

Russian forces targeted the area of Izmail in the Odesa region, in what has become a sustained campaign to target Ukraine's ability to export grain. Attacks on Monday killed two people in a grain warehouse in Odesa and badly damaged an abandoned high-rise hotel, officials said. After Moscow pulled out of a UN-brokered grain deal this summer, the strikes on Izmail and cities located in the southern part of the Odesa region became routine. Attacks on the cities on the Danube have been especially damaging because the route has emerged as the most promising for continued Ukrainian exports. At least nine civilians were killed in Ukraine and 15 people were injured over the past



In this photo provided by the Odesa Region Administration, firefighters work to extinguish a fire in port infrastructure after a Russian rocket attack in Izmail, Ukraine, on Tuesday

AP/PTI

24 hours, the presidential office reported, though some of those deaths were also reported Monday. Russian artillery damaged homes, a school, a market and a food processing plant in the southern city of Kherson that is near the front lines of the war, officials said. In fighting in the Zaporizhzhia region in the southeast, the Russian army dropped five aerial bombs on Robotyne, a town Ukraine took in August in its slow-moving counteroffensive.

On Monday, Ukraine claimed without evidence that its missile strike on the Crimean headquarters of Russia's navy last week killed 34 officers, including fleet commander Adm. Viktor Sokolov. Russia did not comment on that report, but on Tuesday Sokolov was seen among other senior officers attending a video conference with Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu.

Although neither side has released casualty figures, the counteroffensive is believed to have taken a heavy toll on both sides and it has been devastating to the towns and villages where fighting has raged.

New aerial video footage of Klishchiivka, on the outskirts of

Bakhmut, shot with a drone for The Associated Press shows how the battle has turned the village in eastern Ukraine into a pile of rubble after months of fierce fighting.

The footage shot two days ago shows the village in ruins with destroyed Russian tanks and military vehicles littering the main road. Barely a building remains intact in the village that was once home to almost 400 people.

A rare structure that still had four walls standing was missing its roof. Single walls stood like tombstones to mark where someone once lived. Ukraine recaptured the village Sept 17 after months of fighting, two days after it won back neighboring Andriivka, the Ukrainian military said. Both are tiny towns but were considered tactically important for Ukrainian forces as they extend gains around Bakhmut, 6 miles (10 km) to the north. The commanding heights of the village offer a view into the Russian-occupied town of Bakhmut and open up new opportunities for Ukrainian forces to encircle the town. It also potentially allows Ukrainians a better view of Russian logistic lines.

PUBLIC NOTICE
General public is hereby informed that Mr. Indermohan Singh Sidana is the owner of Apartment No. B/E-092 on 8th Floor having Super Area measuring 4213 sq. ft., in The Bealra, DLF City-V, Gurugram, Haryana, vide transfer deed dated 10.10.2016, reg. as Doc. No. 189024, to be financed & mortgaged by my client i.e., Axis Finance Limited. The Conveyance Deed dated 19.07.2016, reg. as Doc. No. 10801, pertaining to the aforesaid property have been lost and complaint bearing Application No. 13227032200134, was registered on 15.04.2022 with Haryana Police. Any person(s) found in possession of aforesaid original documents, then kindly contact the undersigned along with original property document, within 15 days from date of this notice on below address, failing which, the claim as per aforesaid sale deed shall be treated as null and void in respect of the subject property.
Raghav Tiwari, Advocate
Ch. 830, Patiala House Courts,
New Delhi - 110001 Mob.: +91-8076188328

PUBLIC NOTICE
To be known to all that I, R.K. Pal S/o Shri Jagbir Singh R/o DDA MIG Flat No.66-C, Second Floor Pocket A&B, Dilshad Garden Delhi-110095 has applied for conversion of Flat No.66-C Second Floor, under MIG Category, Pocket A&B, Group -III, Dilshad Garden, Delhi-110095 from lease hold to free hold in DDA vide Application No. DDA HC/21637937 Dated 12.09.2023. The original documents, i.e. Demand cum Allotment letter of the above flat have been lost. An FIR to this effect has been lodged in P.S. Crime Branch in vide S.O. No.430/2014 LR No.340391/2023 dated 25.09.2023. Any person(s) claiming any right, interest, having any objection or found in possession of original documents, may write/contact with above named person at above address/phone No.7838199942 within 15 days from the date of publication of this notice. The person claiming any right, interest, objections with respect to this property can personally inform or write to Dy. Director (LABH) or Director (H)/M-I/O Block, 3rd Floor, Vikas Sadan, INA, New Delhi.

IN THE COURT OF
Shri Vikash
Judicial Magistrate -
1st Class, Gurugram
M/S INDIA INFILINE
FINANCE LIMITED
VS
NIRMALA UMESH MUDALIAR
CIS NO No:-10414/2018
CNR No. HRRG03-023668-2018
Next Date:- 31-10-2023
PUBLICATION ISSUED TO :
NIRMALA UMESH MUDALIAR :-
Address: D/O UMESH FLAT NO. 7
BLDG SAPRS EAST GANDHAM
NAGAR KHADKI PUNE
In above titled case, the accused could not be served. It is ordered that accused should appear in person or through counsel on **31-10-2023 at 10.00 a.m.**
For details logon to <https://highcourtchd.gov.in/?trs=districtnotice&district=Gurugram>
Judicial Magistrate,
1st Class Gurugram
Dated, this day of **19-09-2023**

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
No. SSA-20-1/2003/Equity-SSA//1286984/2023 Dated 22.09.2023
Mission Director, Samagra Shiksha Axom, Kahilipara, Guwahati-19, Assam invites bids vide GEM/2023/B/3990804 Dated: 21-09-2023 for Printing and supply of Career Chart through GeM portal. Interested bidder may visit GeM portal and submit the bid on GeM portal accordingly. The bid is also available in SSA website : <https://ssa.assam.gov.in>
Sd/-Mission Director,
Samagra Shiksha Axom
Kahilipara, Guwahati-19
Janasanyog/CF/2830/23/27-Sep-23

PARADIP PORT AUTHORITY
PARADIP-754142, ODISHA (INDIA)
(An autonomous body under Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Govt. of India)
No. AD/RSC-22/36/201516(PL)/2097 Dated, the 25th Sept, 2023
Advertisement
Applications are invited from Indian Nationals for engagement of **01 (one) Chief Manager (Environment)** on contractual basis in Paradip Port Authority.
For further details, visit our website <https://paradipport.gov.in/Carrer.aspx>.
Sd/-
Sr. Assistant Secretary,
Paradip Port Authority
PPA/PR/49/2023-24 Dt. 26/09/2023

SRF LIMITED
Regd. Office: The Galleria, DLF Mayur Vihar, Unit No. 236 & 237, 2nd Floor, Mayur Vihar Phase I Extn, Delhi-110091
Corporate Office: Block-C, Sector 45, Gurugram, Haryana-122 003
Tel. No (Regd office) : (+91-11) 49482870; Fax : (+91-11) 49482900
E-mail: cs@srf.com, Website: www.srf.com; CIN: L18101DL1970PLC005197

NOTICE
Notice is hereby given that Share Certificates pertaining to shares of the Company detailed below have been reported lost and request(s) for issue of duplicate Certificates in lieu thereof have been received by the Company. Shareholder(s)/Claimant(s) shall also be entitled to Bonus Shares in the ratio of (4:1) on these shares from Investor Education & Protection Fund Authority :-

Sl. No.	Folio No.	Name of the Share Holder / Legal Heir (Claimant)	Cert-No.	Dist-No. (from)	Dist-No. (to)	Lost Shares
1	P 0005498	PARSHOTAM LAL SACHDEVA (Holder)	332911	16374831	16374880	50
		SMT USHA SACHDEVA (JT1)	481911	24394623	24394672	50
		KUMARI DEEPA SACHDEVA (JT2)	90141386	7386538	7386587	50
			90141387	7386588	7386637	50
			1136304	296101638	296102453	816
2	SRF0127443	UMA GANDHI (Claimant)	602933	42710863	42710872	10
		KRISHANWARUP SHANTISWARUP VASUDEV (Deceased)	602934	42710873	42710877	5
			602935	42710878	42710878	1
			1131731	310736366	310737229	864
3	G 0002004	PUNEET KATYAL (Claimant)	119173	5082290	5082325	36
		GANESH DAS KATYAL (Deceased)	975569	18559133	18559154	22
			1134518	295737258	295737489	232
4	A 0002570	ARUNA JAIN (Holder)	43938	2539576	2539600	25
			95524	4093313	4093324	12
			1133186	295451318	295451641	324
			90010960-61	6144174	6144217	44
5	SRF0151623	RIDDHI SUBLOK (Holder)	425438-39	18260506	18260530	25
			574436-37	26280198	26280297	100
			574438-39	26280298	26280322	25
			1136128	296073090	296073689	600
6	SRF0036061	MOOL CHAND KUMRA (Holder)	1137331	296299554	296299793	240
		MADHU SUDAN KUMRA (JT1)				
		TRIPTA KUMRA (Deceased)				
7	O 0000443	OM PARKASH GUPTA (Holder)	1138720	296594586	296594785	200
			90167352	12805010	12805059	50
8	SRF0045941	SUNIL ANTHONY PRABHU (Claimant)	1134886	295804374	295806397	2024
		JOSEPH BENEDICT MARTIN (Deceased)	90095974-76	9844590	9844689	100
9	K0005980	KULBHUSHAN MANGAL (Holder)	223	1126431	1126450	20
			56106	2833578	2833585	8
			1139655	296769582	296770053	472
			90025068	6797514	6797553	40
			90162082	12206675	12206724	50

Any person having any claim /objection in respect of the above requests should lodge such claim/objection with the company at its Corporate Office within 15 days of the publication of this notice, failing which the company will consider to give effect to the above requests.
Public is hereby cautioned against dealing with the aforesaid share certificates.

For SRF LIMITED
Sd/-
RAJAT LAKHANPAL
Sr. VP (Corporate Compliance)
& Company Secretary
Place: Gurugram
Date: 26-09-2023

Sensex falls 78 points

PTI ■ MUMBAI

Benchmark BSE Sensex declined by 78 points in a listless trade on Tuesday due to select profit taking in IT and banking shares in line with weak Asian markets and continuous foreign fund outflows.

The 30-share BSE Sensex fell 78.22 points or 0.12 per cent to settle at 65,945.47 with 14 of its components closing lower and 16 advancing. During the day, it declined 158.06 points or 0.23 per cent to a low of 65,865.63.

The broader Nifty dipped 9.85 points or 0.05 per cent to end at 19,664.70. As many as 23 Nifty shares declined while 27 closed in the green.

Among Sensex shares, IndusInd Bank fell the most by 1.29 per cent, followed by Tech Mahindra (1.28 per cent), Kotak Bank (1.24 per cent) and Infosys (1 per cent).

Asian Paints, ICICI Bank, Titan, and Bajaj Finserv were among the losers.

On the other hand, Nestle India rose the most by 1.58 per cent. Tata Steel, Mahindra &



Mahindra, Bajaj Finance, HDFC Bank and Tata Consultancy Services were among the gainers.

"Markets witnessed a listless trading session and lingered in negative territory for most part of the trading session due to weak Asian and European cues. Traders resorted to selective profit-taking ahead of the next week's RBI policy outcome, while external factors like strength in dollar

index and rising treasury yields continue to dampen sentiment," Shrikant Chouhan, Head of Research (Retail), Kotak Securities Ltd, said.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge dipped 0.09 per cent and the smallcap index climbed 0.33 per cent.

Among the indices, IT fell 0.46 per cent, bankex declined 0.45 per cent, teck (0.36 per cent), consumer durables (0.23 per cent) and financial services

(0.21 per cent).

Commodities, consumer discretionary, FMCG, industrials and telecommunication were among the gainers.

Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services said, "Trading remained flat as headwinds from the global market and continued selling by FIIs kept domestic investors under vigil.

"While bargain hunting was visible in small-cap stocks due to the recent correction and favourable valuation compared to large and mid-caps, IT indices slid due to the fear of one more rate hike by the FED and a consequent reduction in spending." In Asian markets, Seoul, Tokyo, Shanghai and Hong Kong ended lower.

European markets were trading on a mixed note. The US markets ended in positive territory on Monday.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 0.79 per cent to USD 92.55 a barrel.

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) offloaded equities worth ₹2,333.03 crore on Monday, according to exchange data.

India's export of polished diamond to dip by 22 per cent this fiscal: Report



PTI ■ MUMBAI

India's exports of cut and polished diamonds (CPDs) is likely to decline by 22 per cent to USD 17.2 billion in 2023-24, amid weak underlying demand conditions in key destinations including the US and Europe, a report said on Tuesday.

CPD exports have been on a declining trend since the second half of FY23 and during the first five months of this financial year shipments witnessed a sharp year-on-year decline of 31 per cent, Icara said in a report.

The decline in CPD exports was led by a fall in both export volumes and polished diamond prices, it added.

While some sequential improvement in volume is expected in the coming months, driven by the onset of the festive season, overall exports are still expected to contract by 22 per cent this fiscal, it stated.

The rating agency has thus revised the sector outlook to 'Negative' from 'Stable'.

"The export contraction is

primarily being driven by weak underlying demand conditions in key consuming nations like the US and Europe due to the inflationary pressures, leading to a shift in spending away from diamonds.

"Demand from China, which accounts for 10-15 per cent of the global demand, has also not picked up meaningfully so far," Icara Vice President and Sector Head Sakshi Suneja said.

In addition, competition from lab-grown diamonds, which are priced at a significant discount to natural diamonds, also accentuated the dip in volumes, particularly for the large-sized diamonds in the range of one to three carats, she added.

The report further said that the prices of rough diamonds remain elevated in FY24, with current prices hovering around the 15-year median level, despite some softening seen in the recent months.

These prices had soared in the last two years, following limited supply from mining companies and robust revival in

demand, post the pandemic, it noted.

However, despite subsequent softening in demand, rough prices remained high due to limited availability from Russia in the market, following the US sanctions on Alrosa PJSC - the Russia-owned diamond mining entity, which supplies 30 per cent of the rough diamonds globally.

With intensified sanctions on Russia and no major ramp-up in output of other mining entities, rough prices are expected to remain elevated, the Icara report said.

On the other hand, the prices of polished diamonds continue to be under pressure, with current prices being 15-20 per cent below the 15-year median level.

Coupled with demand pressures and limited ability to pass on the prices, this will shave off 40 bps of the operating profit margins.

"Profitability pressures will result in moderation in the credit metrics of CPD players in FY24. Faced with lower demand, the inventory levels are also expected to increase to an extent, while remaining lower than the pre-pandemic levels," Suneja said.

The CPD players have been conscious in managing their working capital cycle to control their dependence on bank debt. Additionally, recovery from customers has been timely so far. These factors would keep working capital borrowings of the industry under check, Suneja added.



Rupee falls 14 paise to settle at 83.27 against \$

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The rupee stayed on the downward track for the second straight day to settle 14 paise lower at 83.27 (provisional) against the US dollar on Tuesday due to a firm greenback against major currencies overseas and persistent foreign capital outflows. Besides, weak equity market sentiment and elevated levels of crude oil prices — hovering above USD 92 a barrel — weighed on the domestic currency, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened at 83.19 and traded between a high of 83.17 and a low of 83.27 against the greenback during the day. It finally settled at 83.27 (provisional), registering a fall of 14 paise from its previous close.

On Monday, the rupee declined by 19 paise to close at 83.13 against the dollar.

Analysts attributed the downward movement of the rupee to a strengthening dollar amid weak Asian markets and rising US Treasury yields. The US dollar surged to a ten-month high level after a Federal Reserve policymaker hinted at a longer interest rate hike due to resilience in the US economy. The 10-year US treasury yields also rose to a 16-year high.



'IndiGo seeks to become bigger, more global'

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

India is an incredible and one of the most competitive aviation markets in the world. IndiGo CEO Pieter Elbers said on Tuesday and asserted that the airline is seeking to become bigger and more global.

The chief of the country's largest airline said it is building its own international network, adding new overseas routes from existing cities and enhancing partnerships with other carriers.

Besides, the carrier is taking various mitigating measures to deal with issues related to Pratt & Whitney (P&W) engines that power its A320 fleet. It has grounded many aircraft due to the engine woes.

IndiGo, which started flying more than 17 years ago, operates nearly 1,900 flights daily with more than 320 planes and has a domestic market share of over 63 per cent. In recent months, the carrier has commenced flights to various overseas destinations, including Nairobi and Almaty.

Against this backdrop, Elbers, on Tuesday, also said that India is an incredible and one of the most competitive aviation markets in the world and there

is also a lot of competition in the market.

"There should be a correlation between price of a ticket and cost of operations... Otherwise, airlines will be out of business," he said and added that IndiGo focuses on affordable fares that goes up and down depending on the season.

The airline connects 32 international and 81 domestic destinations. While highlighting the growth potential of the country's aviation sector, Elbers said IndiGo is going through a "maturing phase" and also stressed the need for having aviation hubs in India, which is under served.

"IndiGo has the ambition to become bigger, better and even more global..." he said.

According to him, the airline has developed a strategy for internationalisation which has three very important elements.

Apart from building its own network, the carrier is connecting existing cities with new routes like Bhubaneswar and Singapore. Besides, it is enhancing partnerships.

Earlier this month, IndiGo announced a codeshare partnership with British Airways. It also has codeshare partnerships with various other airlines.

Cipla introduces drone delivery of critical medicine to Himachal hospitals

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Drug major Cipla on Tuesday said it has introduced drone-powered deliveries of critical medicines for hospitals and pharmacies in Himachal Pradesh in partnership with Skye Air Mobility.

The Mumbai-based firm aims to deliver medicines for cardiac, respiratory and other essential chronic therapies as part of the initiative.

The use of drones will support on-time deliveries of the company's medicines to chemists and clinics in remote areas while minimising risks such as delays, temperature excursions affecting cold chain products, and roadside accidents, Cipla said in a statement.

"As we accelerate our digital agenda across all functions, implementing drone-powered distribution enhances our sup-



ply chain resilience, strengthens connects with channel partners, helps us stay future ready and maintain reliable, prompt delivery of our trusted high-quality drugs to stockists and patients in the region," Cipla Global Supply Chain Head Swapn Malpani said.

The drug firm said it also aims to scale the service in the future through distribution to hospitals and expand market coverage to inaccessible and hilly terrains such as Uttarakhand and the Northeast region in India.

Focus on innovative products, pharmas told

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya on Tuesday asked domestic pharmaceutical industry to focus on the research and development of innovative products to move up the value chain and achieve global leadership.

Mandaviya, who also holds the Chemical and Fertilisers portfolio, asked medical technology companies to produce critical equipment in India for the global markets.

While formally unveiling the National Policy on Research & Development and Innovation

in the Pharma-Med Tech Sector here, Mandaviya said the domestic pharmaceutical companies invest less on research and development when compared to multinational companies.

"International MNCs spend 20-25 per cent of their profits in research and innovation while for Indian companies the average is around 10 per cent... Till the time we do not come out with research-led innovative products, we cannot lead the segment globally," he noted.

He said the government wants to make the pharma industry self-reliant by 2047.

"Today is a historic day, an

inflection point in the journey of "Atmanirbharta" in the pharma & medical devices sector. We need to transform Indian Pharma & MedTech sectors from a cost-based to a value-based & innovation-based industry," the minister said.

Mandaviya asked the pharma industry to focus on developing quality products and not just focus on the quantity.

"India can only achieve self-reliance in pharmaceuticals and medical devices by strengthening its research and development infrastructure that would drive the expansion of access to life-saving medicines and drugs

and help India become a global pharmaceuticals and medical exports hub," he added.

He said the government has been working closely with the industry and academia to bring about the changes.

The Department of Pharmaceuticals (DoP) notified the National Policy on Research & Development and Innovation in the Pharma-Med Tech Sector in India in August this year.

The policy aims to encourage R&D in pharmaceuticals, including traditional medicines, phytopharmaceuticals and medical devices.

Deadline for demat nominees extended

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Capital markets regulator Sebi on Tuesday extended the deadline by three months to December-end for existing demat account holders to provide choice of nomination or formally opt out of nomination through a declaration form.

Additionally, submission of 'choice of nomination' for trading accounts has been made voluntary by the regulator as a move towards ease of doing business.

Earlier, the deadline for existing eligible trading and demat account holders to provide a choice of nomination was on or before September 30.

The move is aimed at helping investors to secure their assets and pass them on to their legal heirs. "Based on the representa-



tions received from the exchanges, depositories, brokers' associations and various other stakeholders, submission of 'choice of nomination' for trading accounts has been made voluntary as a step towards ease of

doing business.

"With respect to demat accounts, it has been decided to extend the last date for submission of 'choice of nomination' to December 31, 2023," Sebi said in a circular.

Further, Sebi has given time till December 31, for physical security holders for submission of PAN, nomination, contact details, bank account details and specimen signature for their corresponding folio numbers.

In July 2021, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) asked all existing eligible trading and demat account holders to provide a choice of nomination on or before March 31, 2022.

Later, this was extended by one more year till March 31, 2023 and again till September 30, 2023.



Tax department notifies 'Angel Tax' rules for valuing investments in startups

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

The Income Tax Department has notified new Angel Tax rules that comprise a mechanism to evaluate the shares issued by unlisted startups to investors.

While previously the angel tax — a tax levied on capital received on the sale of shares of a startup above the fair market value — applied only to local investors, the Budget for 2023-24 fiscal (April 2023 to March 2024) widened its ambit to include foreign investments.

As per the Budget, the excess premium will be considered as 'income from sources' and taxed at the rate of up to over 30 per cent. However, startups registered by the DPIIT are exempt from the new norms.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) in a September 25 notification spelled out the valuation methodology.

As per the changes in Rule 11UA of I-T rules, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) provides that the valuation of compulsorily convertible preference shares (CCPS) and equity shares issued by unlisted startups can be based on the fair market value.

The amended rules also retain the five new valuation methods proposed in the draft rules for consideration received from the non-residents — (i)

Comparable Company Multiple Method, (ii) Probability Weighted Expected Return Method, (iii) Option Pricing Method, (iv) Milestone Analysis Method, and (v) Replacement Cost Method.

Deloitte India Partner Sumit Singhania said from an investors' standpoint, revised rules offer a wider range of valuation methodologies to work with, and that ought to make compliance less onerous henceforth.

"Also, safe harbour permitting 10 per cent deviation from fair value makes room for valuation adjustments when needed. Overall, the trajectory is to align tax valuation methodologies with permissible exchange control norms," Singhania said.

Nangia & Co LLP Partner Amit Agarwal said the amendments to Rule 11UA of the Indian Income Tax Act bring positive changes by offering taxpayers flexibility through multiple valuation methods, simplifying the valuation date consideration, incentivising venture capital investments, facilitating investments from notified entities, providing clarity on CCPS and encouraging foreign investments.

"The inclusion of a tolerance threshold for minor valuation discrepancies further enhances efficiency and fairness in tax assessments, ultimately benefiting both taxpayers and the government.

IN BRIEF



Naruvi Hospitals' Dr GV Sampath welcomes Chief Minister of Assam Himanta Biswa Sarma

JSW INFRA IPO SUBSCRIBED 2.13 TIMES ON DAY 2
New Delhi: The initial share sale of JSW Infrastructure, a part of the JSW Group, received 2.13 times subscription on the second day of offer on Tuesday. The Initial Public Offer (IPO) received bids for 29,02,18,698 shares against 13,62,83,186 shares on offer, as per data available with the NSE. The quota for Retail Individual Investors (RIIs) received 4.52 times subscription while the portion for non-institutional investors got subscribed 3.70 times. The category for Qualified Institutional Buyers (QIBs) was subscribed 55 per cent.

KONTOR SPACE IPO KICKS OFF TODAY

New Delhi: Kontor Space Ltd said it has set the price band for its ₹15.62 crore initial share sale at ₹93 apiece, which will open for public subscription on Wednesday. The issue will conclude on October 3, and the shares will be listed on SME EMERGE platform of the National Stock Exchange (NSE), the company said in a statement on Monday. The Initial Public Offering (IPO) consists of a fresh issuance of up to 16.80 lakh equity shares at a face value of ₹10 each.



Gold declines ₹150; silver tumbles ₹850

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Gold prices declined by Rs 150 to Rs 59,900 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday amid weak global cues, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal had finished at Rs 60,050 per 10 grams.

Silver also tumbled Rs 850 to Rs 74,500 per kilogram.

In the international markets, both gold and silver were quoting lower at USD 1,912 per ounce and USD 23.05 per ounce, respectively.

Comex gold slipped to a two-week low, weighed down by strong gains in the US dollar and bond yields amid speculation that central banks will keep interest rates elevated for longer to rein in inflation, Saumil Gandhi, senior analyst of commodities at HDFC Securities, said.

Meanwhile, in futures trade, the October contract of gold fell Rs 30 to Rs 58,671 per 10 grams. Also, December contract of silver plunged Rs 111 to Rs 72,039 per kg on the MCX.

Vistara merger: AI, SA to maintain minimum capacity

PTI ■ NEW DELHI

Air India and Singapore Airlines will ensure minimum capacity on various domestic and international routes, including Delhi-Sydney and Delhi-Paris, as part of commitments made to fair trade regulator CCI to address possible competition concerns arising out of the Vistara merger.

Competition Commission of India (CCI), on September 1, approved the proposed merger of Vistara with Air India under a deal wherein Singapore Airlines will also acquire a 25.1 per cent stake in Air India.

Certain competition concerns due to the proposed merger were raised by the watchdog and to address them, the airlines have given certain commitments with respect to the merger.

As per the commitments, Air India has voluntarily offered to maintain "minimum capacity/ supply level" on certain overlapping O&D (Origin & Destination) domestic and overseas routes.

They are Bhubaneswar-Delhi, Bengaluru-Guwahati, Cochin-Delhi, Delhi-Thiruvananthapuram, Amritsar-Delhi, Bhubaneswar-Mumbai and Bengaluru-Delhi in the domestic segment, according to a 73-page CCI order that has been made public.

The international routes where Air India will maintain minimum capacity/ supply level are Delhi-Sydney, Delhi-Melbourne, Delhi-Paris and Delhi-Frankfurt.

On these domestic and international routes, both Air India and Vistara operate flights.

Further, Air India and Singapore Airlines will maintain minimum capacity/ supply level in relation to certain overlapping O&D pairs between



India and Singapore — Delhi-Singapore, Mumbai-Singapore, Tiruchirappalli-Singapore and Chennai-Singapore.

"The Commission notes that the voluntary capacity commitments offered by the parties seem to address the likely competition concerns that could otherwise result from the proposed combination and thus decided not to proceed further with the investigation in the matter," the order, dated September 1, said.

The merger deal would mark a major consolidation in India's fast-growing aviation space.

Once the merger concludes, Singapore Airlines will be allotted additional shares in the merged entity through a preferential allotment. The deal will make Air India the country's largest international carrier and second-largest domestic carrier.

Air India Express and AIX Connect (earlier known as AirAsia India) are in the process of being merged.

Tata Group has four airlines — Air India, Air India Express, AIX Connect and Vistara, in which Singapore Airlines has a 49 per cent stake.

GOAL-FEST CONTINUES FOR INDIA IN MEN'S HOCKEY

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

Skipper Harmanpreet Singh and Mandeep Singh slammed a hat-trick each as favourites India mauled lowly Singapore 16-1 to register their second consecutive win in the men's hockey competition at the Asian Games here on Tuesday.

The Indians continued their goal-scoring spree after the 16-0 rout of Uzbekistan in their tournament opener as they found the net at will against world No.49 Singapore.

Harmanpreet (24th, 39th, 40th, 42nd minutes) and Mandeep (12th, 30th, 51st), Abhishek (51st, 52nd), Varun Kumar (55th, 55th), Lalit Kumar Upadhyay (16th), Gurjant Singh (22nd), Vivek Sagar Prasad (23rd), Manpreet Singh (37th), Shamsher Singh (38th) were the goal scorers for India.

India will next face defending champions Japan on Thursday.

Unexpectedly, the Indians started on a rather sedate note but completely enjoyed the ball possession.

The play was totally in Singapore's half as India dominated the proceedings from the start.

India's first chance came in the sixth minute but Sukhjeet Singh's shot was saved by Singapore goalkeeper Sandran Gagan.

India secured their first penalty corner in the next minute but skipper Harmanpreet Singh's flick was defended stoutly by the Singaporeans.

Two minutes later, Mandeep Singh earned India's second penalty corner but again Singapore goalkeeper Gagan made a terrific save with his stretched right leg to deny Harmanpreet.



Divyansh-Ramita miss 10m mixed air rifle bronze

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

India's Divyansh Panwar and Ramita Jindal buckled under pressure as they squandered a big lead to lose to Korea in an engrossing bronze medal match of the 10m air rifle mixed team event at the Asian Games here on Tuesday.

Divyansh and Ramita were leading 8-0 initially but the Korean pair of Park Hajun and Lee Eunseo made a remarkable comeback to win the match 20-18.

Ramita, who on Monday won the 10m air rifle team silver and individual bronze, was the more consistent of the two and had four shots of 10.8 while



Divyansh had one. Divyansh also had two bad shots of 9.9 and 9.8.

The 20-year-old Panwar, who was part of the 10m air rifle gold-winning team on Monday, shot 314.3, while the

19-year-old Ramita shot 313.9 to aggregate 628.2.

Earlier, the Indian duo finished sixth in the qualification round and thus faced third placed team Korea in the bronze medal match.

Unlike the individual 10m air rifle event, where eight shooters qualify for the finals, in mixed team six pairs make the medal round. Here too, the top two placed teams compete for the gold, while the remaining four pairs are divided into two groups and compete for two bronze medals.

The other bronze was won by Kazakhstan who beat Iran 17-11.

Hosts China, who had topped the qualification round, beat Uzbekistan 16-2 in the gold medal match.

It was a medal-less day for the Indian shooters after winning five medals, including a gold, in the first two days of the competition.



India thrash Pak & Singapore

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

The Indian squash contingent began its Asian Games campaign with comfortable victories over Singapore and Pakistan, in the men's and women's team competitions respectively here on Tuesday.

The women's team comprising 15-year-old Anahat Singh, veteran Joshna Chinappa and Tanvi Khanna blanked Pakistan 3-0 in its opening Pool B match.

The first singles saw Asian Games debutant Anahat getting past Sadia Gul 11-6, 11-6, 11-3 in 16 minutes.

Joshna, playing the first match of her sixth Asian Games, took 13 minutes to beat Noor Ul Huda Sadiq 11-2, 11-5, 11-7.

India, silver medallists in the previous edition, completed their dominance when Tanvi thrashed Noor Ul Ain Ijaz 11-3, 11-6, 11-2.

Top two teams in Pool A and Pool B progress to the semifinals.

Third seeds India are paired in Pool B alongside Malaysia, Macau, China, Pakistan and Nepal.

In the men's event, top seeds India outplayed Singapore 3-0.

Harinder Pal Sandhu, back to playing singles after a long injury lay-off, had to fight hard for a 11-4, 13-11, 8-11, 7-11 win over Jerome Clement in the opening singles.

India's highest ranked player Saurav Ghosal, who like Joshna is competing in his sixth Asian Games, was tested in the first game by Samuel Kang before pre-vailing 11-9, 11-1, 11-4 in 37 minutes.

Abhay Singh took care of Marcus Phua in straight games 11-7, 11-7, 11-7 to ensure a comfortable win for India, who face Qatar later on Tuesday.

The others in India's group include Pakistan, Kuwait and Nepal.

Ghosal led team had finished with a bronze in the previous edition.

Having won the gold back in 2014, the team is targeting the top of the podium here.

On Wednesday, the men will face Pakistan in a Pool A game. The clash should be more competitive than the one-side contest in the women's competition.



Tulika loses in bronze medal match

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

Indian judoka Tulika Maan missed out of a chance to win a medal after going down to Mongolia's Amaraikhan Adiyasuren in the bronze-medal play-off of the women's +78kg event at Asian Games here on Tuesday.

The 25-year-old from Delhi, a silver medallist at the 2022 Commonwealth Games, lost to Adiyasuren 0-10 by ippon at Xiaoshan Linpu Gymnasium here.

Earlier, Tulika knocked out Macao's Qing Lam Lai 10-0 in just 15 seconds with an ippon. But in the quarterfinal, she lost to Japanese Wakaba Tomita who thrashed her 10-0 with an ippon.

However, she stayed alive to fight for the bronze after beating Chinese Taipei's Jia Wen Tsai with an ippon by 10-

0 in the repechage round.

The losers in the quarterfinal rounds enter the repechage round.

Earlier, Indubala Devi Maibam lost to Thai Ikumi Oeda by 0-10 in women's under 78 kg category where the winner made an ippon in round of 16.

India were unfortunate to miss a medal in men's 100kg where Avtar Singh sustained an injury and conceded his quarterfinal and repechage matches.

In the round of 16, Avtar defeated Thai's Kittipong Hantratrin with a Waza-Ari by 1-0.

But he sustained an injury in the pre-quarters that forced him out of the last-eight, giving Dzhabar Kostoev of UAE a walkover.

In the repechage, Avtar conceded his battle against South Korean Jonghoon.

Boxer Sachin sails into men's 57kg pre-quarters

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

Indian boxer Sachin Siwach put up a dominant display in his opening 57kg bout to sail into the pre-quarterfinals of the Asian Games here on Tuesday.

The 23-year-old managed to dominate the match from the beginning wading off flurry of attacks from the Indonesian with ease using his flashy footwork.

Sachin successfully used his long reach to connect accurate jabs and hooks. As the clock ticked, the 2021 World



Youth Championship grew in confidence to earn a facile win.

He will face Turki Abuquthailah of Kuwait in the Round of 16.

Later in the day, Narender Berwal will play his pre-quarterfinal bout against Kyrgyzstan's Elchoro Uulu Oomatkabek in the +92kg weight class.

Indian golf team eyes Asian Games medals

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

The seven-member Indian golf team, comprising the likes of Anirban Lahiri and Aditi Ashok, will be hoping to carry forward its recent superb form when the event commences at the Asian Games here on Thursday.

Lahiri will be leading an experienced set of Indian golfers including Shubhankar Sharma, Khalin Joshi and SSP Chawrasia, while the women's team has the likes of Olympian Aditi, Pranavi Urs and Avani Prashanth.

While Lahiri and Sharma



have been given automatic berths in the men's section, Aditi has been given the same honour among women.

Joshi and Chawrasia among

men and Pranavi and Avani in women came through the qualifiers conducted for amateurs and pros by the Indian Golf Union (IGU).

Indian women's hockey team eyes continental supremacy

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

Top-ranked India will look to assert their continental supremacy with a second women's hockey gold in the Asian Games when they open their campaign against lowly Singapore here on Wednesday.

Placed seventh in the world, India are the top-ranked team in the competition ahead of defending champions and world No.10 Japan.

The Savita Punia-led side would look for redemption when it opens its campaign against Singapore in the Pool A match.

Going by form and rankings, the Indians are considered title favourites but in Japan, world No.11 China, and

world No.12 Korea, some tough opponents await them on their way to ultimate glory.

But since their historic fourth-place finish at the Tokyo Olympics, the Indian women are on a high under chief coach Janneke Schopman and would be gunning for gold, which will give them a direct ticket to Paris in the ongoing Games.

Under Schopman and Savita's leadership, India have only upped their game in the recent past but it won't be easy and they will have to take the pressure aspect in their stride to emerge triumphant here.

"The team is in great shape heading into our first match against Singapore, we had identified areas of



improvement and worked on it in the build-up to the Asian Games. The plan is to start strong and take charge of our games from the start whistle and finish as table toppers," coach Schopman said.

The road to semifinals would be a bit easier for the Indian women as they are grouped with relatively weaker opponents in Pool A consisting of Singapore, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Korea.

Going by world stature, India and Korea are expected to qualify for the semifinal from Pool A, but it won't be smooth sailing beyond that.

Pool B consists of China, Japan, Indonesia, Kazakhstan and Thailand.

The team selection was on expected lines with chief coach Schopman relying on her tried and tested players.

While the Indian goal will be under the watchful eyes of skipper Savita and Bichu Devi Kharibam, the

defence will be manned by vice-captain Deep Grace Ekka, Sushila Chanu and Nikki Pradhan among others.

India boast of a strong forward-line in Lalremmsiami, Navneet Kaur, Vandana Katariya, Udita and Sangita Kumari while the midfield will be controlled by Neha, Nisha, Salima Tete and Ishika Chaudhary among others.

While India's recent results against strong teams like Australia, England and Germany were not up to the mark, the Savita-led side would look to apply the lessons learnt from those outings in the Asian Games.

After Singapore, the Indian women will take on Malaysia on September 29, Korea (October 1) and Hong Kong (October 3).

Nagal, Raina progress to quarterfinals

PTI ■ HANGZHOU

Counter-puncher Sumit Nagal blunted the challenge of big-serving Beibit Zhukayev with his perseverance while Ankita Raina out-gunned Adithya P Karunaratne without fuss as the two Indians inched closer to singles medals by reaching the quarterfinals at the Asian Games here on Tuesday.

Kazakhstan's Zhukayev served big but Nagal controlled the points better for a 7-6 (9) 6-4 in a riveting men's singles third round while Raina cruised to a 6-1 6-2 win over

her Hong Kong's opponent in the third round of the women's singles event.

The semifinalists are assured of bronze medals in the tennis event at the Games.

However, the singles challenge of Ramkumar Ramanathan and Rutuja Bhosale came to a halt at the Asian Games.

Nagal's movement on the court and the immense retrieving ability was a delight to watch as several times Zhukayev went for drop shots but Nagal reached the ball to fire winners.

Zhukayev was sending down powerful serves and his ground strokes too packed a lot of power but Nagal is not someone who would feel threatened rather he kept the ball in play since he always had an advantage if the points were long.

After saving two set points, Nagal pocketed the opening set by sending down a widish backhand which Zhukayev failed to return, making a volley error while going for a winner.

A break in the fourth game of the second set handed Nagal an early advantage as he led 4-1. In the long-



drawn seventh game, Nagal saved two breakpoints but the Kazakh finally got the break with a forehand winner down the line.

The 26-year-old shut the door on the Kazakh with another break in game 10 when Zhukayev buried a backhand on net on the second match point.

Raina, the top Indian woman singles player at 198, converted all three breakpoints she got in the one hour 34-minute contest and saved two of the three breakpoints she faced against her 354th-ranked rival.

She will now fight it out with

Japan's Haruka Kaji (ranked 213) for a place in the semifinals.

Ranked 336, Bhosale was up against higher-ranked Alexandra Eala (190) from Philippines and went down fighting 6-7 (5) 2-6 in one hour and 51 minutes.

In the men's singles, Ramkumar took the court against world number 78 Yosuke Watanuki and it was always going to be a tough contest for the Indian, who has been terribly out of form this season.

To his credit, Ramkumar stretched his superior Japanese rival, who had to battle hard for his 7-5 6-

7 (3) 7-5 win in two hours and 40 minute match.

Both Ramkumar and Bhosale are still alive in the doubles competitions.

In the mixed doubles, the top-seeded Indian pair of Yuki Bhambri and Ankita Raina reached the pre-quarterfinals with a 6-0 6-0 thrashing of Pakistan's Aqeel Khan and Sarah Khan.

However, Bhosale and her partner Karman Kaur Thandi bowed out of the women's doubles after a 5-7, 2-6 defeat against Thailand's Anchisa Chanta and Punnin Kovatitukted in 1 hour and 59 minutes.

INDIA AIM TO WHITEWASH OZ

PTI ■ RAJKOT

Skipper Rohit Sharma would fancy a perfect culmination to Indian team's World Cup preparations as hosts eye a rare clean sweep of Australia in the third and final ODI here on Wednesday.

Never before in the history have India whitewashed Australia in the ODI format. In fact, neither of them have achieved such a result, home or away, irrespective of the number of matches played in a series. Given how perfectly everything has panned out for the World Cup hosts in the lead up to the mega tournament, it would only be fitting that India finish with a deserving 3-0 score-line.

Dominant Indian team, despite the absence of its front-line players and still tinkering with playing combinations to make sure every member has had game-time under their belt, are in pole position to record a fourth consecutive ODI win before the quadrennial event begins.

Gill, Axar, Shami, Shardul & Hardik to miss 3rd ODI

PNS ■ NEW DELHI

Axar Patel, Shubman Gill and Shardul Thakur have not travelled to Rajkot for the third and final ODI against Australia on Wednesday.

Axar, who has been out with a left quadriceps strain since the Asia Cup and was in the squad only for the final ODI subject to fitness, is understood to be recovering well, and the team management expects him to be fit in time for the World Cup. He is currently recovering at the BCCI's National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru.

Rohit Sharma, the captain, and Virat Kohli, who both sat out the first two games of the series, are back in the line-up, but Mohammed Shami, who played the first two games, and Hardik Pandya, who skipped the initial games as well, are not with the squad.

ESPNcricinfo understands that with just 13 players around - Mukesh Kumar was called up ahead of the second ODI which Jasprit Bumrah missed - India might be forced to use local first-class players, who are part of the Saurashtra team, to chip in in the field if needed.



If they manage to clinch a 3-0 win, India would also have taken a massive upper-hand over the five-time world champions Australia before the two teams meet again in Chennai on October 8 for their World Cup opener.

It will be no exaggeration in saying India have battered Australia in the first two ODIs despite both the rivals making plenty of changes to keep their top guns fresh, while also putting

miles in the legs of those who would not usually feature in first-choice XIs. There could, however, be some respite for the Australian bowlers as India have rested their young gun Shubman Gill for the final ODI after his 74 and 104 in the first two games, alongside Shardul Thakur.

In the 50-overs World Cup year, Gill is the only batter in the format with a thousand runs and counting - 1,230 runs to be precise at a staggering average of

72.35 - and his absence from the final game would certainly be felt. But India's batting mainstays Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli are expected to return and so are the in-form Kuldeep Yadav and Hardik Pandya from a brief resting period during which KL Rahul has led admirably.

Facing some tough questions over squad composition, players' form, fitness and availability, India have turned the tide and how.

That India would end up with a problem of plenty was something not envisaged when the team embarked on the Asia Cup campaign just a few weeks ago. But the likes of Ishan Kishan, Suryakumar Yadav, Mohammed Shami and even Mohammed Siraj have transformed this Indian outfit into as formidable a unit can get.

He took some time to get going and again struggled with his back-related troubles, but

Shreyas Iyer utilised perfect batting conditions in Indore to record a century, which will also consolidate his position in the middle-order.

Much to the delight of the Indian camp, Rahul has delivered the goods with the bat and behind the stumps at the most appropriate time. Like Rahul, Jasprit Bumrah too has proven his fitness and form in a few matches after a long injury lay-off. After resting from the second ODI, India's premier bowler is available for selection.

Even though the team management appears tilted in favour of injured Axar Patel, oldest member of the Indian squad Ravichandran Ashwin would like to make this opportunity count before the contingent is finalised for the World Cup.

For Australia, it is not often that they flop both with the bat and the ball in India with the white ball as miserably as they have in the first two ODIs. The visitors need to gather themselves as the wheels seem to be coming off rapidly following five consecutive defeats in ODIs.

A few months ago, the same side beat India 2-1 with Mitchell Starc haunting the Indian right-handers with his perfect in-swingers.

With one last game left before the World Cup begins, Australia would be tempted to play their preferred bowling attack with Pat Cummins and Mitchell Starc coming in, even though the batting lacks the firepower of Travis Head at the top and Steve Smith and Marnus Labuschagne not enjoying a successful year of cricket in India across formats.



Smith's form not a concern: Starc

PTI ■ RAJKOT

Steve Smith might be taking a wee bit more time to adjust to sub-continental tracks but his poor returns in the first two ODIs against India is least of concern for the Australian team management, senior speedster Mitchell Starc said on Tuesday.

Usually a prolific scorer against India, Smith has scores of 0 and 41 in the first two ODIs on batting-friendly tracks, having flopped earlier in the Test series in February-March when he could only manage 145 runs across four Tests.

Starc, who himself is coming back from groin niggle, was speaking ahead of the third and final ODI scheduled on Wednesday.

"No. His (Smith) numbers speak for himself," Starc replied to a query on Smith's current form.

"He (Smith) has been a high class player and has been a massive part of all formats for Australia, so no concern there. It is the adjustment factor, coming back to India after a series in South Africa, some guys are coming off a break," Starc told reporters here ahead of Australia's training session at the Saurashtra Cricket Stadium.

Starc, who might make a comeback in the third game then underlined the reasons for Australia's back-to-back defeats in Mohali and Indore.

"I think we have seen the wickets change throughout both the games, depending on who batted first and in different places. Spin was a massive factor in the second innings the other night (in Indore). We played pretty well under lights in Mohali," Starc said.

The left-arm pacer said conditions are still proving challenging for Australian touring party, which comprises of a few fresh faces such as left-arm bowler Spencer

Johnson.

"We have got a lot of guys with IPL experience, we know that the wickets are going to be very different through the night and day, depending on which part of India we play as well — not too many grounds we have played back to back games so, conditions are going to play a part," he said.

Starc conceded that Rohit Sharma's India are favourites to win the World Cup while adding that adaptability will be key for Australia to find their form.

"We have used quite a wide squad of players, whether that be managing players or players coming back from injury, trying different combinations and what not," he said.

The pacer admitted that Australia's current form isn't ideal in the run-up to a marquee event.

"Obviously, leading into the World Cup, it is not a position we want to be in but plenty to play for tomorrow - what the make-up of our team looks like, what we want to take into our World Cup campaign."

Starc said like him, Glenn Maxwell too has his sights set on the World Cup.

"He (Maxwell) is on track as well. I am not sure about his particular timeline but no doubt he will be looking to make an impact as soon as he gets his chance," Starc said.

"He has got a wealth of experience over here through IPL, through multiple tours. He is certainly an x-factor no matter whichever team he plays for. This is his third one-day World Cup, he is an x-factor for us who can take the game on."

"His ability with the ball, particularly in these conditions adds to another option in the bowling department as well. He seems in good spirits, (but) his return I am not sure what that looks like for this week but certainly on track for the World Cup," Starc added.

We have done our research: Babar

PTI ■ LAHORE

Most of the Pakistan squad members have not played in India before but skipper Babar Azam on Tuesday exuded confidence, saying his team has done its homework for the ODI World Cup beginning on October 5.

Pakistan team's visas were finally cleared on Monday night and the side will be reaching Hyderabad via Dubai on Wednesday.

Only Mohammad Nawaz and Agha Salman have played in India before. Babar could not travel to India for the T20 World Cup in 2016 due to an injury.

"Although we have not played in India before, we are not taking too much pressure. We have done our research and we have heard the conditions are similar to how they play out in other Asian countries," said Babar in the pre-departure media

conference here.

"It is quite an honour for me to travel as the captain this time around. I hope we come back with a trophy this time," he added.

Azam, one of the leading batters in the game, will be expected to score a bagful of runs for his team in the ICC showpiece. He is especially looking forward to the big game against India in Ahmedabad on October 14.

"I am excited to play in Ahmedabad as it will be jam-packed. I will try my best to perform up to my potential. I am not worried about my individual accolades. I want to make sure whatever I do helps the result for the team ...

"Whenever there is a tour coming up, I spend some time planning for it. I prepare according to [the teams I have to face



and make goals for myself. I try to set targets for myself and then I give my 100% in the ground.

"It is a chance to become a hero as every World Cup performance gives you a different kind of confidence. Everyone is at their best during the World Cup,

so whenever you perform there, it is an altogether different feeling," he said.

Babar said the team will be missing the services of injured pacer Naseem Shah. He also asserted that there is no bad blood in the dressing room fol-

lowing the Asia Cup disappointment.

"There is no ill will in the dressing room. There are discussions after every loss but they get twisted into something else entirely. The entire team is like a family and there is love and respect there."

Hasan Ali has been named Shah's replacement and Babar said he was picked because of his rich experience.

"Of course we will miss Naseem Shah as Shaheen [Afridi] and Naseem bowling together gave us a different edge. It was not easy to pick his replacement, but we all sat together and got input from [chief selector] Inzamam ul Haq."

"We went with Hasan Ali because he has experience. He has played the World Cup before. I cannot comment who will bowl the new ball or the old ball, as we cannot reveal our strategies right now."

Williamson targets World Cup return

AP ■ WELLINGTON

Less than six months after knee surgery threatened to rule him out of next month's ODI World Cup, the goal of captaining New Zealand in India has been the key driver in getting Kane Williamson through his recovery.

The 33-year-old tore the cruciate ligament in his right knee playing for Indian Premier League side Gujarat Titans in April, which looked to have scuppered his chances of making the showpiece tournament.

However, intense rehab work has meant a speedy recovery.

Williamson hopes to be ready for the Black Caps opening game against defending champions England on October 5, a repeat of the 2019 final his side narrowly lost.

"It would be great. Naturally, you want to be back playing when you are fit and ready, sooner rather than later," he said.

"You hope that ends up being around that World Cup time, but I'm still being very focused on the rehab day-to-day and not wanting those targets to stretch it to a point where you take a backward step."

Williamson is already batting in the nets again, which the injured knee can handle.

"For running, it's not quite 100 percent, but making good progress," he added.

Black Caps coach Gary Stead said there was no fixed date for when Williamson will play again.

But his return will be a big boost. He was player of the 2019 tournament with centuries against South Africa and the West Indies in leading New Zealand to the cusp of lifting the trophy.

Williamson, who has chalked up over 6,500 runs in ODI cricket, is desperate to appear in a fourth World Cup, admitting the prospect "keeps



you in the gym every day and working hard".

"It's been really pleasing to see the progress and keep taking those little steps forward," he added.

While New Zealand have warmed-up for the World Cup with tours of England and Bangladesh, Williamson's injury has limited his preparations.

But he is not overly concerned.

"Naturally, it isn't ideal, but I didn't get too much of a say in it. It's the only option I have in front of me and the prospect of playing another World Cup is really, really exciting," he said.

"It's something you always want to be a part of but I didn't want that to dictate my rehab. At the same time, having a carrot at the back of your mind is helpful."

Despite a burning desire to play, the New Zealand skipper said he would have no problem withdrawing from the squad if the injury flared up.

"I only want to be there if I can add some value and I'm fit and ready to go," he said.

Williamson already knows about spending time on the sidelines after returning last year from a lengthy spell out with an elbow injury.

"Working through injuries are part of the job, so being ready for whatever's next is the goal," he said.

Boult looking for 'one more run' at WC title

AP ■ WELLINGTON

After 12 months out of one-day international cricket, New Zealand seamer Trent Boult is relishing a third crack at the 50-overs World Cup after bitter defeats in the last two finals.

Boult is back in the frame for October's ODI World Cup after signing a casual-playing agreement with New Zealand cricket chiefs.

"I fully appreciated the fact that in giving my contract back, you open the door for other players," he said. "The decision was solely made around just being away from home a lot."

"Selection for the World Cup was never guaranteed. I had to work for it, so I am very happy to be here."

"I've been very fortunate to play in a couple of World Cup finals and been on the wrong side of all of them," he said with a

wry smile.

"It's a cliché, but you learn more when you fail than when you succeed. I feel like I'm a better cricketer for that experience."

There is no changing past finals, of course, so Boult has his eyes fixed on the future in the hope it will be third time lucky.

"I'm looking forward to hopefully get one more run and lifting the trophy in a couple of weeks time," he said. "That's the big focus for a lot of us."

Miller holds record he would prefer not to have

AP ■ CENTURION

David Miller holds an international cricket record he would prefer not to have.

No one has played more international cricket without playing in a Test match than Miller.

The hard-hitting left-hander has played in 274 white-ball internationals. The nearest contender for the non-Test record is retired West Indian Keiron Pollard on 224.

"I would have loved to play a Test, but it is what it is," says Miller, 34. "I've achieved quite a lot in my white-ball stuff and I'm grateful to have played so many games." Miller has built a solid first-class record, averaging 36.32 in 63 matches, with six centuries, which he backed up with electrifying fielding.

But it was a time of plenty in a South African Test batting line-up which included Jacques Kallis, Hashim Amla, AB de Villiers and Faf du Plessis, while white-ball cricket was becoming ever more prevalent — and lucrative. In 2018, nearing his 30th birthday, he retired from first-class cricket. "I wasn't being

picked, even for the South Africa A side. There were guys ahead of me so I decided to concentrate on the white-ball stuff."

He is in demand from franchises around the world —

playing for 22 different representative teams — and a crowd favourite in South Africa where supporters wave banners proclaiming 'Killer Miller' and 'It's Miller Time'.

ବନବିଭାଗର ବାଣିଜ୍ୟଗୋଷ୍ଠୀବିବରଣ :
OFFICE OF THE DIVISIONAL FOREST OFFICER: BONAI FOREST DIVISION.
Phone No. - 06626-24454; E-mail At- df.o.bonai@odisha.gov.in

MM-181 No 160 /FDT: 25.09.2023
INVITATION FOR BIDS
Bid Identification No.2 Online

	The Divisional Forest Officer, Bonai on behalf of Governor of Odisha invites percentage rate bids in Single cover system in ONLINE MODE.	
1.	Nature of Works	: Building works (Civil + PHE)
2.	No. of Works	: 3 (Three).
3.	Bid Cost	: 6,000/-
4.	Class of Contractor	: 'D' Class, 'C' Class
5.	Date & Time of availability of the Tender documents	: 26 th September-2023 to 5 th October 2023 up to 5.30 P.M.
6.	Last date & time of receipt of bids in portal	: 5 th October 2023 up to 5.00 P.M.
7.	Date of opening of Bid	: 7 th October 2023 at 11.00 A.M.
8.	The bidders have to participate in ONLINE bidding only. Further details can be seen from the website: https://tendersodisha.gov.in Any addendum/corrigendum/cancellation of tender can also be seen in the said website only.	

OIPR-08040/11/0008/2324 Divisional Forest Officer, Bonai Division.

BHUBANESWAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION
E-PROCUREMENT NOTICE
E-Mail Id-ee2@bmc.gov.in

1. Bid reference No : BMC-EED-II-15/2023-24Dt. 26.09.2023
2. Tender Call notice No : No. 45479 Dt 26.09.2023
3. No of work : 2 Nos
4. Bid Value : Rs. 21,55,651.00 to Rs 35,93,906.00
5. Period of completion : 60 Days

Date and time schedule

Start	End	Opening
11.00 A.M of 27.09.23	5 P.M of 06.10.23	11.00 A.M 07.10.23

6. Tender details: Can be seen for the procurement portal: <https://www.tendersodisha.gov.in>. BMC website <https://www.bmc.gov.in>

OIPR-13002/11/0167/2324 Executive Engineer, Div-II Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation